

Kay Smith

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The essence of our effort to see that every child has a chance must be to assure each an equal opportunity, not to become equal, but to become different—to realize whatever unique potential of body, mind and spirit he or she possesses.

—John Fischer

Philosophy of Education

- ⌘ Every child has the ability to learn.
- ⌘ Every child has the right to a free appropriate public education.
- ⌘ Students must be participants in their education and own up to the responsibilities this implies.
- ⌘ Learning is an activity that should be enjoyed by all.
- ⌘ Learning is lifelong.

Philosophy of Leadership

- ★ Good leadership takes courage and commitment.
- ★ Good leaders know and communicate the goals of the program and the entire school system.
- ★ Good leaders learn from both good and bad experiences.
- ★ Good leaders plan their time well in advance.
- ★ Good leaders continue learning about their field of expertise.
- ★ Good leaders listen to parents, teachers, administrators and students.
- ★ Good leaders regularly evaluate their contribution toward the school system's goals.

Don't be afraid to take a big step if one is indicated. You can't cross a chasm in two small jumps.

—David Lloyd George



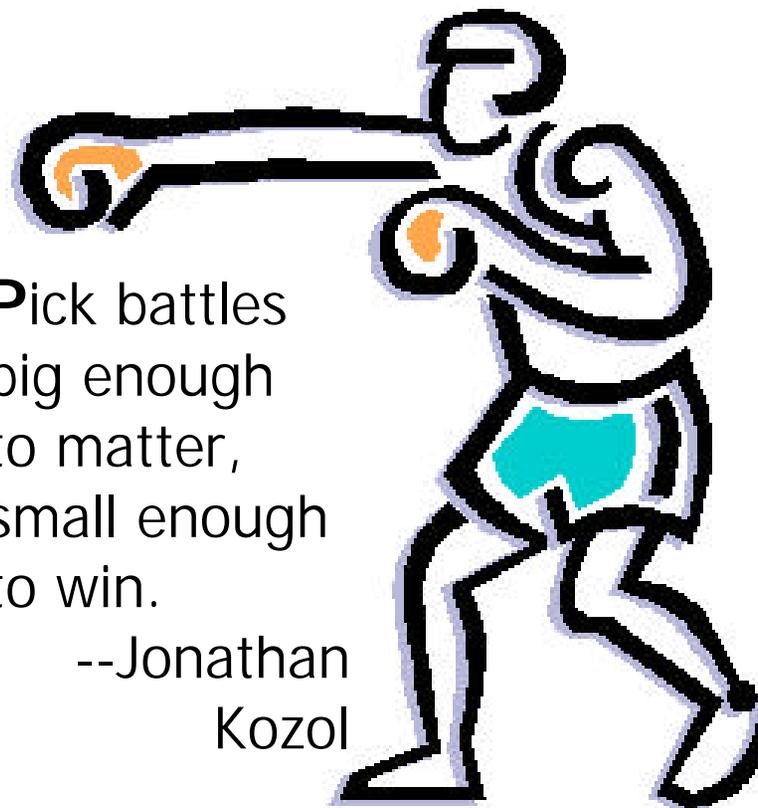
Successes

In our co-op, we had a student diagnosed with ADHD and learning disabilities. His mother had been murdered by drug dealers and his father had abandoned him. His great aunt knew he needed help but she did not have legal custody of him. We helped her work through the system, made sure he received Medicaid and SSI. He was then able to enter residential treatment to deal with his emotional problems.

What I learned: Special Education Directors have the power to change students' lives through their dedication to the job at hand and the goals of the school system.

Pick battles
big enough
to matter,
small enough
to win.

--Jonathan
Kozol



Mistakes are
a fact of life;
It is the response
to error
that counts.
-Nikki Giovanni

Mistakes

Our psychological examiner worked in our cooperative once a week, testing students, completing the reports within ten days. As time went by, he became somewhat lax with the reports and had trouble making it to school with enough time to test all of the students. Rather than try to be more directive and supportive, I watched and criticized almost everything he did. We had rounds of meetings with superintendents and a growing personnel file. It was a battle. Eventually, we worked things out and he still works with the cooperative. We grew to respect each other more, but it was a long hard fight.

What I learned: I wish I had been more directive and supportive in the first place. That way, the psychological examiner would have known that we were on the same team, not personal adversaries. He could have grown and I could have grown, without finger pointing and anger. If I had it to do over again, I would have had a more personal touch and let him know that the difficulties he was facing could and would be overcome.

Goals

- * Present the result of my dissertation study to other special education administrators.
- * Do some collaborative work with a local university.
- * Realize the potential of information technology in the workplace.
- * Become a valuable team member with principals, teachers, parents and students.
- * Raise a family.

Whatever you can do, or
dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power
and magic in it

—Goethe



Personal

- ⌘ Enthusiastically married to Kevin Smith since 1996.
- ⌘ Internet surfer.
- ⌘ College football and basketball fan.
- ⌘ Favorite authors: Jonathan Kellerman, Whitney Otto, Milan Kundera and Barbara Wood.
- ⌘ Enjoy classical, blues and classic rock music.
- ⌘ Favorite outdoor activity: strolling through the zoo.

Often people attempt to live their lives backwards; they try to have more things, or more money in order to do more of what they want, so they will be happier.

The way it actually works is the reverse. You must first be who you really are, then do what you need to do, in order to have what you want.

—Margaret Young

The most important function of education at any level is to develop the personality of the individual and the significance of his life to himself and to others. This is the basic architecture of a life; the rest is ornamentation and decoration of the structure.
—Grayson Kirk



Education

VT Ed.D. Virginia Tech July 1997

Major: Administration & Supervision of Special Education

Dissertation: To Bill or Not to Bill: Medicaid Billing for Special Education Related Services in Arkansas Public Schools

What I learned: I can persevere and accomplish any difficult task. There is light at the end of every tunnel.

VT CAGS Virginia Tech November 1992

Major: Administration & Supervision of Special Education

What I learned: Special Education has many facets; IDEA is the result of the long, hard work of many people and more work will be needed in the future to carry it forward for future generations of students with disabilities.

HSU MSE Henderson State University August 1990

Major: Special Education/Mildly Handicapped

What I learned: Special Education is where I belong.

HSU BSE Henderson State University May 1987

Major: Secondary Social Science

What I learned: I can be an important part of the educational community.

Professional Affiliations

- * Council for Exceptional Children
 - Council for Administrators of Special Education
 - Division for Learning Disabilities
 - Council for Children with Behavior Disorders
- * American Association of School Administrators
 - Arkansas Association of Special Education Administrators

