

MoCo Monday Minute

Monday, February 6, 2017

In this edition:

- *Quote of the Week*
- *U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Candidate*
- *School Spelling Bee*
- *Middle School Wrestlers Hit the Mats*
- *Black History Month*
- *Valentine's Plans*
- *Student Attendance*
- *Dates*
- *Continuous Learning through Professional Literature*



Mapleton's Daddy/Daughter Dance

Quote of the Week – “If students left the classroom before teachers have made adjustments to their teaching on the basis of what they have learned about students achievement, then they are already playing catch-up. If teachers do not make adjustments before students come back the next day, it is probably too late.” – Dylan Wiliam, 2007

U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Candidate – MCHS senior, Greyson Cox was selected as a candidate for the United States Presidential Scholars Program. Students for this program are chosen based on their accomplishment in several areas including academic, artistic success, leadership, and involvement in their school and community. Approximately 500 candidates are named semifinalists and their names and supporting materials are sent to the Commission for review.

In April, the White House Commission will review the applications of the semifinalists and the finalists will be selected. Annually, up to 161 students are name as Presidential Scholars - one of the nation’s highest honors for high school students.



Created in 1964, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program has honored almost 7,000 of the nation's top-performing students; with the prestigious award given to honorees during the annual ceremony that is held in D.C. The program was expanded in 1979 to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, literary, and performing arts. In 2015, the program was again extended to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields.

For more information on the program, please visit www.ed.gov/psp. Congratulations Greyson and best of luck!

School Spelling Bee – Congratulations to Landon Duke (Camargo) and Dylan Kincaid (MSE). Landon and Dylan are their school spelling bee winners. Mapleton, MCIS, and McNabb will hold their spelling bee later this week.



Middle School Wrestlers Hit the Mats – Congratulations to McNabb Wrestling team members Devin Johnson and Dylan Wray. Devin and Dylan competed in the 2017 Kentucky Middle School State Wrestling Tournament over the weekend. Devin finished 3rd in the 190 lb. weight class.

Black History Month – Please keep [Amy Mullins](#) informed regarding activities that are conducted in the schools so we can have an opportunity to get pictures and details.

Valentine's Plans – Valentine's Day is next Tuesday. Please join us in reminding students and parents that glass items and balloons cannot be transported on the school buses due to safety issues.

Student Attendance – We have attendance numbers to compare for three days last week. Mapleton had the highest daily and highest weekly attendance at 95.44 % on Tuesday and

94.83% for the week. This makes the second week in a row Mapleton has claimed both titles!

Dates:

- 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. 9 – Local Planning Committee Meeting, 4:00 p.m., Clay Community Center
- 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 – Incoming Freshmen Parent Night, MCHS Cafeteria, 6:00 p.m.
- Feb. 16 – Local Planning Committee Meeting, 4:00 p.m., Clay Community Center (public forum at 5:30 p.m.)
- Feb. 17 – College Day/Reality Store, MSE
- **Feb. 20 – Make-Up Day (President’s Day) – School will be IN SESSION**
- 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

Doug Lemov on Building Students’ Knowledge As They Read

(Originally titled “How Knowledge Powers Reading”)

In this article in *Educational Leadership*, author/school leader Doug Lemov drives home E.D. Hirsch’s message [see Memos 130, 233, and 509] about the crucial role of background knowledge in building reading comprehension, deep thinking, and creativity.

But isn't knowledge less important now that students can Google pretty much any piece of information? To the contrary, says Lemov: "The brain's active processing capacity is finite, so unless knowledge is encoded in long-term memory, having to search for it actually crowds out other forms of cognition. Knowing things helps you think and read successfully. At the same time, reading is a primary way to come to know things. Every time we read and comprehend a text, we add to the knowledge that helps us make sense of further texts. In other words, when it comes to reading, knowledge is both the chicken and the egg."

Possessing and adding to background knowledge is especially important when students read nonfiction – but there's a problem with motivation. "With the exception of memoir and biography," says Lemov, "nonfiction rarely tries to win the reader's interest with an engaging narrative voice. The tone is more often something like, 'I've got some information here; stay with me if you can.'" He suggests three ways to improve students' success reading and learning from nonfiction:

- *Embed nonfiction in fiction* – Lemov confesses that when he was a teacher working with nonfiction texts, he did what many others did – had his students look for chronological order, organization, evidence, subheads, captions, and other structural elements. Students did not respond well because this approach didn't make an emotional or intellectual connection to the text. As a counterexample, Lemov describes how fifth graders reading *Lily's Crossing*, a novel about a girl in New York City during World War II, were assigned an article on rationing. Students eagerly read an otherwise dry text because they cared about a fictional character who was experiencing rationing. Students also learned new facts (what is "fuel oil" and why was it important in the 1940s) and, as their teacher had them read additional nonfiction articles on victory gardens, blackout curtains, the Nazi bombing of London, spies, and the U.S. decision to enter the war, reading the novel turned into an in-depth study of a historical period.

- *Ask text-based questions* – Teachers often ask students to predict, make inferences, interpret character information, and summarize as they read. But Lemov says there's evidence that practicing answering skill-based questions like these won't necessarily carry over to new reading matter. Better, he says, to mix those questions with questions about the *content* of the text. For example, when students are reading a novel set during the U.S. Civil War, the teacher might ask how most soldiers died during the war (of disease, not combat injuries) and what in the novel told that. "These fact-based questions are actually surprisingly rigorous," says Lemov, "and like the more common questions, they could have led to a fascinating discussion... By asking some fact-based questions, we can chip away at the knowledge deficit and teach our students how to unlock knowledge from what they read." And the information, as well as the process involved in locating it, would carry over to other settings and time periods.

- *Have students write before discussing* – "Students routinely appear to understand what they read far more than they actually do – simply because of the way we structure our instruction," says Lemov. He describes how he aced a college paper on Shakespeare's *The*

Winter's Tale without actually reading the play. How was that possible? By listening to other students during a class discussion and dipping into a scene or two as he wrote the paper that evening. "The fact that my professor thought I had read and understood the play made her, I now realize, typical of many teachers," he says. A simple way to get around this kind of fake reading is to have students read a text and write about it in class and then take part in a discussion. A possible follow-up: having students revise what they wrote. All this would greatly enhance the knowledge students gained from their reading – and also build their reading proficiency.

"How Knowledge Powers Reading" by Doug Lemov in *Educational Leadership*, February 2017 (Vol. 74, #5, p. 10-16), <http://bit.ly/2k5svOz>; Lemov can be reached at dlemov@uncommonschoools.org.

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.