

December 16, 2009

To: Smitty

From: Monty Aldrich

THOUGHTS FROM THE UNIT OFFICE...

Happy holidays! I probably won't separate church from state in this message, but hopefully I won't offend too many! In tough economic times, I know there are still tons of people out shopping and trying to get the ultimate gifts for everyone. But, if I have one wish, it would be that tough economic times might bring back some of the original reasons for this season. I've talked to a lot of people recently about this, and remember one lady telling me that they were all just going to go to their candlelight service at church then get together, pop some popcorn, watch movies, and tell old stories. No gifts, just the gift of family. No matter how many times I watch Ralphie with the new Red Ryder BB gun, it's still a Christmas feeling. No matter how many times I watch Jimmy Stewart saying, "You want me to kiss her, huh?", it's Christmas. Andy and Barney always teach us a lesson with the same Christmas rerun too.

It's been an awesome first semester at our school district. I wish everyone could see the inner works of some of the educational and social lessons that our staff lends daily. I think I've seen more personal care from our staff towards our students than ever. It's needed here and everywhere. As I've said for five years, please look into coming in to our schools and visiting a classroom or try to come and eat lunch with your child. We have become too programmed into coming in at parent/teacher conferences, open houses, and ballgames only. Find out how much school has changed. Kids are learning different things and through different methods than we ever thought of. You'll also see how much technology has governed learning. And, it's fun to walk the hallways and see kids smiling.

The School Reach system will be our primary source for any weather-related cancellations, early dismissals, major announcements, and a few other necessary incidences. Regarding weather-related cancellations, it is necessary for us to call off school for ice or snow by 6:00 a.m. This could result in you being called by the system at that time of the morning. Occasionally, we call off school the previous evening, but that decision may not be made before 10:00 p.m. So, you could potentially be called at the listed times above. Please understand that you can have "School Reach" contact numbers listed for this purpose, and keep other emergency contact numbers at each school office for individual emergency communication.

The other main source that I will contact in the event of any happenings mentioned in the previous paragraph is WNOI-FM Radio 103.9 (Flora). I am no longer contacting all other radio and television stations unless for some odd reason our School Reach system is down. WNOI also posts announcements on their website at www.wnoi.com.

One more plug...I know I've said this before, but I want to personally thank all of the emergency personnel we have that respond at anytime day or night. First responders, Sheriff's department, ambulance personnel, volunteer firemen, etc. Thanks for taking care of our kids.

I believe that's all for now. Please have a relaxing, safe, and peaceful holiday season with your loved ones.