

Hello from Mr. Lane,

Monument has been a great experience for Martha and me. We are looking forward to the beauty of this country in Spring.

Our school family has had an interesting year to say the least, but things have settled down now and the kids seem excited to be entering the last quarter of the year. I'm sure it is bittersweet for our two seniors who will tell you they can't wait to be out of here, but in their hearts will miss the school experiences. This is a time when parents and family can be cheerleaders for their students to help them stay focused for the last quarter. It is tempting to daydream about summer, but the last weeks of school are when the teachers are trying to wrap up subjects, reteach needed areas, and make sure everyone is on track with credits. Encourage the kids to hang in there and work hard to the end.

The Board is in the process of hiring a new Superintendent, and there are several promising candidates, but they still need your help through constructive input about what type of qualities and skills are needed to lead the District and best serve the kids. What kind of person do you want in the office? Who should be the role model and representative of Monument School? Put your ideas out there on social media, or drop them off at the office or with a Board member. Even if you don't have children in the school, the Superintendent represents the community and your thoughts are needed and appreciated.

In my nearly three decades of working with children and parents, I have studied many approaches to helping kids learn – academically, emotionally and socially. By far, the best and most effective ideas come from Jim Fay's Love and Logic philosophy. I'd like to share one tip about how to best help a kid learn from their bad choices. With practice this little tip can save you a lot of emotional headaches, and at the same time allow your child to learn life skills and decision making.

Love and Logic Tip 26

When our kids mess up, we are often overcome with anger and want to punish them. The better thing to do, though, is lock in our empathy for them and let the consequences do the teaching. Parents should let their kids know they love them and how badly they feel about their decision and their problem as a result of it as soon as it happens. Before getting angry or sucked into the child's problem, try using one of the following statements:

- "What a bummer."
- "Really? I know you, and I'm sure you'll come up with something."
- "That's terrible. How are you going to handle it?"
- "Oh, no, I'm glad that's not my paper (report card, grade, late assignment, specific problem). You must feel awful. What can you do?"
- "Hmmm, that's really an interesting way of looking at it. Let me know how it turns out."
- "Wow, what a mess. Let me know what you come up with."

When we make these types of comments we don't put ourselves up against our kids; we put ourselves squarely on their side, and on the side of learning from their mistakes. They need to know we will be with them through it all but that we will not take away any of their responsibility in the process.

- I have found that the hardest part of using these statements effectively is getting trapped into more talk. It is hard to make the statement then close my mouth and walk away or apply the broken record technique of repeating the statements over and over. Try it – it is fun and won't hurt your kid a bit.