Happy new semester and happy January!

We are hoping you had a wonderful break and that you are coming back into the swing of teaching and learning in your classroom.

Some things to review to help create that “Optimal Learning Environment”

- Building positive student relationships
- Providing multiple pathways for student engagement
- Creating an inclusive community within your diverse classroom

Resources for teachers:

Here are a couple great sites to give you ideas, techniques and strategies to use in your classroom:

Edutopia is “dedicated to transforming K-12 education so that all students can acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to thrive in their studies, careers, and adult lives.”

Edutopia focuses on six core strategies (Technology Integration; Teacher Development; Social Emotional Learning; Project Based Learning; Integrated Studies; Comprehensive Assessments) in their weekly updates you will find videos, examples and resources to use in your classroom.

Another great blog is from George Couros; in his latest blog, Couros discusses how to create and sustain an Optimal Learning Environment in your classroom.

Have a great resource that others should know...Please contact your mentor and share in the next issue!
Yahoo! Teacher Success!

Letter from the Editor - Very sorry to Cholla High School on misidentifying their region. We apologize and would like to note that in our last issue we did not give the correct region to Cholla High School. Cholla is in the Silverbell Region!

Pantano Region

Virginia Caballero, kindergarten teacher extraordinaire, from Dietz, K-8. Her mentor notes that Ms. Caballero is amazing and incorporates hands-on, minds-on learning with her warm, nurturing attitude. While going to school as an Intern no less!

Claudia Lopez Orturo, middle school math teacher. Claudia is from Columbia, where she worked as an engineer! She is transferring her skills and talents to her students. We are so fortunate to have such hard-working examples of excellence in our teacher mentoring program!

Arroyo Chico Region

Third graders exploring fractions by making their pizza slices.

Carley Mahan, teacher at Blenman uses anchor charts to support student learning about comparing fractions!

Students worked in pairs making pizzas with fuzzy balls. Then explained by comparing two toppings on pizza – which had more, less or equal.
## Upcoming Seminars and Study Groups for Beginning Teachers

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Just a reminder – you can select the seminar/study group for which you wish to register.

Go to True North Professional Learning Portal - https://tucson.truenorthlogic.com

Login with your TUSD login and password

This is an Internet site so you can log on anywhere (not just at your school site)

Select “Section” and then select “Register”

Please make sure the date and time works for your schedule, and that you can make time to attend the seminars and study groups.

Please know that seminars are a total of 4 hours, and if you miss a class it can be difficult to catch up on the missing information. Study groups are a little different because they meet more regularly, but please contact your instructor in the case of any absence.

Teachers in the Mentor Teacher Program who attend seminars or study groups will receive $25 an hour; get some great resources to use in the classroom; and discover professional collaboration opportunities with teachers throughout the district.
Interviews Throughout the District

Jackie Krieg is the Lead Mentor of the Beginning Teachers Program in TUSD as well as Lead Curriculum Service Provider (CSP). Jackie shared her thoughts through this interview - hope you enjoy.

How long have you been in Tucson Unified School District?

As a student, 12 years (beginning at Hudlow from 1st-6th grade then Fickett for Jr. High, 7-8th grade and 4 years at Sahuaroo); as an employee 31 years (beginning at White Elementary for 3 years, DIT’d to Sam Hughes-taught 15 years, became a librarian and moved to Lawrence Intermediate for 5 years, was a new teacher mentor for 5 years and currently in my 3rd year as a Lead Mentor/CSP.

What is an interesting fact about yourself?

My husband, 3 boys and I all graduated from the same TUSD high school (Sahuaroo High School).

How do you support beginning teachers?

I support teachers in a variety of ways. For example I facilitate teacher learning such as Creating an Optimal Learning Environment (COLE) and in an indirect way by facilitating learning and support to new teacher mentors, and other district support staff who in turn work with beginning teachers.

What is one piece of advice you would offer to beginning teachers?

Build relationships with all stake holders within your teaching community. This includes fellow teachers, administrators, custodians, food service staff, parents and especially students.

Anything else you would like to share to our beginning teachers?

Collaborate, communicate and connect with colleagues. You are not alone so don't be afraid to reach out for support.

Kirsten Cummins is the Catalog Lead at the Educational Material Center (EMC) located inside the Lee Instructional Resource Center (LIRC). This is a wonderful place to get books, artifacts, check out other materials and Kirsten is the person to help find some wonderful items to use in your classroom.

How long have you been in Tucson Unified School District?
I have been working in this position for eight years.

**What is an interesting fact about yourself?**

I grew up in the military and spent most of my childhood in the UK.

**How do you support beginning teachers?**

The Educational Materials Center has products ranging from books (both professional and those geared towards children) to informational panels; from traveling museum exhibits to culture kit boxes - all for free, including delivery and pickup!

**What is one piece of advice you would offer to beginning teachers?**

This is what I advise to people in general: "The world is full of darkness. Be the light."

**Anything else you would like to share to our beginning teachers?**

I'm open weekdays, from 7:30 to 4:30 and am just an email or call away.

Our last interview is with Susan Smith, who works in the Textbook Distribution Center. Another wonderful place where teachers can find some extra resources. Just like with the EMC talking to Susan Smith might get you some books for your classroom!

How long have you been in Tucson Unified School District?

I have been working in this position for eight years.

**What is an interesting fact about yourself?**

We may not always have what people come in looking for but, so far anyway, we have never had a visitor that left empty handed. People always find something of use to them when they visit us.

**How do you support beginning teachers?**

We have a variety of student textbooks, consumable books, teacher's editions, math manipulatives, old dictionaries and thesauri, level readers and class library books available free by request. Teachers can either request materials from us using the online form (available on our website) or send in a request via email (to Susan.Smith@tusd1.org). We also offer twice monthly Open House events (February-May: The first and Wednesday and Friday of the month: 6:30 am-2:30 pm and special days as well). Teachers can
also make an appointment with us to come during different hours. Address and Contact information: Textbook Distribution Center at the Campbell Warehouse, 480 S. Campbell Ave, Tucson, AZ 85719, Textbook Contact Information: Susan Smith, 225-4955, Susan.Smith@tusd1.org.

What is one piece of advice you would offer to beginning teachers?

If you need any of the materials, that we provide, contact us for help. We are not always able to help everyone with their requests but we will do our best for you. For instance, we don't have most of the Middle School Social Studies textbooks, however, if you contact requesting a book we don't have we may have a support book you can use and we will keep you in mind should we find some in the future. We will do our best to help so contact us if you need assistance!

Anything else you would like to share to our beginning teachers?

We are grateful for all you do for our students and we love to help you out. Thanks for joining the TUSD team!
Induction/Mentoring Program Website

Have you seen our website? Many of you have shared your “whys” but if you haven’t and would like to be featured on the website, send a little blurb to your mentor. Check out some of your fellow TUSD beginning teachers and read about why they became a teacher!

http://www.tusd1.org/Information/Mentoring-Program/what-why

We're on Social Media!
Go ahead, follow us!
Twitter: @MentorsTusd
Instagram: TUSDNewTeacherMentors

We hope you enjoyed this edition and tell us what you think? What would you like us to add in the upcoming issues?
Please feel free to email the Newsletter Team part of the Beginning Teachers Mentor Program!