

## **Writer: Things I had not considered**

Written by Wauneta Breeze  
Wednesday, 29 January 2014 19:27 -

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### **Dear Editor:**

The January 2, 2014 issue of the Wauneta Breeze contained a letter to the editor in which I very strongly expressed my opinions concerning the purchase of iPads by the Wauneta-Palisade School District. I said I believe in old-fashioned teaching rather than overuse of high-tech devices. In that letter I also quoted figures about U.S. students' rankings worldwide, mentioning that our rankings, as we hear constantly from some media, are low.

I fully expected an equally strong rebuttal and have looked in the paper ever since that letter was printed to see if anyone was going to let me have it.

Nobody ever did. I wondered why, but then I remembered that now I live in Nebraska, a state where the most marked characteristic about its people is that they are very nice, so much so that it is practically state law to wave at other motorists as we pass each other. Try that in most other states and you get odd stares.

As I conducted my "supermarket polls" to see what sort of reaction my letter elicited, again, everyone was very nice. Finally, someone "corrected" me by her telling me some things I did not know and feel should be shared.

This sweet young lady told me that we cannot take for granted that our test scores are any lower than any other country because, besides the use of different types of testing instruments, many countries do not include the test results of special-needs students, which may affect the averages.

We, in the U.S., do include these scores. She said that when we compare our test scores with those of other countries, we are, therefore, comparing apples to oranges.

This lovely person also expressed her opinion about the teaching of grammar, saying that the most important variable in students' learning is how much they read. She stressed that the

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more people read, the better pretty much all of their skills become.

Whether or not I agree wholeheartedly with this very bright individual is immaterial. The point I want to make is that she informed me of things I had not considered in a gentle, considerate, and respectful manner. I really appreciate that.

I, of course, always wish to be fair. So I would like to thank my friend for her considered opinion and most of all, for her warm, patient, and friendly demeanor.

**Pat Holder**

**Wauneta**