

Family Living

Let's
Talk



This School Year, Expect the Best

This is a good time to talk about an important element to help children succeed in school. That element is expectation; it exerts a tremendous influence on what kids are able to achieve in school. Take a wide walk around a rich field of research and you'll see that schools can improve student learning when they urge teachers and students to set their sights high—and mean it.

While just about every school, teacher, and parent would say that they do in fact hold high expectations for their children, what is declared might not truly be believed. It is the *belief* that moves the child.

Teacher expectations of students tend to be self-fulfilling. The power of belief in you by someone you respect becomes a propelling force to believe in yourself. Yes, you *can* do this. But when students aren't expected to do well, it turns out that most often they don't.

Just as students' belief in themselves can translate to low or high performance, teacher beliefs and behaviors toward students can affect how students perform in school. Research shows changes in teachers' nonverbal behavior depend on what they believe or assume about students. Whether or not it's intentional, teachers smile, lean toward the student, and look directly at them more frequently when they believe they are interacting with someone of high ability. But researchers report that highly effective teachers are tenacious in their high expectations for *all* their students—they don't care who they are, where they come from, or what their family circumstances may be. Doesn't matter—they are expected to do well in school.

It's a curious thing: In our country, many of us think that innate ability is what makes us successful academically. High ability equals

high performance—low ability equals low performance. And, like the color of our eyes and skin, that's what it is, and that's that. But in many other countries, hard work and effort are believed to be what makes the difference in academic achievement. High expectations for all govern the approach, and if kids aren't succeeding, it's not because they're not smart enough to do it, it's because they're not working hard enough at it.

And interestingly, despite the propensity of teenagers to complain about demanding teachers, a 1997 national survey by Public Agenda showed that American teenagers equated hard work with success and satisfaction, were not pleased by those teachers who demanded less, and resented it when rules were not enforced.

It would be silly to suggest that just having high expectations for students is all that's needed for students to succeed. In the carrying out of any school day, teaching and learning is an enormously complex process. While all students can learn, the teaching and learning process indeed varies. As researchers discover more and more about how we learn, and how this new knowledge can be applied to help all kids succeed, it enlarges the context and the content of the learning experience.

High expectations are a launching pad, a base from which to aim for the stars, even though—like a space capsule seeking its destination—there are adjustments and course corrections on the way to achieving the student-learning mission.

This column is provided as a public service by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, a nonprofit institution working with schools and communities in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.

Children's rights signed into law

Governor puts pen to law protecting children at home

Gov. John Kitzhaber has signed into law three landmark bills from the 1997 Legislature that stress the rights of children to a safe home and provide more timely help to youngsters who have been abused and neglected.

This is the first time that certain children's rights have been spelled out in state law.

Senate Bill 689 is known as the "Best Interest of the Child" bill. It provides a consistent framework for the judicial and child protection systems to determine whether a child

dependent on the state for care should be in state custody, be returned home or be placed permanently with another family.

"Oregon is on record today as saying that children are our top priority," said Gov. Kitzhaber. "We've issued that wake-up call: It's not all right to mistreat our children. Nor is it acceptable to let them bounce in and out of state custody. We must protect them while working hard to strengthen their troubled families."

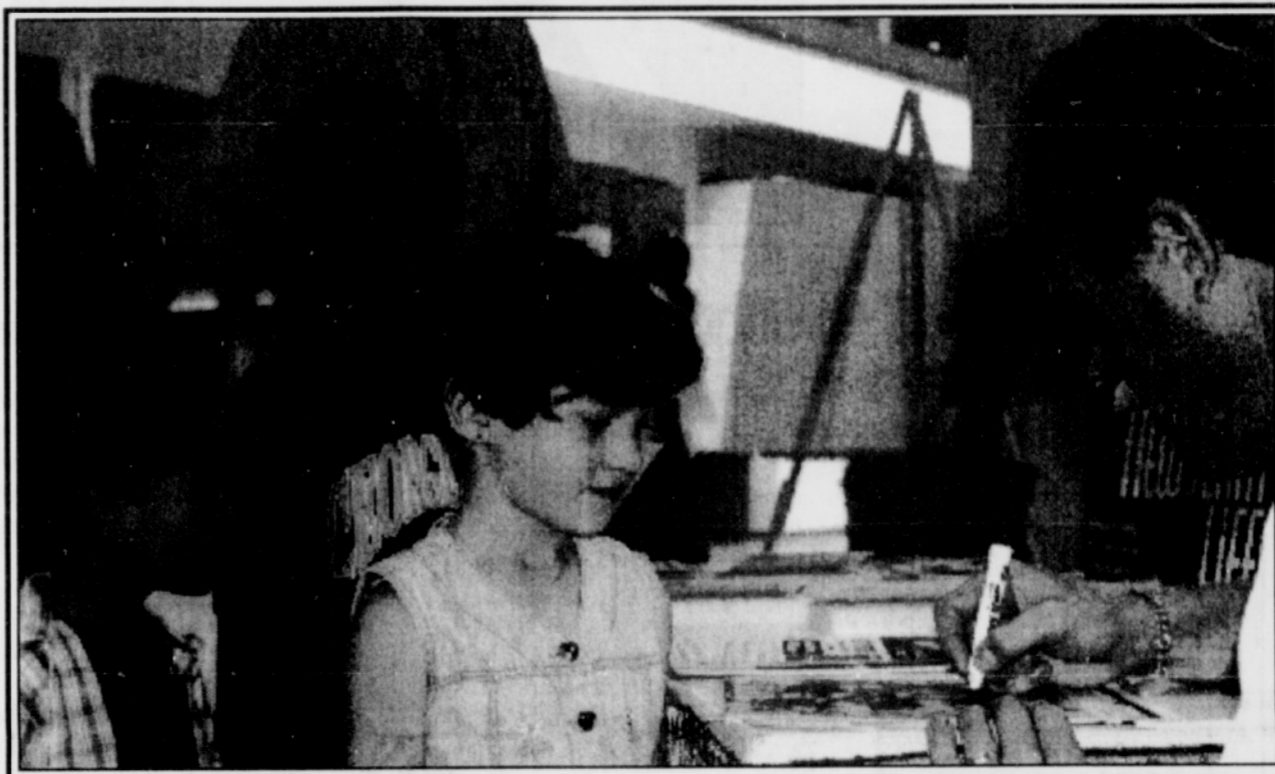
The new law requires courts and the State Office for Services to Chil-

dren and Families (SCF) to respond to a child's needs within the child's sense of time. Until now decisions about whether a child should become a ward of the state, return home or be permanently placed elsewhere were made on a timeline serving adults involved in the process, including judges, parents, and child welfare workers.

Under the new law, a child either will be safely back home or well along the road to adoption or permanent guardianship within 15 months of being identified as needing state

protection. Currently, Oregon children spend an average of more than 30 months in the state system before adoption.

"This legislation puts a clear timeframe around our goal of helping children stay safely with their own families or placing them with another safe, stable family," said Kay Toran, director of SCF, Oregon's child welfare agency. "SCF and parents must work diligently in the first 12 months to turn around an abusive home situation or see that the child finds a safe home."



Star struck

Former National Football league tight end Bob Adams meets with kids at the Clackamas Town Center where he was endorsing the book "New Slant on Life."

Back to school vision checks offered

The Pacific University College of Optometry Eye and Vision Centers are again providing a program of free back-to-school vision screenings for all ages including infants, pre-schoolers, school-age children, and adults.

According to eye doctors, vision screenings are especially beneficial in

assuring proper development of learning skills for infants and children if they are received prior to or early in the school year. Screenings take about 30 minutes and provide important information about clarity of vision, eye health, and eye coordination -- factors that are essential for good vision and healthy

eyes. Screenings are especially beneficial for younger children whose learning skills -- such as reading and writing -- and self esteem in the classroom depend on good vision and healthy eyes. Screenings are also available for area schools, businesses and community organizations through Pacific's off-site

screening program.

Pacific University's Eye and Vision Centers offer weekday, evening and weekend hours, with locations throughout the greater Portland area. For more information and to schedule a screening at the Pacific University Eye and Vision Center near you, call 357-5800.

Book bags filled with supplies

School hasn't started yet and they are already putting papers and pencils in bookbags at King Elementary School, 5906 N.E. Sixth. Only this time it is the adults getting ready for school.

The Cosco Corp. donated 800

Save money on your water-sewer

The Community Energy Project will be holding a free water conservation workshop.

Find out how to save money on your water, sewer, and plumbing bills. All participants will receive a free water conservation kit worth \$25. These materials can help you save \$80 or more per year on your water-sewer bill.

Topics include: understanding a water-sewer bill, detecting water leaks, repairing leaky faucets and toilets and using water conservation materials. To register, please call the Community Energy project at 284-6827.

College prep institute talks with students

Incoming high school seniors who are interested in attending college are invited to take part in the Senior PLUS Institute, which will take place Aug. 27-28 at Portland State University.

The Institute, sponsored by Educational Talent Search/Project Plus takes place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day in the auditorium of Shattuck Hall, 1914 SW Park Ave.

bookbags and the supplies to fill them, to King students.

Throughout the day on Friday, a team of volunteers filled the bags. The assembly line was constructed in the school cafeteria.

On the first day of school each

student at King will receive a bookbag.

You can still join this volunteer effort or cheer on the sidelines. Contact Joe Malone, principal of King Elementary at 916-6456, for more information.

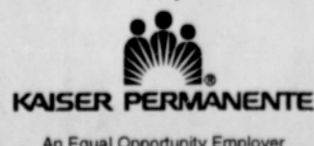
K A I S E R P E R M A N E N T E



HONORS AND ENCOURAGES DIVERSITY

Kaiser Permanente is enriched by the contributions of individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds. We're enhancing our workforce to better reflect the people we serve.

To review current job openings, come by our Employment Office, 500 NE Multnomah St., (use first floor, Grand Avenue entrance) Portland, OR 97232. Or, call (503) 813-4700. Before being considered as an applicant, candidates are required to complete an on-line application. On-line applications accepted M-F, 8am - 3:30pm.



P
POWELL'S BOOKS
Over 1 million Used & New Books
1005 W Burnside, downtown Portland
503-228-4651
www.powells.com

Maya Angelou
EVEN THE STARS LOOK LONESOME
RANDOM HOUSE

This wise book is the wonderful continuation of the bestselling *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now*. *Even the Stars Look Lonesome* is Maya Angelou talking of the things she cares about most, imparting the lessons of a lifetime.

Free Vision Screenings

OFFERED FOR BACK-TO-SCHOOL



More than ever, children depend on a healthy visual system and good eye health for development of essential learning skills such as reading and writing.

As a community service, Pacific University College of Optometry Eye and Vision Centers and affiliate clinics, provide free vision screenings for infants, pre-schoolers, school-age children, and adults. Although screenings do not take the place of a complete vision exam, they do provide important information about visual clarity, eye health, and eye coordination ... information key in identifying and treating the vision and eye health problems of children. Eye doctors stress the importance of regular vision care prior to or early in the school year to detect and treat vision problems before children fall behind in their school work.

Our free vision screenings take about 30 minutes and do not cause discomfort. Screenings may be scheduled during evenings, weekends and regular business hours. Interpreter services can be arranged upon request. We also provide vision screenings for schools, businesses, and community organizations.

NEW EVENING AND WEEKEND HOURS

PACIFIC UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY EYE & VISION CENTERS

NORTHEAST PORTLAND

248-3821

5329 NE MLK Jr. Blvd., Portland