WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?

Is there anybody who does not dream of being wealthy? Regretfully, for too many of us financial independence is simply that – a dream. Quite often educators must begin to think of wealth in a different way to realize their dream.

Elizabeth Roberts, a professional journalist and a former MONEY magazine correspondent, combined her interest in financial lessons and love of children when she asked some young children to name their favorite story about the benefit of hard work or of saving and spending wisely.

Leah, an 11-year-old, told a story about a boy who wanted trumpet lessons, but whose father said, “That’s foolish. I am a fisherman.” Leah told Elizabeth that the boy worked in a mill and saved for lessons and became a professional player. “But not famous,” she added. When pressed, Leah admitted that she could not remember the name of the book.

Serenity read her favorite book when she was 7 and three years later, while she could not remember the name of the book, she could quote the story verbatim. It was, as she told it, a story of Peppa the pig who did chores to earn $15 to buy a pair of boots.

Ms. Roberts also has a favorite children’s book. Its title is UNCLE JED’S BARBER SHOP. In the story, the narrator Sarah Jean tells that Uncle Jed is the county’s only black barber. She says that he walks up to thirty miles to cut the hair of clients as he saves to open a shop with four chairs and “sinks so shiny they sparkle.” Just as he has saved enough to realize his dream, Sarah Jean is hospitalized and needs an operation. It’s going to cost $300, but to save the girl, Uncle Jed uses all of his savings to help. After more work and more saving, Uncle Jed is about to realize his dream again when the banks fail in 1929. By the time the barber is finally able to have his Grand Opening, he is seventy-nine years old, and his barber shop is packed with customers from his decades of coming to them to cut their hair!

What a nice story! Does Uncle Jed make you think of your favorite teacher? While teachers know that they will probably never become wealthy, they begin to see the profession as a calling; one where the reward comes from shaping the future rather than building a bank account. Just like at Uncle Jed’s grand opening when he realized his dream as he celebrated with his faithful customers, teachers realize their dream of riches in the sweet notes and kind words of former students who have “made it” with successful futures.

In fact, I save a Facebook post from a former student. It’s a simple message, but I wouldn’t trade it for a million dollars! I will bet that you wouldn’t either.

THINK OF IT AS AN INVESTMENT
DICTIONARY.com defines to invest this way: “to put money to use, by purchase or expenditure, in something offering potential profitable returns, as interest, income or appreciation in value.”

For educators to enjoy a comfortable retirement, many of us are beholden to wise investments to make our expectations a reality. Whether we count on the Teacher Retirement System to do their work in an exemplary manner or we take some responsibility ourselves and save and invest wisely or more probably we depend upon a combination of these two strategies, investments are important to a secure future.

There is a problem with investing, however, and it can be illustrated in the saying, “what goes up must come down.” Stock prices fluctuate, interest rates go up and down, businesses go bankrupt; all of these things present dangers to investors. However, wise money managers know that to win in the investment game, one must be in it for the “long haul”. Doing your homework to know the companies that are sound investments and keeping your money working in them is the strategy for long-term success. Investors who measure their wealth daily, and make trades in panic because of the price of stocks on the NYSE today often lose in the long run.

Your membership in professional organizations can be thought of as an investment. While your district’s liquid resources may vary from year to year, wise leaders do their homework to determine when their investment is paying off and when it isn’t. TACS has thrived for over forty-one years. When you invest with us, you enjoy discounts for professional development, your staff may purchase “peace of mind” with discounted liability insurance, your students become eligible for thousands of dollars in scholarships each year, and your district has a “seat at the table” before the legislature and state agencies.

TACS membership is a good investment! You may click here to put your district’s money to work for your students and staff!

SAN ANTONIO DREAMIN’

In Texas, we are approaching the Dog Days of summer. It’s hot, and it’s only going to get hotter! You know where it’s going to be cooler – San Antonio in September. Register here to join with your friends at the TACS San Antonio Conference sponsored by National IPA. The price is right, the food is good, the golfing is the best, and the program is second-to-none! September 10, 11, & 12 are the dates and the Hilton Palacio del Río on the River Walk is the place.

The River Walk attracts five million visitors a year to San Antonio. Why not register today and make it five million and one this year?

GOTTA HAVE ME SOME TEACHERS

It’s that time of year. You have vacant teaching and administrative positions, and you don’t have enough qualified applicants. The Education Service Centers in Texas have excellent alternative certification programs, and they are waiting to hear from you. Give your ESC a call. They can direct you to the right contact to fill your need. The Texas Education Agency has data that will convince you that our ESCs do as good a job or better than anyone in helping to produce quality educators to fill the needs of our public schools. Call your ESC today!