Greetings to all superintendents

I just wrote a book that I think you, your teachers, administrators and parents will find very interesting to read. It is called How to Raise Successful People: Simple Lessons for Radical Results and is available for pre-order on Amazon. (discounted pre-publication price). Here are some ideas taken from the book.

We are all worried about the future for our children and grandchildren. The recent climate report came out with dire predictions. Cybersecurity seems less secure than ever. Artificial intelligence is bringing computers that talk to us, computers that manage our lives, computers that even manage our refrigerator contents.

What we really want is relationships with other humans not with machines. We are worried about jobs being lost to robots and to computers but in fact, this hyper technological world is going to need even more workers, but tech workers. It is just that we are not training them correctly. The pipeline is flowing with people without the skills the world needs.
We are training students for the wrong century—the last century when we wanted factory workers. Today we want thinkers, creators. Almost all education today is lecture based where students sit for hours listening to lectures—in high school, students can be there for more than five hours just listening to lecture after lecture. Memorization is still a priority even though we now know that most people forget almost everything within a year. We are not teaching students the most important skills they need for this century: the 4 Cs and tech. That is collaboration, creativity, critical thinking and communication. We aren’t teaching students tech skills like cybersecurity skills, AI skills or quantum tech skills. We continue to teach them a curriculum that was developed more than a hundred years ago and is no longer relevant.

There are two institutions that are almost impossible to change: number one is the church and number two is schools. But for the sake of our planet we need to change our schools 20% of the time. They can stay the same 80% of the time. Give students control of their learning for 20% of the time and let them work on real world projects, like internships in the schools. They can work on climate issues, food supply issues, trash issues, the refugee problems, farming problems. They can work on social media issues, and fake news issues. They can work on whatever they think is important to them and can possibly help make the world better. They can even work on things like gaming or clothing. Whatever they want is what they should work on. These are Moonshot projects….projects that seem impossible, but that can be achieved with diligence and that can change the world.

The foundation for changing education is changing the culture of the classroom and it is tough to change. The classroom has to have what I call TRICK: trust, respect, independence, collaboration and kindness. Changing the culture is the key and it is tough to do. Culture is hard to change. Right now in most schools there is no TRICK. The kids have no respect and no independence. Rates of student depression in all countries are high.

I encourage everyone worldwide to join the global movement. GlobalMoonshots.org. The purpose of this organization is to highlight projects, schools, countries, that are encouraging the 4Cs and the 20% time in their schools and giving kids some control of their learning. Let’s treat students with trust and respect. They are smarter than society gives them credit for. We as a world all need to work together. We have just one planet we call home and that is the Earth. We need to take care of it together.