

MENTORING MATTERS

A Newsletter for Teacher Mentors

Volume 1

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MENTOR SPOTLIGHT KELLY HAAKENSON

Kelly's colleagues praise her teacher leadership as a mentor who coordinates a colleague observation program and creates opportunities for teachers to participate in positive outreach to families.

Kelly loves "celebrating the wins" with beginning teachers and working toward creative solutions to the challenges. While she enjoys sharing teaching tips that she has learned with her mentees, she is also eager to learn from her mentees. She aspires to help beginning teachers establish positive habits and healthy boundaries that will decrease burnout and increase the likelihood of retaining teachers.

A powerful tip Kelly received during her first year of teaching is to "*never to anything the kids can do instead.*"



Kelly is a secondary social studies teacher at the Salt Lake Center for Science Education.



Jacinta is a four-year mentor and first grade teacher at Entheos Academy in Kearns, Utah

MENTOR SPOTLIGHT JACINTA RED THUNDER

According to colleagues, Jacinta takes mentoring seriously and is a very kind mentor. She willingly models to help new teachers see and achieve positive behavior and instructional outcomes and encourages others to observe her teaching.

Jacinta says she seeks to inspire beginning teachers by showing them how consistency and kindness can change classroom environments and outcomes. She is eager to share her classroom management skills and help teachers implement similar practices. She appreciates being able to develop relationships with teachers and assisting them in alleviating some of their stress.

Her advice to her first year self would be: "*Be patient with yourself. Find a teacher friend that you can talk to about concerns, accomplishments, and life. Enjoy it! Teaching is hard, but so rewarding.*"

If You Knew Then...

Do you remember your first year as a teacher? Mine was fraught with challenges, some of which I created myself! My efforts to involve students in building our class culture failed miserably when students caught me off guard by suggesting we have a class rule not to smoke in class and my insistence that students use pencil to complete their math homework resulted in a student threatening to bomb my house. Still, more than 20 years later, I am passionate about the work of supporting teachers as they support students, but there were many days I thought of leaving the profession.

If I knew then what I know now, I'd have quite a pep talk for my former self.

What wisdom would **you** impart to your first year teacher self?



All teachers, but particularly early career teachers, need to know they are not alone in the things that they experience. They need to be able to acknowledge that teaching is difficult - a chaotic art that few ever feel they have truly mastered. They need to know that like a new pair of jeans or a bad haircut - instructional practice gets better with time.

Consider sharing the inspiring "If I Knew Then..." wisdom presented in this [4 minute video](#) with your teachers!

Find additional newsletters for mentors and for beginning teachers at

<https://schools.utah.gov/curr/educatordevelopment/teachermentors?mid=5736&tid=4>

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