

### CONGRATULATIONS

[SME student]

Dr. Karl Krawitz continues his tradition of recognizing student awards and efforts by sending personalized notes to seniors.



"Congratulations! Large Varsity Camp Champions! This is a credit to your dedication and commitment to excellence. More importantly I want to thank you for making SME a tremendous school...No one can appreciate your efforts more..."

to: Kristin Barker 12



"...You are being recognized as a commended scholar by the National Merit Program. Your commitment to leading is appreciated. You obviously have a belief in yourself that drives you forward...absolutely terrific! Certainly want to thank you for the recognition you have brought to our school..."

to: Bernadette Myers 12

DR. KARL KRAWITZ OVERCOMES VARIOUS OBSTACLES TO BECOME A FAVORITE.

12 AUGUST



### YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU FEEL

Above: Dr. Krawitz does the YMCA in his Village People garb, dressed as a construction worker for the pep assembly. "We do these things in the past, so it's not outrageous for me to do that," Krawitz said. "It's all in the spirit of fun." Photo by KJ Anderson.

### CABINET MEETINGS

Below: Krawitz jokes around with administrators during a principal cabinet meeting. "I would call the meetings very training in leadership of the district," Krawitz said. "I have a lot of respect and admiration for the administration!" Photo by Anna Petrow.



### MY NAME IS...

Above: Krawitz addresses the students during the first all-school pep assembly. "It's an opportunity to excite kids, inform them and support them at the same time," Krawitz said. "I lead them in the right way without taking away enthusiasm." Photo by Tyler Rodes.

### A HELPING HAND

Left: Dr. Krawitz gives his game input to athletic director Jim Ricker during an East football game. "I try to analyze and understand what's going on as an old coach," Krawitz said. "It's like having another set of eyes on the field." Photo by Anna Petrow.



Photo by Rachel English

# MEET DR. K

DESIGN BY KATHALIN COLOMBO

SEE ALSO

### LORETTA PRENO SECRETARY

"I bake for my daughter's first grade class. I help in the classroom every once in a while and go on field trips if they need more parents, but I mostly bake for their parties."

BAKER

On the day of the first match of the season against Pembroke Hill, senior tennis player Sally Holmes was paged to the office during passing period. At the office, she was handed a square white envelope which had a glossy card inside with a picture of fall leaves, the word "Leadership" and a quote. Inside was a long note written in perfect cursive from Dr. Karl Krawitz himself. It started off telling Holmes to "stay positive and always focused, [and to] encourage the underclassman" and ended with wishes of good luck.

This wasn't the last personalized card Holmes received during the year, nor was she the only student to receive one; dozens of athletes and academic students alike received cards of congratulations, and student journalists and PTA moms got a few as well. This touch was just one of many that made Krawitz a principal different from those before him.

Krawitz came to East after a long history of working in education. A graduate of Baker University, Krawitz went on to teach and coach in the Olathe School District before moving into the principal positions at Indian Trail Junior High, Olathe North and Olathe East. He became an Associate Professor of Education at Baker University, where he helped found a new doctorate program in education before realizing that high school administration was where his heart lie.

"I missed being around [high school students]," Krawitz said. "I missed going to the events... With grad students, there's no football games, there's no choir concerts."

Although Krawitz loved academia and still continued reading and researching after leaving Baker University, he found that the life of a college professor wasn't sufficiently dynamic.

"It was too slow," Krawitz said. "You know, I'd go home at night and I'd be stuffed in another book, and so I was somewhat bored."

Krawitz was much more active as a high school principal, since he planned to go to 80-85 percent of all school events, including ones that few people attended. To Krawitz, it seemed obvious that students should support each other in every sport and every activity, not just basketball and soccer, and he intended to set an example.

"I'm not probably the status quo administrator," Krawitz said. "I don't like the status quo; I like change."

Krawitz questioned some other status quo ideas that few addressed; he didn't think that high schools should run from 7:40 a.m.-2:40 p.m. because "society is geared more towards later times and sleeping in." Also, he wondered whether seniors and juniors should spend part of their day outside of the school learning about professions instead of sitting in school, and he thought the ACT and SAT said very little about a student's potential for success. In short, he wanted to make big changes.

"This is old. This is old," he said, gesturing towards the school. "And new means that you have to be different."

He made big changes in Olathe East High School by helping introduce an experimental policy on cell phones in which students could use their cell phones at school, whenever they weren't in class. He appealed to the students to respect the teachers, since he believed that they could.

"Sometimes we create rules thinking that it's going to provide more control, and it creates more problems," Krawitz said. "I think my role is to be a motivator and cheerleader of students and to be supportive of what they do. I'm not into lots of rules and guidelines."

Krawitz's urge to reform prompted him to implement the same cell phone policy at East, to try to reverse a trend of mass failures on AP exams and to attempt to curb underage drinking among students.

It could have seemed like a daunting path, but Krawitz found that the Shawnee Mission School District allowed him a significant amount of leeway to test his ideas.

"You can't imagine what this does for motivation for people who are supposed to be doing the motivating," he said.

Krawitz didn't have illusions as to the difficulty of these tasks, but he stayed motivated by limiting his goals to things that he could directly affect.

"You should never become stressed over things you can't control," Krawitz said. "You can't do anything about the past, but you can do everything you want about the future. That's why you've gotta be optimistic."

Maybe it was significant that among all the books about education that filled Krawitz's office, his favorite was "Leadership and Self-Deception- Getting Out of the Box" by the Arberger Institute, since "getting out of the box" was exactly what Krawitz aimed to do during the year.

He tried to branch out in new ways one student at a time, thank-you note by thank-you note, sports game by sports game and innovation by innovation. He always remembered what his dad once told him: "If you truly, truly enjoy your work, you will never work a day in your life."

If this was true, Krawitz had been unemployed for 20 years. Story by Leah Pickett.

Photo illustration by Rachel English.

NEW PRINCIPAL 13

### Theme: See Also

This is a great way to make a bold statement. The use of a large profile silhouette is a bit startling, which is exactly the reaction you want your reader to have. The profile faces the gutter – a good trick to get folks to read your story, as opposed to the other direction, which would make the reader want to turn the page. The type treatment on the spread is tightly uniform. Take a cue from the photo captions – you do not need to use 12-pt. type anywhere in your yearbook. Seven- or eight-point is perfect for captions, 9.25-pt is a solid size for body copy.