

**Title of Session:** Teachers In Training

**Moderator:** Dianne Allen

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Room: Teachers in Training Group

**BJB2:** Welcome to today's Teachers in Training discussion

**BJB2:** and we usually start all Tapped In discussions with introductions

**BJB2:** please tell us where you are located and what you teach or hope to teach

**FabiolaH:** I'm in Houston, doing my student teaching. I hope to teach 4th grade when I graduate

**CarolynNe:** Simi Valley, CA first grade student teacher I hope to teacher 3rd or 4th

**DianneA:** I am a pre-service teacher in Wollongong, Australia

**ElizabethG:** I am student teaching at Arroyo Elementary in a 5th grade classroom and hope to work with fifth graders in the near future.

**LiseU:** I am student teaching at Arroyo Elem/Simi, 4-5 combo class, Hope to teach upper elementary.

**DavidWe:** I'm David Weksler. I'm one of the HelpDesk volunteers for Tapped In. I'm in New Jersey, near New York City

**BJB2:** Dianne has graciously agreed to lead the discussion.

**DianneA** grins

**DavidWe** . o O ( Dianne is SO gracious )

**ElizabethG:** I am in Simi Valley, CA at Arroyo Elementary School

**BJB2** . o O ( Mary Thompson is not logged in yet )

**DianneA:** and looks around frantically for a discussion topic!

**MaureenF:** I'm at Atherwood Elementary in Simi Valley, student teaching in 6th grade.

**DianneA:** so we are mostly engaged in elementary education, or hope to be, that's a good start

**BJB2:** what do you think is the most important experience for a student teacher, Dianne?

**DianneA:** EXPERIENCE BJ

**CarolynNe:** all the things that go wrong.

**CarolynNe:** I learned very quickly how to be flexible

**DavidWe** smiles

**FabiolaH:** that is true, flexibility is key

**CarolynNe:** yesterday a child threw up while another was crying and we were having a fire drill

**LiseU:** my teacher says she hopes I make mistakes - while she is there to help

**DianneA:** can I ask those of you who are experiencing teaching for the first time ... what is it about it that 'gives you a buzz'

**DavidWe** . o O ( make A LOT of mistakes )

**DianneA** lol with Carolyn

**CarolynNe:** I love the difference in each child. I like to help them be successful in their education.

**DianneA:** that's what fire drills are for!

**MaureenF:** Even the students can be helpful when we make mistakes.

**FabiolaH:** when you teach something new, and the students are truly engaged

**CarolynNe:** yes, I think they can be depending on the topic.

**LiseU:** yes, when they are engaged, and I am too. (in the zone, just a little)

**DianneA:** Elizabeth, Juan?

**LiseU:** 2 of my students had to write letters home about fire drill behavior.

**ElizabethG:** When you see their face light up when they finally understand or grasp the material

**CarolynNe:** lol

**LiseU:** I like seeing their thinking when they are writing.

**CarolynNe:** I love to read their writing

**FabiolaH:** Yes I do too,

**MaureenF:** I like to see the big range of abilities in the classroom.

**ElizabethG:** I love having them come to me and ask me to read their story

**DianneA:** If there was one thing you could change about teaching, to make it better, what would it be?

**LiseU:** Have you found that organization is a challenge?

**CarolynNe:** The parents

**CarolynNe:** they think all of their children are perfect

**ElizabethG:** This lets me know that they trust me and value my opinion

**ElizabethG:** I agree with Carolyn

**MaureenF:** More support (financially)

**FabiolaH:** organization I think also

**LiseU:** Some children aren't ready to do the work - behavior wise

**MaureenF:** I am okay with parents thinking a lot about their children. That means their children are important in their lives.

**DianneA:** OK, so we have 'parents', 'organization' and 'finances' ...

**DianneA:** all those things are outside you ..

**DianneA:** it is perhaps easier to consider what you might change to make things better ..

**LiseU:** I think we're doing that - putting our all into student teaching.

**CarolynNe:** well my lack of organization in this career is starting to get to me

**MaureenF:** We are making a big commitment already, and we don't have a guarantee of a job!

**CarolynNe:** yes Maureen, that is what scares me so much

**FabiolaH:** I agree with Maureen

**MaureenF:** Hi Lindsay

**MaureenF:** I have met teachers who spend just a few weeks student teaching through National Univ or Univ of Phoenix. And they are working

**LindsayAS:** I think that organization is key...to everything.. and I am swamped too..

**DianneA** nods to Maureen and Fabiola

**LindsayAS:** I did my student teaching through Western Governors University.. and I am teaching

**DianneA:** working hard for no apparent guarantee of a job is difficult

**LindsayAS:** Where are you and what are you doing?

**MaureenF:** I know how to help my own kids better now!

**DianneA:** Lindsay, you are starting to ask about your own organization ...

**DianneA:** when I see 'organization' I usually think of the corporation

**CarolynNe:** I have a systematic approach

**LindsayAS:** No... filing... lessons, classroom.

**DianneA:** so would others like to focus on our own organization to help make life as a teacher, easier?

**LiseU:** Is it working?

**CarolynNe:** yes

**LiseU:** Something you could share?

**CarolynNe:** everything for each week is kept in a file

**MaureenF:** Yes. Let's get organized!

**LiseU:** That sounds good.

**CarolynNe:** I have everything on my computer organized the same way

**CarolynNe:** I have them divided by subject

**LiseU:** I have "by subject" dividers, but then it does really need to be done by date.

**CarolynNe:** week then subject

**LiseU:** Plus, I have 2 grades to track

**CarolynNe:** yes you do

**MaureenF:** I bought a crate on wheels at Staples for \$20. It helps a lot

**LindsayAS:** I have 5 grades

**CarolynNe:** all the reason to be more organized

**LiseU:** So I'm adapting it

**CarolynNe:** it is good for you.

**LiseU:** How do you have 5 grades, Lindsay?

**LindsayAS:** I teach K-5

**CarolynNe:** whoa

**ElizabethG:** I separate things by Month and date everything. Also, having a lesson plan book along with a journal for notes, ideas and suggestions for your own classroom or things you may see already that you like helps.

**FabiolaH:** just one subject though right?

**MaureenF:** Where?

**LindsayAS:** plus I teach middle school history 6-8

**LindsayAS:** Alaska

**MaureenF:** Wow

**FabiolaH:** sounds like lots of work

**MaureenF:** I love history!

**ElizabethG:** so do I

**LindsayAS:** it is... and it is a blast.. but really challenging my organizational skills

**LindsayAS:** I love teaching history.. that is why I begged to teach it twice a day..

**DianneA:** I find that some simple physical things help organization ...

**DianneA:** boxes; colour coding

**CarolynNe:** I love boxes and labels

**DianneA:** separate filing

**MaureenF:** I am organizing by subject. I use my daily planner. I keep track of how my cooperating teacher does things and slowly I am getting it.

**CarolynNe:** I do the same

**FabiolaH:** me too

**CarolynNe:** my teacher is a little unorganized

**CarolynNe:** but it is good

**ElizabethG:** My teacher is the total opposite

**CarolynNe:** teaching me to be more flexible

**MaureenF:** Someone said they use big butcher block paper and post its for lesson planning

**ElizabethG:** She's organized all the through the beginning of March

**CarolynNe:** yes who was that?

**LiseU:** I have been writing lessons on the laptop

**DianneA:** Carolyn, can you describe the 'good' of the 'little unorganised', please?

**CarolynNe:** it is teaching me to quickly think on my feet

**CarolynNe:** I am not normally good at that

**LindsayAS:** I have made a "war board" on my kitchen wall with all of my standards laid out by grade and I try and find things that we can do in whole group and then fan out from there

**DianneA** nods, thanks

**MaureenF:** I think it was Gina Amenta-Shin. My teacher has some very set routines. Good for organization, but, not always exciting for students.

**LiseU:** One thing that is tricky is to have all materials set to go - transparencies, etc.

**DianneA:** that is one of the problems, Maureen, making things that fit with students

**ElizabethG:** My teacher uses every free minute she has available to plan or copy

**MaureenF:** Does anyone have ideas for organizing the students into small workable groups? There are 33, and not much physical space.

**DianneA:** most children are comfortable with the security of organization, they can know what to expect

**LiseU:** I have a desk, but not a lot of room to organize it all.

**CarolynNe:** I hear you on that one Lise

**DianneA:** some children with special needs can only operate when they know exactly what is going to happen and when

**LiseU:** Maureen, we have tables of 4 (class size 32) - it seems to be working.

**CarolynNe:** Autistic

**FabiolaH:** yea my teacher's desk is just piled with things but he knows what all is in there

**DianneA** nods to Carolyn

**LindsayAS:** Grading and going through all of the papers is what is throwing me off.

**LiseU:** My teacher often says "check w/your table" when they are working on a problem - very useful technique.

**LiseU:** I haven't got to grading yet.

**MaureenF:** I am in a brand new classroom with no blinds. The desks have to face one direction, or the kids get a bad glare and they can't see the board.

**LiseU:** Yikes.

**CarolynNe:** Oh no that is because they are expanding that school

**FabiolaH:** that must be hard, to teach in that environment

**LiseU:** If you teach K-5, how many students per grade?

**LindsayAS:** How much time do you spend AFTER school planning?

**MaureenF:** My teacher says that when the students trade papers to grade their spelling tests and multiple choice work, it is immediate feedback for them, and less for the teacher to grade.

**LiseU:** As much as possible.

**LiseU:** (Time preparing, that is)

**ElizabethG:** Maureen have your children create or write on butcher paper and use it to cover up the windows. At the same time they are able to see their work.

**MaureenF:** I spend about 1 hour or 1-1/2 hours in the classroom then additional time at home.

**LindsayAS:** Me?? I have 2 - Kinders, 1 - First, 1 - second, 1 - third, 1 - fourth, 2 - fifth

**CarolynNe:** My teacher said sometimes you can't grade everything. As she said that she dumped many papers in the trash.

**MaureenF:** Thanks Elizabeth. That's a great idea!

**FabiolaH:** sometimes we just check for completion

**CarolynNe:** yes

**LiseU:** Hi Greg!!

**LindsayAS:** Hi Greg

**CarolynNe:** you made it!

**MaureenF:** That's funny Carolyn! (I think)

**CarolynNe:** It was

**CarolynNe:** I was thinking how often do we do this?

**LiseU:** Some work, we are only grading/checking on one area, such as Some Sometimes we only check a paper for one element, such as reading comprehension

**MaureenF:** Although, when my kids were in first grade, I cherished every piece of work that the teacher sent home.

**LindsayAS:** I check for completion and keep some to enter into the grade book.. This week is the first week that I feel I have an almost handle on things

**CarolynNe:** That is why we do art!

**LindsayAS:** I send everything home.. It is the parent's choice to throw it away

**CarolynNe:** Put a smile on parent's faces

**LiseU:** Some parents are surprised, my teacher says, when they get progress reports and "suddenly" see the kid is failing math.

**CarolynNe:** yes or they act surprised even though they are not!

**MaureenF:** With my 6th graders, parents seem so busy it is hard to get them to sign the weekly notes that are sent home.

**LiseU:** In other words, they didn't really look at the work that was coming home for some time.

**CarolynNe:** Or the kids didn't show them.

**CarolynNe:** hid it, dumped it in the trash.

**LiseU:** Its hard even for me to look at all my kids' work - and I really want to.

**MaureenF:** More organization -- weekly communication with parents.

**CarolynNe:** Homework-Communication folder is what we have

**MaureenF:** Do they sign that folder?

**LiseU:** A different teacher I know in 4th grade solves this via a website -updates it constantly. "Parents can never say they didn't know.

**CarolynNe:** a paper in the folder

**ElizabethG:** My last placement had the same thing that Carolyn mentioned, it worked great

**CarolynNe:** yeah that is hard though

**MaureenF:** Not all parents have email

**CarolynNe:** Yeah until they lose the folder

**FabiolaH:** yea or they forget the folder at home/school

**CarolynNe:** no and we need to consider that every time we want to do something online

**LiseU:** My daughter has the folder too (4th G)

**MaureenF:** My teacher sends home a note on Wednesdays with test scores, news, and a check (good, bad, etc) about the student's behavior. They must return it the next day, signed.

**CarolynNe:** My teacher does homework folder and a cover page with a letter to the parents that they must sign.

**GregSi:** WE use assignment notebooks for homework and then put a stamp next to the completed work.

**FabiolaH:** that's good maybe a weekly update would be easier to keep up with

**ElizabethG:** No matter what procedure we use to communicate there will be an excuse from the student or parent.

**CarolynNe:** oh or I like the calendar that you stamp for completed homework.

**LiseU:** My teacher tries to write in the kids' planners to parents, cause it creates a record.

**MaureenF:** How is Judicious Discipline working?

**CarolynNe:** it isn't

**CarolynNe:** we gave out awards today to the good kids

**ElizabethG:** We have to find what works best for us, the students and realize there is that chance that a student will forget it at home or at school.

**GregSi:** Parents should check the child's homework to see if it has been completed and that the work is correct.

**MaureenF:** I can just picture 1st graders having a meeting!

**CarolynNe:** yea...a nightmare

**CarolynNe:** we have a tough class.

**ElizabethG:** My fifth graders still don't comprehend the meaning of Judicious Discipline

**LiseU:** JD - mostly working for our class, 'cept for certain kids with issues - not for them.

**CarolynNe:** JD is teaching students how to live in a democratic society

**MaureenF:** I think it's too late for my 6th graders, who were never introduced to it.

**CarolynNe:** this is the classroom management

**LiseU:** We need a class meeting, teacher said yesterday, but I think it will be tomorrow at lunch.

**CarolynNe:** at lunch?

**CarolynNe:** ick!

**GregSi:** J.D. is not working that well because the students cannot understand how to discipline themselves.

**LiseU:** Yes, at lunch.

**CarolynNe:** no

**CarolynNe:** they think that it is a game.

**LiseU:** Teacher says "Time place and manner." sometimes - seems to fit the situation

**MaureenF:** Today I gave little star stickers to the students who lined up well. I swore I would not give rewards. But, they loved the stickers!

**CarolynNe:** I use health and safety

**CarolynNe:** it is hard. they do love stickers and they work so well!

**MaureenF:** Where is our moderator?

**DavidWe** smiles

**DianneA:** Here Maureen

**DavidWe** taps Dianne on the shoulder

**CarolynNe:** HI!

**ElizabethG:** What helps me with the students is to stay positive instead of negative and so far I have gained their trust. I was pretty surprised. I know this sounds corny but it works for my fifth graders.

**MaureenF:** How are we doing with organization?

**BJB2:** you've all been doing such a great job!

**DianneA:** you were doing so well on your own, I didn't think I needed to bring in any judicious discipline!

**CarolynNe:** I make sure that each of them knows that I like and respect them.

**DianneA:** Have you got a question you would like to pose about organization Maureen?

**GregSi:** Organization is going OK

**MaureenF:** I'm finding behavior so different with 6th graders, compared to 2nd.

**CarolynNe:** Yes, 4th is so different than 1st.

**CarolynNe:** night and day

**ElizabethG:** Yes, at that age they think they are too cool.

**MaureenF:** Well, I guess I'd like expert advice.

**DianneA:** has that difference in behaviour impacted on your organization?

**LiseU:** I have a question.....Does anyone have thoughts about becoming more "tough"?

**MaureenF:** Actually, I think for me 6th grade is easier to organize.

**DianneA** nods

**CarolynNe:** no, I think I need to get softer! Haha

**FabiolaH:** my teacher is not that tough but the kids really respect him and listen to him

**GregSi:** I feel that you need to be tough and consistent with the students.

**DianneA:** by that stage they are usually more acclimatized to what is expected

**MaureenF:** I need to be tough, but, I have to show them that I like them also

**DianneA:** what is usual behaviour

**DianneA:** for grade 2, the teacher is still trying to set those expected standards

**ElizabethG:** I don't think tough is what you are looking for Lise, maybe firmness and consistency. Make sure you always approach the situation in a positive manner.

**CarolynNe:** yes!

**MaureenF:** In my class there are a handful of gifted students, many in the middle, and a handful of talkative ones who avoid doing work.

**LiseU:** OK, firmness - yeah.

**DianneA:** and that involves both setting the standard of consistency, and doing some explaining about how and why

**MaureenF:** To Lise and Elizabeth ... yes, consistency is important!

**DianneA:** how children can fit in, and why they should fit in

**LiseU:** Maureen, sounds just like my class.

**ElizabethG:** If you say you are going to do something make sure you do it, otherwise they won't listen or respect you.

**FabiolaH:** I have a gt student who is very smart but VERY lazy

**MaureenF:** I have a daughter like that!

**LiseU:** It's a common pattern.

**ElizabethG:** So do I and I noticed that the more I cheer him on on the little he has done the more I see the next time.

**DianneA:** so part of being organized with year 2 students will involve teaching them how they can be organized too

**FabiolaH:** yea I try to check on him as often as I can

**CarolynNe:** It is hard with so many children that need the attention.

**GregSi:** Have a parent meeting with your lazy student

**ElizabethG:** Yes, I definitely agree

**DianneA** nods to Carolyn

**CarolynNe:** It is hard to get a first grader organized

**MaureenF:** I found that while I'm teaching, it is very difficult to make sure kids are all on the same page.

**DianneA:** that's where organizing for children to help children, children to give feedback, etc, is a useful strategy

**MaureenF:** Greg, I am the parent!! Unfortunately knowing her behavior doesn't fix it

**CarolynNe:** There are five in my class that sometimes I wonder if they are even in the same book I am in.

**LiseU:** Why?

**MaureenF:** Oh yes, immediate feedback is very useful (positive feedback)

**ElizabethG:** One of the things that helps me is I teach for about ten minutes no more and then I get them involved and continue the pattern

**CarolynNe:** well that is what CLU teaches us Elizabeth.

**MaureenF:** That's good. Maybe I need to teach/talk for shorter intervals.

**LiseU:** How about if you call on a student to read something on the page?

**DianneA:** Elizabeth ..

**MaureenF:** It's just a big jump going from watching 20 students to 33!

**DianneA:** can you describe a bit more of what you mean by 'get them involved and continue the pattern'?

**ElizabethG:** I did this in my last placement with 10 gate students and it made a difference. I have then applied it at arroyo and once again I am beginning to see results.

**FabiolaH:** I feel lucky we only have 16 students

**CarolynNe:** yea 21 is easier

**LiseU:** How about 32 in a split. My first time with them all is Monday - wish me luck. With a sub.

**MaureenF:** Maybe that should be the most important change to education - smaller class size

**CarolynNe:** YES!!!

**MaureenF:** Are you the sub?

**LiseU:** My teacher says, "no more combo classes."

**FabiolaH:** smaller class sizes do make a difference

**MaureenF:** In some schools the brand new teachers get the split classes!

**CarolynNe:** You should be a sub Lise

**LiseU:** No, I'm not the sub. But I'll be teaching most of the day. She had to line up the sub "ages ago,"

**CarolynNe:** Ohh!

**LiseU:** Guys, if you get a split as a beginner, hold on tight.

**LiseU:** Maybe I can sub next time.

**ElizabethG:** What I mean Dianne is, the first 10 minutes are used to give directions and 1 or two examples of the activity. Then I have them try or participate by coming to the board or participating as a class. I then continue my teaching by giving more examples or different scenarios and once again have students attempt, discuss or model. (Teacher input, student input, Teacher Input, Student Input)

**DianneA:** thanks Elizabeth, very helpful!

**GregSi:** At Arroyo they trade off on who gets the split classes I found out today

**CarolynNe:** Oh nice!

**LiseU:** Just like in the mgmt class model...I'll have to keep it in mind.

**MaureenF:** Well, I have gotten some good ideas from you guys: cover the windows with butcher block paper; teach at shorter intervals; get the kids involved; be positive; ...

**LiseU:** Did you all know it is specially selected teachers (master teachers) who teach at Arroyo? Just heard that 1st time today.

**DianneA:** yes Maureen, the ideas have been good

**CarolynNe:** yes because it is a pds

**DianneA:** thanks for summarising them for us so neatly

**ElizabethG:** Yes, except for Scott but he will be as of the next academic school year

**FabiolaH:** yea it was very informative

**LiseU:** Is that all folks? Thanks for your input.

**MaureenF:** Good night!

**ElizabethG:** This was very informative, Good Night!

**BJB2:** thanks, Dianne, for filling in for Mary

**GregSi:** Thank you

**FabiolaH:** thanks to all

**CarolynNe:** thanks

**DianneA** nods to BJ, my pleasure