



CARDINAL CORNER

July 21, 2025

It was an honor to be approved by the Board as the Superintendent of the School District of Thorp after serving as Principal for the last 7 years. Leaving the Middle/High School Principal role was not an easy decision to make, and honestly came with some regret. I cherished my time as Principal and the unique relationships I formed with students, parents, staff, and the community in that role, and knew that those relationships would inevitably change and develop differently being the Superintendent. I had goals for myself and for the school that I felt were being left unreached. I had students with complex needs I was working with for years that I felt like I was abandoning. I was scared to hand over the school that I had worked on and poured my heart into for 7 years to a new principal, especially with both of my own kids still being in middle and high school.

What I finally came to understand was that I am blessed to be in a small district like Thorp. In a district like ours I can stay connected and engaged with students, staff, and families at a closer level than I ever could at a large urban district. I realized that the same reasons I came to Thorp as Principal 7 years ago are the same reasons I could feel comfortable and confident staying here, but as the Superintendent. With the school district in need of steady leadership and consistency, I'm glad that I can step up and fill the void. It wasn't ever a plan of mine to become a superintendent, but I appreciate and am humbled by all of the people who have encouraged me and supported me as I've transitioned into this role. I never planned on using Thorp as a career launching pad to land a job at a bigger school district, with more students and more money. So, I'm grateful that I get to stay and continue the great work being done in Thorp!

Moving on from my role as Principal led me to think back on the great things we've accomplished in the last 7 years, for which I am very proud. At the forefront is the fact that our students are graduating more prepared to be successful in the workforce, military, or college. We've expanded our academic and career readiness opportunities for school, including increasing both dual-credit and technical education classes, while developing a successful FCCLA chapter. Academic achievement has become a strength with Thorp Middle and High School Reading and Math scores competing with the top tier schools in the state. Our co-curricular options have expanded to serve a broader population of students, including Book Club, Archery, Trap Shooting, Equestrian, and E-Sports teams. Meanwhile, our sports teams have consistently focused on building positive culture and have enjoyed multiple Regional, Sectional, and State Tournament appearances, along with several students having the opportunity to play collegiately. We've developed a bustling After-School Program that served over 275 individuals last year providing snacks, supervision, and engaging academic, social, and physical enrichment activities for our community's kids. We've developed sustained teams and processes to support mental and social-emotional health in our schools, resulting in fewer behavioral referrals, decreased absenteeism, and better overall health of our students.

Over the last 7 years in Thorp I have spent time as the Middle/High School Principal, Athletic Director, Elementary Principal, and Interim Superintendent. These roles have all contributed to a unique perspective of Thorp. I know that our school district has the right people in place and the community support needed to remain an incredible place for students, staff, and families to belong. As we strive to love our students and help them to grow and succeed, there is nothing that Thorp can't do if we work together. An old African proverb teaches, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." As Thorp is united for our children, I have no doubt that they'll go far!

Adrian Foster

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT