

# MoCo Monday Minute

**Monday, January 2, 2017**

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**Banner by MCHS students**

**Quote of the Week** – “I think everyone is looking for the shortcut and looking for that quick fix, and there is never going to be a shortcut or a quick fix in education. It’s always going to come down to hard work, trying to be smart, and trying to do what’s best for kids.”

California principal Mike Kerr on blended learning

**Happy New Year!** – I hope everyone had a restful break and a great start to the New Year!

**MCHS Banner to Represent at KSBA** – Only one banner from each school district can be displayed at the annual Kentucky School Boards Association Conference. This year, the high school’s banner was voted to represent Montgomery County Schools at the 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference held at the Galt House in Louisville scheduled for February 24-26, 2017. MCHS received 306 votes out of 778. Congratulations!

**December Board Recognition** – Several MCHS students recently made the Kentucky Music Educators Association’s 2017 District 8, All-District Orchestra. Students from Blazer High

School, Russell Independent High School, and Montgomery County High School will meet in January to rehearse and perform in a one day event on KCU's campus. Congratulations to the following All-District Orchestra Members:

Jacob Boggs	Noah Mascle	Jill Rush	Rezin Tuttle
Whitley Cantrell	Tanner Prewitt	Carrie Sorrell	
Alexa Dotson	Micah Rouse	Emily Spradling	

In addition, six students also made the KMEA 2017 All-State Orchestra and one made alternate. Jared Lederer and Roman Wood made the KMEA All-State Symphony Orchestra and Elliott King made the All-State Symphony Band, which are the top orchestral and band groups in the state. Students will attend the KMEA conference in Louisville, KY in February to participate in rigorous rehearsal in preparation for a concert at the conclusion of the conference. Congratulations!

Greyson Cox	Elliott King	James May	Roman Wood
Madelyn Johnston	Jared Lederer	Daniel Risner	

Montgomery County High School students recently attended the Kentucky Youth Assembly in Louisville. Students received the Delegation of Excellence Award for their participation performance in the program. Special recognition went to Hayden Holley for Outstanding Delegate, and Joy Pidgorodetska for Outstanding Speaker. MCHS had a bill pass both houses and was signed by the governor. Hayden Holley, Kimberly Lopez, and Larkin Danis passed their bill on requiring a self-defense unit to be added to the PE curriculum.

Mrs. Donna Wilson has served on the Board of Education for the past eight years and December's meeting was her last. She was recognized for her lifelong dedication and tireless advocacy for the students and staff of the school district. Donna, a 35 plus year educator, began her career at Camargo Elementary, then transferred to the high school as a special education teacher. After obtaining her Master's degree in guidance and counseling she began her 32 year career as a counselor at MCHS. During her time serving, Mrs. Wilson stated, "As a board member, it is important to me that the board's actions help students reach their academic potential and develop as individuals."



**Gateway Holiday Classic** – The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Gateway Holiday Classic was a huge success. Kaitlyn Barber, Hayden Chism, Tucker Norris and Deuce Ralls were selected for the All-Tournament Team! Congratulations to all!

**Board of Education News** – Please join me in welcoming our newest board member, Dr. Daniel Freeman. Dr. Freeman was elected to a four-year term beginning in January 2017. Dr. Freeman is a familiar face in the district, having served as Superintendent of Montgomery County Schools from 1998 through 2011. Serving on the school board is one of the most important volunteer jobs in a community, and it's often a thankless one. Board members serve because they care deeply about their community and educational opportunities for the youth.

At the January 9<sup>th</sup> organizational meeting the Board will set meeting dates, times and locations for the 2017 calendar year. This meeting will be held in the MCHS cafeteria. Assuming the board continues with the same schedule, the regular monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 24, 2017.

**Mileage Reimbursement Rate** – Mileage reimbursement for the district is aligned with the state rate, which is reviewed and subject to change quarterly. For the current quarter, January 1 – March 31, the rate increased from .39 to .40.

**Dates:**

- Jan. 9 – Camargo PTO Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
- Jan. 9 - Board of Education Organizational Meeting, 6:30 p.m., MCHS Cafeteria
- Jan. 10 – Mapleton SBDM Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
- Jan. 11 – Camargo SBDM Meeting, 3:00 p.m.
- Jan. 12 – Camargo Academic Team Match, Mapleton Elementary
- Jan 13 – McNabb Winter Dance (2<sup>nd</sup> 9 Weeks TRIBE Rewards), 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- **Jan. 16 – No School – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**
- Jan. 18 – Mapleton PTO Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- Jan. 19 – Camargo Academic Team Match, Camargo Elementary
- Jan. 19 – MCHS SBDM Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- Jan. 28 – MCHS Academic Team District Competition, 8:00 a.m., MCHS Cafeteria
- Jan. 30 – Born Learning Parent Workshop, 5:30 p.m., ELC



***Continuous Learning through Professional Literature***

## Teaching Interpersonal Skills

In this article in *Kappan*, Adam Dovico (Wake Forest University), says that because of students' constant heads-down focus on their electronic devices, there's been a "stark decline" in their ability to interact appropriately with other people. "Typically, students are more comfortable texting or sending an e-mail to introduce themselves or communicate than offering a firm handshake or a warm smile," says Dovico. "With the convenience of and accessibility to cell phones, it's now more important to select the correct emoji than to excel at face-to-face interactions."

To prepare students for college admission, scholarship opportunities, job interviews, and the modern workplace, not to mention their personal relationships, Dovico believes schools need to join with families in explicitly teaching students the skills of interacting with others. This is especially important because studies have shown that humans form an impression of another person "spontaneously and with minimal cognitive effort" within a tenth of a second – somehow we take in scores of subtle cues to form a split-second judgment that can make a big difference in subsequent interactions.

Drawing on his experience as a teacher, professor, researcher, and PD presenter, Dovico came up with this SPECIAL acronym for face-to-face interactions:

- Shake hands – a firm, appropriate grip;
- Posture – standing up straight, shoulders back, conveying confidence and awareness;
- Eye contact – looking the other person in the eye during the entire interaction;
- Charm – winning the person over with a smile, raised eyebrow, head nod, laugh;
- Introduce yourself – saying, "Hi, I'm ----" gets the ball rolling;
- Ask a question – "What brings you here?" or "Don't you hate this snow?" begins a conversation and shows interest in the other person;
- Lean in and listen – without invading the person's space, getting a little closer signals engagement and helps you listen and respond appropriately.

These elements, executed smoothly and naturally, "make you come across as confident and professional," says Dovico. "Many of these proficiencies require practice, which is why it's vital to begin teaching them at an early age." He's working with his four-year-old son on the handshake and introducing himself. In the elementary grades, building a repertoire of questions is helpful, and by middle school students might be coached on the head nod, eyebrow raise, or appropriate lean-in. In high school, students should be able to get into a good conversation with a stranger, maintain eye contact, be charming, and stand out in a crowd.

Of course, says Dovico, "we're humans, not robots, and no amount of practice in a staged setting can prepare someone for real-life, unpredictable encounters. Reading social cues, understanding cultural proficiency, and sharpening interpersonal skills can aid

greatly in mastering this practice.” Here are his suggestions for how teachers and school leaders can fit this skillset into the day and gradually improve students’ proficiency:

- Greet students coming into school and classrooms with a handshake and some components of the SPECIAL acronym.
- In each classroom, designate a student each week to get up and greet visitors using several of the components.
- Have students stand up when they speak in class and occasionally get feedback from classmates on how effectively they maintain eye contact and communicate.
- Practice the skills in group discussions, with Common Core speaking and listening standards in mind.

[An additional element is using literature, current events, and discussion protocols to coax students into being less egocentric and less wrapped up in themselves, helping them develop genuine curiosity about other people and what makes them tick. K.M.]

“Making a S.P.E.C.I.A.L. First Impression” by Adam Dovico in *Phi Delta Kappan*, November 2016 (Vol. 98, #3, p. 55-59), [www.kappanmagazine.org](http://www.kappanmagazine.org); Dovico can be reached at [dovicoa@wfu.edu](mailto:dovicoa@wfu.edu).

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Be sure to notify the designated person at your school if you have calendar information that should be added to your website calendar.

***Thank you so much for your effort and commitment to children. If you have questions about any of the information contained in this issue of The MoCo Monday Minute, please contact me at [matthew.thompson@montgomery.kyschools.us](mailto:matthew.thompson@montgomery.kyschools.us).***