

# The Power of the Positive

## Cameron Grow

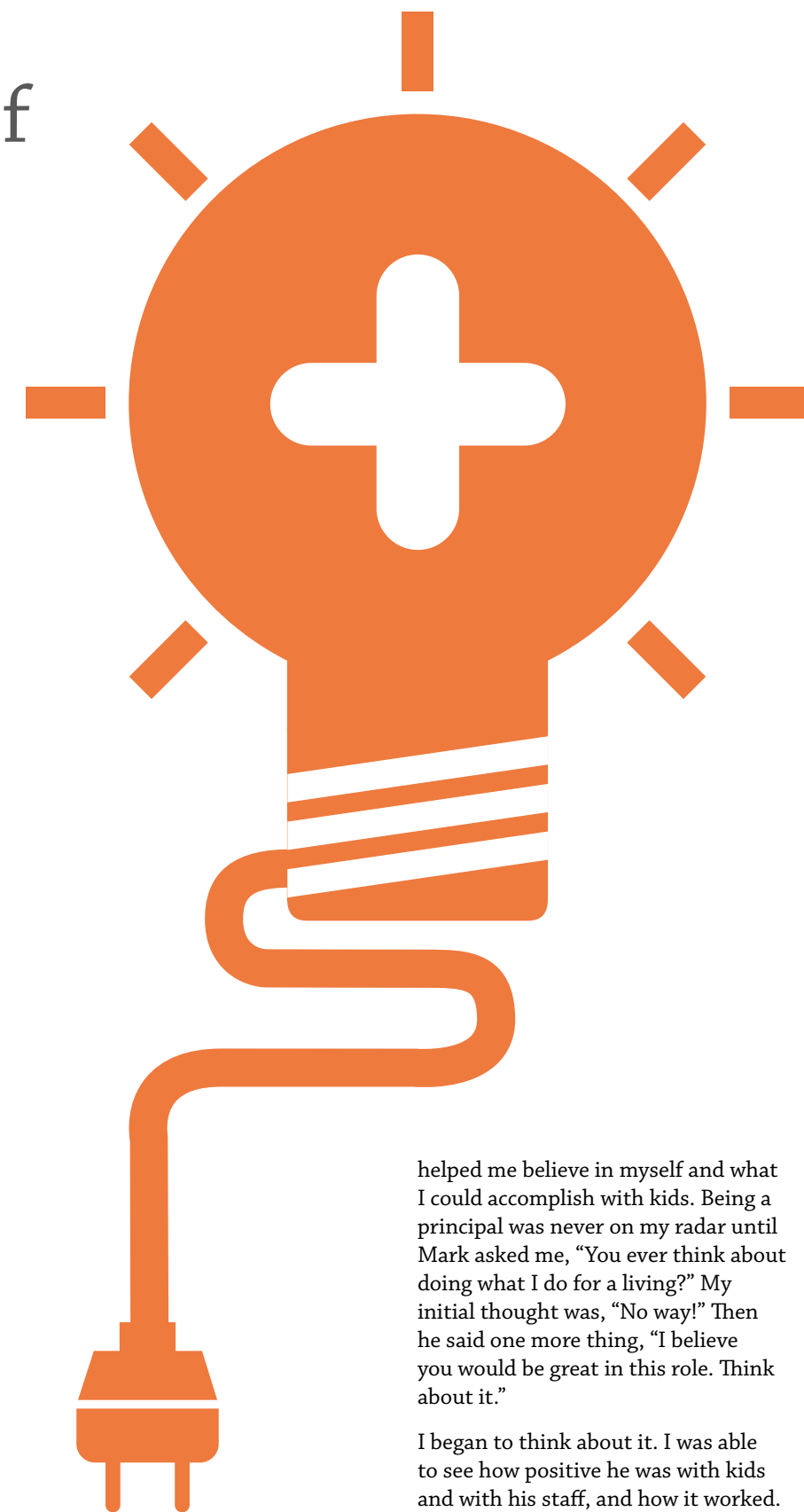
2019-20 AWSP Board President,  
Principal, Lincoln Middle School,  
Pullman SD

**As I enter my** 22nd year in education, I am now taking stock of where I am as an educator and looking forward to where I want be as a leader in the future. Over the course of my career, I have been a teacher, coach, mentee, mentor, assistant principal, and principal. And my views of education and how I see myself in education have changed. Some of the change is directly related to the people I have worked with and the places I have been during the journey. One thing stands clear during the last 22 years: The “Power of Positive” has always been a driving force in who I am and the leader I want to be.

“ The ‘Power of Positive’ has always been a driving force in who I am and the leader I want to be.”

## BELIEVE IN THE POSITIVE

I began my journey in the Auburn School District. I was blessed to be hired at Mt. Baker Middle School and spent an amazing seven years there as a teacher and coach. I was young and willing to work with kids both in and out of the classroom. I taught 7th and 8th grade Language Arts with an amazing group of teachers who believed in kids and what they could accomplish. I coached football, boys’ and girls’ basketball, and baseball during my after-school hours. This is where the power of positive truly came to be.



My principal was the great Mark Boynton. He was a master at getting his staff to believe the positive and understand the positive role they could play in students’ lives. He

helped me believe in myself and what I could accomplish with kids. Being a principal was never on my radar until Mark asked me, “You ever think about doing what I do for a living?” My initial thought was, “No way!” Then he said one more thing, “I believe you would be great in this role. Think about it.”

I began to think about it. I was able to see how positive he was with kids and with his staff, and how it worked. Kids believed in themselves. Teachers believed in themselves. This is what it was about for our school and staff. Always believe in the positive and where it can take us.

*Continued on page 10*

Continued from page 9

## IF NOT US, THEN WHO?

I spent the next two years completing the Educational Leadership program through City University and was hired as an assistant principal at Olympic Middle School in Auburn. I loved this school. The diversity of the community was its strength. My principal was Paul Douglas. He was a former Washington State Assistant Principal of the Year. He was tough, dedicated, committed to the school, and loved kids. Paul was positive in a different way than my previous principal. He taught me we must believe in and always be there for our kids, because if not us, then who? Paul believed we could lead students in a positive direction. No matter how tough things may look for a student, we would always be there for them, to lead them to another path. He leads with the heart and I loved it. A big part of who I am today is because of what Paul Douglas taught me.

After three years at Olympic Middle School, I accepted the principal job at Lincoln Middle School in Pullman. At the time, I believed I was ready to lead my own building. I had a tough first couple of years as I was figuring out the many things that new principals try to figure out on the fly. My assistant principal was Bill Holman. Bill is the most positive person on the planet. At every roadblock put in front of him, he finds a way around it and then teaches why the obstacle made him better. I needed Bill as my AP. He believes in the power of positive and taught me how important it would be in my journey. He was right.

## POSITIVITY IS A CHOICE

For the last 12 years I have been the principal at Lincoln Middle School. I continue to learn and reflect through my time in Pullman. My assistant principals through the years have been Bill, Robyn O'Connor, Juston Pollestad, and Tammy Sewell. Each has taught me so much during my

“ You have a choice in who you are going to be today.”

time here. One thing is a constant with each: The Power of Positive will take our building, staff, and kids in the right direction.

I once told my grandfather, Oliverio Vasquez, that I was in a bad mood because I got up on the wrong side of the bed. He told me, “Get back into bed and get up on the right side! You have a choice in who you are going to be today.” He was right.

I choose positive! ■



Cameron Grow, 2019-20 AWSP Board President, Principal, Lincoln Middle School, Pullman School District

# Capturing Kids' Hearts®



## THOUSANDS OF CLASSROOMS. MILLIONS OF STUDENTS. TRANSFORMED.

Experience the proven research-based process that educators across the nation are using to:

- Improve Student Attendance
- Improve Graduation Rates
- Increase Teacher Satisfaction
- Decrease Discipline Referrals
- Improve Student Performance
- Increase Teacher Retention

### Call to Discover More:

Chris Layton Leadership Solutions Advisor  
602-524-3384 [chris.layton@flippengroup.com](mailto:chris.layton@flippengroup.com)



Bringing out the best in people.