



WEEKLY WARRIOR

Webutuck Central Schools

194 Haight Road, P.O. Box 405

Amenia, New York 12501

October 8, 2010

Yet Another Omission

As noted last week, when I make a list of people to thank that I will somehow always miss some. We have found another case where we failed to recognize Janice McSpirtt for over five years. Please accept my apologies for the omission and we thank Janice for her service to our school and our children.

Question Corner

Do you have a question about our school? Please e-mail me your question at doclerk@webutuckschools.org

Superintendent's Notes

Teaching is for everyone!

When we talk about "Teachers," we tend to think about those professionally trained and certified individuals employed by schools or colleges. However, in reality, we are all teachers. Every parent teaches his or her children. Older youth teach younger children. Employers teach their staff. Every time we answer a question or demonstrate an action, we become teachers. But, the question is, how good are we at teaching?

Melissa Kelly, in her article "*Top 6 Keys to Being a Successful Teacher*," lists the common characteristics shared by all successful teachers. She further states that, "success in teaching, as in most areas of life, depends almost entirely on ones **attitude** and **approach**." Below is her list of critical characteristics.

- **Sense of Humor:** A sense of humor can relieve tension in the classroom and make the experience more enjoyable for the student. I will also help reduce stress for you, the teacher.
- **Positive Attitude:** A positive attitude will help you to cope with the many challenges we face as life unfolds. With the right attitude, everything goes more successfully.
- **High Expectations:** You should always strive to raise the bar for yourself and your student. If you expect less, you will most assuredly receive less. Remember, your high expectations will be a key factor in helping your students learn and succeed.
- **Consistency:** To have a positive learning environment, students should know what to expect from you each day. This creates a feeling of safety and allows students to feel more comfortable in fully participating in the learning process.
- **Fairness:** Many people confuse fairness and consistency. A consistent person is the same person from day to day. A fair teacher treats all students equally in the same situations. Students pick up on this lack of fairness quickly, so be careful to treat everyone the same.

- **Flexibility:** One of the realities of life is that change is a constant. Interruptions and distractions are the norm and, therefore, a flexible attitude is important for both your stress level and for your students who expect you to be in control of any situation.

Clearly, these are important characteristics for our professional instructional staff, but they are just as important as we interact with others around us, whether it is with family, colleagues, students, or simply friends and acquaintances. So how are your keys working to unlock success? These are all things we can work on together because,

Together, we can do great things!

Have a great week!

Steve Schoonmaker

Educational Quotes of the Week

In education, the formulation of the problem is often more essential than the solution.

Albert Einstein

Tony Wagner supports Einstein's thoughts by indicating that..... "In education today, we suffer from a severe case of "answeritis!"

It's Cold and Flu Season Again!

As we move from summer into fall and winter, the cold and flu season comes along. To protect ourselves from illness, we should take extra care to keep ourselves healthy from these and other infections. There are a number of steps we can all take.

The following are recommended precautions you should take to help protect yourself.

These are listed on the "Cold and Flu Guidesite."

In summary, the some practical ways to stay healthy are:

- Practice good hygiene, especially hand-washing.**
 - Stay home, and keep your children home if you or they are ill.**
 - Cover your nose and mouth if you cough or sneeze.**
 - Avoid people who are ill.**
 - Eat regularly, including fruit and vegetables.**
 - Get enough rest.**
 - See your family doctor immediately if you get ill, rather than waiting to see if you get better.**
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HIGH SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

As of this writing, Mr. Ken Sauer plans to begin duties as Jr./Sr. High School Principal on Friday, October 8th, so this is my final opportunity to contribute to the Weekly Warrior.

I want to begin by thanking the school board, administrative colleagues, faculty and staff for their support during this transition period. I hope my service here has been helpful. I have served as a teacher and administrator in several schools and I think that Webutuck School District residents should know that the majority of students here come to school to learn, to participate in sports and other activities, and to have some fun. That is just what teenagers should be doing in my opinion. Thank you.

Best wishes.

John T. Oates

Elementary & Intermediate Schools

Thank you to all who attended the Parent Forum on September 29. Mr. Schoonmaker and I appreciate your concerns and will be discussing these further with the Board of Education. Once a decision is made I will contact you.

This year, as a District, we are running our days on six-day letter cycle (A-F). This allows us to share staff across the District, as well as, provide additional time for special area classes. It has always been a challenge to extend the classroom instruction to the special areas- art, music, library/media and physical education- but this year we have found a creative way to accomplish this called Project Adventure. It not only integrates all special areas but is an extension of classroom learning. I personally observed it last week and was very impressed how creative the teachers of this area are and how favorably the students respond to the integration. We are currently implementing this K-3 and I would hope we can extend this to other grades in the future.

Project Adventure

The special area teachers- Mary Molloy, Elizabeth Murphy, Rosanne Persico, and Eric Wiener-worked together to create an avenue to aid, assist and enrich our students. Project Adventure meets the needs of all students at Webutuck Elementary. During this time, two classes join together and work through a series of activities focusing on a specific theme for the day. These activities may include: reading a story, learning the lyrics to a song, physical movement and artistic creations. Since the beginning of school, the focus has been CARES, which is the acronym describing the principals of Responsive Classroom (Cooperation, Assertion, Responsibility, Empathy and Self Control). These concepts are used to develop lessons reinforcing these skills. Other activities in the future will focus on various performance indicators as described in the NYS Learning Standards. We believe this is an exciting addition to our current programs and are looking forward to an enriching year with our students during their specials time.

Reading Tips

Give your child tools to assist in reading words which may be unfamiliar to him or her. Encourage your child to think of the context of the sentence to read a challenging word. For example; the text may read "The sky was gray. It started to thunder." Teach your child to use the surrounding words and the context to read a difficult word. The child may think *what happens when the sky becomes gray* in order to read the word 'thunder'. By assisting your child to read challenging words, it will encourage their confidence as an independent reader.

Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.

~ Joseph Addison ~

October 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3	4 - <u>A DAY</u> - <u>BOE Mtg 7:30 pm</u>	5 - <u>B DAY</u>	6 - <u>C DAY</u>	7 - <u>D DAY</u>	8 - <u>E DAY</u>	9
10	11 Columbus Day - <u>School Closed</u>	12 - <u>F DAY 8:00 am - 9:00 am</u>	13 - <u>A DAY</u>	14 - <u>College Visit - SUNY Oneonta 12:00 pm</u>	15 - <u>C DAY</u>	16
17	18 - <u>D DAY</u> - <u>BOE Mtg 7:30 pm</u>	19 - <u>E DAY</u>	20 - <u>College Visit - Moravian College 12:00 pm</u>	21 - <u>A DAY</u>	22 - <u>B DAY</u>	23
24	25 - <u>C DAY</u>	26 - <u>D DAY</u>	27 - <u>College Visit - Air Force 10:30 am</u>	28 - <u>College Visit - SUNY Potsdam 9:00 am</u>	29 - <u>A DAY</u>	30