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Department: Teacher's Corner



Jeff Danielian, NAGC Teacher Resource Specialist and editor, *Teaching for High Potential*

You Better Watch Out, You Better Not Cry...

In schools across the country, teachers and students are looking forward to the holiday break, bringing much-needed rest and distance from the classroom. But there are a few weeks to go yet, and a great deal to do in preparation for an organized and effective start to the New Year.

Returning in January from more than a week away from school can pose quite a challenge for both the teacher and the students; after all time away is time away. For me, with a grading period behind me, parent/teacher conferences wrapped up, and students' long-term projects collected and evaluated, I will be ready to begin short one-on-one conversations with my students before they too head out. Like a department store Santa, I'll try to uncover what they would like to get out of the second half of the year, related to content knowledge and/or creative productivity. I am sure to check my "list" more than twice, reviewing and re-evaluating their interests and learning styles, noting who has been naughty and who has been nice.

For students who have been organized, productive, enthusiastic, and respectful, the goals set for the second semester are clear and understood. After writing down three goals and three ways to meet them, they are ready for the increased challenge. Other students need a bit more direction, and so discussions focus on opportunities and strategies for improvement. Guidance is also given in goal writing. One thing is certain, expectations come wrapped in ribbons and bows. For an in-depth look at goal setting see the May 2012 issue of [Connecting for High Potential](#).

The cycle of giving and receiving goes beyond the holiday season. Detailed feedback follows each new assignment turned in, and with hope, makes a difference in the next piece of work the student completes. Once illuminated, the lights ignited in our students' minds shine brilliantly, and when the visions of sugarplums fade, real dreams can begin.

As we all settle down for a long winter's nap I would like to end by sharing the link to last January's installment of [The Teacher's Corner, A Gifted Carol](#). It is one of my favorites and resonates with the spirit of the season. You can access [all of this year's The Teacher's Corner](#) online.

Happy Holidays!