



Commissioner's

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Kentucky Commissioner of Education

Comments

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Show some love for our public schools

Back in the 1970s, there was a TV drama called Kojak. The show's star, Telly Savalas, was bald and almost always was seen with a lollipop in his mouth. He loved them almost as much as he loved to solve crimes. His ever present catch phrase, "Who loves ya baby?" was used to remind the people around him that he loved them and had their backs.

You may be wondering, why is the commissioner of education is writing about a fictional TV character from decades ago? Well, let me be more specific. This week, I want to focus on love -- not the deep emotional connection one has for another human being, but love, as in admiration and appreciation for the good job our educators are doing. So, during this Valentine's Day week, let's take time to show some love for our public schools.

Our educators work hard every day to teach and provide environments in which our students can learn. Our bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and custodians provide care and safety to our 650,000 students each day. Kentucky continues to improve because of the dedication our educators and education shareholders have shown for more than 25 years.

As an education community, we typically do not do a good job of telling our story. We allow it to be told for us, and it is typically focused on how bad things are. To be sure, we have work to do. Our achievement gap persists and we still have students performing well below their capability. However, education is also the most complex of issues. There are many factors that shape education such as school/district culture, socioeconomic status, preschool opportunity and many others. There is no easy answer to solve the issues our teachers and system deals with on a daily basis - - if there was, I guarantee we would be employing that solution.

I do believe though that there is hope. Hope that a teacher provides each time he or she steps into a classroom focused on providing each student an opportunity...hope that an administrator provides when they are focused on being instructional leaders. Keeping faith in the system we have built, changing the things that need changing, and hard work will move the system and our students forward.

So, on this Valentine's Day week, I ask our public schools out there, "Who loves ya baby?"
Let me be the first to say, I do.