Brown

Practicum Journal 3

This week has been focused mainly on T-CAP review. The students understand that this test they are about to take is very important. The students are worried about doing well, and you can tell that they are already burnt out on the T-CAPs and they haven’t even taken them yet.

To prepare the students for the T-CAPs, they have been implementing “mock T-CAPs”. This is where the each student gets an answer sheet and a practice T-CAP test booklet. During the “mock T-CAPs” students are tested as if they are taking the real thing. The tests are timed and they are to complete it to the best of their ability. Luckily, unlike the T-CAPs, they go over the answers at the end. This makes a great review. Since the real T-CAPs should mostly cover the same material as the mock ones, students can be less stressed because they have seen an example. Without this part, the reviewing and going over the answers, the practice test would be pointless.

From viewing this week of T-CAP review, I have come to the conclusion that while standardized testing may have its benefits, it is not beneficial to the education process or to the students. Teachers and students agonize and worry over the test. That’s all it is, a test, not a monster. I believe it puts too much pressure on the students and teachers alike. Not only do educators have to “teach to the test” but they must also take away instruction time in order to teach their students how to take a standardized test (filling in the bubbles, making your mark heavy and dark, erasing your answer completely if you change it, etc.). I do believe that yes, there should be some sort of formal summative assessment, but it should be in a form that truly tests the students ability (i.e. some students are not great test takers and therefore a test will not truly assess the ability and knowledge).

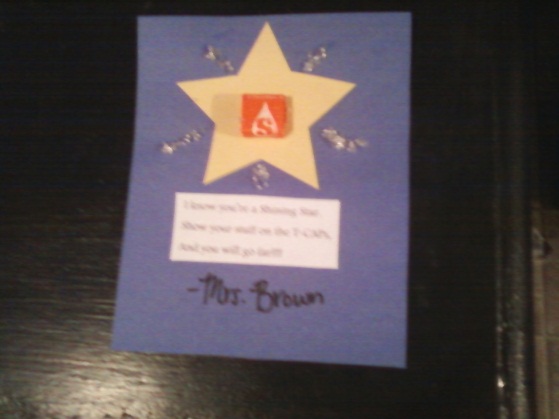
Because of the students’ stress, I decided to make something for them to give them a little encouragement. The school’s theme is S.T.A.R.S. It says:

I know you’re a Shining Star,

Show your stuff on the T-CAPs,

And you will go far!!!

I also signed it at the bottom. The students were very excited to receive these.



I also had a very proud moment a week after teaching the students about the associate, commutative, and distributive properties for addition and multiplication. When my mentoring teacher was having the students explain how they arrived at their answer, one student said “Well, I remembered that Mrs. Brown said…” I was so excited to hear that what I had told them had stuck with them. I have had a great experience in my practicum at Glenwood Elementary. Even though I was only there for 2 short weeks, I felt like I was a part of the school staff.