

## **"Inside MSD15" Episode 11**

### **TITLE: Meet Winnebago Principal Cody Battaglia**

**INTRO:** *Hello and welcome back to "Inside MSD15"! I hope you're having a terrific February out there. I am so excited to sit down with our next guest of the podcast today. Winnebago Eagles, I know you're quite familiar with this incredible educator. He is the new principal at Winnebago, but he is no stranger to the school. We're talking about Mr. Cody Battaglia. Let's jump right into our fun conversation.*

**Lindsey:** Hi Cody and welcome to Inside MSD15! Thanks for coming today. First, I would love to give you the opportunity to introduce yourself to the MSD15 community. I know obviously Winnebago families know who you are. Very well but can you tell us a bit about yourself?

**Cody:** So, I'll just kind of start with my teaching career. I started as an educator in 2008. And I worked in the Bloomingdale and Glendale Heights Community for my entire career at a variety of different schools. I was a PE teacher at the middle school level in Bloomingdale now, not in our district but in District 93. I then moved over and taught special education high school and then obviously I was Winnebago's PE teacher for 4 years before moving into the assistant principal role back in 2020. And now I'm the principal! I absolutely love Winnebago, I love Marquardt, it is my second family. The teachers at Winnebago are the best in the entire world. And the students and families make the school year so fun each and every year. As I said, they're my second family. My first family is my wife Samantha who is also a teacher. My son Bryce is a first grader, he is 6 years old and my daughter Brinlee is 3. I love hanging out with them in my spare time, exercising every day, coaching baseball, playing golf and I love to read to my kids every night.

**Lindsey:** This is my favorite "get to know you question"... what is your favorite book you've ever read?

**Cody:** The most memorable book that I've read is the 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership and I know that doesn't sound very exciting... but remember my passion is in leadership and coaching and being a parent and I was introduced to this book back in grad school 10 years ago when I was getting my master's degree in school administration, I was learning how to become a leader. But I also have some kids books that I enjoy too. And my

favorite book that I read to students is *Strictly No Elephants*. I just love the conversations that this book opens up with the students, love hearing their thoughts about it and how to include people and how to become friends and be kind to one another and it's a great conversation starter for students at Winnebago and at Black Hawk when I was the assistant principal at Black Hawk.

**Lindsey:** We are pretty much midway through the 22-23 school year. What has been your highlight thus far?

**Cody:** Besides joining this podcast, I've seriously enjoyed the opportunities to welcome our families back into the building. Bring our community back together after a pretty challenging last few years, we were all working on keeping each other safe and to do that we had to kind of distance ourselves from one another and close the school for extra activities and it really feels like we've been able to bring everyone back together and Winnebago has always been a place that is very heavily community involved. For me, that has been the greatest highlight seeing students working so hard. Being excited about school every day. I really enjoy working with Mrs. Orlando, our wonderful assistant principal, a highlight for me has been watching her leadership on display each and every day. It has been a really exciting school year for us.

**Lindsey:** We are extremely grateful for your leadership and for Mrs. Orlando's leadership as well. What are your main goals and priorities moving forward at Winnebago?

**Cody:** I would say main goals and priorities for the future would be continuing to learn from our teachers and students, so I can learn how to best lead them. We are always looking for new ways to engage our students and highlight their work.

**Lindsey:** One of my favorite parts about last year at Winnebago, that maybe you can speak a little bit about, was the One Book One School initiative. What is that and what can parents expect this year?

**Cody:** I can't give away any secrets about what the one book is but one book, one Winnebago is exactly what it sounds like. Every family gets a copy of the year's book and we celebrate literacy through this shared reading opportunity so there's guest readers that come and visit classrooms, we do voice recorded guest readers, we really kind of all read the book together within our own classrooms and with our families at home. Our One Book

committee works all year round to plan this event. And they include a lot of community resources and businesses that truly brings the Winnebago community together, we have special events throughout the month, when our One Book initiative is going on, we celebrate weekly all the time and it really comes together at the very beginning when we have our initial launch, which we invite all of you to come by the April 27<sup>th</sup> launch to see what it's all about and it's a really exciting time. We'll introduce the book, we'll have some themed events. We just have so much fun and really celebrate reading and literacy and our students all at the same time.

**Lindsey:** At the end of the day, what is the part of being a principal that makes you smile?

**Cody:** So this is pretty easy. Greeting our students every single morning upon arrival, every day brings the start of something new. And I really feed off of the energy and the excitement that kids feel when they see me. Honestly, I feel like when kids get out the car and we're doing car greeter line in the morning or I'm just walking the halls and saying hello, kids are just excited whether it's me or being with their teachers. I really feed off of that energy and it reminds me of the importance of the work that we do in school and the role that everybody has in the school. That makes me smile, I am very proud of our teaching staff and I am excited for them when they see success for their students, there are reasons to smile all day every day when I'm at school.

**Lindsey:** Thank you, Mr. Battaglia. We appreciate all that you've done and will continue to do for Winnebago and Marquardt School District 15. Have a great rest of your school year!

**OUTRO:** And there you have it. Another episode of "Inside MSD15". We would like to take a moment to thank the MSD15 Board of Education for their support. If you enjoyed this podcast, please like and subscribe to our channel and leave us a comment. If there's a topic you'd like to hear discussed, please let us know! Thanks again for listening.