

**Title of Session:** Teachers In Training

**Moderator:** Dianne Allen

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Room: Teachers In Training Group

**BJB2:** we always start the Tapped in discussions with introductions. Please tell me where you are located and what you teach or hope to teach

**BJB2:** I teach remedial communication and am located in Pennsylvania

**BJB2:** I'm also on Tapped In helpdesk.

**CourtneyP:** I am in Sugar Land, Texas and I am student teaching in first grade.

**KiaundraR:** I live in New Boston, Texas, and I would like to teach Kindergarten when I finish in December.

**LorettaK:** I'm in VA and am a first year ESL teacher

**JenniferKL:** I am an instructional technology student at University of TN-Knoxville, and I'm a Texas longhorn for all you Texas folks here today!

**BJB2:** what grades, Loretta?

**LorettaK:** 1, 3, and 5th. I can teach k-12

**KiaundraR:** Go Jennifer (Texas)

**BJB2** nods to Loretta. My daughter is getting ESL certification

**LorettaK:** I'm at an elementary school with another teacher who teaches k, 2, and 4th

**BJB2:** ok...so we have some wild west Texans ;- ) and a couple of people on the east coast

**JenniferKL:** I taught high school language arts for several years before returning for my master's degree.

**BJB2:** Language arts is such an adaptive subject :-)

**JenniferKL:** I do love it.

**BJB2** . o O ( communication skills )

**BJB2:** sounds like some newbies who are student teaching and some experienced teachers entering new fields...

**LorettaK:** My undergrad is in Business, when my youngest started 4th grade I went to sub and became interested in ESL.

**JenniferKL:** Bravo!

**LorettaK:** I'm new and old at the same time.

**BJB2:** what is the most exciting thing about being a teacher?

**CourtneyP:** I am very new!

**JenniferKL:** . o O ( I know that feeling. . . )

**BJB2:** . o O ( you notice I avoided the word OLD, Loretta ;- )

**KiaundraR:** Me too Courtney

**LorettaK:** I don't feel that way unless I'm in my tech class

**BJB2:** maybe Jennifer can help you there, Loretta.

**BJB2:** I'll repeat my question...

**BJB2:** what is the most exciting thing about being a teacher?

**CourtneyP:** The growth that you see in the kids and the love that the kids give you.

**LorettaK:** I love teaching, the kids are wonderful and when they catch on to something I've taught them that is the most exciting.

**JenniferKL:** I enjoy planning and trying new things.

**CourtneyP:** I could go on and on because I love it.

**BJB2** smiles...ahhh, I can feel the passion!

**DavidW** joined the room.

**BJB2:** and what do you find to be the most frustrating thing about teaching?

**DavidW** waves

**BJB2** waves hi to David

**KiaundraR:** I enjoy the challenges and the different situations each and everyday. No day is ever the same

**JenniferKL:** I can tell I'm out of my element here. High school teachers never mention loving the kids.

**CourtneyP:** Controlling the talking!

**BJB2** chuckles...there's a reason for that, Jennifer!

**JenniferKL:** I agree, Kiaundra

**CourtneyP:** My kids are so enthusiastic that they have something to say about everything!

**LorettaK:** The most frustrating is when you know that the kids don't have support at home.

**CourtneyP:** I agree Loretta.

**KiaundraR:** I agree Loretta

**CourtneyP:** I observed at an underprivileged school and witnessed a lot of that.

**LorettaK:** We have very low income kids and the parents are working a lot.

**JenniferKL:** Parents and sometimes grandparents.

**DavidW:** For some students, they feel safer in school than at other times of the day

**CourtneyP:** My student teaching experience is completely different, but the parents are their TOO much.

**KiaundraR:** Yes, we have to teach morals, values, and the curriculum

**BJB2:** Courtney, count your blessings

**JenniferKL:** David, I really enjoyed knowing my classroom was an inviting safe place. I worked hard to make it a fun environment.

**SusanR** joined the room.

**KiaundraR:** Courtney that's GREAT, but I can see where that could create a problem. Some children will not learn or stay focused with parents there constantly

**BJB2** waves hi to Sue

**LorettaK**: You can tell most of the parents truly care but don't have time.

**SusanR** waves hi to everyone

**CourtneyP**: Hello!

**KiaundraR**: I understand parents have to work, but there has to be some time to devote to your children.

**KiaundraR**: Hi Susan

**CourtneyP**: I agree.

**BJB2**: we're discussing the most frustrating part of teaching, Sue

**SusanR** listens

**CourtneyP**: I would say parents in general are a problem, whether too much involvement or none at all.

**BJB2**: Kiaundra, some parents are so overwhelmed trying to survive and keep their families together that they have no energy left to nurture their children

**LorettaK**: My kids parents also don't speak English, this is very tough on the kids. A lot of times they have to translate for the parents.

**DavidW** . o O ( or aren't always sure HOW to do it )

**CourtneyP**: That must be difficult.

**SusanR** has experienced these concerns

**KiaundraR**: I agree BJ, it's so sad.

**BJB2** nods to Loretta. Language issues are an obstacle...

**LorettaK**: We often have parents thank us for telling them how to help their kids. They didn't know that reading to them in their native language is beneficial

**BJB2**: as new classroom teachers in whatever subject or grade you are teaching, how can you overcome these obstacles?

**BJB2**: Loretta, how would you help parents learn to read to their children?

**LorettaK:** I think touching base with experienced teachers has been the most helpful

**KiaundraR:** Have the school look into different programs that can help the parents. Have some of the parents volunteer to come to the classroom and visit and see their child in action, and learn while they are learning.

**LorettaK:** For parents who are literate in their own language we are now offering adult ESL classes

**CourtneyP:** I would talk to veteran teachers (for advice) and talk to the parents saying that they can not teach the child alone and the parent is the primary educator.

**SusanR:** I do hope you will touch base with the K to 3+ Great Resources session next Tuesday..

**BJB2:** cool, Loretta

**SusanR:** a quick plug

**LorettaK:** Sounds good, thanks

**KiaundraR:** that is a great start, Loretta

**BJB2:** thanks, Sue. Participating in Tapped In discussions is one way to meet with other experienced teachers and share ideas

**CourtneyP:** I like to hear what other have to say as well.

**BJB2:** what about family read nights?

**KiaundraR:** I do too. I love to learn from others.

**DavidW:** Do you folks know about Family Math?

**KiaundraR:** That's a great idea. We have family read nights at our local library.

**CourtneyP:** I think they are a great idea, but my mom recently has one at a middle class school of 1200 children and only 20 children showed up.

**BJB2:** tell us more, David

**LorettaK:** We are having a books and bagels on Monday morning for students and parents

**BJB2:** sign me up, Loretta!

**CourtneyP:** I like that idea!

**KiaundraR:** Reach those 20, and maybe others will join later Courtney

**LorettaK:** We have had functions with low turnout but you look to the ones that you can help

**CourtneyP:** I agree.

**DavidW:** Elementary math program that really encourages parent participation in all activities to make math happen in all sorts of places (supermarket, etc.)

**KiaundraR:** David, that sounds good. Math is everywhere.

**DavidW:** <http://www.lawrencehallofscience.org/equals/aboutfm.html>

**CourtneyP:** That sounds wonderful.

**DavidW:** It's available in Spanish as well

**CourtneyP:** I think you bring ELA into that as well with environmental print.

**KiaundraR:** wow

**JenniferKL:** Parent engagement is good but tricky -- several of my students were first in the family to be graduated from hs.

**JenniferKL:** Their parents have negative associations with the school context

**LorettaK:** I think different cultures view education differently

**BJB2** nods...and educators

**DavidW:** Yes - that's often a big stumbling block - if school wasn't a good place for you, you're less likely to be happy going there as a parent

**JenniferKL:** All these ideas for parent engagement are great with low intensity but high interest

**CourtneyP:** I agree. I think some parents think that their children do not need to go to school because they did not do good in school and expect their child to fail as well.

**LorettaK:** Some parents feel it is the teacher's job to teach reading etc. So parents think that they can't help.

**KiaundraR:** I agree Jennifer

**CourtneyP:** I agree too.

**CourtneyP:** They feel they do not need to participate, but in actuality it is imperative that they do.

**KiaundraR:** We as educators need to encourage parents and let them know how much they are helping their child when they do read with them, etc

**BJB2:** any other ideas to engage the parents?

**CourtneyP:** Have them come read to class.

**LorettaK:** It certainly is in the US. I don't know how other countries do it.

**CourtneyP:** The children love it at our school and it gives the teachers a break. = )

**KiaundraR:** I would like to have a little something for those parents that help their child. Maybe a little bookmark with a note attached explaining how thankful and helpful they are. The personal attention might be great.

**LorettaK:** We give the parents all of that information, but we have to offer food to get them to the school

**BJB2** grins...teachers respond the same way ;-)

**CourtneyP:** = )

**DavidW** agrees

**LorettaK:** If we can involve the whole family we always have a better turnout

**LorettaK:** Our Parents as Educational Partners class is even offering free babysitting along with the free weekly class.

**KiaundraR:** Wow, you guys are trying everything. That should help out in a huge way.

**CourtneyP:** That sounds like a great idea. Anything for families to come to school to support their child's education.

**LorettaK:** It starts Monday. We're hoping to get a lot of families.

**KiaundraR:** Is that getting them in Loretta?

**LorettaK:** It has in other schools

**BJB2:** Loretta, you'll have to come back next month and tell us how it's going

**KiaundraR:** good luck with that. I hope it works for you too.

**CourtneyP:** Hopefully it will work in your school too.

**LorettaK:** Our county has many immigrant families and the county to the north just started refusing services to illegals so they are moving south.

**JenniferKL:** I have a question for the teachers in training. . .

**CourtneyP:** = )

**BJB2** listens to Jennifer

**LorettaK:** Jennifer where will your daughter teach?

**JenniferKL:** Are you receiving any formal face-to-face mentoring at your schools?

**JenniferKL:** From veteran teachers?

**KiaundraR:** I am in student teaching, so I receive it all the time.

**LorettaK:** My mentor has only a year of teaching herself

**JenniferKL:** Wow

**CourtneyP:** Yes, I am under a teacher in first grade. I am teaching full time though right now.

**CourtneyP:** She has been teaching for 15 years.

**JenniferKL:** Are you here at this discussion tonight to supplement your mentoring?

**KiaundraR:** I seek veterans and observe things that I am curious about and ask. It may or may not work for me. I am taking everything in like a sponge.

**CourtneyP:** Just to get some ideas and support.

**JenniferKL:** Kiaundra, it's good to observe as many different styles and levels of experience as possible.

**BJB2:** Jennifer, do you feel that mentoring programs are important?

**KiaundraR:** I am here to obtain anything that can benefit me as a teacher

**CourtneyP:** Me too.

**JenniferKL:** BJ, I have been involved in a very fruitful mentoring program here in Knox County, TN, and we are trying to grow it out to all the schools.

**KiaundraR:** I agree Jennifer, and I love observing

**BJB2:** can you tell us more about the mentoring program, Jennifer?

**JenniferKL:** My few years as a mentor teacher I learned more than in all the previous years.

**BJB2:** . o O ( I agree that mentoring is important )

**CourtneyP:** I have been going through an intense program at the University of Houston.

**KiaundraR:** me too BJ

**JenniferKL:** Teachers with 3 plus years experience volunteer to serve. . .

**JenniferKL:** they are matched with interns, 1st year teachers, and new-to-building teachers.

**KiaundraR:** I hope I can get that at my first school, sounds like a great program Jennifer

**CourtneyP:** I think that sounds good too.

**LorettaK:** Are there ESL teachers at your schools?

**JenniferKL:** There is a good bit of training but lots of camaraderie and teacher-driven professional development sessions after school.

**JenniferKL:** Loretta, we have a traveling ESL teacher who works with a few students for a few hours a week. . .

**KiaundraR:** Do you have a large population of English language learners Jennifer?

**JenniferKL:** I do think our non-English speaking population is growing in East Tennessee though.

**JenniferKL:** No, Kiaundra, but I do think it's growing.

**LorettaK:** You must have low numbers of ESL students. We have 89 in one school. Over 1,000 in the county

**CourtneyP:** Do you have a bilingual program at your school?

**JenniferKL:** Yes, the last year I taught before taking a maternity leave I think we had five in the whole school.

**KiaundraR:** is this a private school?

**JenniferKL:** Courtney, no not when I was teaching.

**LorettaK:** No bilingual education. We struggle to get bilingual helpers

**JenniferKL:** Kiaundra, we are a public school

**KiaundraR:** wow, you do have low numbers.

**KiaundraR:** that's almost unheard of here in Texas

**LorettaK:** We also have several different languages represented.

**CourtneyP:** We have ESL at my school, but mostly for ASIAN students.

**JenniferKL:** Oh, I know it! . .

**JenniferKL:** I taught on the Gulf coast and in Austin. It was culture shock coming to TN.

**KiaundraR:** Courtney, it's because of where you are- sugarland, right

**KiaundraR:** I bet Jennifer

**CourtneyP:** Yes, very diverse.

**CourtneyP:** I love the mix of cultures thought, I have learned a lot.

**KiaundraR:** that's a good thing.

**JenniferKL:** It seems teaching a diverse student population is another huge challenge for new teachers.

**CourtneyP:** I will find out soon. = )

**JenniferKL:** In my school, I noticed our interns struggle less with language and culture differences but really could not understand class differences.

**KiaundraR:** well, now that most schools are going to inclusion, we might as well get use to it and trained in teaching all students no matter the circumstance

**JenniferKL:** Here, here, Kiaundra!!

**CourtneyP:** I agree.

**CourtneyP:** I have to see I was prepared for all of the differences though.

**JenniferKL:** "Deep personalization" is what they call it in ed tech, but it's the same basic principle about meeting diverse needs of heterogeneous populations.

**KiaundraR:** I like that name

**CourtneyP:** It is very "deep".

**DianneA** joined the room.

**JenniferKL:** Hi, Dianne.

**CourtneyP:** Hello.

**DianneA:** Hi Jennifer

**KiaundraR:** hello Dianne

**LorettaK:** Hi Dianne

**DianneA:** Hi Courtney, Kiaundra

**DianneA:** Hi Loretta

**DianneA:** my apologies for missing all the good talk you've been having

**CourtneyP:** It is okay.

**LorettaK:** That's okay.

**DianneA:** my excuse is getting hung up on commissioning Dragonspeak and then needing a break, and forgetting what day it was and what time it was!

**KiaundraR:** we have been discussing frustrations and passions of teaching

**DianneA:** and ESL so I am told ...

**KiaundraR:** Dianne, that led to so much, even ESL

**DianneA:** I have just been marking masters assignments for international students and being taught English by them ...

**DianneA:** like what is the difference between since, and once and when ...

**CourtneyP:** Sounds interesting. = )

**JenniferKL:** I hope you enjoy the rest of your discussion. I have a fussy baby . . .

**JenniferKL:** goodbye!

**CourtneyP:** Bye Jennifer.

**LorettaK:** Bye

**KiaundraR:** thanks Jennifer, bye

**DianneA:** bye Jennifer

**DavidW** waves

**JenniferKL:** I'm really impressed by your thoughtfulness and passion! My best wishes to you all!

**JenniferKL** waves

**JenniferKL** left the room (signed off).

**CourtneyP:** Something I have learned working with a diverse group of students is that they do not understand head nods.

**CourtneyP:** I always nod "yes" or "no" and they just stand there.

**KiaundraR:** really, now that you mention it, I can agree

**CourtneyP:** I have learned to correct myself.

**DianneA:** head nods can be ambiguous .. different meanings in different cultures ...

**KiaundraR:** mine look at me confused. I showed the class today a bag of treats and asked one of my ESL students if she thought the class would enjoy what was in the bag, and she nodded no, but was smiling. I thought she hated it, but turned out she was excited about it

**CourtneyP:** I know, I forgot at first and now I catch myself and actually say the words instead.

**CourtneyP:** That is kind of funny Kiaundra.

**LorettaK:** That's something for me to keep in mind. I hadn't noticed it.

**DianneA:** and even 'yes' can be culturally determined ... to please rather than what is needed by way of effective feedback

**LorettaK:** I do know not to take yes as complete assurance that something is understood.

**CourtneyP:** What is anyone's opinion of parental email communication?

**LorettaK:** Our parents don't have access to computers in the evening

**BJB2:** depends on whether all parents have that ability ...as Loretta pointed out

**CourtneyP:** I guess so.

**LorettaK:** They'd have to go to the library

**KiaundraR:** I think it is great for working parents who are willing to use it. If they choose to communicate like that, I do not see a problem. That is how I communicate with my child's teacher

**LorettaK:** My perspective is different than say a regular classroom teacher.

**CourtneyP:** The problem I have seen with it though is that you cannot tell the tone of voice sometimes that the parents are using.

**KiaundraR:** Courtney, it is a form of communication, you have to do what you have to do to get messages and things across to the parents

**KiaundraR:** share Loretta

**LorettaK:** Email would be a fine way for my son's teacher to reach me

**LorettaK:** Most of the students that I serve are low income

**KiaundraR:** what about sending emails to those who can receive them and prefer that, and then a different form for the others

**CourtneyP:** We have has trouble with a few parents. The emails are worded so harshly, but they are so nice in person.

**CourtneyP:** I think phone communication is great too.

**BJB2** heads for the WriteTalk discussion

**BJB2:** Thanks, everyone, for your spirited and enthusiastic input to the discussion!

**LorettaK:** We have a website where assignments are posted for my highschool children

**KiaundraR:** just weed out the negative stuff and concentrate on the child and what the main point is.

**CourtneyP:** Thank you! I agree.