

Sponsor Speech – *Jeanette Norris*

Wow! This is an awesome occasion, and I like to say thank you and good afternoon to everyone here. I have been asked to stand here as a sponsor, and I see many sponsors as I look around the room. To be a sponsor for a student here at The Community School is a responsibility and a pleasure. I wanted you to know just a few things a sponsor has to do because the sponsor's job is major.

The purpose of a sponsor is to give support for a specific student, to encourage that student with whatever they might want to do, to support the school, and help it build positive and productive citizens. But here is what that means to me or meant most to me, it meant when that student came to me with his heart on his sleeve and asked me "Would you be my sponsor?" How awesome of a job is that? When someone will come to you with his heart and ask, "Would you help me?" because that is what I heard. It also means, as a sponsor, that you are entrusted to hold someone's dreams. Think about that. Think about how many dreams are crushed, how many dreams are ignored, and how many dreams are deferred. And that has happened to every single person I have met. These students come with dreams in-hand, saying "This is what I want to be." So, being a sponsor means you are a part of weaving a net under that student, and this net is to supply safety and support, just in case they bend too far to the right, or bend too far to the left. You help lend them a hand in helping to lift them up – another awesome responsibility.

So, for me, it has been a privilege, and for all the students, once you leave this environment – because this is such an awesome school and an awesome place – you have a responsibility. Don't ever let this drop. Be a sponsor for the school, for the students, and for everyone you have left behind. Support your school and talk your school up because everyone needs to know what a gem we have here.

If you are out in the audience today and have not served as a sponsor, start today. The rewards are not just for the students or for the school, but for yourself as well.