

October 29, 2007

Dear Sir or Madam:

Ecstatic describes my level of excitement toward the JOBS Program and the impact it will have on student culture. I recall the week after my high school graduation. I was offered a four-year internship with a career development component. At age seventeen, I embarked upon a career in business. The program changed my life! I gained real work experience, in addition to career coaching and training.

Admittedly, I was an honors student with the credentials for the program. My career IQ, however, was on zero. I was not skilled at marketing myself for employment. In fact, I was offered the position because none of my peers wanted that particular job. I believe I was the company's last choice.

As such, I am absolutely passionate for students to learn career and life skills and to gain confidence from contributing to a work environment. As a classroom teacher, I know first hand how hungry our students are for experience in and exposure to the real world. Moreover, as a co-op coordinator, I supervise students who earn academic credit working in local offices. Only a handful of students, however, enjoy this privilege. Usually, they are twelfth graders who require a lot of coaching to successfully complete their assignments. Students generally are challenged by the culture and expectations of business. "The job" is so drastically different from their family, social and academic lives. They need help to transition and to be productive.

This morning, a student shared that he doesn't believe adults really care about kids. Last week, another student was sharing his disappointment over an adult whose actions failed to agree with his verbal commitment to care.

Our students want adults to prove their care and concern with action. Last school year, during our business letter unit, my students were required to write a letter to an organization of their choice. One of my students asked to whom she could write. She wanted to ask someone about the lack of student jobs in Hopewell. I suggested she address her letter to Mrs. Becky McDonough at the Hopewell-Prince George Chamber of Commerce. A portion of her letter read as follows:

I am currently a freshman at Hopewell High School and am concerned about the job opportunities in Hopewell. I think we should have more places where teenagers could be eligible to work with a workers permit...I

believe this would decrease the number of high school drop-outs around our area and decrease the number of behavior problems in the school system. I also believe that it would help clean up our streets; the reason I came to that conclusion is because the students will be able to work.

I know the JOBS Program will benefit our students and make a significant deposit toward their development as young professionals. I look forward to the ongoing success of the program and its participants.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katina L. Moss". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'K'.

Katina L. Moss
Hopewell High School
Business Department Chair
Co-op Coordinator