

# Woodland Newsletter

February 2021

## Message from Principal

Dear Woodland Families,

This month, there are a lot of opportunities for students to have new experiences! As mentioned in a previous principal communication, we are going to celebrate the spirit of Valentine's Day a little differently this year. Throughout the month of February, students will participate in recognizing and demonstrating different acts of kindness. The culminating event will be a virtual assembly for students where we share our collective definition of kindness and the way small acts of kindness can create a positive ripple effect throughout our community. Please do not send in Valentines from home. Instead, we will be creating our own special cards and notes to send ripples of kindness through Woodland School and beyond.

As mentioned last month, the district faculty have chosen Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) as our professional learning goal. Our most recent discussion topics were The Learning Pit and Dependent versus Independent Learners. The Learning Pit is a powerful analogy for learning and the challenges that entails. Taking on a challenge is like getting into a pit where some remain stuck at the bottom, failing to learn and succeed. When students are in the pit, they are taking on the challenge of learning something new and could be presented with new struggles. At times, students may feel uncomfortable with this challenge and the effort it takes to climb out. When students do climb out, it means they have learned a new concept. As Zaretta Hammond states, "You want to get students to hang in there when the going gets tough, to get through "the learning pit." We want them to see themselves as learners. Learning is always hard. Instead of confirming that they're not intelligent, students can use that struggle to build their capacity. The growth mindset helps students change their explanatory story from "always fail" to "I haven't gotten it yet, but I will."

Our other discussion topic was understanding the difference and importance of being a dependent learner versus independent learner. According to Zaretta Hammond, a dependent learner depends on the teacher to carry the cognitive load, is unsure how to tackle new tasks, does not complete work without scaffolds and sits passively while stuck. An independent learner temporarily relies on the teacher to carry some of the cognitive load, utilizes strategies for tackling new tasks, attempts new tasks without scaffolds and has strategies for getting unstuck. Our goal is to move our students from dependent learners to independent learners. Remember this is a journey and process. We look forward to this journey with our students.

Sincerely,

Jennifer G. Faber

## Dates to Remember

Mark  
Your  
Calendar

- METCO/Weston Families Coffee on **Monday, February 8th** at 8:30am via zoom. All are welcome!
- Principal Coffee on **Thursday, February 11th** at 9:00am via zoom.
- Virtual BINGO night on **Thursday, February 11th at 5:00pm** via zoom.
- Spirit Day- wear red, pink, hearts, or clothing with messages of positivity, kindness, love or joy on **Friday, February 12th**.
- February Vacation **Monday, February 15-Friday, February 19th**.
- School Council Meeting on **Monday, February 22nd at 2:30pm** via zoom.
- Incoming Kindergarten Information Night on **Tuesday, February 23rd from 6:00-7:00pm** via zoom.