

# From green screen to SMART Board

## *KARE 11 meteorologist visits BEAHS classrooms*

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Commonly recognized as the weekend weatherman from KARE 11 News in the Twin Cities, most people have only seen Jerrid Sebesta through their television screens.

Six months ago, Sebesta would have never imagined that he would be using a SMART Board rather than a green screen to teach a group of students in rural Minnesota about different types of meteorological phenomena.

However, last Tuesday, a group of eighth graders had the opportunity to learn from the former KARE meteorologist in person; he even took one of his famed “selfies” with the entire class to add to his widely successful social media pages.

Last May, Sebesta announced that he was leaving the esteemed Gannett Company, only six weeks before his contract was due to expire.

Although he held a prestigious title in the field of broadcast media, and his name and image were commonplace in homes throughout Minnesota, Sebesta realized that his family had too often taken second priority to his job.

“My job was my greatest asset and my greatest hindrance. On paper, there was no reason for me to quit. I had obtained what people work decades to accomplish, and I just walked away,” he admits.

Initially, Sebesta and his wife Emily planned to move from Maple Grove to Sioux Falls with their children, Beckham, 3, and Raiya, 1.

But after reviewing the terms of employment with a broadcast station in Sioux Falls, and considering the success of his latest blog post that hit 50,000 views in less than 24 hours, Sebesta questioned his decision to jump back into broadcast media.

“My entire identity revolved around being a TV weather guy. Not just any weather guy, but a weatherman for KARE 11,” he explains. “The identity that KARE had created for me fed my ego and my pride. So when I walked away from all of that, I really struggled.”

Feeling a bit hesitant and uneasy, Sebesta and Emily, who had grown up in rural Faribault County and graduated from BEAHS in 2001, decided to temporarily move in with her parents, Dave and Ann Krause of

Winnebago.

“I’ve lived more life in the past six months of living in Winnebago than I ever did during the 10 years that I was on TV,” Sebesta admits. “I’m living my dream. You might not understand it, and that’s OK. We all have different dreams and that’s what makes them special.”

Summer days were filled with bike rides and trips to Winnebago’s Municipal Swimming Pool with his children.

When autumn arrived, Sebesta spent hours in the field harvesting crops with his father-in-law. Later, he went deer hunting for the first time—he even has a battle wound to show for it.

“I went deer hunting for the first time last weekend. I only shot the gun one time and the viewfinder buried itself into my face,” he laughs, pointing out a wound on the bridge of his nose.

Last Tuesday, Sebesta spent the afternoon discussing weather-related topics with the students in Colby Swanson’s social studies class and Julie Ackerman’s Earth Science class.

Together, Sebesta and the eighth graders examined topics ranging from sun dogs, sun halos and light pillars

to the functions of different atmospheric layers.

Two days after his classroom visit, Sebesta posted an announcement to his website and Twitter page for his 15,200 followers to read.

In the message, he shared his family’s decision to start a new life in Willmar, where Sebesta will begin his career as the director of marketing and public relations for a start-up business, Taatjes Financial Group.

“We close on a house in Willmar in two weeks and I’m going to enter the financial field,” he reveals. “I’m already working for Ben (Taates, founder and CEO of the company), setting up his social media accounts.”

Sebesta left his wildly successful career to follow his ambition, and in the process, he rediscovered some of the things he is passionate about—finance, helping and motivating others, the power to make solid decisions and further explore the things he loves, and most of all, cherishing time spent with his wife and children.

Sebesta and his family left everything behind in search of a dream, and they found it in rural Faribault County.