

A Newsletter for Five Keys' Instructional Programs



CAPTION Teachers from LA Community Sites: Griselda Marquez (back) and Mayra Martinez (front)

With Intention

Growing as a Professional Educator

Standard 6 of the California Standards of the Teaching Profession (CSTP), which addresses "Growing as a Professional Educator," is one of my favorite standards to explore, because so many aspects of it are based on teachers' discretion and motivation. This is so different from the other CSTPs, as those standards are aligned with school/district/state mandates about what teachers should teach, what they should assess, and in some cases, they are told how they should teach and how they should set up their teaching environments.

But with Standard 6, how can a school/district/state *make* a teacher collaborate with his or her colleagues? How do any of these entities *make* a teacher attend classes or trainings outside of school? How can educational agency *make* a teacher reflective on his or her teaching practice? The truth is, they can't, at least not effectively. Certainly, elements from Standard 6 can be "measured" as part of a performance evaluation or, in the case of classes or professional development hours, they can be required for the attainment or renewal of a credential. However, if there is not a personal interest in these activities, a teacher will comply unenthusiastically and, consequently, be no better off *after* professional development than they were *before* they started.

The desire to grow as an educator has to come from within. However, there are ways to motivate that desire to enhance teaching practices. It is from a place of motivation that this newsletter came into fruition. My goal in developing *With Intention* was to peak an interest in topics or issues that influence teaching; often in area of instruction (but not exclusively). Through the use of published articles, school-related news, and the sharing of teachers' resources and perspectives, this newsletter aims to bring together a community of educators to examine and reflect on teaching and learning, thereby contributing to their professional growth. While some editions of this monthly newsletter will be driven by the school's instructional programs, other editions will be driven by teachers' voices and perspectives. As I post this newsletter monthly, I hope you can provide feedback that can help make this publication more meaningful to you. Thank you for reading!

-Amerika Sanchez, Director of Instruction

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Who dares to
TEACH
 must never cease to
LEARN

John Cotton Dana

Five Keys' Salary Scale Incentivizes Professional Growth

Across the country, many schools and school districts provide incentives for their teachers to pursue professional growth. *How?* By moving teachers up a salary scale based on the number of units obtained beyond a bachelor's degree. While these units can be obtained at any accredited community college, bachelor, or graduate school program, many of them are offered at extended learning programs, which provide opportunities for professionals to grow in their given field through Continuing Education Units (CEUs). Five Keys provides this incentive, but like

many schools, Five Keys maintains that these post-BA credits/CEUs have to be sought out and paid for by the teacher.

Why would a teacher spend the time and money to earn additional units? In this case, the adage "you have to spend money to make money" rings true. When enough units are earned (which, in the case of the Five Keys' salary scale, is in increments of 30), they enable a teacher to earn salary differentials. **(Continue on page 4...)**

"My students can do better, with the proper guidance, practice and expectations. My job is to support these and other important learning goals by continuing my own professional development as an educator."

-Lynne Winner, "Looking Back with Gratitude"

"Lifelong Learning is a Crucial Educational Mindset" [Article]

"Doctors, lawyers, and other professionals never stop learning new techniques and strategies to hone their craft and remain on the cutting edge in their field—and so, too, do teachers. Teachers should consider the concept of "lifelong learning" and a few reasons it's a great frame of mind for educators to have."

Click on the link below, to read the rest of this article:

<http://www.edudemic.com/lifelong-learning-educational-mindset/>

"Look Back with Gratitude" [Essay]

A handful of Five Keys teachers in Los Angeles and San Francisco are clearing their credential through the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program. Below, you will read from Lynne Winner who, in completing her BTSA requirements, reflects on her journey as a lifelong learner.

You might think that a jail is tough place to become a teacher, but looking back in reflection today, I can only smile with gratitude. As Frederick Douglas said, "If there is no struggle, there is not progress." Thankfully, my enthusiasm and belief in the power of education started me on the right path, but it was going through the BTSA program that has helped me become more of a professional educator.

One challenge of teaching in jail, is remembering failure is an experience every one of my students has had in their previous schools. All adult inmates in my classes are working to attain their High School Diploma. Even more challenging is teaching them Mathematics, a subject almost every one of them had problems with. In my own academic experience, High School Math was a struggle as well. It was only as a college student, I matured enough to face that fear and overcome it with perseverance and stubborn determination. It is an honor to help my students through this same journey.

My experience with education informs my teaching practice. Sometimes, this pays off by understanding and empathizing with the fear and frustration they feel. In other cases, it works against me as I find myself "helping" them rather than expecting and facilitating an independent learning experience. Because of this, the Assessment section of our BTSA training was most helpful. By focusing on all types of assessment, including (in my opinion) the dreaded summative assessment, I began to see this as a form a data collection, rather than an opportunity for my students to worry about passing or failing the course. This is the most important California Standards of the Teaching Profession (CSTP) lesson I have learned during my induction.

Causing test anxiety is counter-productive. Supporting my students as they build confidence in their own academic ability is a primary goal. **(Continue on the next page...)**



CAPTION Teachers and the Assistant Director from the SF Re-Entry Sites: (clockwise from the left) Pete Valceschini, Mario Silano and Monica Rizzo

“Looking Back with Gratitude” [Essay] (Continued...)

(continued...) However, there comes a point when they should be able to work independently without constant feedback on the correctness of their work. By including more varied assessments, I am helping them work towards building that confidence in their efforts. Formative and summative assessments provide a safe, yet public forum for sharing their work. While pursuing my own academic path, failure has just become another way to focus my learning. Assessments are giving my students that same opportunity.

One new assessment I developed provides a better focus on broader learning goals and standards. Developing a *detailed* rubric gave a grading emphasis to some Common Core principals as well as giving students the chance to use their calculation skills. They were shown the rubric before they took the test, so they knew how I was grading their efforts. Answering a question was as important point-wise, as getting the correct calculation on the quiz. When reviewing results, it was clear my students needed more opportunities to use academic language. While most were able to give a brief response to my questions, there were very few who used the appropriate mathematical terms. My students can do better, with the proper guidance, practice and expectations. My job is to support these and other important learning goals by continuing my own professional development as an educator.

Gratitude for having a career as a life-long learner is part of this reflection. Because there is always something new to try, I will never be the greatest teacher in the world; I will persevere in this goal with every class I teach.

Lynne teaches Math at the Pitchess Detention Center, South facility, in Los Angeles.

“The Myth of Having Summers Off” [Article]

“I don't know who started this legend of the well-rested teacher who sits around all summer long sippin' sangrias without a thought of prepping for the year before them, but I've never met those teachers -- if they even exist.”

Click on the link below, to read the rest of this article:

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/summers-off-myth-heather-wolpert-gawron>



“Professional Educational Organizations-Join One (or more) Today!”
[Article]

“Throughout my career I have maintained membership in at least three different educational organizations (one state, one national and one content-area) and found that the investment has always multiplied itself many times over.”

Click on the link below, to read the rest of this article:

<http://mastersineducationguide.com/professional-educational-organizations-join-one-today/>

Five Keys Charter Schools' Instructional Programs

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Five Keys' Salary Scale Incentivizes Professional Growth (Continued...)

(continued...) Each differential/increment of 30 units can add thousands of dollars to a teacher's annual salary — permanently — and cumulative differentials can make a big difference in their earning power and retirement planning (the larger a teacher's salary, the larger his or her pension will be). However, it is important to note that continuing education is also a way for a teacher to explore areas of education beyond what is offered for professional development at his or her school.

What motivation would a school or district have in providing an opportunity for teachers to earn more money? To reference the "Growing as a Professional Educator" article on the first page of this newsletter, there are different methods to motivate teachers' otherwise intrinsic interest in professional development opportunities; increased earning power is one way that many people find inspiration to grow in their chosen fields. Also, schools and districts know that not every teacher will actively pursue moving through salary differentials, so they are happy to reward the ones who do, with the hope that their educational pursuits will be impactful in the classroom.

So where are you on the school's salary scale? Are you on the first step? Or, do you have some units, but are ready to move to the next salary differential? Contact HR to review your placement, and contact me at amerikas@fivekeyscharter.org if you are looking for some ways to earn units! (Note: All units must be on an official school transcript, and teachers are responsible for acquiring their own transcripts and submitting them to HR for review of salary placement.)

Looking for Stories from Teachers!

For the July newsletter, it would be great to wrap up the school year by reading stories from teachers about great teaching and learning moments from 2014-2015! If you are interested in submitting your story to be published in the upcoming newsletter, please include the following:

1. Your name and teaching environment (Site-based? ISP? What location?)
2. The subject(s) or topic taught during this great teaching and learning moment.
3. A narrative (1-2 paragraphs), explaining what the teaching and learning moment was, and why it was so great.
4. Optional: Include a photo of you "teaching-in-action" (electronic...in a .jpeg or .pdf format)!

Submit a typed version of this narrative (in Google Doc or Microsoft Word) to amerikas@fivekeyscharter.org no later than June 12th!