Superintendent’s Corner

September 13, 2019

The concept of time, and our devotion to it, is certainly interesting. While students have only been in school for two weeks, one can already note changes in their perception of time. The first day, everyone looked excited to be back, to see their friends, catch up on activities, and become involved in the school year. By the second day, some were already upset at having to get up in the morning, already thinking of the next vacation, but most were still excited to be in school. As we progress through the year, that differentiation between students will continue. Those students who are involved in activities and those who value their education will continue to be more positive than those who are simply marking time between life events.

A similar perception of time happens in the days preceding vacations, with time seeming to slow down in the last couple of days before starting a vacation week. What also happens during this time is a difficulty in concentrating on what’s happening in the classroom while being easily distracted by what may happen during their time off. Of course, some vacation periods are more prone to distraction than others. The holiday and summer vacation breaks are high on the list for most of our students. The time before school lets out for the summer is particularly difficult when we need to make up days due to inclement weather as the weather becomes nicer, the buildings become warmer, seniors have already graduated and then we add on days. Perhaps there is something to be said for those schools that have transitioned to a year-round schedule, with vacations sprinkled throughout the year, beyond just how much students lose in learning over a 10-week summer vacation.

As a student, some classes may feel long and drawn-out, the months may drag by, and then suddenly they’re walking across the stage for their high school graduation. Speeches at these events always seem to highlight not only what they’ve learned, the great experiences they’ve had and the need to keep in touch moving forward, but also the universal theme of how fast those years have passed.

Of course, if you’re a parent, time morphs in even more striking ways. One day your child is born, then they’re graduating, and it seems as if little or no time has passed (though some days and events seem to take so much longer than your watch indicates). A similar experience faces educators who stay in a district over time, when the children of their students are then students or when their students become their colleagues.

It’s said that time is relative, with so much based upon your experiences and outlook. Time has certainly been a subject of a number of songs, many of which I’ve used in my comments during past graduations. Country musician Trace Adkins’ song “You’re Going to Miss This” echoes what our seniors speak about, reflecting on their years in school. And for those of us with more years of experience, how well does Kenny Chesney’s refrain of, “Life goes faster than you think—don’t blink” summarize your thoughts?

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