

Friday Reflection

11/2/2018

Halloween embedded in the middle of the week presented a unique dynamic. It is kind of a holiday that isn't really a holiday. I wondered how it would be acknowledged by our staff and students as there was no school wide emphasis except for not allowing masks or face paint covering. Greeting students in the morning, I noticed some students creatively dressed. However, throughout the day, I noticed proportionately more teachers dressed for the occasion. The biggest event of Halloween day for Tustin High School was an annual baseball celebration. Our boys' baseball and girls' softball teams played a co-ed double header in full costume. They used a softball that was actually soft and created a short field on the existing baseball diamond. Watching students try to maneuver in their costumes and play the game added some entertainment. Most evident was the mutual respect shown among the two teams. Watching each team play with boys and girls in such a festive setting brought a smile to my face. Knowing all the pressures our students may face at home, work, and/or school, I enjoyed watching our kids just have fun.

Club Food Fair presented itself as another festive event. ASB sponsored this fundraising opportunity that allowed clubs to sell food items in the plaza. It was great to see so many clubs represented and students participating. Students gathered, ate, and enjoyed each other's company for the event that spanned a tutorial and lunch. An additional bonus was that some groups were able to generate a little funding for their club. It is a Tiller tradition.

Halloween and the Club Food Fair were fun, but some of our students were focused on CIF competitions this week. Boys' Water Polo started the week off well in what was a heavy CIF playoff week. They outscored Warren High School in Downey by a score of 15-4. Their intentions to advance to the next round were clear from the first whistle. They continued that momentum by winning a second game in Torrance last night by another impressive score of 14-3. This means that they will compete in a quarterfinal game this Saturday at Tustin High School at 3:00 pm.

Qualifying for 3rd rounds was a thing this week as Chloe Carraway competed in her second round CIF tournament yesterday. (It turns out that this was her second time to make it this far, and not the first time as I reported last week.) What Chloe had truly never done before was qualify for the third round- that was until yesterday. She will go to Pasadena next week for a Southern California competition that will determine state qualifiers. She shot two over par on a challenging course under intense pressure which is a testament to all her hard work over the years.

Although faced with a daunting task of somehow beating the number one seed in their CIF bracket, the Tiller football team showed up with full focus and determination. After three quarters, the score was tied 7-7 to the shock of South Hills High School who brought a 10-0 record to the first-round game. Unfortunately, the remarkable upset that was brewing didn't quite materialize, but the team had much for which they should be proud. It was a challenging year in many respects, but it was obvious from watching last night that this group was united and

focused. Coach Miller, who will retire after this season, has contributed a great deal to not only the football program, but more importantly, to helping young people grow up and chart a productive course in life. His leadership and passion for young people will be missed.

At the start of the football game last night in Covina, I noticed the sky. The colors were spectacular reminding me of the many Midwestern sunsets I observed over 30 years living in that part of the world. It caused me pause to think about the transition my wife and I made in order for me to be a part of the Tiller team. Winning is great, and growing students' academic capacity is important, but it is about so much more. High School is a significant time of transition for students from childhood to adulthood. Our students face many challenges and pressures in our world today—some unique to their generation. Helping them navigate all that and develop into a quality person, prepared for the next phase of their journey, is the important mission at hand. Teaching them to deal with adversity, to persist, to overcome barriers and accomplish their goals, and to pursue their dreams, is a gift that keeps on giving. I am grateful to be part of a team that is focused on growing students well. I am grateful for the vast majority of students who embrace the growth opportunities and rise to the challenge.

It is great to be a Tiller, and . . . Go Tillers!

Dr. Jon Tuin

Tustin High School Principal