

MoCo Monday Minute

Monday, January 23, 2017

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Mr. Bond's music class learning to play the ukulele.

Quote of the Week – “If we only did things that were easy, we wouldn’t actually be learning anything. We’d just be practicing things we already knew.” - David Dockterman

Celebrating Success – (1) Mr. Bond’s music class has started learning how to play the ukulele; one of the instruments purchased by the \$20,000 grant that was awarded to the District by the Steele-Reese Foundation; (2) Middle and high school All-District Band participants recently traveled to Ashland, KY; (3) This past weekend, McNabb Wrestling Team members Devin Johnson and Dylan Wray individually qualified for the 2017 Kentucky Middle School State Wrestling Tournament which will be held on Saturday, February 4th in Louisville. In their respective weight class, Devin finished 4th and Dylan finished 3rd; (4) The MCHS Girls’ Basketball team celebrated Senior Night against Lexington Catholic on January 21st; (5) Today officially became the 100th day of school this year, after school was canceled on the 6th.



Student Attendance – MSE had the highest daily and highest weekly attendance at 96.39% on Wednesday and 95.86% for the week. This is the second week in a row MSE has claimed both titles. Way to go!

Board Recognition Month – January is Board Recognition Month in Kentucky. Please join me in thanking the members of the Montgomery County Board of Education for their service. They volunteer many hours and are called upon to make difficult decisions in the best interests of students.

W-2 – On Friday, January 20th, W-2 statements were sent to schools to be distributed to employees. Please check with the front office if you haven't received yours yet. You will be required to sign stating you have received your W-2.

Kentucky Free File – Last year approximately 85% of Kentucky resident taxpayers filed their individual income tax returns electronically. You may qualify to file your federal and Kentucky individual income tax returns for free. Please review each offer carefully to make sure you qualify as each company determines their offer. [Click here](#) to review offers from the participating vendors.

Dates:

- Jan 23-27 – MSE Book Fair & Great Kindness Challenge Week
- Jan. 24 – Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m., MCHS Cafeteria
- Jan. 26 – MSE Family Night, 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 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
- Feb. 1 – Camargo Spelling Bee, 8:30 a.m.
- **Feb. 3 – No School – Teacher Planning Day**
- Feb. 4 – PTO Daddy/Daughter Dance, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., Mapleton
- Feb. 6 – MSE Spelling Bee, 8:00 a.m.
- Feb. 8 – Mapleton Spelling Bee, 8:00 a.m.
- Feb. 8 – Camargo SBDM Meeting, 3:00 p.m.
- Feb. 8 – MSE SBDM Meeting, 3:30 p.m.
- Feb. 10 – McNabb Spelling Bee
- Feb. 10 – Family Valentine's Dance, 6:00 p.m., Camargo
- Feb. 11 – MCHS ACT Test, 8:00 a.m., Zone II Lobby
- Feb. 13 – Camargo PTO Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
- Feb. 14 – I LOVE My Career Day/Heart Healthy Valentine's Day, MSE
- Feb. 15 – Mapleton SBDM Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
- Feb. 15 – Mapleton PTO Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- Feb. 16 – MCHS SBDM Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- Feb. 16 – MCIS SBDM Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- Feb. 16 – Raising Freshmen Parent Night, MCHS Cafeteria, 6:00 p.m.

- Feb. 17 – College Day/Reality Store, MSE
- **Feb. 20 – No School – President’s Day**
- Feb. 21 – 6th Grade Science Night, 5:30 p.m., MCIS
- Feb. 23 – FFA Parent-Member Banquet, MCHS Cafeteria, 6:00 p.m.
- Feb. 23 – Internet Safety Evening, 6:00 p.m., MSE
- Feb. 25 – KMEA District 8 Instrumental Solo & Ensemble, MCHS Music Wing, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Feb. 25 – PTO Superhero/Princess Day, 11:00 a.m. – 12 p.m., Camargo
- Feb. 27 – Born Learning Parent Workshop, 5:30 p.m., ELC
- Feb. 28 – Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m., MCHS Cafeteria

Continuous Learning through Professional Literature

Jon Saphier on Leading for High-Expectations Teaching

In this article in *Principal*, author/consultant Jon Saphier says the idea that intelligence is malleable (as social psychologist Jeff Howard put it, “Smart is not something you *are*; smart is something you *can get*”) went mainstream with Carol Dweck’s 2007 book, *Mindset*. Since then, says Saphier, a key part of principals’ instructional leadership is infusing the idea of effort-based ability into every classroom and bringing it alive throughout the school.

“But promoting the growth mindset is not just a matter of teaching students about brain malleability and putting up posters and signs with encouraging messages,” says Saphier. “We have to change our language, our behavior, and our instructional decision-making as we handle daily instructional events.” Students must get a clear message from all adults:

- What we’re doing is important.
- You can do it.
- I’m not going to give up on you.

This is especially important for children who enter school with any kind of disadvantage. Many of these kids have received the opposite message throughout their lives, and in addition may have been affected by poor nutrition, inadequate health care, family and community violence, and racism. All this takes its toll, says Saphier, but “the one area we can control is the messaging and positive support, both emotionally and instructionally, within the environments we do control – the classroom and the school.” The research shows that when schools commit to an effective belief system, they can make major inroads on students’ academic and emotional deficits, putting them on the path to success and closing the achievement gap.

Beliefs manifest themselves in subtle ways, says Saphier, often in the words we choose. “Taking on that mission will bring us face to face with our own beliefs about our children’s capacity and our own inevitable doubts about how malleable ability is.” He provides two classroom dialogues, the first revealing the teacher’s fixed mindset (notice the unspoken messages at every turn), the second deftly conveying a growth mindset and getting the student launched in the right direction:

Scenario #1:

- Student: I can’t do number four.
- Teacher: You can’t? Why not?
- Student: I just can’t do it.
- Teacher: Don’t say you can’t do it. We never say we can’t do it. Did you try hard?
- Student: Yes, but I can’t do it.
- Well, you did the first three problems. Maybe if you went back and worked a little longer you could do the fourth problem, too. Why don’t you work at it a little more and see what happens?

Scenario #2:

- Student: I can’t do number four.
- Teacher: What part don’t you understand?
- Student: I just can’t do it.
- Teacher: Well, I know you can do part of it, because you’ve done the first three problems correctly. The fourth problem is similar but just a little harder. You start out the same, but then you have to do one extra step. Review the first three problems, and then start number four again and see if you can figure it out. I’ll come back in a few minutes to see how you’re doing.

Saphier goes on to describe eight specific actions principals can take in staff meetings, study groups, professional development, and supervising and coaching teachers to put their schools in a growth-mindset trajectory:

- Research the history of how fixed intelligence and measurable IQ became so deeply rooted in U.S. schools and society.
- Present evidence that ability can be developed and the bell curve of innate ability is a fallacy.
- Look in detail at the subtle but powerful ways adults communicate their belief system to students, especially in responses to their requests for help.
- Create classroom routines and structures that help students see their progress and take responsibility for their own learning. This includes frequent quizzes and error analysis. Practices like these, says Saphier, serve as “constant reminders to students about their role in doing well academically and embed, by their very nature, the message that they *can* do well.”

- Give all students a clear picture of what proficient performance looks like, including criteria for success and exemplars of good work. This is especially helpful for students with low confidence in their own abilities.

- Provide explicit instruction in effective study skills and strategies for exerting effective effort.

- Allow students to make choices in how they work and how the classroom functions.

- Align school policies with effort-based beliefs, including how success is rewarded.

In addition, Saphier says districts can foster high-expectations, effort-based thinking through hiring and induction of teachers, professional development, supervision, coaching, evaluation of teachers and principals, home visits, and promoting culturally competent instruction.

“The Principal’s Role in High-Expectations Teaching” by Jon Saphier in *Principal*, January/ February 2017 (Vol. 96, #3, p. 8-11), <http://bit.ly/2jCYEKP>; Saphier can be reached at info@rbteach.com; this article is based on his new book, *High-Expectations Teaching* (Corwin, 2017).

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.