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NikaVika Neighborhood's "Vigilance" Coaching | Week 1 | January 7, 2020

First Grade Teacher from Boston Public Schools is a Champion for the Hungry

- Jennifer Amendola is all-in when it comes to giving students a boost at the **Edison K-8** school in Brighton where she teaches first grade.
- As a major champion of the school's "Boost Bags" program, providing families in need with nutritious snacks for the weekend, Jennifer has even rallied the Boston College football team and the Red Sox player's wives to lend a hand!
- For Jennifer, it's worth all the extra time that she spends volunteering: "By the smiles on the students faces, I'm able to see the impact we're making," she said in a recent interview (**Project Bread**). Thousands of students in the Boston Public School system are homeless and in need of this kind of boost every day, not just on the weekends, but the program is a solid starting point.
- Jennifer is among 11 teachers from across the state who were honored by the non-profit Project Bread last year as a "Teacher Champion" for her efforts in spearheading the Boost Bags program at her school.

Quick Journaling Activity (see completed example below)

1. What was the most **engaging** (interesting) part—**to you**—about Ms. Amendola's story?

_____

2. How were you **enlightened** by reading this story? (Did you learn something new?)

_____

3. Why might the families who receive Boost Bags feel **empowered** (strong & confident?)

_____

4. What could you do to help hungry people in your community?

_____

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Completed Journaling Activity Example

1. What was the most **engaging** (interesting) part—**to you**—about Ms. Amendola's story?

I love that she reached out to the BC Football team and the Red Sox. Getting teams involved like that is awesome and will bring everyone closer together.

2. How were you **enlightened** by reading this story? (Did you learn something new?)

I didn't realize there were that many hungry students and families right in our neighborhood. It's sad. We need to do more for people right in our own backyards.

3. Why might the families who receive Boost Bags feel **empowered** (strong & confident?)

When you have energy from food, you can sleep better and think better and play sports better. Everything's better.

4. What could you do to help hungry people in your community?

Maybe we could create a dinner program at local schools sponsored by restaurants in the area? And lots of kids and families can come together. If you can pay, you pay. If you can't, it's free. We could make it "invisible" so that if you're homeless or don't have enough food, you wouldn't feel badly about it and it would be easy to sign up for free.

Submitted by Shane, Age 17, Hyannis, MA

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