

The Monti Navigator

Be Greater than the Average



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Success Breeds Sunshine

When you live in the Northeast, it can be tough to find inspiration in the depths of February. The rush and the pull of the holidays have disappeared, and we are left with the cloudy, dreary realization that it will be at least two months -- a full 60 days -- before we can count on clearer skies and toastier weather.

Indeed, the Northeast can be a difficult place to reside in these late winter/early spring months. With approximately 200 cloudy days a year, most of them settling in between January and April, we clearly need to find a way to create our own sunshine if we want to break through the clouds.

We don't accomplish this by waiting for others to inspire us. We don't accomplish this by pointing blame in any given direction. We don't accomplish this with band-aid-driven actions that allow for temporary respite.

We DO accomplish this by taking responsibility for the world around us and by inspiring ourselves to set and get bold goal outcomes -- and from the **TENACITY** to keep going despite potential roadblocks, hiccups and situational issues.

Indeed, success breeds a bit of sunshine.

Remember:

Inspired folks have a laser-like focus on their bold goal -- they elude negativity and attack challenges that block their pathway to success with kindness and integrity. Make no mistake, this sort of thinking doesn't make life any easier -- we are all aware that it takes a ton of energy to combust and yield light. But those who have been lucky enough to have felt the warmth that this light generates work tirelessly to continue its shine.

To demonstrate how this level of inspiration is powerful enough to alter perspectives, let's take a look at our current proficiency rates. We have **BOLD GOALS** set to reach 65% proficiency in reading level and in math competency by 2020, but we still stand with more than 40 percentage points separating us from that goal. With those statistics in mind, we can join one of two camps.

Camp one:

Folks in this camp point fingers in any direction other than towards themselves. They tell themselves that the failure of these children rests with their parents or with those who educated them in the past, who clearly failed to impart the skills these students need to achieve. They entertain the idea that these kiddos "don't fit into" the regular program and that their only chance at success lies with a label or with an alternative educational experience. These folks also entertain the idea that some other entity must take responsibility for the failures of these students, absolving themselves of any responsibility and trapping themselves in the gloomy cycle of endless

failure.

Camp two:

Folks in this camp look every single conflict straight in the eye and accept it as their own. They relentlessly seek to improve outcomes for their students (and for themselves) through achievement! They are inspired by the thought that EVERY educator matters in the success of each student, regardless of any student's level of learning when the year begins. Indeed, these folks use baselines as springboards towards powerful growth. They act on the thought that if we are to change the behaviors, actions and habits of our students, we must EDUCATE them rather than seeking to place blame. They act on the thought that intentional, nimble, evidence-based solutions will improve the success rates of our children and the lives of the children who are touched by these TENACIOUS individuals are forever changed, because education is the great equalizer.

Yes, these Northeast winters can certainly be dreary, but despite our zip code, know that the sun shines much more brightly on the address of camp two. So, let's - if we don't already reside there - move! If we do, we might all find ourselves in need of some shades.

Be well,
Tammy Mangus