

It's great to be here at Lincoln High school in Lake City - the home of the Tigers!

I want to start by telling you that you live in a really beautiful and promising part of the state:

(Talk about your trip so far)

Lake Pepin - marina

Rochester - mayo Clinic -

eagles in Winona

Lark Toy factory

I hope you all get credit for being here today.

Maybe you can say I was here talking as a teacher - giving a lecture.

After all, I'm in schools so much these days I think I'm becoming a teacher.

Class - Today we'll be talking about the Big Plan.

Listen up, you'll be tested on this.

How many of you have heard about my Big Plan?

- Here's my message to you - even more - here's my *ASSIGNMENT* to you in my Big Plan.

The Big Plan is not complete until you create *YOUR* Big Plan.

Every one of you out there - not just the students, but the adults too - is responsible for creating your own Big Plan.

That's because a part of the Big Plan is Self-Sufficient People - every one of you has to be responsible for yourself to be the best you can be.

But I don't see doing my best simply a duty, I also see it as a right.

I see it as a most basic right.

How did Jefferson put it, “The rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

Guess what my favorite right is?

Well, you know I love my life, and I demand to free, but the part that really gives you something to aim for is the right to pursue happiness.

How you define your happiness is your plan of what you become in life.

That’s your part of the Big Plan.

What are you going to do in your life that will really make you happy?

That breaks down into a lot of very specific questions, questions we all should ask.

How will I make my living,?

What kind of career should I have?

What kind of advanced education do I need to get where I want?

You need to have an idea of what you want to become and what you want to do in order to be happy.

That’s the American Dream.

The Government can protect you life.

The Government can defend you liberty.

But the government cannot pursue Happiness for you.

You have to do that yourself.

But happiness is not just *about* yourself.

I wanted to be a professional wrestler.

I created my dream and made it become real.

It was a lot of fun for me and it made me happy.

But, even with all the fame and all the money, I found my happiness was incomplete without my wife and my kids.

I learned I need my family in order to be happy.

I'm self-sufficient, but I am not alone - I have Terry, Tyrel and Jade.

They are part of my happiness.

I acted in Hollywood movies, but I found my happiness was incomplete unless I got involved in government.

I didn't like some of the decisions that were being made that affected me and my community.

So I got *involved*.

I ran for Mayor of Brooklyn Park - and got elected.

It made me happy to get some things done.

It also makes me happy to be governor of Minnesota.

But I can't be happy without you.

And my Big Plan will not be complete until you develop your Big Plan.

How do you do it?

The Big Plan is all about turning ideas into reality, and achieving results.

Think of it.

You have an idea . . . you start with an idea . . . and then you take initiative, and make it happen.

You act. You *do* it.

Let's say your class at school has the idea of going to Europe to study.

That costs a lot of money. Money you don't have.

Is that going to stop you?

No, not if you believe in your idea.

So you start raising the money anywhere you can.

A couple weeks ago I attended a spaghetti dinner at my old junior high School in Minneapolis: Sanford Junior High.

They raised money for the trip to Europe - plus they found businesses and others in the neighborhood who were willing to help sponsor the trip.

This spring, that trip will come true for those students.

They turned their idea into reality.

Here in lake City you've had some people with big ideas - such as the man who invented water skiing.

Everybody must have thought he was crazy - but he didn't listen to them - because he had this idea.

And then you had randy breuer - Not only did he have a big idea - to join the NBA - he also had a big body!

I understand you have a couple industries on your waterfront here that are very successful and competitive - yet they began in someone's garage!

Imagine that - someone had an idea - tinkered around with it in their garage - and eventually it became a thriving business.

That brings us to another part of the Big Plan - Minnesota, Global Competitor.

You have in your own backyard one of Minnesota's world class facilities - The Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

For many world leaders around the globe - when they think of Minnesota - they think of the Mayo Clinic.

It's hard to believe that when they think of Minnesota - they don't think about the Vikings, or the Timberwolves - or even of the artist formerly known as "Prince."

It is world class institutions like the Mayo Clinic that really puts Minnesota on the Map.

And it all began with a couple brothers who were dedicated to doing their best to fight disease.

To be a world-class competitor you must make the most of your assets.

A good example here in lake City is the wonderful asset of Lake Pepin - it's a natural attraction for sailboats and motorboats.

You capitalized in lake pepin's beauty by building a city-owned marina.

It's the largest in the area.

But let me tell you something.

Economic competition these days is not simply about doing better than the next city - or doing better than Wisconsin.

Our economy today is global - we compete with every nation on earth.

We compete for ideas, we compete for prices, and we compete for markets.

That's why I traveled to Japan - and that's why I'm interested in opening up China as a market.

Can you imagine all the things we could sell them?

Who knows? Maybe they crave apple cider from Lake Pepin!

Let me share something I have learned.

As part of my World cultures curriculum. . . (stare at them - this is part of the Profile of Learning)

... don't worry. I don't know what it means either.

What I mean to say is - in my staff briefing about China... which I consider a seminar for my honorary doctorate - - - I learned something very remarkable.

I learned that I agree with some of the ideas of the Chinese philosopher, Confucius.

He said that a society achieves harmony when every body does their part - In his day it was - when a king is a king, a father is a father and a son is a son.

If we update that to 21st century Minnesota, it becomes:

“we will achieve healthy and vital communities when everyone is responsible - when the governor governs, when the parents parent, and when the teacher teaches, and so forth.

We all have our roles - our duties.

We each have to assume responsibility.

Parents - are you giving your kids direction? - are you setting an example? - Are you encouraging them to learn?

Teachers have their role.

city leaders of government and business have their roles too.

And state government has a role, too.

The State Government is responsible for Minnesota as a whole - but for me that's too abstract.

I don't have any real picture of the "State as a whole" - all I get is a vision of a map that looks like a boot.

I only get a map of Minnesota in my head when I think about the "State as a whole."

What makes more sense to me is to see Minnesota as a big community.

A community of people.

A community made up of a lot of smaller communities - towns, cities, farms, industries,

That's why I'm taking these trips - to give me a better sense of what Minnesota is.

Let me tell you something - Minnesota is not a map,

Minnesota is you.

That's why the government has a duty to you.

The job of the state is to help in those areas that affect all the communities . . .

. . . and to help solve problems that are too difficult for communities to handle by themselves.

A big part of that is to make sure all communities are well connected on the internet superhighway as well as the concrete highways.

Healthy and vital communities need good telecommunications and good transportation systems.

How many of you kids know how to surf the internet?

Raise your hands.

How many of you know more about computers than your parents?

How many think Lake City needs to be better connected?

I want all of Minnesota to be better connected.

I want every community in the state to have access to the latest and fastest high technology.

That's why we are pushing to change the state laws on telecommunications.

Our laws are based on the days when all they had was the telephone and the radio.

Nothing was digital, and nobody ever even *dreamed* of the internet.

Along with the electronic superhighway, the state government is also responsible for the regular highways - and other *modes* of transportation.

For Minnesota to be its best - our communities have got to be connected in *multi-modal* ways - highways, rails, and of course - waterways.

We need to do our best at getting people, goods and ideas flowing in every direction around the state.

And remember - just as the state government needs to be involved in the communities - the people have also got to be involved in state government.

How many of you have ever visited the state capitol?

How many of you have ever talked with your legislators?

Now - here's a big one - how many of you have ever sat in on a *conference committee*?

Have many know what a conference committee is?

It's important to know - because many key decisions are made by the handful of lawmakers that dominate conference committees.

Toward the end of each session, these conference committees are set up to hammer out the difference between the House version of a proposal and the senate version of a proposal.

But you know what?

In conference committees - things get thrown in and taken out without any citizen involvement.

All of a sudden democracy takes a nap.

Why not? Often times it's midnight when these conference committees take place.

The people are out of it.

When the citizens wake up - there is suddenly a new law that they had *no* input into.

Who do they hold accountable if they don't like the law?

It's hard to hold individual lawmakers accountable in this case.

do you know what I think?

It's the *SYSTEM* that we need to hold accountable!

The system that allows for conference committees needs to be changed so that we can hold our lawmakers more accountable.

The answer is unicameral - if there is just one law-making body - then there is no need for conference committees.

This is a question for the citizens to decide - not the lawmakers.

It's not surprising that most lawmakers like things the way they are.

You know who else like the system the way it is?

Lobbyists! Special interests!

I think it's up to the people to decide whether they can improve upon the accountability of their legislature.

I want you to call your lawmaker and ask him or her to let you decide on the system.

The question of unicameral needs to be put on the ballot in November - but it won't happen unless your lawmaker *allows* it to happen.

And at the very center of each healthy and vital community is a good school.

that's why we came to the school today - it is the center of your community.

What happens here determines whether your community produces citizens that are ready to become full-fledged members of the community.

That's why a good education isn't simply up to the teachers.

It's up to all the members of the community.

Especially parents.

But also local businesses and local government.

if you are not already involved with the school, find a way to volunteer.

I help out with high school football.

My Lieutenant governor goes to help out on a volunteer reading program at an elementary school.

Everybody can do something.

Unicameral

state of the state. - make your own.

you will be tested on this - in the larger classroom of the real world.