

Andrew Jordan: Principal Turned Superintendent Calls for Community-Centered School Culture

Donovan School Leader Encourages Families and Educators to Embrace Ownership, Engagement, and Connection in Education



Kankakee, Illinois Jul 4, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Andrew Jordan, Superintendent of Donovan Community Unit School District #3, is raising awareness about the importance of school culture and student ownership in public education. Drawing on over a decade of experience as a teacher, principal, and administrator, Jordan is urging communities to become active participants in shaping educational

environments that are inclusive, engaging, and emotionally supportive.

“Kids thrive when they feel ownership over their learning,” said Jordan. “That’s when culture begins to shift. And that shift doesn’t start with policy—it starts with people.”

Over the past several years, Jordan has led school-wide transformations including “Genius Hour,” where students select their own learning activities, and “The Bobcat Way,” a positive behavior support system that recognizes and celebrates student achievements monthly. These efforts have contributed to higher student engagement and improved school morale in Donovan.

According to a 2023 Gallup study, only **47% of U.S. students say they feel engaged in school**, a number that drops sharply in middle and high school. Jordan sees that as a call to action—not for bigger budgets, but for stronger relationships.

“We don’t need to wait for programs to be handed down from above,” Jordan explained. “Parents can ask more questions. Teachers can try one new thing. Administrators can listen more. These are free, immediate ways to make schools feel different.”

Jordan has also secured over **\$1 million in grant funding** to support student tutoring, social-emotional learning, and school facility improvements. Yet, he believes school culture can’t rely on funding alone.

“Even with financial support, culture doesn’t change unless the people in the building believe in it,” he said. “It’s about trust, voice, and shared responsibility.”

His call extends beyond schools. Jordan has spent years volunteering in youth sports, community service through the Watseka Masonic Lodge, and organizing tournaments that raised over \$50,000 for student athletics. He believes this kind of civic involvement can’t be separated from educational success.

“Schools are part of the community. The more we connect the two, the stronger both become,” said Jordan.

As he pursues his Doctor of Education degree, Jordan is focused on research-driven ways to keep improving Donovan schools—but he also emphasizes the value of day-to-day actions.

“My advice to new educators is simple: be patient, be present, and focus on relationships,” he said. “That’s where lasting change begins.”

Small Steps, Big Shifts

Jordan is encouraging parents, educators, and community members across Illinois to take small, personal steps to support a stronger school culture.

Ways to get involved:

- Attend a school event and connect with staff or students
- Ask a child what they’re proud of learning that week

- Volunteer in a classroom or mentor a new teacher
- Celebrate positive student behavior on social media
- Suggest or support a student-led project or club

“Change doesn’t have to be big to matter,” [Andrew Jordan principal](#) added. “It just has to be consistent and rooted in care.”

Media Contact

Andrew Jordan Principal

*****@andrewjordaneducator.com

Source : Andrew Jordan principal

[See on IssueWire](#)