

Letters from page A13

enced. But let us not delude ourselves into thinking this is Camelot.

Again, let me express my heartfelt gratitude to most of you, my concerns to a few, with the hope that we may all recognize improvements can be made and are caring enough to effect change where necessary.

Mark T. Morgenson
Farmington

Set record straight

In a recent letter, Ms. Kohnert discusses the alleged disregard of parental rights by the administration (and by logical extension, the teachers) of Flanders Elementary School. This concerns two supposed events: first, that every class in school was informed of the Mt. Morris shooting; and second, that a second/third grade class was given a detailed explanation of the recent suicide of a

local high school student. I disagree.

My daughter is in that class. The teacher had no intention of mentioning the suicide. To set the record straight, it was a student in the class who brought up the suicide subject during the social studies segment of their day. The teacher had no choice but to respond and her response was brief, and very respectful, and did not include any other explanation of methods. I have talked to my daughter and I am satisfied of this.

Given that our daughter is a normal girl who can hear, read, write, and comprehend, we know that we cannot always shield her from life's realities. Whether from TV, a newspaper (such as reading Ms. Kohnert's letter or mine), or more commonly from school yard and neighborhood kid gossip, kids are inadvertently exposed to

all kinds of subject matter. So how should parents prevent the news of tragedies, unfairness, crime, illness and death from reaching their children's ears?

We could deprive our daughter by living in a 10-by-10 cabin in the wilds with no electricity, TV, newspapers, or social interactivity. That is as drastic as not caring at all about her exposure to society. Rather, we choose to respect our parental duties by assisting her in beginning to comprehend the complex social and technological society she is already encountering. She knows about Oklahoma, Jon-Benet, the president's lies(s), Columbine, and Elian and his mother - all without us or Flanders Elementary informing her.

So while we do not dwell on these topics, we are always curious to hear what she

knows or has heard. Then we are able to briefly discuss the subject at her level of understanding. We are gratified at the budding maturity and insight of her thoughts and have great fun with our daughter and friend.

All of the educators at Flanders who have contact with my daughter are great partners in the enterprise. Many are parents themselves who have chosen to work in child development and education. If you ask me, that takes a special kind of person.

Thanks to the administrators and teachers at Flanders Elementary for their devotion and integrity in providing schooling, care, and love to my daughter. Flanders beware! In a couple of years you'll have to deal with my next daughter.

Steve Russ
Farmington

Proud of her

The staff at Flanders Elementary are proud to work for Mary Joyce Readler. She is a principal who leads by example and we feel fortunate to have her as our educational leader. She has high expectations for herself and her staff. She values each and every member of our team and insists on examining issues from everyone's point of view. Her primary concern is the welfare of the children in our building. She empowers each of us to be the best that we can be. She believes all children can learn and knows that with school personnel and parents working together, all our goals can be achieved. She instills this belief in each of us.

Mrs. Readler has made many positive changes since her arrival at Flanders. Just a few include: the development of a comprehensive early literacy program and collaborative consultation model, a strong technology component integrated

into the core curriculum, and enrichment classes for fourth and fifth grades. She has also been instrumental in improving the physical appearance of the interior and exterior of the building. Mrs. Readler always gives credit to those involved in helping with any given project. She prefers to let others "shine." She doesn't look for personal recognition but takes pride in the accomplishments derived from a team effort.

Through her effort and example, Flanders has become an excellent place for teachers to teach and children to learn! She is a dedicated individual who is admired by those who know her. Her vast knowledge and understanding of educational issues serve as a foundation for all of us. We are proud to be part of her team. Together, under her leadership, we are committed to helping all children succeed.

Pamela Green
Mary Jo Stewart
Flanders Elementary
School

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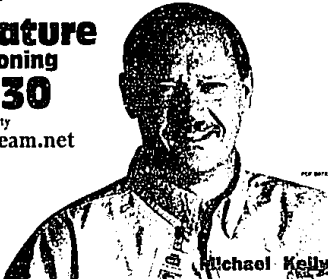
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