

Sarah Estep—

Somerset High School Class of 2016

Morehead State University Class of 2020



1. Tell us about your public school journey.

I started out school at Science Hill Elementary and attended there from preschool to eighth grade. After that, I went to Somerset High School and graduated in 2016. I have always enjoyed school. I loved Science Hill for the small class sizes, closeness, and friendships I made, and Somerset for the traditions and high school experience.

2. What aspects of your public education helped mold you into the person you are today?

My public school experience definitely helped mold me into who I am for a number of reasons. I had amazing teachers and friendships who were always encouraging and kept me engaged and inspired me to keep learning. I was given real-world wisdom from teachers aside from the classwork that I have continued to carry with me. I feel like I was given every opportunity to explore my interests at the time, such as playing softball, volleyball, participating in DECA, competing in Governor's Cup, experimenting with art, playing an instrument, being in musicals. I am lucky to have experienced all kinds of different areas because I was exposed to it in school. Because of this, I was able to choose the right path for me.

3. When you think back on your experience in public school, are there specific instances or relationships that stand out to you as having had a significant impact on your success since graduating?

Since graduating Somerset, I went to Morehead State University and have earned my Bachelors of Science in Space System Engineering and I currently work for Boeing as a System Safety Engineer on NASA's SLS rocket. I had known since middle school that I wanted to work in aerospace, but I always doubted if my math skills would be good enough to succeed. When I got to high school, I was blessed with incredible math teachers like Mrs. Ruble and Mr. Spillman who both made succeeding at math possible for me. I started to gain a real appreciation for it and, most of all, confidence that I would be able to be an engineer. If it weren't for them, I would not have believed in myself, and probably wouldn't have had the skills I needed to succeed.

4. As a product of public education, what advice would you give to a parent who was choosing an education path for their child?

To a parent, I would always say to choose the education path that is right for your family and your child. For my family, that was always public school and I have nothing but positive things to say about it. I would choose the same path for me if I had it to do over again. Public school provided a way to explore my interests and create bonds that are irreplaceable.

5. As a product of public schools what drives you to give back to your local school and/or district?

I feel lucky to have attended schools where I did and be where I am now, so I will always owe a lot to the schools, teachers, and classmates who helped me grow up. We spend so much of our childhood with these people that they really do shape us into who we become. I am forever grateful for teachers who had a passion for their jobs, who stayed late hours or after class to help us, or who spent their own money on materials for their classrooms, who went above and beyond for us. My mom is one of these teachers, so I have seen firsthand how much of the work they do is outside of the classroom, and how people that do their job have such a passion for helping others. Kentucky schools have a special place in my heart because of the people in them.

The power of public schools is evident in
THE STORIES WE TELL.



#TellingOurStoryKy