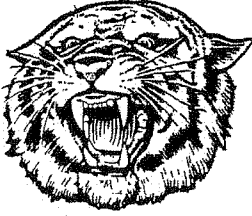


HR Focus

NOVEMBER 20, 2007



HUMAN RESOURCES CONTACTS

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Whenever time permits I really enjoy reading quotes from famous people and analyzing how the quote applies to us in the district. John F. Kennedy was quoted as saying, "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future." For all business, especially people working in education, the pace of change has definitely increased. We are forced to examine how we operate at all levels. Technology, Employee Development, Student Achievement and more are all areas that have and will continue to change. For the first time in recent history, the American workforce includes four generations of employees - Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and the youngest working generation, called "Nexters." (What a wonderful opportunity) Guess What? Change would be part of our lives even if we were not employees of this great district. Each of us deals with significant challenges and changes in circumstance on a personal level as well. Whether it's related to health, children, relationships, or other parts of our lives, change is certainly a part of our lives. The Lobster Tale article, below, is about keeping a healthy perspective on change. -Tom Keil

A Lobster Tale: Shed Your Shell and Grow By Harvey Mackey

How does a lobster grow? The only way is for the lobster to shed its shell at regular intervals. When its body begins to feel cramped inside the shell, the lobster instinctively looks for a reasonably safe spot to rest while the hard shell comes off and the pink membrane just inside forms the basis of the new shell. But no matter where a lobster goes for this shedding process, it is vulnerable. It can get tossed against a coral reef or eaten by a fish. In other words, the lobster has to risk its life in order to grow.

The lobster can teach us that the only way to endure the passage of time is to know that we are growing and changing. We all know when our shells have gotten too tight. We are doing the same old things and beginning to feel bored. Or we are doing things we hate to do and are feeling stifled in our shells.

Some of us continue to smother in old shells that are no longer useful or productive. That way we can at least feel safe. Others are luckier. Even though we know we will be vulnerable, we realize that we have to take risks or suffocate. Sometimes it's risky not to take a risk.

Growing old is mandatory; growing is optional. Most people want to improve themselves. Not too many are willing to work at it. They haven't learned that of all our human resources, one of the most valuable is the desire to improve. One of the biggest problems in continuing to grow is people get in a comfort zone. This restricts their growth. They get in the habit of saying no to new experiences. Life becomes habit rather than experiences. How many times have you said or heard others say, "We've always done it that way. Why change?" Seeking fresh ideas, exciting opportunities or ways to improve yourself is the key to successfully maneuvering changes we face. Remember, we're in education all our life. Now is a good time to exercise your opportunities, or shed your shell like the lobster in order to be open to new and better adventures.

Teacher's: Share your Thoughts, Success and Ideas

Each month we will feature a question for teachers. These questions are meant to spark some creativity and feedback to see what other teachers are doing. We will post some of the responses in following month's HR Focus. Please email your answers to amundell@usd263.k12.ks.us. Each teacher submitting comments will be entered into a prize drawing. Deadline is December 4th.

Should class be fun?

Here is November's question and some responses:

How do I encourage students to be active/interested?

- A frequently asked question by students is, "Why do I have to know this stuff?" My objective as a teacher is to always be able to answer that question. I feel that if I am not able to answer that question or if the answer is simply, "you have to know it for the test," then I am not providing a service to my students, and I may be teaching things to my kids that aren't worthwhile. By teaching content that is "worthwhile" or real-world, I feel that the students can become active learners and stay interested in the subject at hand. Another key to encouraging students to be active/interested is to make sure that the teacher is enthusiastic about what they're teaching. If a teacher doesn't have a love of the content area, then why should the kids? There is always going to be a certain topic in a subject area that isn't as exciting as others, but if it's important (worthwhile or real-world) for the students to know, then there is a way to get kids interested. It's kind of like the saying that goes, "smile, it's contagious;" I think that if the teacher is active/interested, then it will catch on for the student. - Denise Woods
- From the first day, demonstrate and talk about your own enthusiasm for the course material, and how it effects you personally
- Look for ways to connect the material to the lives of your students. For example: if you are teaching a current events class, bring in examples of issues going on in the area where your students live.
- Use current event articles, editorials from local newspapers, or examples from your own life that illustrate your points. Solicit these examples from your students.
- Think of questions you can ask about the material that make students think about the subject matter, even if they have not read the material. While students may not have read the biography of Martin Luther King, they can talk about what life must have been like for an African American living at that time in history. Then, during class, attach statements that come out of their mouths to the reading, so they want to go back and read about their own ideas.
- Create a "need to know." As you are preparing your lesson plans, ask yourself - why would a student need to know this? This helps you think about material in terms of its relevance to students' lives.

**Congrats to Denise Woods,
winner of a \$25 gift certificate to location of her choice!!**

Getting to Know Our Team

This month we will have the privilege of featuring one of our wonderful teachers **Kassie Witt**.

Kassie is a second grade teacher at Munson and has been with the district for three years. The most important aspect of her job is to care for her students.

Kassie has always lived in Mulvane and has attended Kindergarten through 12th grade in USD 263.

When asked who in her school career made a great impact on her life was she answered “Kris Carson, her passion for teaching was very inspiring!” Growing up in Mulvane, Kassie had great memories of her family traveling to different sporting events for her brother, sister & herself.

These days Kassie continues to live in Mulvane and enjoys playing with her daughter Regan (4 months), playing volleyball, shooting baskets, playing golf and she loves to fish!

A fun fact about Kassie is that if she could have any super power she wanted, she would like the ability to fly, just to see how it is! Thanks for sharing!

American Education Appreciation Week

A luncheon was held at the schools during American Education Week for the teachers and employees of the district as an extra ‘thank you’ for the services you provide. We thought this was a great way to express our thanks for all the hard work each of you do. The Central Office staff really enjoyed serving and meeting all of you. Please contact us if you did not receive a Wildcat bowl. Because of a scheduling conflict, the High School lunch will be on December 4th.

Teacher Education & Licensure (TEAL)

Implements Teacher Identification Numbers:

All educators in Kansas have been assigned a unique teacher identification number. New educators will be assigned a number when they apply for their first Kansas license. The identification number will appear on both the employer and employee copy of all licenses. This identification number replaces the social security number that formerly was printed on the employer copy of the license. Educators will still be required to use their social security number on licensure application forms.

DECEMBER

HR Mission Statement:

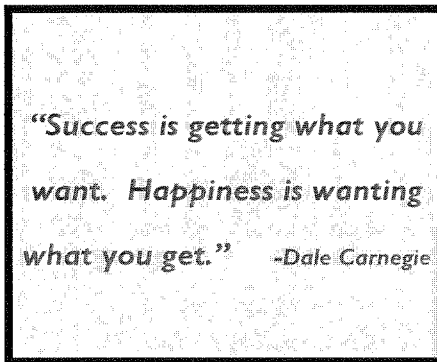
The Human Resources Department will support the Mulvane School District vision by delivering superior customer service through recruiting, training, developing, and assisting our people in caring, trustworthy and timely manner.

Important Dates

- December 1
Classified Pay Period Ends
- December 6
Classified Time Cards Due
- December 10
Board Meeting 7pm
- December 21
Pay Day
- December 23 - January 1
Winter Break - No School

Anniversaries

- Mae Beth Hatfield - 6 years
- Corrina Hein - 6 years
- Debra Cooke - 2 years
- Kistin Tussey - 2 years



Birthday's

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Patricia Sargeant | Judy Wilcox | Heather Brown |
| Carol Pagels | Patricia Morgan | Connie Akred |
| Edwin Pennington | Brenda Martin | Ashley Waggoner |
| Tracy Schenk-Lara | Tawnie Spencer | Lynn Bowen |
| Thong Phengvongsa | James Lewis | Amy Vore |
| Caryl Chacey | David Fennewald | Vicki Hillhouse |
| Marcia Pietro | Debra Jelinek | Dustin Rhodes |
| William Nunn | Mike Wherrell | Trisha Branson |
| Paula Wing | Kassie Witt | Becky Misak |

Mulvane: Great Schools, Great People!

Inspiring Excellence Award

Jan Anderson, Linda Dinkel, Christy Gutzmer, Vickie Hackley & LeAnn Pierce (MHS Secretarial Staff) - These ladies are on the “front line” at MHS and whether they are managing enrollment and fees, absences and attendance issues, student grades, finances and lunch accounts, schedules, announcements, or phone calls, they are always friendly, helpful and professional. We appreciate the manner in which they take care of our staff, student, and parent needs, questions, and concerns. Thank you for all you do for Mulvane High School! It is appreciated.

Transportation

We would like to recognize a “behind the scenes” position in our district who most of you may not have had the opportunity to meet. **Fred Fox** is our new mechanic at Transportation. He brings over 20 years of mechanic experience to the district. Thanks for keeping our vehicles in working order Fred!

Has your colleague done something to deserve recognition? Is he or she described as: Diligent, Hardworking, Reliable and Dedicated? Might this person also show: Initiative, Extraordinary Teamwork and Leadership? Is he or she known in the district for providing Excellent Customer Service, Positive Attitude, and outstanding work ethics? If so, reward this employee by nominating him or her for an “Inspiring Excellence Award? For more information go to www.usd263.com or contact the HR office today!

Cold Weather Warnings

As the temperature begins to cool down some people may begin to explore alternative ways to heat their homes. Here are some safety tips on space heaters and fireplaces.

Space heater tips:

- Place the heater on a level, hard and nonflammable surface, not on rugs or carpets or near bedding or drapes.
- To prevent the risk of fire, NEVER leave a space heater on when you go to sleep or place a space heater close to any sleeping person.

- Have gas and kerosene space heaters inspected annually to ensure proper operation.
- Do not use a kitchen range or oven to heat your house because it could overheat or generate excessive carbon monoxide.
- Be aware that manufactured homes require specially-designed heating equipment.
- Have a smoke alarm with fresh batteries on each level of the house, inside every bedroom, and outside the bedrooms in each sleeping area. In addition, have a carbon monoxide alarm outside the bedrooms in each separate sleeping area.

Fireplace safety tips:

- Have flues and chimneys inspected before each heating season for leakage and blockage by creosote or debris.
- Open the fireplace damper before lighting the fire and keep it open until the ashes are cool.
- Never use gasoline, charcoal lighter or other fuel to light or relight a fire because the vapors can explode.
- Keep a screen or glass enclosure around a fireplace to prevent sparks or embers from igniting flammable materials.

Employee Classifieds

Introducing our new Employee Classified section! This section is to be used for items for sale or services available / wanted. Each item / service will be included subject to the discretion of the HR department. We will enter your item / service and a contact number. The contact number must be an after hours number. Business should not be conducted during district time. This is a resource for district employees only. Please send the items you'd like to be submitted to amundell@usd263.k12.ks.us. Names will not be included in classified.

For Sale:

Piano - \$100, 529-1008

Services Wanted or Needed:

Some examples are tutoring, yard work, babysitting.



Stay tuned for next month's HR Triva!