MTSS Update

November 2022

District's Strategic Plan:

Sweetwater County School District #1 will nurture a positive learning climate and culture.

- Promote positive behaviors and relationships among students, staff, families and the community.
- Ensure schools are safe and secure.
- Proactively support physical, mental and emotional health.

A large portion of the information contained within monthly updates will be borrowed from other locations. I will cite the location where the information is gathered and encourage you to look up the original source if you desire more information.

The updates will be sent out district-wide. If you in anyway touch the lives of a child/student you are an educator and this newsletter is meant for you.

If you have questions or I can be of assistance please don't hesitate to call or email.

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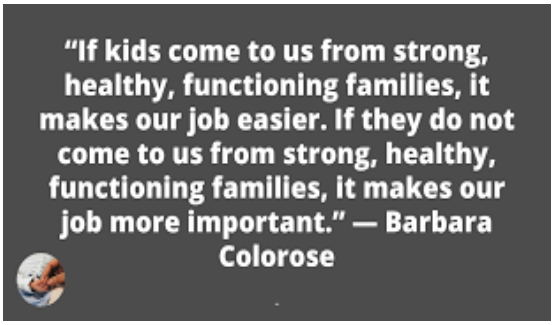


Within this newsletter

- Fostering a Love of Reading
- *In Defense of Read-Aloud Sustaining Best Practice* by Steven L. Layne – The Curriculum Instruction & Assessment office is purchasing this book for those who whould like to read it in it's entirety. Please email Tina Johnson at johnsonti@sw1.k12.wy.us.
- Healthy Habits
- Mandt Moment

Educators Fostering a Love of Reading

By gaining the love of reading young, children of all ages are establishing benefits that can last a lifetime. Research shows that reading can improve emotional health and cognitive intelligence.

Reading positively affects children by:

- Improving concentration and developing focus.
- Teaching children about the world around them.
- Improving vocabulary and language skills. By reading, children learn how to use words and structure sentences.
- Reading develops imagination.
- It helps children develop empathy.
- Reading is fun and can beat boredom.
- Reading promotes better achievement in school.
- Children who read a lot get better at reading (building reading stamina).

Children are often restricted in their book choices. Limits may be placed on them due to the amount of books available in the home or a teacher may appoint a genre, Lexile score or page count. If these already reluctant readers happen to find a book they enjoy, often they are told these texts are not long enough, are above or below their prescribed Lexile level or maybe are too similar to books they have previously read.

As adults, no limits are placed upon us when we enter a library, walk through the bookstore doors or power up our Kindle/iPad. My own bookshelves are a hodgepodge of texts — some professional text, some mindless drivel, assorted cookbooks, self-help works, and of course texts on knitting and quilting. I am free to read what I please, not limited by subject or Lexile.

If we do not trust our children to make these same choices, how can we expect them to grow into the readers they have the potential to be? As stated by Beth Jarzabek in her article *A Teacher's Tip: Want to Foster a Love of Reading? Let Students Pick Their Own Books. Giving My Kids Voice & Choice Changed My Classroom.*

> With more choice in books comes an increase in the amount of reading students actually do. As with any skill, the more students read, the better they are at it, leading to improved reading ability and greater achievement in other content areas. Finally, and most important to me, choice in books gives rise to lifelong readers.
>
> If we want to foster a true love of reading within our students, we need to stop limiting their choices in books and allow them to find their own reading identities, regardless of Lexile level, genre or page count. We need to allow them the experience of finding that perfect book that they will count as their favorite years later. We need to let them try books and abandon them. We need to allow them their voice and choice — with no limits.

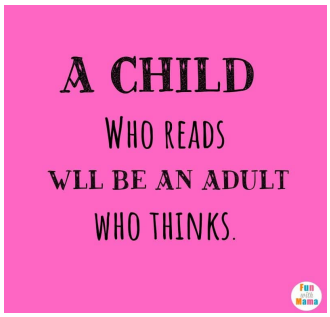
https://www.the74million.org/article/a-teachers-tip-want-to-foster-a-love-of-reading-in-students-let-them-pick-their-own-books-how-voice-and-choice-has-changed-my-classroom/

We need to help students learn how to pick "just right" books then again, we also must instill within them a love of reading.

In Defense of Read-Aloud

The text, *In Defense of Read-Aloud,* shares the how and why reading aloud is a best practice and beneficial at all grade levels. I want to clarify that this "reading aloud" is unlike the reading aloud that occurs in our current Kindergarten through fifth grade reading series. In addition, it is important to understand that reading aloud is merely one component of a balanced literacy program and cannot stand alone. "*In Defense of Read-Aloud* is grounded in solid, extensive research that definitively illustrates the positive effect of reading aloud on student engagement, thinking, and reading achievement." Reading aloud to a young child, preadolescent, or adolescent (at home, on a bus, waiting in line, while riding in a vehicle, etc.) has many benefits including potentially:

- Hooking them on a book, series, and/or author
- Altering their attitude about books or reading
- Allowing comprehension of a book that is at a higher level than they are able to read silently
- Foster a love of reading
- Benefit a student's vocabulary acquisition, comprehension, pronunciation/inflection and syntactic development (syntax refers to the rules used to combine words and make sentences),
- Promote student engagement, a positive attitude, and understanding of text types
- Broaden a child's thinking as well as their imaginations



- Create an environment that builds a relationship between the one reading aloud and the individual listening
- Facilitate an understand of characters, including ourselves better
- Permit an individual to experience a wide range of genres that they might not read independently
- Encourage students to go beyond stereotypes and become a thoughtful community member

The author, Steven Layne, utilizes excerpts from individuals and authors as well as research to explain and encourage reading aloud continuously throughout grades K-12, not only in the home but also in the classroom.

This book is a quick read and I encourage you, especially if you have children, grand-children or students, to email me with a request for a copy. Any employee of our school district who request a copy will have one purchased for them. Please email Tina Johnson at johnsonti@sw1.k12.wy.us by November 28, 2022 to request a copy. Books will be delivered or sent through school mail as soon as they arrive.

Healthy Habits

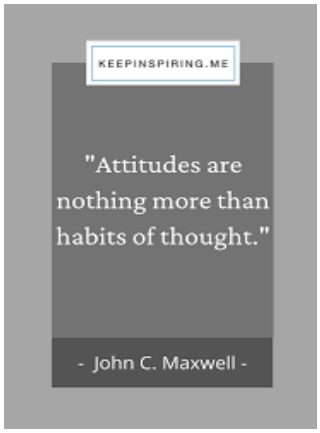
The following came from Eastside's weekly newsletter, Eagle Notes, the week of August 22. It is a story taken from Dave Weber's Blog.

How to Beat Workplace Burnout Like a Marathoner

Hidden in the canyons of Mexico's Copper Canyon lives a shy tribe of people called Tarahumara, or the Running People. The Tarahumara live quiet lives, growing corn and beans and living in family groups in huts and caves often perched precipitously on the mountain cliffs. They are also all ultra-runners.

At social gatherings and celebrations, the Running People will conclude the festivities with a friendly footrace. A footrace up to 200 miles, that is. For a guy like me that is out of breath after four miles on the treadmill, the thought of these people running through mountain passes in handmade sandals sounds more like a mirage than a reality.

In Christopher McDougall's book *Born to Run*, he marvels that in the midst of a 100-mile ultramarathon they, "churned up the slope like kids playing in a leaf pile." Laughing. Smiling. Somehow *enjoying* a 100-mile run. For the Tarahumara, running wasn't a chore—it was a time to connect with their world and with one another.



Now let's step back from the Copper Canyon and into your city, your home and your workplace. You're fed up with the job you used to love. Coworkers you've collaborated with for years are grating on your nerves. Projects that excited you in the beginning seem stale and dusty. Like the American runners racing against the Tarahumara, you've burnt out, and you've got 150 miles left to run.

How do you return to the blissful state where you began? Mental toughness.

I know, I wish I had a different answer too. But oftentimes the only element in our day that we can actually control is our attitude. And, when the boss is happy and the workload is light it's easy to stay upbeat. Throw in an irate customer, a missed deadline and some extra rush-hour traffic, and *then* you have a training ground for mental toughness. Here's a few tips from the Running People themselves:

- **Take Shorter Steps**—your burnout might be the result of overextending yourself. Instead of focusing on everything you need to get done this week, focus on the five things you need to get done today. Break larger projects up into small pieces and knock them out one at a time.
- **Lose the Shoes**—After researchers studied indigenous groups like the Tarahumara, they discovered these groups experienced far less injury than Westerners with hi-tech and cushy running shoes. At work, sometimes the very things we think we need are the things creating problems. Have you gotten bogged down in party planning drama or chasing down someone by email instead of picking up the phone? Maybe it's time to pick up speed by simplifying your processes. Lose the shoes.
- **Look to your elders**—Would you believe that among the Tarahumara, the best runners are often the oldest!? Though it seems contrary to nature, it's true. The runners with years of experience have honed their speed, footwork, diet, and strategy. The same is true of great leaders in any industry. If you want to avoid burnout, begin to note the habits of those a few years down the road, and a few rungs up the ladder from where you find yourself.
- **Never run alone**—In Tarahumara culture, racing is a means of bringing the community together. How would our workplaces change if we viewed collaborative work in the same way? Sure you might feel like the project is about as fun as running uphill in the boiling Mexico sunlight, but there is some solidarity in enduring it together. Find at least one person at your workplace who you know you can lean on during a particularly tough day. But be prepared to return the favor.

Mental toughness is choosing these attitudes and practices over the feeling of burnout. It doesn't matter if you're running 100 miles or just trying to make it through the last 100 days of school with a rowdy classroom. When nothing around you seems to be changing, change your attitude. After all, it's a marathon not a sprint.

Mandt Moment

When a student challenges an educator in front of other students it is often difficult but essential to maintain self-control. Losing control and responding in anger or with an emotional outburst yelling, swearing etc. is not only unprofessional, it results in a loss of respect for you as an educator and brings you down to the offending student's level. You lose credibility, and your power and authority are compromised. It is a signal to the students in your classroom/cafeteria/hallway or on your bus that you are no longer running the show. Maintaining your self-control is like most skills, is a learned behavior that can be acquired through habitual practice.

REMAIN CALM: "CALM IS CONTAGIOUS," AND "SILENCE IS POWERFUL."

The first step in maintaining self-control is to remain calm. When faced with disrespectful or challenging behavior, do not immediately react. Instead, take a deep breath to help you relax and remain silent, at least initially. If you overreact, the students have just witnessed how to set you off, which virtually guarantees that they will try it again.

Remaining calm does not mean you are going to ignore the problem. If you ignore it, then students have just observed you back down and relinquish your authority. You are not going to ignore or overreact–both of which result in a loss of control and authority–but respond appropriately in action and timing. In order to do this, you must first be calm and have a clear mind to think.

This information “and wording” has primarily been taken from the article: Remain Calm & Respond Right When a Student Challenges! https://www.bemidjistate.edu/services/public-safety/wp-content/uploads/sites/92/2020/01/Classroom-Security-1.pdf please read the complete article.