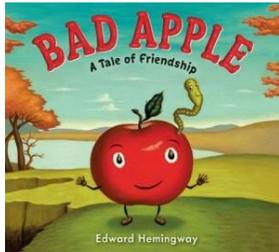


Dear Staff,

What a wonderful weekend! It was twice as nice for me because I received a box of apples from my brother. He has a couple dozen trees that we prune together in the spring, and receiving this box in the fall completes a nice circle for us. The "problem" is that his farm is organic which means the trees don't get sprayed for insects... which mean the apples are at first



blush only suitable for cider. What I've learned though, is that 90% of the blemishes are only skin deep, and if they're peeled, they are more usable than one would ever imagine by looking at them. This morning, when I made my waffles, I added butter, maple syrup (also from the



farm) and a heaping spoonful of mighty tasty applesauce. Enjoying the extra touch the applesauce made to my breakfast reminded me of the wisdom found in the caution to be slow to judge. Digging a little deeper into a situation like the tasty apple under the blemished skin can often offer truth and great reward!

We send a tip of the Tiger's tail to Ms. Bowman, Mr. Snodgrass and everyone else involved in making Homecoming Week memorable for students and staff. The Jr./Sr. high provided staff and students with all sorts of fun that reinforced school pride in being a Tiger. The MC at the pep rally on Friday afternoon deserves a tip of the Tiger's tail as well. He gets credit devising a system for moving 500+ excited students successfully from the bleachers onto the gym floor without bloodshed! Staff keeping an eye on the proceedings helped greatly, I'm sure. At Friday night's game, the blowout against Union County, Mr. Snodgrass, was the icing on the cake. Thanks for it!



Someone driving down Baker Road is likely to notice that Mr. Clark is parking the Tiger minibuses in a slightly different location these days. I asked him about it, and he responded



that moving the purple and gold buses closer to the street makes them more visible and is a marketing initiative. Thank you, Mr. Clark, for your creativity! We already have the money invested in those minibuses. Maximizing their purpose in this way is genius!

HES is holding a Book Fair this week! Books make great stocking stuffers for those of you thinking ahead. Also, the PTO has their Tiger Bazaar scheduled for Thursday from 5:30P.M. to 7:30P.M. Various classrooms and student groups will be selling items to raise a little room money.

More and more as you walk the halls and visit classrooms at Hagerstown Elementary School you notice teachers sharing information about NWEA results with students. There are several reasons why this is a productive strategy. Posting data that cannot be traced back to any individual student while sharing with everyone the progress students are making reinforces



that growing academic achievement is important in our schools. Both schools have identified that motivated students learn better. HES has discovered that there are several ways to display RIT scores that benefit students. Sixth-grade teachers have a spotlight on their student's NWEA data to motivate their students to achieve. A data board is newly posted in the sixth-grade hallway that shows students where they are currently achieving and where the grade-level goal is.

Ms. Shedd attended an NWEA training this past summer and came back with many strategies that she is excited about and willing to share that are taking her instruction and the instruction of all of the sixth-grade team to the next level.



Initially, schools use NWEA as a yardstick. They typically talk with their students about where their RIT level is. Advanced users, however, who really see results, use NWEA scores as a planning tool. Ms. Shedd has broken through and is focusing her vocabulary instruction to include the words NWEA indicate students are ready to learn in order to grow to the next level. Across the top of her bulletin board are the RIT Ranges. Down each column are the vocabulary words students in that range must master. Children seeing what is expected of them and being able to see where they are expected to go add a whole new dimension to student motivation and accountability.



Ms. Hollenberg is coaching students using a data board in her multi-age classroom, too. It's no surprise that her board has a basketball theme! Regardless of the theme, data boards are a form of

communication that students use to watch their growth with the understanding that as good as we are, we can always get better. This evening as I was checking on things at HES, I came across a new data board in the form of a giant Monopoly game board in the hall. I apologize to whoever put so much time into this work of art, and I promise to come back



and take a better photo when the hallway lights are turned on, but each child in the hall seems to have a little crayon that will move around the board as his/her learning - as measured by MAP - grows.

Let's end this week's letter with one more example of a classroom that is using MAP scores to inform students of their learning progress. Ms. Stinson's second-grade example is unique because she has paired the messages of learning progress as measured by NWEA with the concept of Growth Mindset. Students learning early on that their ability is changeable along



with learning to set achievement goals is a combination that will serve them well not only now but in the future as well, regardless of the life path they choose.

We send a tip of the Tiger's tail to all of you who have provided so many great examples of an important strategy in this week's letter and to those wherever you are or whatever role you play in helping students understand that measured learning is what we specialize in here at NCSC!

Yours for another successful week with children!

WD

