



# THE PRINCIPAL'S PAD

NANCY LAWSON, PRINCIPAL



**“We must send a clear, unequivocal message to our children that hard work does pay off – and that part of this payoff is the unfettered opportunity to continue one’s education and to pursue one’s dreams.”** --Uri Treisman (Professor of Mathematics and Executive Director, Charles A. Dana Center)

I read this quote in a journal recently. Educating children for life and work in a century in which technology is daily changing that way of life is more than challenging. Consider: Three of our teachers are currently pursuing advanced degrees totally on-line. Their method of communication will be through wikis and blogs, and their research will be completed almost entirely through the internet. Many of our Fisher children have cell phones so that they can text you or call their parents or their friends. We are all so enamored of our iPhones that we text through meetings/lunches/dinners and check for recent e-mails. Our new math textbook series is available to parents online.

Your children will not be competing solely with other Texans or other United States citizens for the jobs of the future. They will be competing with citizens of the world. What skills will our children need to compete and live fully as they move into adulthood? How do we prepare them for an ever-changing world?

The business world is telling us that our children need more than information. They need to be able to think critically, to solve problems, to work with others. Virtually anything can be posted on the internet, yet we know that many sites used for information (wikipedia, for example) contain incorrect information. How do our children know *what* to believe and what do they *do* with the information they have? How do we approach the moral dilemmas that advances in science and other fields pose to us? How do we teach our children that most valuable of intangibles, judgment?

Through what lens will they learn to view the critical issues facing our world? Certainly we can all agree that developing character is just as essential as learning to think critically, if not more so. The quote above emphasizes one of those qualities that will help to ensure their success as individuals: hard work -- especially as it relates to pursuing their education. In our last Friday huddle, we focused on “kindness” and tolerance. (You can watch the short video clip we viewed by following the link. If it is no longer available, I’m sure you can find it by searching UTube. :) <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=4696315n> )

Hard work, respect for others, faith, courtesy, patience, orderliness, discipline, giving to others, feeling remorse when we have done something wrong, standing up for what we believe . . . I told the students on Friday that “what we practice, we become”. At Fisher, we are constantly striving to improve the education we provide your children so that they are maximizing their abilities to think critically, solve problems, and to work with others. We also believe that school is a stage on which to rehearse and refine all of the essential character qualities that form the backdrop for using those skills. ALL OF OUR futures are dependent on their development as human beings. Thank you for your partnership.