

Title of Session: Teachers-In-Training

Moderator: Dianne Allen

Title of File: 20070412training

Date: April 12, 2007

Room: After School Online

DianneA: welcome to today's session of teachers in training ...

DianneA: might we start with our intros ...

DianneA: where are you from, what kind of teaching are you hoping to get into

KristinMJ: 5th grade science, Deer Park Elementary Houston, TX suburb

MeghanML: I'm from Houston Texas I want to teach 2nd grade

GaryML: Hi I'm Gary and I'm a 7th grade Texas History teacher living in San Antonio

RebekahO: I'm from the University of Virginia, and I'm hoping to teach upper elementary and/or middle school French

NaomiR: Hello everyone, my name is Naomi, I am from Houston, TX, I attend the University of Houston, I am currently Student Teaching in Kindergarten in Channelview ISD

DavidWek: I'm David Weksler. I'm a HelpDesk volunteer and I lead a math education and technology discussion here. I'm in New Jersey, near New York City

MonaY: Hello I am from Houston and I would like to become a kinder teacher

ChaseK: I'm from Spring and I wanna teach ppl

ChaseK: 5th grade

YamileH: University of Texas Pan American.. want to teach high school English

DianneA: I am from Wollongong NSW Australia, and my teaching area includes pre-service teachers for K-6, my personal teaching area used to be high school (7-12) science

ChaseK: maybe high school coaching

SusanR: I am Sue. I moderate the K to 3+GREAT Resources twice monthly sessions. I am from Canada

DianneA: Today's session topic is open and over to you ...

DianneA: has anyone a current concern they would like input from others about

CherrieL: hi, I am Cherrie, from Taiwan

NaomiR: I will be certified for PreK - 4th

RebekahO: I have a concern I guess I can throw out there

ChaseK: troubled students

DianneA looks to Rebekah

ChaseK: how to deal with them

RebekahO: I'm currently working with a 4th grade class, and one of the students in the classroom has completely disengaged

DianneA nods

RebekahO: The teachers have all but given up on the student

RebekahO: and I'm wondering if people had input as to how to reengage this student or differentiate instruction to reach the student

KristinMJ: give them jobs to make them feel welcome in the classroom

MeghanML: how does ur student act differently?

DianneA: does that mean that you are seeing this one as a 'troubled student'? If so we are in line with Chase's concern

GaryML: are they currently passing or failing?

RebekahO: I don't have the scores, but my guess is failing

DianneA: if not we'll come back to Chase's question in about 10mins

MeghanML: does the student participate in class?

ChaseK: ok

GaryML: is there hope for them to pass

NaomiR: what subject/s?

GaryML: to the next grade level

RebekahO: No. Generally, he sits at his desk and plays with his pencil. That's about it.

RebekahO: I don't know how passing looks...

NaomiR: What are his interests?

MeghanML: he doesn't act up or anything?

RebekahO: this is all subjects

RebekahO: No, the funny thing is that he doesn't act up--he's really quiet and doesn't distract from the rest of the class

RebekahO: Which I guess is why the teachers don't pay him much attention anymore

YamileH: have u tried talking to him or his parents about it?

NaomiR: cartoons?, video games?, music?, books?

DianneA: has he been engaged previously? if so with what?

RebekahO: No, I mean I'm just in the classroom once a week or so, so I don't have access to parent information or anything like that

KristinMJ: I have a student similar to that. you have to give them specific things to do to make them welcome....water the flowers, staple papers, have him stand in the back of class during lessons so he will stay alert.

RebekahO: He seems to like writing, from what I can tell--stories, anyway

MeghanML: yeah that's a good thing for them to do

GaryML: have the parents not been involved at all, their son is about to fail?

KristinMJ: maybe the class is boring....

MeghanML: is any of his work different? like drawings and things

YamileH: mmm.. what about a counselor?

YamileH: to talk to him

RebekahO: You know, I don't know. I'm not even student teaching in this classroom, so I only have a limited view of his work in the classroom...but the fact that he and the teachers have given up on him concerns me

MeghanML: yeah that is a big concern

CherrieL: maybe try to get his friends to talk to him--kind of "peer pressure"

GaryML: this may be harsh, but at this time of year a lot of teachers have given up on certain students

MeghanML: would u be able to talk to the teacher? or is she not open to things like that

YamileH: does he have friends?

MeghanML: that's a horrible though

KristinMJ: its one of those out of your hands problems...learn from it, take notes of suggestions and make a real effort to stay on top of that in your own classroom

RebekahO: I'd have to do it in more of a question form, I guess, like "What's going on with this student?"

MonicaAd: sometimes students need to be held back so that they can build up their confidence again

MeghanML: yeah

GaryML: every year there are going to be around 5 kids who don't care, its life

RebekahO: I don't think he has a lot of friends, which is where the peer pressure idea runs into an obstacle

YamileH: that is true..

MeghanML: but u can't stop caring about them

RebekahO: The other students seem to have given up on him too

MeghanML: that's not good

YamileH: he just might not be sociable

GaryML: I'd rather concentrate on borderline passing kids, then on the 5 who don't give a you know what

RebekahO: I guess I'm just throwing this out there as a hypothetical in case I ever run into this kind of situation as a teacher

MeghanML: I like the idea of giving them little tasks to do and what not

KristinMJ: I agree Gary

MonicaAd nods to Gary

KristinMJ: thanks Meghan

GaryML: I'm at the middle school level so it may be different than elementary

DianneA: A suggestion involves finding a child's strength and working with that

DianneA: success is an important motivator

RebekahO: You see, I feel like he could do a lot...but he just needs a little more attention and support

MeghanML: very true

YamileH: I find it hard to want to give up on this student

YamileH: there has to be a way

MeghanML: it's too bad his teacher is giving up on him

GaryML: is he spec ed? does he have inclusion support?

DianneA: and will help someone, young or old, move from where they are comfortable to areas where they have had less success

MeghanML: maybe a learning disability?

RebekahO: You know, I don't know, but I don't think it's a special ed case, necessarily

KristinMJ: true...there will usually be one student in the class who is really comfortable working with difficult students....peer help...they don't necessarily have to be friends

RebekahO: I understand the teacher's frustration

KristinMJ: sounds like he's just bored

YamileH: ahh.. pairing him up with a better student to help him along????

GaryML: just having an inclusion teacher in the classroom can help (again I'm speaking from a 7th grade level not elementary)

DianneA: in the end, there is a sense in which each person needs to look after their own learning, but help along the way is never unwelcome

MeghanML: yeah

KristinMJ: yeah...give him a little nudge

MonicaAd: what grade is this student in?

RebekahO: She has a class of 25 with multiple special ed, remedial reading, and ELL students

RebekahO: 4th grade

YamileH: oh jeez

BJB2 wonders if there is something going on at home (or not going on at home)

DianneA: helping along the way means you need to work to find the key

KristinMJ: wow

NaomiR: It sounds like he just hasn't found his niche in class. Did he come later in the year than the other students? Could it be his background? His home situation?

DianneA: simple coercion to pass exams has no attraction if schooling is not attractive

GaryML: wow, that's a different story, so he's doing bad in a class designed to give him more support?

RebekahO: I do wonder about home problems, but unfortunately I'm not in a situation to intervene

RebekahO: No, this is a general ed classroom

MonicaAd: why not?

NaomiR: To get to him, I would start with his interests. You said he's interested in writing. What does he write about? Does he keep a journal?

KristinMJ: I wonder if the extreme diversity in the classroom is a distraction

RebekahO: I'm not even a student teacher--I'm just doing field experience in this classroom

MeghanML: it's hard bc u have no control

KristinMJ: he may be getting lost in the other problems that the teacher is having to deal with

MeghanML: you aren't the teacher

RebekahO: that's my guess

MonicaAd: maybe he needs more one on one time that the teacher can't give him

MonicaAd: have they tried a tutor?

YamileH: or just bored and doesn't care

RebekahO: When I was in the classroom the other day, he wrote a story based on a prompt the teacher had given him. It wasn't fantastic writing, but I could definitely see potential there

MeghanML: that could be true to

MeghanML: I guess ud have to see his work to really see deeper

YamileH: well at least he wrote

RebekahO: I do think more one-on-one time could help

YamileH: that's a start

MonicaAd: then I say you should talk to him about his writing and get him to put in effort there.... maybe the rest will fall into place

RebekahO: there's an assistant in the classroom, but she's spread between various classrooms and like I said, she's got all of these other needs to attend to the classroom

KristinMJ: I have another concern when we finish this one

MeghanML: what's your concern Kristin?

DianneA: Have you had enough on this one Rebekah?

RebekahO: I think that answered my question, if we want to move on (although I know Gary brought up a question)

GaryML: no I'm good

DianneA sits on her hands, you are doing well enough managing yourselves

GaryML: what does Kristin want to ask

KristinMJ: ok..I will be a first year teacher in the fall and will be in charge of science in 5th grade....there will be another science teacher but she will teach math as well

MeghanML: uh huh

KristinMJ: my question is...how do you manage as a first year teacher planning science for the entire grade level, setting up all labs and managing the science lab for the whole school

MeghanML: that's a lot!

RebekahO: Can this other teacher not contribute to the science planning?

GaryML: why do you have to manage the lab for the entire school?

KristinMJ: would you consider it fair for the other teacher to just sit back and copy from your lessons bc she's not solely science?

YamileH: you're completely on your own... ?

MeghanML: but it also can be an opportunity to kinda run things the way you think it should be done

KristinMJ: well...the teacher whose place I'm taking...that was her job...

RebekahO: Is this other teacher planning the entire math curriculum?

CherrieL: is it possible for you to find others to cooperate?

MonicaAd: but they know it's your first year

GaryML: wow, at our school each teacher sets up the lab when they use it

YamileH: so there isn't anyone that you can ask for help or guidance?

MeghanML: do you think you could maybe get some of her plans and her notes...from her or the other science teacher to aid you?

NaomiR: what kind of staff support does the school have for new teachers?

KristinMJ: I'm excited bc that way I can keep it just so, I guess I'm just afraid that I wont have anyone to turn to to make sure that all the curriculum is met

MonicaAd: won't you have meetings with the other science teacher to make sure curriculum is met?

YamileH: I think I would be frightened to do things wrong

NaomiR: are you from TX Kristin?

KristinMJ: from what I've heard, she doesn't contribute anything....will send an aid to watch you do it, take notes, and verbatim teach her kids

RebekahO: from what you know about the staff and administration, are there folks there that could give input??

KristinMJ: yup/...TX

MeghanML: did you meet this other teacher? was she friendly?

MonicaAd: well you could just use the TEKS to help you

KristinMJ: she's pretty scary

MeghanML: eek!

MonicaAd: has the other teacher been teaching a long time?

YamileH: lol

NaomiR: You'll need to learn those TEKS inside out

KristinMJ: TEKS are a great guideline...I guess I'm just nervous having so much weight on my shoulders....

MeghanML: yeah I understand

MeghanML: that's tough

RebekahO: are there people in the district, like a science curriculum coordinator, you could talk to?

KristinMJ: do you have any ideas about how to appropriately ask for help?

MeghanML: what district is it?

KristinMJ: Deer Park

KristinMJ: There is, and she's great, but I couldn't plan with her

MeghanML: I would hope there would be someone there that understands it's your first year and would offer help

MonicaAd: I would go to inservices to get more ideas and information, and when you are there make friends with other teachers that can help you.

RebekahO: do you mind me asking why?

NaomiR: Start now with reviewing the TEKS and putting together Units and lesson plans for next year.

MeghanML: yeah make as many friends as you can there

KristinMJ: oh, well, I just assumed because she's the only coordinator that she would be SUPER busy herself...I've never seen her work specifically with one teacher

NaomiR: Professional Developments are wonderful!

MonicaAd: it never hurts to ask

KristinMJ: good idea...prep ahead

RebekahO: I see, okay. Well, she might at least be able to point you in the right direction of helpful people/resources

MeghanML: yeah

KristinMJ: true....thanks for your help all!!!

KristinMJ: we can move on

DianneA: especially if you take her your prep ideas!

DianneA: then she will have something to work with, and be appreciative that you are looking to do your bit

CherrieL: then ask her to give you some advice

MonicaAd: well I have a question

CherrieL: glad to hear

MonicaAd: I'm moving from Texas to New York right after graduation to be with my husband. How should I find a job there when I don't know anything about New York?!

KristinMJ: wow...you won't be certified for there then right?

MonicaAd: no... my husband is in the military so we might be moving quite a bit

CherrieL: do you know any friend who is a teacher there?

MonicaAd: I will only be certified in Texas

MonicaAd: I don't know anyone there

MeghanML: that's tough..moving like that

RebekahO: would the base have any contacts?

MonicaAd: it's a reserve base so I don't think so

GaryML: I'd wait till I was there and scout the school districts to find the best fit for you, is it NY City or upstate?

MonicaAd: upstate

MeghanML: I know that is how my mom found her job...the base helped her when I was younger

MonicaAd: Do you think it would be ok to go talk with a principal directly?

GaryML: Is there any way to become certified across several states?

MonicaAd: I don't know

KristinMJ: I would go to the TEA website to accountability...you can find the names of schools there and find out all types of information from demographics to salary

MeghanML: I don't see why it would be a bad idea to talk with the principal directly

MeghanML: that's true also

MonicaAd: isn't the TEA only for Texas?

KristinMJ: maybe....NY should have one too I would think

YamileH: really ? you can directly talk to principals?

MonicaAd: see! I didn't know if that would even be possible

SusanR . o O (Monica, you may want to post to the teachers.net chatboard re being certified to teach in New York state ..<http://newyork.teachers.net/chatboard/>)

RebekahO: I think it might be best to check in with the district first and find out where there are openings

DianneA nods thanks to Susan

MeghanML: yeah

MonicaAd: thanks Susan!

KristinMJ: <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/>

DianneA and feels definitely out of depth with the specifics of this one

SusanR . o O (lots of concrete advice)

MonicaAd: I know this is a tough one, so y'all can move on if you want.

KristinMJ: that site looks like it might have info like TEA

DianneA: One of the roles of Principals is to talk to prospective teachers, and parents, and ...

DianneA: making an appointment to do so will make that easier than cold calling

YamileH: so as a future teacher.. u can go and speak to a principal without any problem?

DianneA: writing and explaining your situation will give them some idea of what you are wanting to see them for

MonicaAd smiles at Dianne

MonicaAd: thanks for the advice! it really helps

DianneA: yes Yamile, unless Principalling has changed since I was at school

KristinMJ: usually Yamile...if you call they are usually excited to make appointments with future teachers

YamileH: I had no idea.. thank u

KristinMJ: it can be scary...but you would be surprised at how eager they are to meet prospects

DianneA agrees with Kristin

MonicaAd: Has anyone else heard that teachers from the north are coming down to the south to find jobs?

KristinMJ: haha, no

MeghanML: ...no?

MeghanML: how did u hear that?

RebekahO: what do you mean?

KristinMJ: is everyone in here student teaching?

MonicaAd: I have from many people.

RebekahO: No, I'm student teaching next semester

MonicaAd: I'm student teaching right now

CherrieL: I am student teaching next year

MeghanML: not yet

MonicaAd jumps for joy since graduation is in 4 weeks!

KristinMJ: I'm getting so bored with it...I'm SOOOOO ready for my own class...I already have a job for next year so it's making me so antsy

DianneA notices that it is that time of year again!

MonicaAd: lucky you

MeghanML: that's great tho!

KristinMJ: YEA Monica...are you at UH?

MonicaAd: yeah

DianneA: Has anyone else got a question they would like addressed?

KristinMJ: me too.....:)

GaryML: sure I'll ask one

DianneA over to you Gary

GaryML: Our school is making us pass any kid who passes TAKS (the Texas common assessment) are other states doing this as well to keep up with NCLB standards?

MonicaAd: I haven't heard of that Gary.

RebekahO: Do you mean that the state is passing kids who pass TAKS even if they haven't done well in terms of school grades?

DianneA: who else is not Texas based?

MeghanML: interesting...so u have to pass the students that don't do anything cuz they passes TAKS

RebekahO: I'm in Virginia

GaryML: yes, our district has mandated that even if kids fail your class if they pass TAKS you must pass them on

MonicaAd: what district is that?

YamileH: but that's not good

MeghanML: that's not fair to students who have to work hard to pass

GaryML: north east isd in SAN Antonio

RebekahO: Hmmm, I haven't heard of that...

MonicaAd: neither have I

NaomiR: is that legal? it doesn't sound very moral.

GaryML: yeah completely outrageous I know, that's why I was wondering if this is going on elsewhere

MeghanML: I haven't heard of that, I hope its not

RebekahO: I've heard of kids being kept back because they didn't pass, but not the other way around

MonicaAd: can you complain to someone about this?

DianneA knows that in Australia States rights like to rule, each state thinks that its standards are the best

GaryML: well if it's the district that is forcing it

KristinMJ: I have heard that a lot of times we just pass on kids because they can only be retained a certain number of times \

YamileH: or the teacher wants them out of their class

GaryML: a lot of teachers want to do something but we don't know what

MeghanML: that would really upset me if I had to pass a student that didn't come and didn't care

MonicaAd: no wonder so many students are in high school that can't even read

GaryML: yep

DianneA: have you compared the TAKS with the NCLB standards?

MonicaAd: I meant can't

MeghanML: and how does that prepare them for college?

MeghanML: no ones going to pass u there because u passed TAKS

NaomiR: the school I'm student teaching at talked about retention today, if students do not meet the levels they are supposed to meet by the end of the 5th six weeks, they are being tested to see if they should be retained, the only way they pass on is if they've already been retained in that grade already

GaryML: supposedly the TAKS test all the state mandated lessons kids are supposed to learn. so if they pass the test the district is arguing that they know the content

MeghanML: but if they don't work hard..which some of them who pass it do not, then they won't have the work ethic to make it in college

RebekahO: Could you, and other teachers who likewise feel that the decision is unwise, appear at a school board meeting to make a case for changing that policy?

KristinMJ: well...if you follow the TEKS I guess that has a little truth in it

MonicaAd: Gary... politics are messing up the school system way too much. Sometimes we have to just bite our tongues and move on.

KristinMJ: college is just test after test...if they can learn to pass a test...that's what a lot of people do

MeghanML: it's horrible it is like that now days

CherrieL: haaa, that's true

MeghanML: true. I just never was able to walk into a college class and just do well with out working at it

GaryML: well TAKS is next week so we wouldn't have time, a few teachers thought about going to the media to let them know about the districts policy

MonicaAd: did anyone else hear that the TAKS might be done away with?

MeghanML: or at least as well as I wanted to...I guess they just wanna pass

RebekahO: I don't know if going to the media right now would change much--it may be worth it to bring this up with the school board so that the policy changes for next year

NaomiR: I've heard that Monica, but I think all they will do is change the name again

MonicaAd: well that's disappointing

NaomiR: It won't really be done away with

MeghanML: they just changed it

GaryML: the TAKS may go away but that doesn't mean another state common assessment won't come along

MonicaAd: I heard that high school students won't have to take it anymore though

MeghanML: I knew a lot of student in high school that had trouble with the TAKS

GaryML: as long as NCLB exists there will be state assessments with huge ramifications for those who don't do well

NaomiR: yea, it was TEAMS, then TAAS, now TAKS, right

MonicaAd nods to Gary

MeghanML: wow

KristinMJ: true, I agree with doing end of course exams

MeghanML: me too

DianneA: standard testing of some form is with us all

KristinMJ: we need to know if they learned the stuff after each course

MeghanML: it puts so much pressure on students..stressing them out..especially the little ones

DianneA: even professional associations have professional standards

KristinMJ: not a huge lump test that covers everything they ever learned...good grief

MeghanML: I agree

MonicaAd: I agree that students should be accounted for what they learned, but I don't agree that money is tied up with the whole thing

CherrieL: me too

MeghanML: true

KristinMJ: oh well...anymore student teaching worries?

GaryML: If you make school accountable for only 40 questions, then all teachers will teach will be the material for those 40 questions

DianneA: notices that some sort of reward always relates to performance

MonicaAd: that's true, but then we start having problems

DianneA: even when it is a paradoxical or reflexive relationship

MonicaAd: cheating and what not

DianneA can't quite remember what it is that is its own reward

RebekahO: I think a teacher can go beyond those 40 questions, though. Standards are a baseline...and teachers have to move up from there

DianneA: who is cheating? child? or district admin?

DianneA: who will not benefit from cheating?

MonicaAd: teachers... principals... students..... it's been all over the news

YamileH: students

RebekahO: Sure, time is often a problem, and teachers often end up "covering" material instead of actually teaching it, but at least we can be the teachers would are better than that

DianneA: how does that then inform what you do in class with the children you teach?

BJB2 . o O (a reminder that there are 4 minutes left)

BJB2: The next Teachers in Training discussion will be on May 3

DianneA notes the time

MeghanML: sounds good

DianneA: and thanks everyone for their input today

DianneA: we have a Teachers In Training group if you would like to join that and keep the discussion going

MonicaAd: well it was good to talk to y'all tonight

KristinMJ: sure, this was a good meeting

RebekahO: thanks, all

MeghanML: thanks...bye!

CherrieL: thanks for your contribution!!!

GaryML: talk to y'all later

CherrieL: see u next time!

MonicaAd: good luck with student teaching to the ones that have yet to start

DianneA: we will meet there in that group room next session

YamileH: bye.. and thank you for all the information.. It's very helpful

MonicaAd waves good bye to everyone

CherrieL: good bye everyone!

DianneA: hope this was relevant to you too