

Eryne Jenkins
Grade 7
Postlethwait Middle School
Caesar Rodney School District
Mr. Todd Klawinski
Grade 7 Science

"Great Teaching Essay Contest"

The American dream is the act of working hard, no matter your past, to achieve something great. On this journey Mr. Klawinski has given me additional tools to achieve the American Dream.

As I took my seat in seventh grade science on August 22, 2012, I knew Mr. Klawinski would be different. His approach to teaching was unique. His innovative ways allows students to grasp information with ease. Currently we are interacting with tablets to understand our unit, "Properties of Matter". He has taught us to look at things in a whole new way. Instead of the long homework assignment, it is a key to an unknown journey. For example, in the unit Genetics we learned deoxyribonucleic acid is "the secret code of life". In order to encourage students to go the extra mile, Mr. Klawinski also rewards science bucks. They can be redeemed for exciting objects. Something as simple as offering one on one time after school three days a week makes a difference. He offers students more advanced material in order to stimulate interest. Mr. Klawinski also has a website he updates daily. His teacher website gives us access to homework, classwork, videos and recordings of our lessons. In addition, Mr. Klawinski has brought in living organisms such as snakes and plants for us to nurture. Many students have conquered their fears of these animals by joining the Creature Care Corps. The extra-

curricular activities have been a valuable resource in our science experience. The extras are what "sparked my fire" for the sciences. As this year comes to an end, I know I have made progress, a step towards Princeton University, a PHD in pediatric neurological sciences, my American dream.

Every teacher I have encountered had a different skill level and way of teaching. I believe Mr. Klawinski is helping me pave my path to the American dream, exploring science. From this experience, I am empowered and inspired to do something extraordinary.

Ella Wisniewski
F. Niel Postlethwait Middle School
Caesar Rodney School District
7th Grade
Mr. Finley; Math

The American Dream

When I think of the American Dream, I envision myself growing up and aspiring to be anything I want to be. I imagine making my own decisions and following my own path, wherever it may lead me. Many of my past teachers have guided me towards the American Dream, but the one teacher that comes promptly to mind is my current math teacher, Mr. Finley. I admired his work ethic and will from the first day of school, when he had us delve into our work straight away. He assigns homework nearly every night to ensure we are working diligently on the subject matter. Mr. Finley's low tolerance for misbehavior is quite impressive. His passion for the subject is shown through the fact that he wants each and every one of his students not just to pass, but also to succeed in his class. He shows the countless ways of how math is relevant and usable in real life. Mr. Finley teaches in a style unlike any other. He introduces new algorithms and rules in ways seventh graders will understand. Mr. Finley is not only an exceptional teacher, but he makes an effort to relate and speak to us. He is a teacher and a friend, firm yet easygoing. One of Mr. Finley's best qualities is that he does not focus on the state test. He focuses on the math, and knows that if he does his job and his students do their job, the test will handle itself. The way Mr. Finley does this reminds me of the American Dream. He doesn't plan every single aspect of the future, but he knows that if you prepare in the present, your future will inevitably unfold in front of you.