

Teacher to Teacher

A DoDEA Teacher of the Year Publication

e-Newsletter

Spring Issue 2009

DoDEA Teacher to Teacher Project to Promote Educator Networking and Collaboration

by Dorothy Goulet

The first wave of volunteering for participation in the DoDEA Teacher to Teacher Project has gone extremely well! There has been great interest from



teachers throughout DoDEA in learning and collaborating through this type of venue. Most of the 430+ volunteers who replied to the invitation to participate early commented they were glad to have this opportunity to share ideas and learn from their colleagues.

Many of you also said you would love to contribute to a community like this. That is great! The easiest way to do that will be to request access to the external wiki space for Teacher to Teacher or reply to my email requests for content.

The first group of participants will be enrolled in the Blackboard community to give feedback, suggestions, and contributions of content around the end of May. In order to enrich the community for all DoDEA participants during SY 09-10, I will continue to work on the community and the external wiki site for the rest of the school year and throughout the summer.

The 21st-Century buzz is all about collaboration and leadership. One of the goals of Teacher to Teacher is to harness our leadership and create collaborative, 21st-century ways to address 21st-century challenges. The DoDEA Teacher to Teacher Project gives us opportunities to grow and develop professionally in terms of daily productivity, organization, interactive classroom strategies, and the use of technology and best practices. We have the technological infrastructure in DoDEA to succeed in this type of project and we certainly have the educator talent to share!

Here are a few facts for the project:

- 430+ early participants (for May enrollment)
- more than 150 DoDEA schools represented
- 14 of 14 districts participating
- more than 60 volunteer contributors
- 25 State Teachers of the Year participating
- First-year and student teachers participating
- 30+ participants from outside DoDEA
- School nurses and psychologists participating
- School counselors, ET's, and IS's participating
- ISSs at all levels of DoDEA participating
- Admin at all levels of DoDEA participating
- Robust support from DoDEA Headquarters

For more information about the DoDEA Teacher to Teacher Project, email Dorothy.Goulet@eu.dodea.edu

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Connecticut Distinguished Teacher Named 2009 National Teacher of the Year

by Dorothy Goulet

Mr. Anthony Mullen, the 2009 Connecticut State Distinguished Teacher of the Year, has been selected as the 2009 National Teacher of the Year. Mullen, who teaches at the ARCH School in Greenwich, Connecticut, was honored by President Barack Obama in a Rose Garden ceremony at the White House on Tuesday, 28 April along with the 54 Teachers of the Year from the other 49 states, District of Columbia, Northern Marianas Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands, and DoDEA.

Among those attending the ceremony were Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, First Lady Michelle Obama, Second Lady Dr. Jill Biden, and the inventors of the SMART Board and CEO's of SMART Technologies, David Martin and Nancy Knowlton. The Teacher of the Year program is sponsored by ING and the Council of Chief State School Officers and is a tradition honoring the profession since 1952.



Photo courtesy of Kimberleigh Hanft

2009 National Teacher of the Year Anthony Mullen poses for a photograph with President Barack Obama during the Rose Garden Ceremony on April 28.

HOT TOPICS

Report: US Lagging in Teacher Learning

Teachers in the United States are given significantly less time and support for high-quality professional learning
<http://www.teachermagazine.org/tsb/articles/2009/03/16/02nsdc.h02.html>

What do YOU think? Read the article from *Teacher Magazine* and give your views on ways we can accomplish educator growth? How do you make time in your busy schedule for personal and professional growth and development? Request access to the Teacher to Teacher Google Group and share your ideas there- start the dialogue!

<http://groups.google.com/group/teacher2teacherproject?hl=en>

"Learning is not a spectator sport."

~Anonymous

Web 2.0 Wonderful!

Here are a couple of easy-to-use Web 2.0 tools that are free and great for the kiddos!

For creating interactive, virtual flash cards (free account):
<http://www.quizlet.com>

Quizlet

For creating interactive and collaborative mind maps, concept maps, brainstorming webs (free account): <http://bubbl.us>

bubbl.us
brainstorming made simple

21st-Century Skills

Embed these career- and college-readiness skills in your curriculum to serve as a vehicle for content~

- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- Collaboration & Leadership Skills
- Agility & Adaptability
- Initiative
- Entrepreneurialism & Financial Literacy
- Oral & Written Communication Skills
- Information Access & Analysis Skills
- Curiosity & Imagination

ASCD Special Report

<http://www.smartbrief.com/servlet/wireless?issueid=33145776-B694-45E6-A079-8-C499072FB91&sid=f25b151a-e18c-4f00-8cf6-198bf046e1cb>

Staff Summer Fiction Reading Suggestions

Contributed by Lori Kimble,
Kaiserslautern Middle School Information Specialist

(This list intended for grown-ups only!)

- Barefoot*-Elin Hilderbrand
- Last Kiss*- Luanne Rice
- The Love Season*- Elin Hilderbrand
- The Heretic's Daughter*- Kathleen Kent
- The Gifted Gabaldon Sisters*-Lorraine Lopez
- The Lace Reader*- Barry
- Saving the World*-Julia Alvarez
- Home Safe*-Elizabeth Berg
- When Will There Be Good News*-Kate Atkinson
- The Gate House*-Nelson DeMille
- How the Garcia Girls Lost their Accent*-Julia Alvarez
- The Last Wife of Henry VIII*- Carolly Erickson
- The Tsarina's Daughter*-Carolly Erickson
- Handle with Care*-Jodi Picoult
- The Law of Similars*- Chris Bohjalian
- Heart and Soul*- Maeve Binchy
- The Blood of Flowers*-Anita Amirrezvani
- Sing Them Home*-Stephanie Kallos
- The Geometry of Sisters*-Luanne Rice
- Garden Spells*-Sarah Addison Allen
- The Uncommon Reader*-Alan Bennett
- The Shack*- William P. Young
- The Story of Edgar Sawtelle*-D. Wroblewski
- People of the Book*- Geraldine Brooks
- Leeway Cottage*-Beth Gutcheon
- Goodbye and Amen*-Beth Gutcheon
- In the Time of Butterflies*-Julia Alvarez
- The Wednesday Letters*-Jason Wright
- The Art of Racing in the Rain*- Stein
- While My Sister Sleeps*-Barbara Delinsky
- The 19th Wife*-David Ebershoff
- Shelter Me*- Juliette Fay



2009 DoDEA Teacher of the Year Dorothy Goff Goulet meets President Barack Obama at the White House Rose Garden Ceremony 28 April to Honor this year's National and State Teachers of the Year.
Photo Courtesy of Kimberleigh Hanft

"To teach well is to be a lifelong student."

~Johanna Betsch Cole

Contribute to the T2T Project

Please consider what you might be able to offer:

- Lesson planning ideas
- Rubrics
- Multimedia presentations
- SMART Board Notebook files
- Web 2.0 presentations
- Web 2.0 integration ideas
- Tips and tricks for anything
- Project-based learning ideas
- Organization and productivity ideas
- Interactive classroom strategy ideas
- Performance-based assessment ideas
- Video clips from your classroom
- Your favorite Internet resource sites

For more information about the project or to request first-wave enrollment (May or June enrollment), click the following link:

<http://ed.voicethread.com/share/409586/>
or email Dorothy.Goulet@eu.dodea.edu

Techno-Vocabulary List:

1. cloud computing

Using tools on the internet to create, store, and share work products

2. Web 2.0 tools

Tools that act like software to increase productivity, interactivity, and collaboration; they live on the internet and require little or no downloading, training, or money

3. cross-platform

Software or gadgets that can be used on multiple operating systems, such as both PC and MacIntosh computer systems



Articles of Interest on the Internet

Budget Outlines Funding for Teacher Merit Pay Programs

President Obama is seeking to add hundreds of millions for teacher merit pay programs, an investment in a reform that has often drawn criticism from teachers unions.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/07/AR2009050703786.html>

Push is on for National Academic Standards

An effort is gaining momentum to establish common academic standards for the nation's elementary, middle, junior high and high schools.

<http://www.nwarktimes.com/adg/News/258833>

White House to Seek Input on Controversial Education Law

WASHINGTON (AP) — Education Secretary Arne Duncan is a man on a mission: to hear what teachers, students and parents in at least 15 states think about No Child Left Behind, the controversial education law championed by President George W. Bush

http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2009-05-05-education-law_N.htm

Writing Disorder May Be Common Among Kids

Study finds rate as high as 14.7 percent in one Minnesota city.

<http://www.forbes.com/feeds/hscout/2009/05/05/hscout626417.html>

See the study here: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/123/5/1306>

Facebook and Grades: The Debate Continues

Refuting the findings of a recent study indicating a relationship between Facebook usage and poor grades, a new study indicates no relationship between the two.

http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2009-05-07-facebook-grades_N.htm

See the study here: <http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgi-wrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2498/2181>

Hong Kong's Math Content Harder Than Massachusetts'

How does the math covered in the highest-ranking American state stack up against that of a top-scoring international performer?

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/05/13/3zhongkong.h28.html?tkn=LNTFYDPLwPCiP%2Bd258%2Fe0d6gFikIZsKBAb7>

Testing Faces Ups and Downs Amid Recession

As the recession crimps education budgets, states are beginning to stop the number of standardized tests they give...

http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/05/13/31assess_ep.h28.html?tkn=VMPFsMvdqXX6Im%2BMmZ8WASFLLM7I9ItqSISF

Communication is KEY!

Everyone knows that effective communication is the key to any successful organization. Our classrooms are no exception to this rule. Effective communication builds the community within your classroom, creates working relationships, defines expectations, and sets the general tone. When you engage in ongoing communication with your parents, good reports are always welcomed but even negative reports are accepted with an ease of knowing that you will work together to solve any issue.

There are many ways of communicating with parents, especially in this age of technology. Weekly newsletters are a great way to keep parents informed of classroom events, homework assignments, and other school activities. Class web pages can be used as an avenue to showcase student work samples and projects, post assignments and newsletters, as well as providing endless resources for parents to use to support your efforts in the classroom. How about the convenience of email? This is the one of the quickest, least intrusive ways to get an important message to anyone these days.

As we strive to create these relationships and build these communities, let's not forget the importance of that personal connection. The more connected the parents feel with the school and the classroom, the higher the probability they will become actively involved in the classroom and support you in any way possible. Effective, ongoing communication is KEY to a successful classroom.

Kathleen B. Smith
EC Killin Elementary
2009 Okinawa District
Teacher of the Year



"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

~Albert Einstein

Correction to our last newsletter: Guten Tag! All nouns are capitalized in German. Sorry for the error and thanks for pointing it out to us.



Technology and Problem Solving

by Deirdre McAlpin
Japan District Teacher of the Year



We are fortunate to have a variety of technology available for use in teaching and learning. Teachers use technology to assess subject knowledge and students to create work products demonstrating their understanding of concepts. Looking at the needs of our students, we should consider 21st-century skills necessary for their success. Problem solving is an important component for success. What can we, as educators, do to integrate problem solving into technology thereby increasing critical thinking for our students?

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Broken Link Patrol

A link to an article on the achievement gap from the last newsletter was not accessible by the time most people received the newsletter because it had "blog" in the URL and was filtered between publish time and dissemination. Please email me if you would like an email copy of the that article:

Dorothy.Goulet@eu.dodea.edu



To successfully include problem solving as a goal in technology, it is important to include input from all faculty members. An initial step is defining technology uses for all students, whether elementary or secondary, and for all abilities to include ESL and special-needs students. We should also consider if the definition is limited to computers or also includes those basic technology tools, such as calculators. Lastly, we should look at how to include problem solving which incorporates technology for electives classes including the arts. With a broader scope we can integrate problem solving and technology throughout the school, resembling the real world. By engaging students and supporting their learning, we can increase problem solving skills needed for the 21st century.

While many of us are comfortable with basic technology, others are also at ease with computer technology. Our collaborative effort to support each other's strengths is important so we best impact student learning. This may initially be a dialogue within our teams, to determine aspects of technology we use and opportunities for our students which include problem solving and decision making. As we incorporate technology more often in our teaching, our students also need opportunities to strengthen their critical- thinking and problem-solving skills while using technology. This will better prepare our students with skills they need for the 21st-century world.

October 20, 2009 National Day on Writing

Writing is a daily practice for millions of Americans. But few notice how integral writing has become to daily life in the 21st century.



To draw attention to the remarkable variety of writing we engage in and help make writers from all walks of life aware of their craft, NCTE is working to establish October 20, 2009, as the National Day on Writing.

<http://www.ncte.org/action/dayonwriting>

Google Groups



Request access to the Teacher to Teacher Project's Google Group! You'll need a free Google account. You can access the group from the Teacher to Teacher Blackboard community.

Inclusion of links or articles in this e-newsletter is for informational purposes only and does not constitute endorsement by DoDEA. All links included in the newsletter were operational at the time of publication. Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience caused by broken links. Please email Dorothy.Goulet@eu.dodea.edu for information you have missed due to broken links or to report errors. We hope you have enjoyed this issue of the Teacher to Teacher e-newsletter! Look for our School's Out! Issue in June!

**Transformational Leadership
for 21st-Century Progress...
Transformational Teaching
for 21st-Century Students!**

The DoDEA Teacher to Teacher Project

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