

# Don't give up on school yet

## For students and teachers, it's the seventh inning stretch

The arrival of America's pastime is here. Baseball consumes the lives of many dedicated sports fans.

Whether it is an involvement with Fantasy Baseball or just pure genuine devotion to a particular team, women and men of all ages are

playing, watching, and following their favorite city to potential victory.

Baseball games can be metaphors for school. The nine innings within this sport resemble the duration of an academic school year. Taking all the school vacations and closures into consideration, there are technically nine months of school.

### The opening pitch

The beginning of a game is exciting and new, holding a mystery of which team will win. Fans make predictions of scores and achievements for their favorite players. When a new school year starts, students and teachers share a similar feeling of the unknown. They set goals in the hopes that students will attain success by earning favorable scores on assessments.

Though the two teams of players are trying to beat one another in and out of the diamond, the "teams" of students versus teachers share a different relationship. Educators are helping students to be better learners, while baseball players attempt to strike each other



**VICKI ISACOWITZ**  
On education

out. However, the latter does also make for a better player, though this is not the intent of the opponent.

In the meantime, an umpire holds the responsibilities of making calls on vague plays while maintaining structure and order within a

game. Principals and administrators play roles similar to an umpire in their daily duties of running a school; both share the task of keeping unruly "players" in line.

### "Take me out to the Ballgame"

The seventh inning stretch is a cherished moment. It allows devoted fans and spectators an opportunity to stand up, take a breather, and get some more peanuts, maybe even another hot dog. Most of the game has been played, the end is near and a winner will prevail. The last two innings are exciting because the predicted outcome can change at any moment.

Students, teachers, administrators, and parents are currently experiencing the seventh inning stretch. Spring break has come and gone, giving all a chance to relax, re-

energize, and maybe meant a vacation out of town. The majority of the school year has transpired, with the final days approaching at the pace of a fastball. Similar to the eighth and ninth innings, the remaining two months of school can be crucial to desired results. If athletes slack, their team increases their chances of losing and facing failure. Students are in the same ballgame.

Athletes and students might feel tired and experience burn out when trying to get through the last innings, despite the passing of the seventh inning stretch. Motivation is a driving force that assists both groups to endure the challenge of staying focused. Coaches, teachers, and parents provide inspiration, support, and instruction on how to perse-

vere. The ultimate test lies in the hands of the athletes and students.

Giving up is not a viable option. Finishing strong is an achievement in itself, regardless of whether you're scor-

ing a home run or earning straight As. Doing the best that can be done makes everyone a winner.

*Vicki Isacowitz is a secondary English teacher who has been educating students since 1996.*

*She is co-founder of Clever Minds Educational Services, providing tutoring for students in grades K-12. Call 582-1707 or e-mail*

*vicki@cleverminds.org.*

**■ If athletes slack, their team increases their chances of losing and facing failure. Students are in the same ballgame.**