

# STAFF DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

MAY, 2017



*The greatest accomplishment is not in never falling, but in rising again after you fall. V. Lombardi*

## Image from National Geographic SMELL THE ROSES

As a kid I remember counting down the days until summer break and it seemed like time stood still. Fast-forward thirty plus years and I wish I could get time to slow down a little bit more. It is hard to believe but we only have fourteen school days until kids are out for the summer. How am I going to get everything done I need to get done? I am certain that many of you had a spike in your blood pressure when you think about the tasks that have to be done before the end of the school year. Education is one of the few careers that has a definite beginning and ending each year. As we all run around with our heads cut off the next three weeks I hope that all of us can spend a little time to stop and smell the roses not only now as we enter the end of the school year, but throughout the year.

Reflection is an individual act and can look differently depending upon the person doing the reflecting. According to Costa and Kallick, “reflection on work enhances its meaning and reflecting on experiences encourages insight and complex learning.” Reflection involves linking a current experience to previous learning and we must be willing to celebrate when possible or learn from what is happening so we don’t repeat our mistakes. We can all identify people who are not willing to be reflective. This may include teachers who do more blaming of students or parents rather than looking at themselves for improvement. Coaches, who are not willing to look at themselves as part of a team winning or losing a game. Nobody likes to be wrong, but part of being human is accepting our faults and learning from our mistakes...reflecting. We all get caught up in the daily rat race of life and finding time to reflect can be a big obstacle for all of us. I have heard over and over the coach after a season stating, I wish I would have handled this game or player differently or a teacher in the summer discussing what they would have done differently with a specific student or class. How can we make reflection a daily practice for change vs. a summative practice?

Jack Mezirow summarizes reflection best, “A defining condition of being human is that we have to understand the meaning of our experience.” Your experiences at Seward Public School during the 2016-2017 school year I hope for all of you, has continued to grow you professionally and personally. Congratulations to the first year teachers you survived your first year of your many first experiences! Thank you to those who have served Seward Public Schools for the last time. Your experiences, has helped shaped Seward Public Schools and the many students you have served. As we wind down the school year and you are thinking about all that you still have to do please stop and smell the roses. The kindergartener who can now read, the high school students who you thought may never graduate or the student who pushed your buttons in the beginning of the school that is now working hard. I hope all of you have a great ending to the school year and enjoy your summer!

