

## **Celebrating American Education Week**

American Education Week—November 18-22, 2013—presents schools and communities throughout the nation with a wonderful opportunity to celebrate public education. It is also a time to honor individuals who are making a difference in ensuring that every student receives a quality education. This week's celebration features several special observances, including:

- Nov. 18 – The after school program students made celebratory posters for the teachers lounge.
- Nov. 19 — Retired employees were invited back to eat lunch in their respective schools.
- Nov. 20 – ANEA will provide Granola bars for the staff.
- Nov. 21 – Board of Education will provide cookie trays and fruit for staff.
- Nov. 22 – Board of Education will provide sandwiches for the staff.

According to information at the National Education Association's (NEA) website, The first observance of American Education Week occurred December 4-10, 1921, with the NEA and American Legion as the cosponsors. A year later, the then U.S. Office of Education joined the effort as a cosponsor, and the PTA followed in 1938.

Nearly everyone has an anecdote about the teacher or support staff that made a difference to them. For me it was my school bus driver. He went above and beyond to connect with the bus students thus developing a bus community. He would ask me about my day, offer thoughts, encouragement, and we would discuss my classes. I remember even asking he some of my homework questions. It was evident he believed in me. Some of my best friends and fondest memories are from my bus rides to and from school.

I asked some of our administrators to reflect on their educational experiences and this is what they had to say.

Mr Cooper, Assistant Superintendent, "Mr. Akin's my high school science teacher always made science relevant and important to our daily lives. We had many hands on labs that were so fun. He had high expectations of his kids and himself. He was always asking us to bring in ideas to help him learn more about science. I still have a strong love of science because of the fire he built in me when I was a kid!"

Mr Burton, AHS Asst Principal, "My senior English/Debate-Forensics coach (Gail Naylor) had an impact on me with her following quote 'When you hold yourself to higher expectations, you can then start to achieve things.'"

Mr. Wilson, AMS Principal, "I had a teacher/coach growing up who made quite an impression on me as a young man (who later would decide to go into teaching and coaching himself). One skill I admired about this teacher/coach was his ability to begin every class or practice with honest appreciation or praise of what we had done the day before. He also was a person who praised even the slightest improvement in our class work or work on the court. If he needed to criticize, he did it in a way that made you feel like it was a good suggestion and the fault could easily be corrected. I have tried to model my career after his example he set for me many years ago."

Mr. Meneley, Garfield Principal, My first grade teacher, Mrs. Purdon, was such a support to me during a tough transition in my life and was always there for me.

Mr. Schwartz, McKinley Principal, “I had a math and physical education teacher (Tom Young) at Hanover High School who I always looked up to and admired -- he was someone who noticed me for what I could do. He also was the football coach and brought championships to not only Hanover but also three other schools in Kansas. He is the reason I became a physical education teacher and administrator today.”

Mr. Heinrichs, Kennedy Principal, “My fifth grade teacher always let me help one of my peers with his spelling practice. She repeatedly told me how good it made both her and the other student feel. I think she knew education might be a good fit for me.”

American Education Week seems like the perfect time to say “thank you” to a teacher or support staff that makes a difference in your life.