



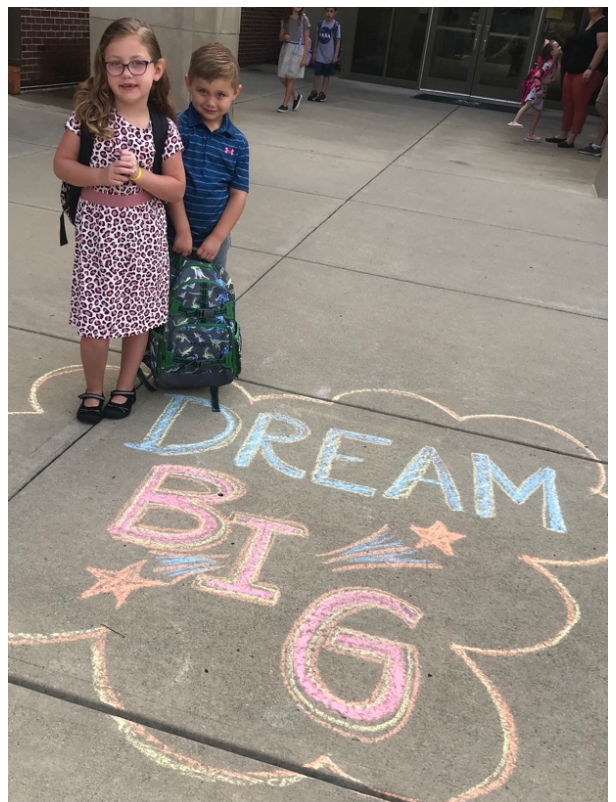
Madeira Board of Education, 7465 Loannes Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45243  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## CHALK IT UP TO A PEP TALK

An anonymous group of Madeira City School parents came up with a unique way to make sure the district's students began the new school year walking in their school's front door with positive thoughts on their mind.

One of the group's parents has a daughter who can become anxious about new experiences. As she and her mother talked about the upcoming new school year and how to handle possible scenarios, her mom started thinking that there were probably many other students who could use a pep talk as they walked into their school building that very first day. The inspired mother came up with a special way to give each Madeira student those pep talks by spreading visual messages of hope and encouragement. After running her idea past Superintendent Kenji Matsudo, she got in touch with a handful of friends and asked them to start looking for positive quotes. With a minivan full of chalk, she and five other parents drove to each Madeira school building and created chalk messages on the sidewalks and around the entrances. By 1:00 AM the group had ensured the first thing all Madeira students saw on their first day of school was a colorful message like 'You are capable of amazing things', 'Be you', 'Love grows here', and 'Welcome back – you've got this!'

The next morning the parents' art work hit social media, and their simple idea of chalking sidewalks spread throughout the community. Insisting their identities remain a secret, the 'Madeira Chalk Bandits' have a mission to chalk the Madeira community with positivity. Their goal is to remind everyone that they aren't alone, and that tomorrow is a brand new day.



*Pictured (l to r): Julia Shaffer and her brother Mason were two of hundreds of students who were encouraged to 'Dream Big' as they began their first day at Madeira Elementary School.*