

FEATURE TEACHER

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What is a challenge you have faced teaching in during a pandemic in 2020?

I've been challenged by my own thoughts of not being able to live up to the needs of my students and expectations that I have for myself as an educator. Teachers have had to shift our mindsets and realize we are not teaching in the same manner that we were just a short year ago. Times have changed drastically, and so have the needs of our students. Therefore, even though I may not be the teacher I was in 2019, I'm the teacher my students need me to be now in 2020.

How do you support building a positive and safe online learning environment for your students?

Using online learning activities for meaningful, engaging lessons has helped not only my students but families invest in their work and education.

Do you have a super awesome success story from 2020?

Finding success in the little things is something I have learned from COVID-19. Let's celebrate each week of having perfect attendance of your students because that means they are healthy and getting at least 2 days of face-to-face instruction that week. Celebrate the fact that you received all your remote learning assignments turned in for the week. Celebrate the fact that your students come back after being home for 5 days and want to be there, want to learn, and want to do the lessons you have planned. I celebrate each of my students, families, and co-workers that are giving this school year absolutely everything they have to give to better themselves and others.

What do you do to encourage online classroom participation?

Trying to reach out to each of my families and understand their different needs and dynamics in the beginning was definitely extremely helpful. Spending time in the first few weeks of not only teaching our students, but families as well, has allowed for remote learning participation and success. Our families are our co-teachers this year, they need support and encouragement along with our students.

Parent Communication... What's working for your families?

Connecting with parents has been easier than I expected. Seesaw allows me not only to send messages, but I can also see that they've received the message. If they don't read it, then I can reach out by phone or note home reminding them to check Seesaw. Directing them to Seesaw and using that as a consistent form of communication has been helpful.

What methods have been effective in teaching during a pandemic?

Teaching in a pandemic is definitely requiring patience and understanding with not only my students and families, but also myself.

Share something positive about teaching in 2020.

Even though it is somewhat forced due to the schedule, family involvement in the learning process is such an amazing thing.