

MoCo Monday Minute

Monday, October 10, 2016

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Col. Stepanchuk and student leaders from his JROTC battalion put the MCHS Girls' Basketball Team through great leadership training and team building exercises last week.

Quote of the Week – “Students who can self-assess are poised to be life-long learners. They are poised to use self-regulation strategies and to be their own best coaches as they learn. They are able to ask focused questions when they don’t understand or when they’re stuck.” Susan Brookhart

National School Lunch Week – To recognize the National School Lunch Program and the 30 million children it serves every day, we will recognize National School Lunch Week from October 10-13, 2016. The theme, “Show Your Spirit,” reminds parents, students and school officials that a healthy school lunch helps students power through the day!



Regional FCCLA Officer Training Meeting – Six FCCLA (Family, Career and Community Leaders of America) students attended the Regional FCCLA Officer Training meeting at Maysville Community and Technical College in Maysville, Kentucky, on Friday, September



30. Local chapter officers were given guidance in fulfilling the responsibilities of their office and leadership activities to use in their local chapters. Attending from MCHS was Sara NeSmith, President, Jonus Leger, First Vice President, Maria Al Lawati, Secretary/Treasurer, Jillian Rush, Vice President of Community Service, Makayla Harris, Vice President of Peer Education, and Kassidy Blanton, Vice President of STAR Events.

Students Visited Cooper Standard – Several Montgomery County High School and Sterling School students attended Manufacturing Day on Friday, October 7, 2016 at the Mt. Sterling Cooper Standard Plant. Students were able to tour the plant and see the use of the Engineering 3-D printer.

Fire Prevention Day – Montgomery County Fire/EMS visited students at Mapleton yesterday. Students received a combination of classroom teachings about fire readiness and safety, along with demonstrations and tours of the Safety Trailer and Fire Engines.



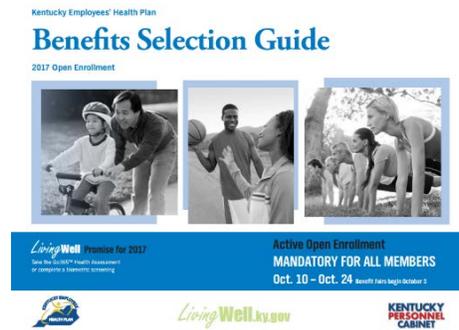
Reading Extravaganza – Last Thursday, October 6th Camargo Elementary held its 3rd annual Reading Extravaganza. This night is designed to showcase student's love for reading while initiating a creative way to highlight their individual learning. Students were asked to read



a book and design a tri-fold poster board emphasizing all the important elements of the story that they chose. To make things interesting, boards were judged and the top three winners received a prize. The winners were 1st place Keeton Miller, 2nd place Kasey Hudson, and 3rd place Mya Jackson. Winners were able to shop at the book fair the following morning.

Student Attendance – MSE earned the highest one-day attendance with 96.46% on Monday, October 3rd and the weekly high attendance with 95.28%.

Mandatory Health Insurance Open Enrollment – Open Enrollment began today and will go through Monday, October 24th. **It will be mandatory for every employee who wishes to have health insurance in 2017 to enroll this year.** Benefit Selection Guides will be



available to you by the end of the week. A digital copy of the guide is available by clicking on the photo to the left. The Kentucky Employees' Health Plan recently announced that there will not be a premium increase for the LivingWell plans if you completed your 2016 LivingWell Promise, and you choose another LivingWell plan for 2017. There will be a 1% premium increase in the Standard CDHP and Standard PPO plans. You can visit the Kentucky Employees' Health Plan (KEHP) website for additional information by [clicking here](#).

Benefits Fairs – Benefits Fairs have been scheduled for each school site to provide employees with an opportunity to learn about various insurances and other programs available to them. [Click here](#) for a list of dates and vendors. Additionally, a list of services provided by each vendor has been prepared to give employees a chance to consider their interests prior to the fairs. [Click here](#) to review the list.

Dates:

- Oct. 10-24 – Health Insurance Open Enrollment
- Oct. 11 – Mapleton SBDM Meeting, 4:00 p.m.
- Oct. 11 – Orchestra Fall Concert, 6:30 p.m., MCHS Auditorium
- Oct 11 – MSE K-3 Fire Prevention Day
- Oct. 12 – Benefit Fair, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., Camargo Media Center
- Oct. 12 – Benefit Fair, 1:30 – 4:30 p.m., MCHS Media Center
- Oct. 12 – MSE SBDM Meeting, 3:30 p.m.
- Oct. 14 – MCHS Football VS Anderson County, 7:30 p.m.
- **Oct. 14 – No School – Court Day/Fall Break**
- **Oct. 17 – No School – Court Day/Fall Break**
- Oct. 17 – McNabb SBDM Meeting, 5:00 p.m.
- Oct. 17 – MCHS Freshmen/JV Football VS Powell County, 6:00 p.m.
- Oct. 18 – Mapleton PTO Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- Oct. 18 – MCHS Academic Team VS Fleming County, 5:00 p.m.
- Oct. 18 – Board of Education Special Session, 6:30 p.m., MCHS Cafeteria
- Oct. 19 – Benefit Fair, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., Mapleton Media Center
- Oct. 19 – Benefit Fair, 1:30 – 4:30 p.m., MCIS Media Center
- Oct. 19 – Mapleton PTO Meeting, 4:30 p.m.
- Oct. 21 – MCHS SBDM Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- Oct. 21 – Camargo Fall Dance, 6:00-7:00 p.m.
- Oct. 25 – Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m., MCHS Cafeteria
- Oct. 26 – Benefit Fair, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., MSE Media Center

- Oct. 26 – Benefit Fair, 1:30 – 4:30 p.m., McNabb Media Center
- Oct. 27 – MCHS Academic Team VS Rowan County, 5:00 p.m.
- Oct. 28 – MCHS Football VS North Laurel, 7:30 p.m.
- Oct. 29 – JROTC Indian Challenge, 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., MCHS Arena

Continuous Learning through Professional Literature

Getting Students Thinking At Higher Levels

(Originally titled “Start with Higher-Order Thinking”)

“Memorizing facts is boring,” says consultant/author Susan Brookhart in this article in *Educational Leadership*. “Drill-and-practice is boring. But thinking, for most students most of the time, is actually fun.” Brookhart suggests four strategies to engage students in higher-order thinking:

- *Open questions* – Every lesson should have two or three of these to highlight key content and thinking skills. Some examples: Ask students to describe similarities and differences that require analysis and reasoning:

- *How are 11 and 16 alike? How are they different?*

- *How was the political climate in President Obama’s first term like that in his second and how were they different?*

Another idea: present the work of a fictional student – for example, the student’s solution to an algebra problem – and have students analyze it and explain how to fix it. Or ask students to make an argument and explain their reasoning – for example, *Why do you think many people in the U.S. became isolationist right after World War I?* “Probably the simplest suggestion for designing open questions is to ask ‘Why?’ as often as you can,” says Brookhart.

- *Students to respond to one another* – Wait time is important. *Think time, no hands up*, is a good admonition. “If you don’t provide enough wait time, you’ll get either no responses or surface-level responses,” says Brookhart. Another strategy is having students think/pair/share. In all-class discussions, teachers should resist the temptation to comment themselves, instead asking specific follow-up questions to get other students involved. Or start a whole-class discussion and then have students follow up in groups.

- *Students thinking, not just retelling* – All too many student projects are simple regurgitation, says Brookhart – for example, students producing posters showing the natural resources of their state or artistically illustrating one element on the periodic table. “All students have to do is copy information onto their poster, make it colorful and attractive, and voilà, they have a completed assignment, with no evidence of what they

understand about their topic,” says Brookhart. The way out of this dynamic is posing a thought-provoking problem – for example, ask students to imagine they are astronauts who have been asked decide which planet they’d like to settle on and why. Students look at all eight planets, choose one, and make the case for the choice and the equipment and other steps needed to live there.

Another approach is asking “what if” and “what else” questions to push students to expand or elaborate on what they’re studying – for example, *What might have happened in the 1968 presidential election if the U.S. had not been in the Vietnam War?* An even more open-ended question would be to let students choose an election year and develop their own what-if scenarios. In science, rather than a hum-drum project like making a model of the water cycle, ask students, *What else would you need to know about a particular region to predict how the water cycle would function there?* In math, students might be asked for other ways to solve the problem, $46 \div 3$ using drawings, counters, or different algorithms.

• *Self-assessment* – “Students who can self-assess are poised to be life-long learners,” says Brookhart. “They are poised to use self-regulation strategies and to be their own best coaches as they learn. They are able to ask focused questions when they don’t understand or when they’re stuck.” She suggests three ways to help students move to this level.

- Teach students to self-assess with rubrics. It’s important that the rubric goes beyond the basic level and stipulates higher-level criteria like stating a position, defending one’s reasoning, using supportive details.
- Use confidence ratings. For example, students might be asked to use the “fist of fives” on their chest to indicate how confident they are that they understand a particular term or concept (five fingers means very confident, a fist means no confidence, held close to the chest to avoid embarrassment or peer pressure).
- Have students co-create success criteria. Studying material with which students are familiar, they can jointly create what the teacher and students will look for in their work. “This higher-order, creative exercise,” says Brookhart, “requires students to look at work samples, decide whether they are high or low quality, decide what makes them high-quality or low-quality, and describe those characteristics.”

“Start with Higher-Order Thinking” by Susan Brookhart in *Educational Leadership*, October 2016 (Vol. 74, #2, p. 10-15), available for purchase at <http://bit.ly/2dqECAZ>; Brookhart can be reached at susanbrookhart@bresnan.net.

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.