

Title of Session: Special Education Forum

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Title of File: 20090209sped

Date: February 9, 2009

Room: Special Education Forum Group

BJB2: Paul, you'll be interested in this...I'm on the committee planning the Region One CEA conference...

BJB2: and we just learned that Pennsylvania has cut all prof development funding from adult facilities

BJB2: lord knows what it's like in other states, but I wonder if we'll get any participants to the region conference...sad.

PaulDB: There are all sorts of cuts affecting prison and juvenile justice programs!!

BJB2 nods...yep.

PaulDB: Here in Florida, they are moving more towards "distance conferencing" using technology to reduce travel expenses.

BJB2: and I think that we are going to be seeing more and more of that

PaulDB: I guess the idea of "networking" has taken on a new meaning in today's technology.

BJB2: which brings us full circle to what Jeff alluded to

JeffC: cool

PaulDB: I did my dissertation on the level of preparedness for teaching in a juvenile justice educational setting.

BJB2: Murray, the president's chair for CEA lost his job.

JeffC: well... "forcing" is a little strong... they *should* be doing that anyway. but there are many barriers.

PaulDB: Lost his job as in laid off, fired, dismissed?

BJB2: Level of preparedness is different from amount of prof. development to move forward

PaulDB: True!!

BJB2: Murray lost his job as some official in a prison...think it was community development of some sort

PaulDB: But even more distressing was the absence of both pre-service and in-service training provided for those who were hired.

BJB2 nods to Paul. I don't doubt that at all

BJB2: most people enter corrections ed by accident

BJB2: and go through trial by fire...which puts the entire facility at risk

PaulDB: We, meaning Dr. Platt and several others are trying to develop a grant to address both JJ teachers as well as Adult prison educators and Alternative education teachers inservice/professional development needs.

BJB2: we still have an Alt/Correctional Ed group here in Tapped In

BJB2 . o O (hint, hint)

PaulDB: BJ you must have read Wright's work regarding the culture shock that accompanies initial experiences as a correctional educator!

BJB2 laughs...I LIVED that culture shock

BJB2 . o O (and that is eventually what burned me out)

PaulDB: Yeah, I know that and will suggest that the grant work group log on to the site.

BJB2: good...let me know if I can help

PaulDB: Actually, that might be a good way for the group to expand its thinking beyond Florida since the intent of the grant is to develop a program that would have national significance.

BJB2 . o O (say hi to John for me, please)

JeffC: one tricky problem you'll have being in corrections is having collaboration via the net between institutions.

JeffC: prisons tend to be pretty touchy regarding the net.

BJB2 lets Paul take that comment

PaulDB: Actually, we will be trying to use existing satellite antennas at the various sites connecting to a specific satellite that will transmit the material.

JeffC: from within the prison walls?

JeffC: in a secured room?

PaulDB: The transmission will originate at a remote site to be delivered to the prisons via satellite.

BJB2: will you be working with Ann Charles and that group?

JeffC: so... a one way transmission?

PaulDB: It will be one-way at the time of delivery but with telephone connections to the originating site.

JeffC: ok... so... teleconferencing (for now).

PaulDB: It will then be followed up with an on-line presentation that will be accessed by computer. The access will be available to any computer that has Internet connection. But access will be controlled by a built in security system.

JeffC: ok... login required, etc., that's good.

PaulDB: After the satellite presentation and completion of the computer-based work assignments, on-site visits by trained personnel will be conducted to evaluate actual implementation of the training topic.

JeffC: great

PaulDB: In addition, participation in the program will lead to a Master's Degree in Education with emphasis on Special Education and Correctional Education or in Adult Education and Correctional Education.

BJB2: who will be giving the degree?

JeffC: sounds good

PaulDB: The initial plan is to develop the program, coordinate the program with other colleges and Universities and make it available from several different institutions.

BJB2: interesting approach

PaulDB: What we are hoping to accomplish is the development of a national Alternative/Correctional Education teacher training program that could be implemented

anywhere with NACTE support.

PaulDB: Well, there is only one program in the nation that includes specific training for prospective correctional/alternative teachers.

BJB2: Dr. Platt or the one in California?

PaulDB: As a result, there is no recognized profession except among those of us who work in the field. Consequently, there is no professional recognition of the work being done or the value of the efforts expended.

BJB2 nods

JeffC: getting NCATE endorsement/accreditation isn't easy.

JeffC: have you contacted them about this?

PaulDB: Yet, in these times of high costs for prison operations, this represents a way of spending tax-payers money that will have a return, a measurable return, on money invested.

PaulDB: The one in California BJ.

BJB2 nods

PaulDB: UWF is willing to work with NCATE to obtain support for the program to be developed there. Once in place, it will easy to export to other sites.

BJB2: sounds wonderful, Paul. I sure wish you all the best

BJB2: I know you've already invested a lot in this project

PaulDB: The Dean of the College of Teacher Training at UWF has come on board with a great deal of enthusiasm. He not only understands what we want to do but also realizes that in Florida (which has the third largest number of citizens in confinement or under supervision in the country) has a real need to push the concept.

BJB2: Is CEA giving support?

JeffC: is their college already NCATE certified?

PaulDB: It is certainly an interesting project. We are trying to collect data using another survey instrument that originally was developed in California for use among teachers of at-risk, incarcerated, and delinquent youth.

PaulDB: We have not approached CEA yet, we are thinking it is too early in the process.

Yes, the teacher training program at UWF is NCATE certified.

JeffC: great

PaulDB: But more than that, USF, and FIU, two other state universities have expressed an interest in the project and a willingness to participate.

BJB2: has any curriculum been written?

PaulDB: We are planning to use several of the course material originally developed through the JJET project and supplementing that with new curriculum content intended to address those elements already approved for basic alternative teacher certification programs but modified for preparing teachers to work in alternative or correctional education settings.

BJB2: if you could name one thing, what would you say is the most important thing a correctional educator should teach?

BJB2: . o O (btw, I just finished A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier)

PaulDB: As of right now, we have 18 of the 24 credit hours required for a Master's degree in place. The remaining 6 credit hours will reflect the modified alternative teacher certification program.

BJB2: interesting behaviors exhibited when the boy was being 'rehabilitated'

BJB2: similar to removing a kid from the streets and gangs

PaulDB: Interesting question BJ, I think I would stress Career Development Skills. It is more important that a person know how to get along with others, how to cooperate in a joint project, how to ask for and accept help, how to search for and find answers without alienating others, and how to realistically plan for the future. That is what I think I would teach.

BJB2: I'm sorry...I've started a whole new topic and it's at the hour already!

PaulDB: I am going to find and read that book. I have heard from several different people that it is thought-provoking.

BJB2: good answer, Paul...and you have 6 months, tops, to do all that!

PaulDB: Time flies when one is having fun!!!

BJB2: I listened to the book on CD...it's narrated by the author which gave it even more credibility

BJB2: I did enjoy this discussion!

PaulDB: Actually, we are trying to prepare the grant for submission by late March or early April.

PaulDB: I enjoyed it as well!

BJB2: good luck! And again, if there's anything I can do to help out...facilitate the use of TI, for example, please let me know

PaulDB: I will do that.

PaulDB: Thanks!!

BJB2: We'll talk in March and see how close you are to being ready ;-)

BJB2 hugs Paul. Thanks for being here.

PaulDB: I am leaving now but want to thank you both for being such willing participants in tonight's discussion.

PaulDB: I look forward to next month's session!!

BJB2: the topic is near and dear to my wounded heart

PaulDB: Thanks BJ, and good night to both you and Jeff.