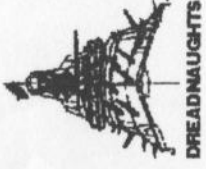




LAKELAND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

726 HOLLINGSWORTH ROAD
LAKELAND, FLORIDA 33801



OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL

May 16, 2000

Dear Mrs. Celello:

Two economic projects from a beginning Art teacher! Wow! Not only did you dive into the school-wide initiative for economic project-based instruction, your efforts illustrate what I have always known - America's teachers are among some of the most creative and innovative in the world.

I recognize that Art classes sometimes become a "dumping ground" and teachers often react by caving in to student attitude (or lack of). You, however, have taken the challenge and turned it into an exciting enterprise. "The Great Tile Ad-Venture" set your students working as entrepreneurs. They participated in such real-world activities as: getting a start-up loan, production, marketing, accounting, and dealing with customers. They learned how art can be beautiful - but also a business opportunity and that tile, in particular, can be useful as a building material in homes. Teaming the class with Florida Tile and Habitat for Humanity was another creative twist for an Art class. Now, your students know about entrepreneurship and work ethic and have developed skills as workers and producers. At the same time, they have learned the joy of community service.

Your follow-up, "How Does Your Garden Grow?," completed the cycle for developing a sense of community. Teaching the students that the value of space changes with use is a really inspirational idea that can lead to changes in their behavior and the way they use the spaces allotted them.

You are already a winner. You won by conquering your challenge. Then, you won at the Superintendent's and the Governor's Awards Programs. It is my pleasure to recommend you to the Judging panel for the NASDAQ Awards Program. This project is certainly worthy of national recognition.

I want to be around to watch you grow as a teacher. You're off to a great start!

Sincerely,

Mark R. Thomas