

Title of Session: Alt/Correctional Ed Forum

Moderator: BJ Berquist

Guest Speaker: Don Beadle

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Room: Alt/Correctional Education Group

BJB2: hi, Julia. Welcome

DonKB: hello Julia

JuliaCH: hello

BJB2: are you here for the Alt/Correctional ed discussion, Julia?

JuliaCH: I'm kind of in and out of chats seeing what's going on. . . what's it about?

BJB2: are you a teacher, Julia?

JuliaCH: yes, I am a special education teacher 6-8 grade

BJB2: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania

BJB2: cool, Julia! Does MPS have an alternative school?

DonKB: I'm an alternative ed teacher in British Columbia

JuliaCH: mps has many alternative schools at the high school level

DonKB: MPS?

BJB2: what we had planned for today's discussion was to talk about alternative schools and how they can be used

JuliaCH: Milwaukee public school

JuliaCH: that sounds like a good topic. . .I'll stick around

BJB2: as a special ed teacher I would think the topic is very relevant

JuliaCH: yes, many of our students transfer to alt schools

BJB2: Don and I have discussed this a little. Don, can you tell us a bit about your alternative school, please?

DonKB: sure

DonKB: I'm in an area called the sunshine coast

DonKB: north of Vancouver BC

DonKB: 4000 kids in our district

DonKB: about 200 in our school, sunshine coast alternative

DonKB: I work with about 50, in two shifts , am pm

DonKB: I mean 2 shifts of 25

JuliaCH: 25 still seems like a lot

BJB2: are you working with the students face to face?

BJB2: I agree, Julia..are they all in one classroom, Don?

DonKB: It is a lot, and yes mostly face 2 face

DonKB: but..

BJB2 listens

DonKB: we have several programs, most r smaller

DonKB: I work with students who can't quite handle the regular stream

DonKB: some of my colleagues work with fewer, but with more serious diff

JaneGu joined the room.

JuliaCH: what type of difficulties

DonKB: various..

BJB2: Welcome, Jane. Don is telling us about the students he works with in an alternative school

JaneGu: Thank you!

DonKB: social emotional academic \$\$

BJB2 . o O (two classes of 25 students each..one class in AM and one in PM)

DonKB Don smiles, thank you Bj

JuliaCH: I was just about to comment of the causes of student problems

BJB2: can we stop for a moment and let Jane introduce herself?

JuliaCH: Many of my students come for foster families or have once been in the foster system.

JuliaCH: I work with a young man who was given up at birth but now lives with his father who was in prison at the time

JaneGu: Hi to all, and I am a library media teacher at a juvenile court school and am at the end of a virus/flu so may leave sooner than I would like! I work with max security to mild offenders.

BJB2 . o O (the ultimate alternative school)

JaneGu: Forty percent of incarcerated kids are relinquished at birth.

BJB2: so...what I'm hoping this group can accomplish eventually...

BJB2: is to develop some ideas on how to intervene at the alternative step

BJB2: before the kids get locked up

DonKB left the room (signed off).

BJB2 hopes Don comes back!

JaneGu: Wow, that is big!

JuliaCH: My student has many phy issues. He says he hears voices but he is still in the public school system and receiving no phy services. I am trying to get him servicing.

JaneGu: I see special programs, mentors in writing projects, poetry programs, community support, etc.

BJB2: somehow the cycle has to be broken. Julia, you are an important advocate for this child

JaneGu: Assessing basic needs, getting kids to proper support,

JuliaCH: He has become like a son to me. Where I go he goes throughout the school.

JaneGu: Staying with that kid as an advocate as long as possible.

BJB2: Julia, what will happen when the child moves to the next grade?

JaneGu: To build on that relationship and to direct him to psych services,

BJB2: is there some kind of transition program?

JuliaCH: he will still be my student for another year.

JaneGu: So you have such a gift of time to do interventions at many levels, how wonderful!

JuliaCH: I am trying to transition him to day treatment by his father does not want him to go

DonKB joined the room.

JuliaCH: he wants treatment to come to the school

BJB2 cheers...welcome back, Don

JaneGu: To address mental health issues, then after he is receiving treatment his school needs can be addressed

DonKB: power failure hope I'm here to stay

BJB2: you missed my big pitch, Don!

BJB2: so...what I'm hoping this group can accomplish eventually...

JaneGu: To be a stable presence in his life, and to find his area of special interest and build from there.

BJB2: is to develop some ideas on how to intervene at the alternative step

BJB2: before the kids get locked up

DonKB Don smiles wistfully

JuliaCH: I agree, but he is not getting service because his parent wont allow it

JaneGu: To get kids really hooked on literacy, on emotional literacy, on coming out of their isolation and pain to step out there for education and giving a helping hand the whole way.

DonKB: I think you are talking about appropriately early intervention?

JaneGu: Possibly a parent neglect issue?

BJB2: I wish! Is that realistic, Don?

JaneGu: This could be brought up to counselors to see if there can be mandatory testing, etc.

DonKB: That's a question that gives one pause

DonKB: But I hope so

BJB2 pauses

JuliaCH: I also work for a sat. program that addresses early intervention.

JaneGu: It is concrete neglect in my view.

BJB2: Julia, has the father spent any time in school with his son?

JuliaCH: no, just when he comes to discipline him

BJB2: yikes!

DonKB: One of the major goals..

JuliaCH: that is only for about 5 mins

DonKB: in our program..

BJB2 listens to Don

DonKB: is to try to develop

DonKB: a regular relation ship with the family unit, whoever that is

DonKB: so we have positive (and negative) discussions

BJB2: does the school require parent conferences?

DonKB: we try to connect with everyone weekly

JuliaCH: Don the sat program that I work for does something similar to what you are talking about

DonKB: but no, we don't have special requirements

JaneGu: Please excuse me for leaving, I can see what an impt. chat this is. I will definitely be back to others as I can. Julia, I will hope for good steps forward for you student!

BJB2 waves goodnight to Jane. Hope you feel better

DonKB: That's great Julia and bye Jane

JaneGu: Thanks and you , too

JuliaCH: thanks Jane

JaneGu left the room (signed off).

JuliaCH: we work with young men k5-8 grade

BJB2: K5?

JuliaCH: to build leadership skill and self discipline

BJB2: is that 5 years old?

JuliaCH: yes

BJB2: ahhh...leadership skills and self discipline...wonderful!

BJB2: Don, what do you teach to your alt students in your classroom?

JuliaCH: it is a military based program and you would be amazed how well the 5yr olds do

DonKB: I work mostly with academic subjects

BJB2 nods to Don

DonKB: I use a computer based management system to help with that

BJB2: military based as in boot camp program?

DonKB: no

JuliaCH: not totally

BJB2: Don, do the students use computers to do their work?

JuliaCH: we use some military techniques in teaching but we have a social skill curriculum

BJB2: . o O (we're getting Plato installed)

JuliaCH: Plato is a good program

DonKB: They refer to the desktop PCs for assignments, then they use regular materials

DonKB: to complete them

BJB2: nods to Don

DonKB: also web sources etc

BJB2: and your students, Julia?

DonKB: we also have outdoor ed, leadership programs

DonKB: and vocational programs (culinary arts)

JuliaCH: remember this is just a sat program

BJB2: is the program different from day to day, Don?

JuliaCH: we use the boys town social skills program

BJB2: right, Julia. Do you have an idea of numbers of students enrolled?

JuliaCH: last count 73

BJB2: what kind of vocational programs do you have?

JuliaCH: the group used to be 200. . .

BJB2: wow...big reduction in numbers

DonKB: Work experience at various local employers..

DonKB: a culinary arts program

BJB2: nice, Don.

JuliaCH: but they started a charter school from our program 3 yrs ago

DonKB: + an outdoor leadership program

BJB2: how does the outdoor leadership program work?

DonKB: sounds very cool Julia

JuliaCH: well guys, I hate to leave but I must get ready for bed

BJB2: thanks for your input, Julia.

BJB2: sweet dreams

JuliaCH: thanks

JuliaCH left the room (signed off).

DonKB: students interview, they participate in various O ed and leadership activities one day a week for the school year

DonKB: 10 kids in the cohort

BJB2: 10 is a good size to work with

DonKB: mix of "regular " students and alt ed students

BJB2: that's good.

DonKB: yes, we have a very keen skilled (read young) teacher doing that

BJB2: is phys ed mandated? Once a week doesn't seem like very much

DonKB: yes it is mandated

DonKB: but

DonKB: we provide that on an individual basis, weight lifting, running, community team sports

BJB2: ahhh...so the outdoor thing is supplemental to regular phys ed classes

DonKB: Yes O Ed is a suppl program

BJB2 nods

DonKB: I handle large groups so small ones can exist

BJB2: since it's just the two of us, would you like to discuss some ideas for future topics for this group?

DonKB: sure

DonKB: any thoughts?

BJB2: I like the idea of appropriate early intervention

BJB2: how early do you feel that should be?

DonKB: yes, a very good topic, kind of got passed over tonight

BJB2: . o O (prenatal)

DonKB: touche

BJB2: parenting skills? Parenting classes?

DonKB: Most of my kids can be id'd in early primary school

BJB2: nods...we can see that, but I don't think most el ed teachers are trained to spot at risk kids

DonKB: yes, you are correct, it is easier to look back..

BJB2: so we could discuss what determines if a kid is at risk?

DonKB: yes, warning signs, there's two topics already

BJB2: sounds good.

BJB2: any other ideas?

DonKB: use of technology?

BJB2: good one.

DonKB: building from students strengths

BJB2: and helping students recognize their strengths

DonKB: and believe in themselves

DonKB: yes

BJB2: sounds like enough topics to take us through the next few months

DonKB: You have that right...

BJB2: Thanks so much for helping, Don. I think this group is so important

DonKB: Well this was fun

BJB2: Ready to call it a night?

DonKB: same time next month?

BJB2: I'm looking forward to next month...yes, same time, March 16

DonKB: One day before St Patrick's day

DonKB: I'll be wearing green

BJB2: I'll be sure to wear green also

DonKB: OK bye 4 now

BJB2 . o O (although Berquist isn't very Irish)

BJB2 waves goodnight