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was a senior in high school that he finally decided to go into the teaching field, and what drove him in the direction of being an English teacher was the chance to be unique.

"I think one of the big reasons why I like English is just because it has so much freedom," said Mr. Lilienthal.

He said subjects like history and math have answers that are fixed in stone.

"But with English, you have a lot of freedom. You can write about a lot of different things, and you can also bring a lot of the different things that you're writing about and build connections to your own life, which I

think is really interesting with English."

Mr. Lilienthal said that he found a lot of enjoyment in student teaching and being able to build connections with the students. He said that is one of the things that excites him about teaching, even if it isn't the highest paying profession.

"You never really know what to expect every single day; whereas if you're working in an office job where you're kind of doing the same thing, it can get repetitive, and it can kind of wear you down in a way," said Mr. Lilienthal.

Mr. Lilienthal added that if pay is a

concern, you could always get your master's degree and make more, which he plans to do. He also wants to coach.

Mr. Lilienthal is well aware of the teacher shortage and said even when he would tell people he was going to become a teacher, they would always point out the clear deterrent.

"Whenever I bring it up to anyone else that I was going to be a teacher, everyone automatically thinks of just the pay and how they don't want to do it because they're not going to get paid enough, which I don't necessarily agree that should be the reason

why you wouldn't want to do something, but it's definitely a factor."

Mr. Lilienthal also said that teachers come under stress from many sources and have to develop "thick skin."

Mr. Lilienthal believes that it is extremely important to encourage students who are considering going into the teaching field to pursue it.

"I was kind of on the fence my senior year of high school. And then I got to talk to a couple other teachers while I was there [at Durant], and they kind of told me to look into education," Mr. Lilienthal stated.



Can't tell you how much we've enjoyed the ride! Can't wait to see what's next!

Congratulations, Nolan!
Love,
Mom & Dad, D, I, O, E, & J



"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined" (Henry David Thoreau).
Congratulations, Zack!

Love you,
Mom and Dad



Garrett, we couldn't be more proud of the person you've become. Share your spirit, your joy, your love, and your light with the world and inspire others to follow their dreams.

Love,
Mom, Dad, and Reid



Carlie Jo,
You already have the power to protect your peace. You see the good in yourself and in others. Keep it going. #LiveLikeLarry.
Your biggest fans,
Mom & Britt, too! XOXO



You did it, Kalie! Class of 2023! We are so proud of your accomplishments. Best of luck on your next adventure at ISU!

Love,
Mom, Cody, Madison & Caden



Congratulations, Lane! We are incredibly proud of all that you have accomplished, as well as the young man you have become. Go confidently in the direction of your dreams!

Love,
Mom, Dad, Grandma Karla, Bradley, Aaron, Chloé, Tayton, and Payton



Wherever you go, go with all your heart. Congratulations, Ethan. We are so proud of you!

Love,
Mom, Mitchell, Isaac, and Alydia



Congratulations, Kiyah! You have made us proud. Now go after your dreams!!

Love,
Mom & Dad



Ashley, we can't wait to see what lies ahead for you!!

Love, Mom and Dad



McKenna, we are so proud of you! We love you and look forward to seeing where life takes you!

Love, Mom and Dad



Congratulations, Robbie! We are so proud of you! We can't wait to see you achieve your goals in your next journey and will always be cheering you on.

We love you!
Your family



Drake, we are so proud of all that you have accomplished but even prouder of the young man that you have become. Your strong character, determination, and hard work will take you far in life. Enjoy your success! We love you so much.

-Mom and Pat



Congratulations, Nora!
So proud of you. I know great things are in store for you.

Love,
Mom and Trey



Jacy,
We are proud of you! Keep going after your goals with a smile on your face.

We love you!
Mom and Dad



No matter what you do next, we know you'll bring your very own unique blend of smarts, courage and heart. We Love You! Mom & Dad



"Congratulations, Grant!!
Keep working hard and never give up! We are very proud of you!!"