

Mark McCord

Morton Ranch Junior High principal is leading the Maverick way

Written by Kirsten Cornell | Photography by Anetrius Wallace

Morton Ranch Junior High School (MRJH) is named in honor of the Morton family who began farming the Katy area in 1929. Although they raised a variety of crops, the property was primarily used for rice farming, a harvest that fueled the commerce of the Katy community for many decades.

“At MRJH we truly care about one another,” says Mark McCord, the school’s principal. “On almost a daily basis, I see one of my staff members going to the extra mile for a student or another staff member. Where there is a need, the MRJH family steps up to meet that need.”

Answering the Call

Having served in a variety of roles throughout his career in education, McCord began as a science teacher in Beaumont ISD. “After two years, I took a job at Cook Elementary in Cy-Fair ISD where I taught science for 11 years,” he says. “I was then promoted to principal at that campus.”

McCord was then asked to open Aragon Middle School as their assistant principal. He also served at Thornton Middle School before accepting the position of principal at MRJH. “I make it a point to be highly visible throughout the day,” says McCord. “The bell serves as my ‘call to the hall,’ and I meet and greet students and staff while doing supervision.”

When issues arise that McCord feels would benefit from having a students’ voice, there is an advisory class that he visits so that the matter can be discussed in further detail and opinions can be weighed. It is also not unusual to see him having lunch with his Mavericks.

Clear Expectations

At MRJH, the promotion of safe, civil, and productive behavior is a daily way of life for students. This is known

**Maverick
Mentionable**

Varsity and non-varsity orchestras have both earned superior ratings

Morton Ranch Junior High



Mark McCord has spent his career in education and currently serves as the principal for Morton Ranch Junior High in Katy ISD



McCord makes it a point to be highly visible to his students and can often be found in classrooms or having lunch with them

commonly among the halls as the “Maverick way.” “One of my first actions as the new principal was to work with the staff to develop a set of specific expectations for students to relate to as the standard,” says McCord. “The staff and I looked at major settings in and around the school such as the classroom, hallways, and the bus. We then developed a matrix of expectations to describe what behavior should look like in each of these settings.”

Maverick Mentionable

The eighth-grade A basketball team was undefeated and named district champions

“We care about our students and want them to feel a sense of belonging at our campus.”

– Mark McCord,
Morton Ranch Junior High principal

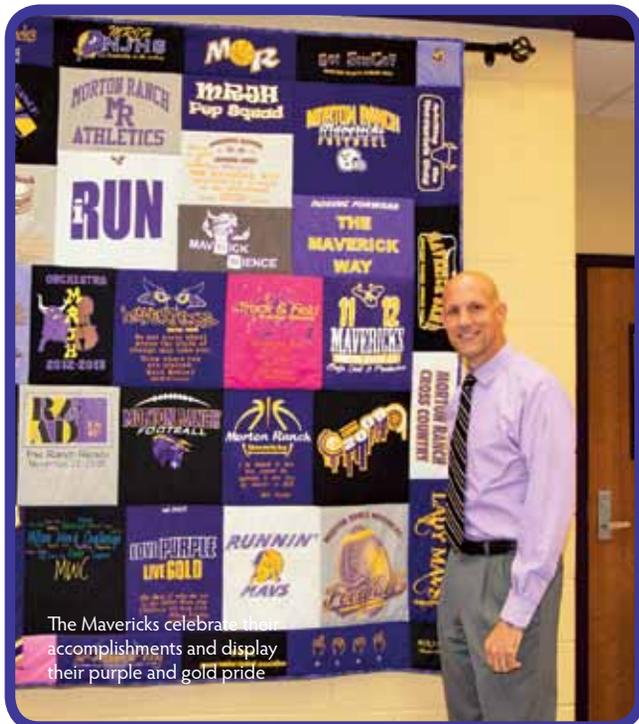
MRJH’s faculty and staff use the “Maverick Way Matrix” to directly set expectations with students and ensure campus-wide consistency.

Leading the Way

McCord maintains that the most important trait of a successful principal is being a positive role model for their school. “I see myself as the lead learner and teacher for my campus,” says McCord. “I am curious and have a passion for learning new things.”

McCord is also purposeful when integrating the strategies he chooses for his teachers to use with the students and leads professional development training. “I work hard and demonstrate a growth mindset for the staff and students,” he adds.

McCord’s vision for MRJH is simple, to be a campus in which students find success in a variety of ways. “We care about our students and want them to feel a sense of belonging at our campus,” he says. “We are a family-oriented school that works very hard to ensure that our kids reach success.” **KM**



The Mavericks celebrate their accomplishments and display their purple and gold pride



KIRSTEN CORNELL is the lead associate editor at Katy Magazine. She is proud to be able to highlight the inspiring educators in Katy ISD.