

# TEACHER TO TEACHER

A DODEA TEACHER OF THE YEAR PUBLICATION

Late Winter 2009 Issue

Teachers of the Year Online

<http://www.dodea.edu/teachers/toy.cfm>

## Transformational Teaching for the 21st Century

~By Dorothy Goulet, 2009 DoDEA Teacher of the Year

What an honor it is to have been selected as 2009 DoDEA Teacher of the Year! Inseparable from the honor is the responsibility to do something important in education and represent DoDEA's teachers well.

One of my duties is to work on a project that benefits DoDEA teachers in some way, but first, I had to figure out what my message was going to be. I found statistics on the staggering dropout rates across the U.S., the exponential changes in technology, the latest brain research, and the needs of the generation of students sitting in our classrooms now and in the next decade. Digital literacy in 2009 is functional literacy in 2009.

I also believe quality education is the single most critical issue facing our nation's future. My focus for this year's project became clear very quickly.

Baby steps in teacher development used to be enough to keep up with the times, but we now need giant leaps in terms of teacher education programs and tech integration. We need a transformational approach to staff and professional development that *invites* teachers into progress. We need teacher networking and non-threatening access to the world of possibilities just waiting to be tapped. I hope to open a door or two and invite you to join me in transforming our teaching to meet 21st-century needs.



What could you transform about your teaching in order to keep up with 21st-century students?

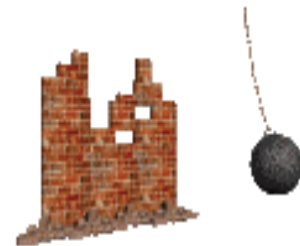
## Are You A Builder or a Wrecker? ~Poem by Unknown Author

I watched them tearing a building down,  
A gang of men in a busy town.  
With a "ho, heave, ho" and a husky yell,  
They swung a beam and the sidewall fell.

I asked the foreman, "Are these men skilled?"  
Men you'd hire, if you had to build?  
He smiled and said, "Oh, no, indeed!  
Common labor is all I need.

I can easily wreck in a day or two...  
What builders have taken years to do."  
I thought to myself, as I went on my way,  
Which of these roles am I trying to play?

Am I a builder who works with care,  
Measuring life by the rule and square?  
Or, am I a wrecker who walks the town,  
Content with the labor of tearing down?



### Inside this issue:

DoDEA District Teachers of the Year	2	Losing Something, by Anthony Mullen	4
Foreign Language Key to Global Education	2		
"Fab Finds" on the Internet for Teachers	3	Timeline for the 2009 T2T Newsletters	5
Education Articles of Interest on the Web	3	Collaboration a Factor in Student Success	5
Using Data in the Classroom	3		

**2009 District Teachers of the Year**



Sharon DelGobbo  
Georgia/Alabama



April St Clair  
North Carolina



Lisa Arroyo  
Isles



Kathleen Smith  
Okinawa



Janet Goldhorn  
Guam



Angela Stephens  
SC, Ft Stewart, Cuba



Gary Marvel  
Mediterranean



Dorothy Goulet  
Kaiserslautern/DoDEA



Bob Roach  
Kentucky



Laura Boles  
Bavaria



Deirdre McAlpin  
Japan



Kristen Smith  
NY, VA, PR



Kina Stallings  
Heidelberg



Chad Casciani  
Korea

It is the  
supreme art of  
the teacher to  
awaken joy in  
creative  
expression and  
knowledge.  
~ Albert Einstein

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE INTEGRAL FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION**

~By Tracy Knick

The 21<sup>st</sup> –century focus on global education must include the study of foreign languages at the core. Deep cultural understanding necessitates linguistic proficiency, and while DoDEA maintains a 2-year Foreign Language graduation requirement, our schools offer a variety of opportunities for

language exposure and for building communicative competence. FLES, Immersion, and Host Nation classes are available at the elementary level and provide an enriching experience for young learners. As students progress to the Secondary Level, they can choose from a variety of languages includ-

ing Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese. Moreover, students may surpass the graduation requirement on the path to proficiency and even earn up to 15 college credits for success at the Advanced Placement level.



Ms. Tracy Knick is the Foreign Language ISS at DoDDS-Europe in Wiesbaden, Germany. She is a National Board Certified Teacher.

## “FAB FINDS” ON THE INTERNET FOR TEACHERS

We hope there is something here for everyone! Enjoy the links here that interest you, and as always, feel free to contribute your own “Fab Finds” on the internet for teachers! Click away!

Interesting ideas for self-directed professional development!

<http://www.pdtogo.com/>

K-12 Learning and Teaching Resources from the University

of North Carolina School of Education

<http://www.learnnc.org/>

People around the world can vote to select the next object the Hubble Space Telescope will view!

<http://youdecide.hubblesite.org/>

Digital Media Download Options from the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg

County (PLCMC).

<http://www.plcmc.org/Catalog/audiobookOptions.asp>

Download Audacity Software (free! the best price!) for making podcasts (MP3s, WAVs, MP4s)!

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/download/>



We welcome your feedback about our Fab Finds section! If you have your own Fab Finds, please contribute to a future newsletter by emailing them directly to [Dorothy.Goulet@eu.dodea.edu](mailto:Dorothy.Goulet@eu.dodea.edu)

## Education Articles of Interest on the Web

I hear — I forget. I see — I remember. I do — I understand.  
~Chinese Proverb

In School for the First Time, Teenage Immigrants Struggle

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/25/education/25ellis.html?\\_r=2](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/25/education/25ellis.html?_r=2)

The Assessment Gap: 21st Century Writing and Standardized Testing

<http://ncteinbox.blogspot.com/>

Grammar Myths for the ELL/ESL Classroom

<http://ncteinbox.blogspot.com/search/label/grammar?max-results=100>

Student Expectations Seen As Causing Grade Disputes

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/18/education/18college.html?ref=education>

Teacher Working Conditions

<http://www.teachingquality.org/twc>



Find education articles on the web that you believe would interest other DoDEA teachers? Please contribute directly to [Dorothy.Goulet@eu.dodea.edu](mailto:Dorothy.Goulet@eu.dodea.edu)

Links and articles in this newsletter are provided for informational purposes and do not constitute endorsement by DoDEA.

## Yada, Yada, Yada... Data, Data, Data! ~By Dorothy Goulet



“...data serve as our navigation system in the classroom.”

The emphasis on data, research, and test scores isn't a new thing or the new location of the forever-swinging edupendulum. Teachers have been using test scores and other data for years and years to determine what works—and what does not. However, very recent studies of the brain add to what we know about what works and why. “Data” are more than numbers—data serve as our navigation system in the classroom.

Perhaps it might lower some of our anxiety about using data if we simply interpret this emphasis as a *renewed* emphasis on *reflective practice*. A successful teacher is a reflective

practitioner. True, using test scores is one way to measure what a student has achieved, but there are many other things to consider at the same time in educating the whole child and reflecting on successful teaching practices. Here are some tips to help you get in the groove:

- Use **environmental data** to learn about the generation of students in our classrooms: <http://nces.ed.gov/>
- Read a little on how the **adolescent brain works**: <http://>

[help4teachers.com/prefrontalcortex.htm](http://help4teachers.com/prefrontalcortex.htm)

- Learn how your school **performs in core areas plus foreign languages** in the DoDEA Test Data Center: <http://www.dodea.edu/datacenter/testdata.cfm>
- **Start and end** with individual student data from a variety of sources, including frequent, informal classroom assessment!

## LOSING SOMETHING ~By Anthony Mullen, 2009 Connecticut Teacher of the Year

I teach and mentor high school students classified with emotional disabilities, young men and women who consider "F\_ you!" a reasonable answer to a teacher's question. Sometimes I want to reply in kind, but their profanity is more sincere and delivered with greater rapidity. Seen from a military perspective, they have a greater arsenal of "F Bombs" and their sorties seldom miss a target.

A new 11<sup>th</sup> grade student arrived recently at my school and quickly displayed her linguistic talent of being able to use the F word as noun, verb, adjective, adverb, conjunction and prepositional phrase. Not an easy task for a teenager reading and writing at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level.

At first glance such a student would be considered beyond repair. After all, she has not done her part to be a productive member of the school or community and her language presents a crude and profane adolescent who clearly did not learn any manners at home. But a closer look reveals a much more complex person.

I reviewed the student's IEP (Individual Education Plan) and went first to her psychological and family profile. She was born to a 16

-year-old mother, abandoned by her father, subjected to sexual abuse by an uncle, moved in and out of various foster homes and, not surprisingly, became a mother when she turned 16. Her brief but chaotic life could be portrayed in a Dicken's novel.

I spent many months trying to make contact. She was resistant and apathetic and resentful of my attempts to reconnect her to school and community. Even the lollipops left on her desk did not help her smile. And leaving lollipops is the last desperate tool in my bag of teacher tricks.

One morning, she came to me and asked if I was once a New York City police officer. I replied yes and she then asked if police are good at finding things. I paused for a moment and said, "Some things."

"Could you help me find something?" she asked.

"What is it that you are looking for?"

"I was wondering if you could help find my daddy."

Is it any wonder why they are so angry?



Mr. Anthony Mullen is a finalist for the 2009 National Teacher of the Year. He teaches sciences and law at the ARCH School in Greenwich, Connecticut.



## It's about student learning-- period.

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

We hope you have enjoyed this issue of the *Teacher to Teacher* newsletter! The vision for the newsletter is reader-friendliness, interactivity, usefulness, and frequency. Our 2009 plan is for semi-monthly issues to be disseminated DoDEA-wide on the following timeline:

Late Winter Issue	February-March 2009
Spring Issue	April-May 2009
School's Out! Issue	June 2009
Welcome Back Issue	August-September 2009
Fall Issue	October-November 2009

If you have comments, contribution ideas for future issues, or general feedback, we certainly welcome you to share it! Please contact 2009 DoDEA Teacher of the Year, Dorothy Goulet, at the email address listed to the left.



## COLLABORATION A MAJOR FACTOR IN STUDENT SUCCESS

~By Deirdre McAlpin



Ms. Deirdre McAlpin teaches at the Sullivans' School in Yokosuka, Japan. She is the 2009 Japan District Teacher of the Year.

All students can learn at their highest level and collaboration plays a major role towards that success. All educators, families, and students can work in this partnership. It takes many forms: one-to-one meetings, analysis of student data, investigation of trends and educational theories, and exploring

systems all to better student achievement.

As educators, we can collaborate in many formats. Classroom teachers can work as a team at grade- or team-level meetings to improve student understanding in a particular area. This can be planning, looking at student work samples to enhance learning and make teaching stronger, or reviewing results to decide how the practice impacted student understanding. Specialists and resource educators are in a prime position to liaise with classroom teachers so best practices are used consistently towards higher student achievement for all levels of learners. Administrators sustain educators' growth opportunities as leaders in learning so that system wide goals for student achievement are supported.

I see that my primary role as an educator is to prepare my students

for the future while working with parents and students. Here, collaboration includes student-led conferences, working with families to understand standards and coursework particulars, and communication using technology so that every family member, even when deployed, feels he or she is a part of his or her child's education process.

Education should have connections and meaning for students - it is not good enough just to "know" it. I keep in mind the saying "education is the part that lasts after you've forgotten what you learned." To me, education leads to lasting understanding. I believe through collaboration, we can strive for students to have that knowledge which lasts so they are better prepared for the future.

