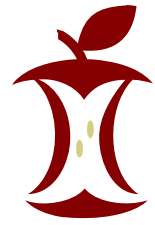


The Apple Core



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Teacher Mentor Training

Both the two-day Teacher Mentor Basic Training, scheduled for June 22 and 23, and the June 24 Advanced Mentor Training, will be held at Vernal Middle School. Several teachers have let me know that they plan to attend one of these trainings, which begin at 8:00 AM and end at approximately 3:00 PM.

Lee Gagon—
HR Director

Superintendent's Message School's out for summer...

Superintendent
Mark Dockins

"School's out for summer...
No more pencils
No more books
No more teacher's
Dirty looks"

By Alice Cooper

In an interview Alice Cooper was asked what his motivation was for writing the song "School's Out". Cooper stated, "What's the greatest three minutes of your life? I think there's two times during the year when you feel like, 'this is the greatest time of my life'. One is Christmas morning, when you're just getting ready to open the presents. The greed factor is right there. The next one is the last three minutes of the last day of school when you're sitting there and it's like a slow fuse burning. If we can catch that three minutes in a song, it's going to be so big."

At the end of each school year, this song always pops into my mind, and I have the strangest urge to break out my air-guitar and start singing the Alice Cooper classic. I'm not sure it's appropriate for

the superintendent of schools to be jamming out in public to Alice Cooper, but it would be quite a scene.

Few moments in our lives are as exciting as the last minutes of the last day of school. That feeling of anticipation for the last day of school never dies down. I'm sure even someone like Kevin Dickson, who's been in school for an eternity, still feels that



anticipation and joy of the last day of school. I remember as a teacher how moving it was to hear the busses honking their horns as they drove down the road or watching the graduates throw their hats into the air at the end of graduation. As a student the joy was having summer freedoms, moving on to another grade, and growing another year older. As a teacher the excitement is much more complicated—and it wasn't just

that the trouble child was moving on to another grade. As a teacher there is a sense of joy in the knowledge that I changed children's lives over the course of the year. That feeling of accomplishment is powerful.

That joy also makes me think about what important and powerful jobs we have as educators. We often forget what a significant impact we have on children's lives and how they will grow up. Next to parents and family, teachers probably have the most significant influence on what kind of successes the children of our community experience. The daily interactions we have with children help develop their attitudes towards everything from other adults to work ethic. We need to understand and embrace our role in their lives. Every positive thing a teacher may have said to a student, every encouragement or extra hour that a teacher puts in to intervening with a student will pay off—even if the child didn't appear to get it or acknowledge the effort. Those posi-

(Continued on next page)

School's out for summer (Continued)

tive experiences build up for children to draw on later in life. The abilities to face failure and find ways to overcome that failure are skills we teach children when we don't allow them to choose or settle for failure. We teach resiliency and determination when we constantly insist that they keep trying and we intervene when they don't understand.

As you jam out to Alice Cooper (or whatever grand end of year ritual you partake in) please recognize the profound impact you have had on children this year. Reflect on what attitudes and passions that each of your students may have taken away from your class. Hopefully those memories will be mostly positive.
Have a great summer.



Stockton and Malone—Teamwork

—Kevin Dickson, Student Services

As a sports fan in Utah, I am grateful we had the opportunity to watch two Hall-of-Fame basketball players for almost two decades. I believe John Stockton and Karl Malone were the poster boys of what is good about the NBA. Although their personalities were different, they came from different backgrounds, they had different skills, and had different weaknesses; somehow they worked as a team that gained an unbelievable amount of success. I think it would be hard to argue that Karl Malone would have been a Hall-of-Famer without John Stockton. I think it would be safe to say John Stockton wouldn't have been a Hall-of-Famer without Karl Malone. Without the leadership of Jerry Sloan and Frank Layden, I don't think either one would have reached the hall.

Karl Malone, John Stockton, and Jerry Sloan are a perfect example of how working as a team can be much more productive than working in isolation. I don't believe they lost their individual skills or had to become "cookie cutter" basketball players. Individually they were good, as a team they rank with the greatest. They had a leader that provided a system where they could maximize their skills. Although they had a structured framework and specific assignments I don't believe either Coach Sloan or Coach Layden took their autonomy away. Until the Jazz added a couple of other key players they had limited success in the play-offs. When Jeff Hornacek was added to the team, they got much better. Hornacek didn't become Karl or John, he just became part of their team, working in the

intentional framework laid out by Coach Sloan. When the Jazz brought in Gregg Ostertag...well that might ruin my PLC analogy. Let's just say when they brought in Gregg Ostertag, a good team can overcome a clown. I believe the Utah Jazz would have made a great PLC.

I find parallels between John Stockton and Karl Malone and many of the educators I have worked with in the Uintah School District. Both choose to spend their career in a small market community. Both could have made more money had they left that small market and played for another team. Many of their peers felt they were limiting themselves by remaining in Utah (USD). I am pretty sure Karl or John never felt they were settling to remain in Utah. They were provided many opportunities because of their choice to remain with the Jazz. I believe most Uintah School District educators, if they choose to, could make more money if they left the Basin. I believe many of our peers from other districts feel we are limiting ourselves by remaining in a "small market". I know I never felt like I was settling, I believe I was given more opportunities to become a better educator because I was part of the Uintah School District team. Malone and Stockton both gave to their community. They were great role models for all. Both donated more time to their communities than most of their peers because there was a greater need and more opportunities to help. My fellow educators give so much to our kids and community. Go to any function and count the number of USD employees that are helping. As an educational com-



munity we do an amazing job providing services to our town outside of our job description.

John Stockton and Karl Malone became better basketball players during the off-season. They studied, improved their game, corrected their weaknesses, and never sat on their successes. They found a way to be better individuals and better teammates. We do the same thing during our off-season. Our summers are spent finding ways to better educate the kids in our community. We go to workshops, read, reflect, and find better ways to reach students all summer long. We come back in mid-August as better educators than we were during the end of May. If students and parents worked as hard as educators during the off-season our students would make tremendous growth over the summer rather than staying even at best.

John Stockton, Karl Malone, and Jerry Sloan are all members of the Hall-of-Fame, selecting them as the best to ever participate in the game of Basketball. If there was such an honor for teachers I guarantee we would have a high percentage of our educators in the USD in a teacher's Hall-of-Fame.