

11/26/14

Good Morning B.o.B.,

We had an absolute great day yesterday at the Lion's Academy, or at least, I did. I received so much wonderful feedback from the principal, teachers and staff that I want to share some of it with you. For me, it was the best day yet at the Academy.

First I would like to thank all the volunteers that came out to serve lunch, contributed their money, and talked with the young men and women at the Academy!!! I am finally convinced that we are making a big difference in the attitudes and direction of the boys we work with.

During a conversation with Cheryl White, the principal, she said that almost all the boys at the school would like to join the "Band of Brothers". She has such a hard time picking which boys to send because they all want to go. I asked her, is this because they want pizza and play basketball, and get out of school? She said **NO**. It is because they want to **belong** to something. They want to belong to the Band of Brothers. They do not have much to belong to at this school. No sports or clubs. The Band of Brothers is seen as something special and they all want to belong. Think how good and sad this is. It is good because we are doing this for them, it is sad that they don't have the opportunity to feel needed or worthy, to belong with something. My 2 cents here, that is probably why gangs are such an attraction... to belong.



I was talking to the councilor at the school and he thanked me for "coming and giving while preserving the boys' dignity". I asked him what he meant and he said, you guys come every month and give and ask nothing in return. I asked, what do you mean by that? He said we get groups that want to come help but in return they want to take pictures of the boys and post on their website stating how they are helping the poor. The kids do not want to pose for these type pictures. One group last week offered to bring turkeys for the needy families but they needed to take pictures of them handing the turkeys out. The school turned them down.

Another teacher thanked me and said the kids really liked us and that he could tell that the kids are “getting a little love” from us. He said that makes a big difference. Even giving them encouragement for anything is special to these kids. Herman tells us all the time that some of these kids do not get this at home, and when we give it to them, it is making a difference.

Now on to the kids, I got an earful from so many of them. They were excited and thankful. I received many hugs before the dinner. At least four asked if we were coming back today to play basketball. They were really disappointed that we were not because they had remembered that we come on the last Wednesday of the month. For those that went, if you have a story to tell about yesterday, I know we would love to hear it.



A BIG thanks to the following for serving the DLA yesterday:

Dave & Debbie Halsey
Chris & Alison Tillotson
Brad & Chad Miller
Antony and Father (guests)
Larry Pryg
Ari McEntire
Dave LeBay
Rick Rosen
Zac Sanger
Donnie McGinlay
Herman Shelton
Pete & Anika Kalaj
Brent Taplin



Next up, Christmas Lunch with just the boys. Rather than bring in pizzas for the entire school, several of us thought it would be more meaningful to serve a nice lunch, talk and play basketball with just our group. I am going to ask the principal if we can have the kids from 12:00-3:00 on Tuesday, December 16th. About 10 of our boys are graduating to high school in January. This will be our last chance to talk with them. I talked to most of them yesterday and they were polite, respectful and eager to share their thoughts on High School. I believe it would be meaningful to send them off in style and encourage their commitment to education.

For those that gave for the Thanksgiving lunch, I am not asking for another donation. We will come up with the money to pay for a nice catered lunch. God will provide. Several kids asked for "Band of Brother" shirts. I know we do not have the money to pay for this, but it is something to think about in the future. Please put this date on your calendar. We have lots to be Thankful for. I include the DLA in the things I am thankful for.

Christmas Lunch: December 16th - 12:00-3:00 pm (this date was picked by the principal, Friday the 19th is their last day of school before Christmas)

More details to follow.

Steve B