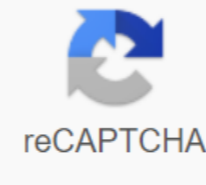




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## West oak middle school teachers

Cancer is happening right now, and that's why we're taking part in a Race for Life Schools to raise money and save lives. 1 in 2 people will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime. Every single pound you donate makes a difference to Cancer Research UK's innovative work, so please sponsor us now. Middle school, in most districts, covers students in grades six to eight, although this may vary in some locations. Middle school teachers have the same educational needs as those who teach other levels of education; they present lessons, grade documents, keep parents informed of their children's progress and maintain discipline in the classroom. Middle school students often present challenges that do not manifest themselves in primary school and have been corrected by high school. Effective middle school teachers, therefore, possess certain characteristics and characteristics that complement their teaching skills. In the book *Keeping Good Teachers*, Mark F. Goldberg notes that it's hard to be a great teacher without being comfortable with the student age group. Some teachers are naturally attracted to kindergarten and first grade students, the years when students are only exposed to the world of learning. Other teachers prefer to teach high school, as students are approaching adulthood and typically require less nutrition. Great middle school teachers feel comfortable facing the challenges their students can face. In 2003, the National Middle School Association published its list of qualities it considered crucial for middle schools to achieve academic excellence. One quality was the ability of teachers to change their teaching styles to accommodate students with different levels of performance, previous academic history, and skills. The best teachers also have high expectations of each student and the ability to engage students in learning through dialogue and interaction. O-Net Online recommends that middle school teachers have some knowledge of psychology and sociology. Understanding psychology can help teachers recognize problems that may require additional help if the student is to achieve good academic achievement. It also helps teachers recognize differences in motivation and the best ways to deal with each individual student. Sociology can help teachers understand group psychology and the dynamics and behaviors that can manifest themselves in the classroom. Some teachers seem to be born with the necessary understanding, but acquire skills through formal education or training. Effective middle school teachers have a natural empathy for their students. They are sensitive to what their students need and how they feel about threatening or unknown experiences. Teachers must be able to maintain their self-control, remaining composed in difficult situations and not responding aggressively or angrily. A the amount of stress is inherent in work and middle school teachers must be able to cope with the pressures of the profession. Middle school teachers earned an average annual salary of \$56,720 in 2016, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In the lower end, middle school teachers earned a 25th percentile salary of \$45,370, meaning 75% earned more than this amount. The 75th percentile salary is \$71,850, which means 25% earn more. In 2016, 630,300 people were employed in the United States as middle school teachers. About author Jeffrey Joyner has had numerous articles published on the Internet covering a wide range of topics. He studied electrical engineering after a service tour in the Army, then became a freelance computer programmer for several years before settling into a career as a writer. Michigan middle school teacher, Cossondra George Winnipeg eighth-grade teacher, Miles MacFarlaneInterview with Cossondra George, Michigan Middle School TeacherCossondra George recently set aside time from her hectic day to tell us about her experiences as an educator in Michigan. During his twenty years in class, Cossondra taught social studies, mathematics, American history, and technology to middle school students. Today he is a teacher of mathematics, language arts and a resource room for students from seventh to seventh grade. Cossondra attended Northern Michigan University, where he earned a BS in Education, with minors in social studies and mathematics, as well as an MA in Special Education, focusing on learning difficulties. During our exchange, Cossondra described his middle day in class as well as what he knows today that he would like him to know as a starting teacher. Please describe what your typical workday is as an educator. Although there is no typical day for a teacher, some things are predictable. I arrive at school about 45 minutes before our contract, about an hour before the students start arriving in the halls. I use this quiet time to prepare for my day, both mentally and physically. Classes often require some materials to be set up in advance, so I make sure everything is as ready as possible. The rest of this time is devoted to planning next week's classes, completing special training papers, or talking to other teachers about the students we share. When the students begin to arrive, a crowd tends to gather in my class, wanting to chat, get help with homework or just go out. Once the first alarm bell rings, I make sure I'm in the room, greeting the students as they enter and reminding them of the materials they need. The day runs in a blur of students and classes. Being a special education teacher, the hats I wear are many. Part of the day, I have students in my class for math classes. Other hours are hours of academic support where students come to my room with assignments from classes that need help on. These hours are the busiest, with up to 15 students often working on different assignments, with different support needs. Some may just need a point in the right direction, others need a quiet place to finish independently, but most of these students need closer to one-to-one help as I can handle. Another hour of the day, I co-teach a language arts course. This hour I work with another teacher to provide education to a class composed of both regular education students and some students on my workload. We share the duties of education, some days you lead while I support; other days, I am the main teacher, with its circulation, providing additional assistance to students in difficulty. We can divide the class into two sections and bring one group into another class for a more direct instruction, or keep them all together. I have an hour of preparation. This is now when I plan all parent meetings, individual education plan team meetings, or other informal meetings. Days that I don't have scheduled meetings are spent working on special education documents, grading documents, scheduling, making copies, and more. After my last lesson of the day, I make sure my room is ready for the next day. I always write on the board now for now what the goals of the day are, as well as list the materials that students need to bring to class on a smaller board in the hallway. An unknown problem has occurred. What aspects of your work are the most challenging and how do you overcome them? The most challenging aspect of my job is motivating students. Working with special education students, I often find that in middle school, they gave up on themselves, certain to be stupid. I need to find a way to motivate them individually, help them experience success, and fill in what they can do based on where the resume expects them to be. I find that by making an effort to get to know my students as people, learning about their interests outside of school, and recognizing the things that are good at, I can encourage them to push themselves to try new things. It's a constant uphill battle, with many slides backwards. What do you like most about being a teacher? The children. I love the unpredictable nature of middle school students: their humor, their wisdom, and their new version of life. I especially like the opportunity to have students for more school years, watching them learn, grow and mature. You can share any time management board for teachers who strive to create a professional and personal life Be organized. It sounds trivial, but it's the only way to survive. I have three lists that go all the time: #1 Must do today, #2 Must do this week, and #3 Dream List (things like cleaning desk drawer, organizing files, etc.) In addition, it does not get behind on votes and paperwork. Once you're behind, it's overwhelming and becomes too much to conquer. Take the time every day to complete your Must Do Today list. Finally, take time to reflect on your work, your lessons, your students, and your journey as a teacher, both in a blog and in an old-fashioned diary. The writing process will help you free your mind, formulate solutions to problems, and give you an execution record of how far you've come. What do you know now that you wish you'd known during your first year of teaching? I wish I knew my students were going to change me so deeply. From them, I learned patience, endurance, tolerance and humor. Going into my teaching career, I focused on what I could teach my students. Now, I realize they have a lot more to teach me than I'll ever be able to give back in return. We thank Cossondra for sharing with us her various experiences and her heartfelt wisdom and wish her all the best for the rest of the school year. To connect with Cossondra, visit his blog, Middle School, Day by Day.Read on how to become a teacher in MichiganInterview with Miles MacFarlane, Winnipeg Eighth Grade Teacher We recently had the great fortune to interview Miles MacFarlane, a middle school teacher in Winnipeg, with 22 years of experience in the field of education. Miles earned a BEd in secondary English from the University of Newfoundland, and began his career teaching in a remote Fly-in First Nations reserve. He lived there for five years and was also vice principal before taking up a temporary three-year position as Coordinator of Education Technology for 35 remote schools. During this time, Miles pursued a Master of Arts in Education and Human Development with a focus on education technology leadership at George Washington University (GWU). After the temporary assignment was completed, he settled in Winnipeg, teaching in fifth grade for three years in an elementary school. For the past eleven years, he has taught eighth graders all the subjects in a middle school that Miles describes as incredible and progressive. Please describe what a typical day seems to you, Miles.My day begins very early. Since the rest of the day has work, family and community commitments, I get up between 4:30 am and 5 am for Me Time. I sit at the living room window with the iPad and a cup of coffee and read my RSS feed, connect with my professional learning network on Twitter, my friends and family on Facebook and write for my blog. At 6:30 am, I prepare breakfast and lunches ready for my wife and nine-year-old son I listen to the news on the radio. Before school starts I like to spend time with colleagues in the staff room above the crossword puzzle. This time it is a mix of curiosity, recovery and professional sharing. Because I am responsible for all subjects and I have the same of students for the whole day, we have tremendous flexibility throughout our day. This lends itself to fully integrated and project-based learning experiences where, in addition to the PE and Applied Arts programs, the designations on our calendar are arbitrary. Students and I look at what projects and activities are underway, look at the project deadlines and goals, and then set an agenda for the day. At any time students could work on different things in different places. A lot of what I do throughout the day is helping students with setting short- and long-term goals, managing projects, and identifying resources. Managing online learning spaces (Edmodo and student blogs) takes up time throughout the day providing context for discussions with students and becomes the student's portfolio. I tend to have lunch in my class and invite students to visit, continue their projects or get assistance during the lunch break. It's a nice, informal, low-pressure time that goes a long way to creating communities. After school it is mainly the focused family: putting around the house, visiting, eating dinner together, and reading or writing in the evening with time for school or commission work if necessary. I recently re-enrolled in the GWU Ed Tech program so that the courses change the nature of my evenings and me time. What aspects of your work are the most challenging and how do you overcome them? There are so many interesting and interesting things to do and try as a teacher, but there isn't enough time to do everything. My strategy is serial innovation where I see an idea, get down to it, do some initial research to implement, reflect and understand the problems associated with the idea, and then move on to the next one. The only problem with this strategy is that I don't usually stick to the same thing long enough to develop mastery, but I can be useful for other teachers as they try to innovate. What do you like most about being a teacher? Looking around a busy room with children interacting, exploring, learning, creating, engaging, questioning, it's a thrill. I like to experiment with the technology myself and the server of a new technology tool/app in the mix with some visions of what it could do, then seeing students pick it up and running with it is exciting. What best practices can you share to integrate technology into classroom activities? I don't know if it's good practice, but here are some thoughts: don't expect the technology to be perfect. Consider the technological problems part of the learning experience. As the they learn the content, they're also learning the tool. Collectively, in your class, you probably have all the technological knowledge you need to keep things going. It blurs the line between teachers and students and capitalizes on skills in the room. No need to be an expert with technology. Know what it should be able to do and use that understanding to stimulate thought in your students. They can search for tutorials on how to use it and teach others when they find solutions. (I'm sure one of your programs somewhere will have something about identifying needs, creating a strategy to identify, synthesize, and apply information.) Teaching students how to learn is much more valuable. Can you share a few words of wisdom with recent graduates who are preparing to start a teaching career? I'm full of pitiful teaching-related sayings. Here are the ones that best define my beliefs and attitudes about teaching: take what you have and get on with it. Everyone in the room is a student, including yourself. Don't teach, help students find out. Your students have a life outside of school. You should, too. Take time to understand the motivations behind behaviors. Managing the workload: - framed assessment, write about children's work while circulating, only take home if necessary. - summative evaluation: usage criteria, headings and self-evaluations, focuses feedback. - mark hell out of the first couple of paragraphs then focus on the content. (Thank you for this advice, MJ) Get in touch with online educators. Twitter and blogs are valuable sources of professional learning. If you can't find anything positive in a situation, you need to look stronger. We thank Miles for putting aside the time of his hectic day to share his valuable tips for new teachers. Connect with him via Twitter @milesmac. @milesmac.

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