

From the Superintendent's Desk
Dr. Jeff Athey
April 7, 2017

On Wednesday, March 29th, the 3rd Quarter ended. By 3:30 p.m. Friday, March 31st, teachers were to get their grades turned in so that report cards could be printed off and sent home to parents the next week.

Now that we're in the 4th Quarter and the last day of school is Friday, May 26th, I would like to offer an article titled "Finish Strong." I want to address the importance of students maintaining good school attendance, demonstrating excellent behavior, making responsible choices, giving their best effort in academics and, looking forward to summer ahead.

Good School Attendance

During the months of April and May, many things will be taking place ranging from students taking state tests (i.e., ASPIRE), spring STAR tests, music contests/concerts, Title 1 Night, Prom/Post-Prom, National Honor Society induction, class field trips, spring sport contests, and graduation. It's an exciting time of year; it can also be a stressful time of year. We want (and expect) students to participate in these events, yet we also want them to attend their scheduled classes. We ask that parents work to limit the number of hours that students are out of school for appointments. Finishing the school year in "good standing" implies being here on the scheduled days of school and then enjoying summer when it gets here—not before.

Excellent Behavior/Making Responsible Choices

"Finishing strong" also means staying out of trouble/not doing something that results in losing privileges or getting suspended from school. Students are taught what it means to be "respectful"—of their teacher(s), others, and "self." It is very important that students be mindful of how they treat others—in the classroom, at recess, at lunch, on the school bus, in the hallways, etc. From time to time, I find myself reminding young children to "keep your hands and feet to yourself", "do not touch/or take something that doesn't belong to you", or "stay seated on the bus facing forward." For older students, the reminders include: driving safely in the parking lot, do not drink/smoke/do drugs—particularly during Prom/Post-Prom and Graduation times. We want you to be safe and to do your parents/school proud. In short, be decent, respectful and kind to people, protect those in trouble, and lend a hand when someone needs it. If you make a mistake or a bad decision, fess up, admit you were wrong, apologize, learn from it, and move on. If you are distressed, it might help to disengage from social media, where accusations rebound back and forth, "facts" are misstated, feelings are hurt, and reactions amplified. Let your actions reflect the better angels of your nature, and may you inspire others to do the same.

Giving One's Best Effort in Academics

The primary reason we attend school is “to learn”—to get the best possible education so that we’re prepared/ready for that next chapter in our lives. This is not the time to “coast” or be a “slacker.” Educators expect kids to try, to give their best effort in everything they do (e.g., tests, papers, projects, etc.), and to feel a deep sense of satisfaction knowing they gave it their best. Ten years from now when you look back at your schooling experience, will you have regrets knowing you were capable of more but you didn’t give your best? Will you find that “doors” to your future are closed because you failed to put forth your best effort today? Here’s to all of our students earning good grades and embracing learning as a life-long skill.

Summer

When the school year ends on May 26th, we want all students to have a safe, yet enjoyable summer. We encourage students to make reading a part of their summer fun. Reading books helps improve focus and concentration, develops verbal abilities, and expands one’s thinking and imagination. Strive to read at least one book a week this summer.

Best wishes to our soon-to-be graduates! And, to those students returning in the fall, I encourage them to look forward to the new school year as opening doors to their future!