

Be Greater than the Average

*Tammy Mangus, Superintendent of Schools*



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Dear Member of the Monticello community,

June is the New Year's Eve of the school year. As I explained in September, there are certain aspects of the New Year's festivities that are "standard protocol" as part of the celebration. These include:

- Reminiscing about the prior year's memories
- Bringing folks together to celebrate the event
- Resolving to make improvements in order to allow our lives to be richer

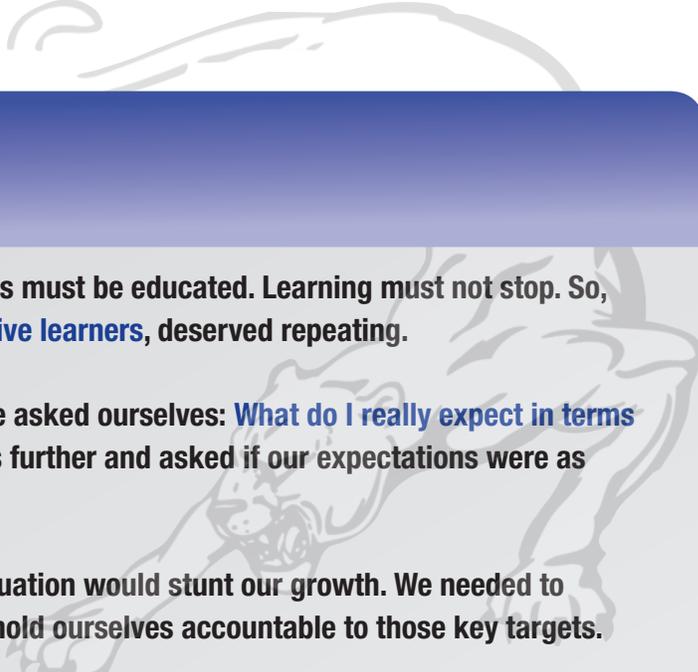
In the world of education, our New Year protocols are no different. So, in light of tradition – and in honor of David Letterman's retirement this past month – here is the Top 10 list of this year's essential habit and questions, to serve as a reminder of the goals we discussed throughout the school year.

**10.** We committed to be **greater than the average**. After all, we are Monticello. Don't we deserve to be? In order to ensure that we became greater than the average, we asked ourselves: Am I crazy enough to make a difference?

**9.** When the going gets tough, the tough get growing. We pledged to realize that problems are nothing more than challenges, and challenges, when they cannot be solved, can certainly be avoided by finding a new path toward our greater goal. As we did this, we asked ourselves this essential question: **How far am I willing to grow?**

**8.** **Be intentional. Be solutions oriented. Be inspiring.** These habits centered around what true leaders do.

**7.** Of course, New Year's resolutions typically crash and burn at some point. To stick our landing, we needed to realize that oftentimes we, as adults, do not display key traits to strengthen our practices and gather new information. To "check ourselves" in this we asked: Do I expect someone to feed me information in a desirable format in order to learn, or **do I intend to be a learner each and every day in every situation** by wrangling information to maximize my own learning so it can be used to proceed forward? If we could say yes to this, than we were, indeed, powerful, passionately aggressive learners and educators.



**6.** Educators educate, but to be successful, educators must be educated. Learning must not stop. So, our most important habit, **to be passionately aggressive learners**, deserved repeating.

**5.** As the depths of February knocked at our door, we asked ourselves: **What do I really expect in terms of outcomes for Monticello?** We challenged ourselves further and asked if our expectations were as high as they should be for the outcomes we sought.

**4.** In March, we realized that micromanaging any situation would stunt our growth. We needed to **simplify, center our work around simple targets** and hold ourselves accountable to those key targets.

**3.** By April, the long winter had exhausted everyone. We pulled up our bootstraps, hunkered down, and reminded ourselves that essential learning revolved around three timeless points of knowledge that all students needed to master - **reading, writing and arithmetic.**

**2.** May brought about key reminders centered around the importance of **innovation.**

Our year had come full circle. And so...

## **1. Let's celebrate!**

Let's calculate and PROVE that we are innovators. Let's PROVE that we have **greater than the average courage and commitment** to our kiddos. The countdown begins now. As we ring out the old and bring in the new, let's remember that we get to decide how we feel at this very moment next year, by using the what we learned from this year to build an even better next year.

Be well,

**Tammy Mangus**  
Superintendent of Schools