

The Spartan Sentinel

...inspiring and equipping...

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Team,

Good morning! As you know, I'm a fairly big fan of quotes. I think it's awesome how a quote can inspire you, challenge you, convict you, and really change your life. Sometimes the great ones are very "deep," sometimes they're funny, sometimes they have so much meaning behind the words. Well, this morning, I want to share with you a life-altering quote:

"Everyone has a plan 'till they get punched in the mouth."

--Mike Tyson

I know life-changing, right?! While this may not be the most eloquent quote in the world, I think it does highlight a key characteristic of effective teams. ***In order to be successful in reaching their goals, effective teams make adjustments when things don't go as planned.***

These last couple of weeks, we've been "punched in the mouth" by the weather here in Northern Indiana. We haven't had a full week of school since Christmas break and between the days last week and Monday and Tuesday this week we were out almost a full week! I'll be honest, the extra time with my family has been nice, but the reality is the days off of school have really put kink in our "plans" here at school. We have our *mission to inspire and equip all students to continuously acquire and apply knowledge and skills while pursuing their dreams and enriching the lives of others*. We've set goals for this year that will help us achieve that mission, and we've made plans to achieve those goals. We've made plans for units, for lessons, for common formative assessments, for success time, for intervention, and for assessment.

Here's the truth: our mission and our goals have not changed just because our schedule has been crazy lately; however, our plans *have* to change if we want to be successful in reaching those goals and fulfilling our mission. We've been punched in the mouth, the plans we had are gone, and the question is, what are we going to do about it?

We know that effective teams aren't immune from things not going their way. But *what sets effective teams apart from ineffective teams is what they do when things don't go their*

way. Effective teams collaborate and make adjustments, and in the end, they still reach their goals, and fulfill their mission.

We know that instructional time is a precious commodity here at Jefferson. We do our best to protect it and make the most of it. The reality is, adding days on to the end of the school year satisfies the instructional time requirement for a school year, but those days at the end just aren't as important as the days we have right now. At the end of the year, Acuity, Las Links, IREAD and ISTEP are all completed, and while those are still valuable instructional days, the measures we use for determining if we've reach our goals will have passed. So we've got to collaborate and adjust. We can't let this punch in the mouth keep us on the mat. We get up, and we fight back. Some things that will help us as we make adjustments:

Choose to stay positive—refrain from complaining

Give each other grace—assume the best of each other

Be flexible—when things change last minute, roll with it

Take care of yourself—maintain a healthy balance

Team, the truth is there isn't another group of people I'd rather go through this journey with! We've set lofty goals and I'm excited to watch how we'll adjust and be successful despite the fact that our schedule has been significantly disrupted by weather lately. What's great about these newsletters is I'm never communicating things you don't already know. I simply encourage you to keep moving forward. It really is a privilege to be on this team with you. Together, let's make the time we have with these kids great!

