



HIGHLIGHTS: Upcoming Events!

Jan 10, 17, 24, and 31 & Feb 7, 14, 21, and 28
National Board Pre-candidacy Class

Feb 8-9, Mar 14-15, April 25-26 & May 9-10
Cognitive Coaching (Phoenix)

Mar 14-15, April 18-19, May 2-3, May 30-31
Cognitive Coaching (Tucson)

Mar 31, April 7, April 14, April 21 & April 28
Technology Integration: Digital Storytelling

Did You Know?

Did you know that in 2007 the Arizona Department of Education issued 7,182 certificates to teachers new to the profession and/or new to Arizona?

7,182
new teachers

Source: Arizona Department of Education, 2007

Challenges of a New Career: Beginning Teachers Discover Lots to Learn

For beginning teachers, the classroom can be a wondrous and fearful place. It's the space where you can truly make a difference in the lives of children, opening them to fresh worlds of knowledge and experience. But it's also an unpredictable environment, which can cause confusion and anxiety in new educators. And then there's the paperwork.

To help ease the way for teachers completing their first and second years, the Arizona K-12 Center is offering its First Annual Beginning Teacher Institute. During this three day event, teachers will have the opportunity to learn from local and national leaders, as well as National Board Certified Teachers. The focus will be meeting the everyday challenges of teaching.

For Dulce Corrales, who teaches first grade at Washington Elementary in Phoenix, the biggest challenge is time management. "It's all the new things teachers have to do," she says, "paperwork, deadlines, assessments, district requirements and data entry. But mostly the time it takes to prepare for lessons. I don't just do the workbook/ worksheet thing I try to do a lot of interactive lessons. That takes a lot of preparing."

Corrales works with her mentor, Leah Esmont, who helps her figure out how to set up and schedule activities to make her time as productive as possible. Although she's in her first year of teaching, Corrales is not new to the classroom. She started volunteering when her own kids entered school and has ten years experience as an instructional assistant.

"My students reward me everyday with the questions they ask, which show me they are excited about understanding the concept I'm teaching. It validates all of the late nights, early mornings and weekends."

"I found that it just felt real natural," she says, "It didn't feel like I was going to a job. I had a real good time with the kids."

Corrales does feel she is better prepared than many new teachers, but still finds herself confronted by difficulties she didn't foresee. "My expectations are too high," she says. "I want to do so much - it can be frustrating that there isn't enough time."

For Shaun Stevenson, who teaches 5th Grade at Tuscano Elementary School in Phoenix, the biggest challenge in his first year is organization.



"When I collect resources, I have to learn to file them away for access when I need them next. Balancing administrative concerns, coming up with engaging lesson plans—without a good basis of organization it's difficult to juggle everything," he says.

Because it's all new to him, Stephenson has no basic systems, so he has to setup everything for the first time. He says that although he feels a "Periodic sense of being overwhelmed," he's still "very happy with the way things are going."

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EVENT SPOTLIGHT: Adaptive Schools

Dates Jan 10-11, 2008 and Feb 28-29, 2008

Location Desert Willow Conference Center
4340 East Cotton Center Blvd, Phoenix

Times 8:30 am-3:30 pm
(Registration begins at 8:00 am)

Cost \$350

Deadline 12/7/2007

Meetings and collaborative groups are often viewed as ineffective and unfocused, but that does not have to be the case. Bruce Wellman and Jane Ellison will guide you to understanding that there is a science to facilitating successful collaborative groups and meetings during this four-day workshop. This session will teach you how to bring a group to the same level of understanding, focus on the same tasks, and increase outcomes and achievements.

You will explore ways to support the continual learning of all group members by helping groups

and teams to develop new norms and skills for collegial interaction, goal clarification, problem solving, and decision-making. You will learn to extend personal facilitation skills to aid in accelerating group development, increase task focus, and enhance organizational productivity. By the end of this course, you will be able to prove that collaborative work can be beneficial for all parties and meetings can be productive.

This workshop is perfect for administrators and teacher leaders. Anyone responsible for leading groups and facilitating meetings.

Challenges of a New Career: Beginning Teachers Discover Lots to Learn

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It's helped Stephenson to work with two mentors—Petra Gonzales and Dede Frejes. "They are good listeners," he says.

Overall, Stephenson is thrilled to have found his way to teaching. That's because in college he tried majoring in Business, History, Sociology and Biology, before he arrived at Education. He liked the subject matter involved in those other majors more than he did their professional application. His epiphany came when he volunteered as a tutor and he actually enjoyed it. "It was really nice to find a profession that I loved," he says.

Theresa Johnson, who teaches Biology, Botany and Health to high school students at Gateway Early College School, recalls: "From the time I was 16, I knew I wanted to be a science teacher". That's because she had a fantastic AP biology teacher her senior year who her inspired her.

But now that she's living her professional dream as a first year teacher, she's finding herself not as well prepared as she might have hoped.

"I'm the type who likes to be uber-prepared," she says. "But it's really hard to simulate a classroom situation without actually putting yourself into a classroom. And every classroom has been completely different."

Her single greatest challenge? Keeping up with the workload. Between lesson plans and grading and paperwork, she has a hard time completing everything that needs to be done.

She's gone to senior staff members for answers to questions regarding better classroom management, student assessment and how to fill out certain forms. As she puts it, "Things they don't talk to you about when you're going through certification process." Yet she still sometimes feels alone.

Reaping the Rewards of Student Achievement

But even as these beginning teachers face the tests of embarking on a new profession, one that has not always provided the support to its newest members that it should, they are reaping rewards as well.

Dulce Corrales has been particularly thrilled to see the growth from last year when she student-taught the class, to this year. Many of her students are English Language Learners who are "Becoming more outgoing, willing to participate even if they are not sure what the answer is, just to share, to tell you what they are thinking. They are moving out of the silent stage of language learning."

For Shaun Stevenson, the most satisfying aspect of his first year has been: "The response I've

gotten from peers, students and administrators. I'm learning a lot about different techniques of teaching and have gotten really good support."

Theresa Johnson reports that, "My students reward me everyday with the questions they ask, which show me they are excited about understanding the concept I'm teaching. It validates all of the late nights, early mornings and weekends."

"At first I was completely overwhelmed," Johnson admits, "but every day it gets better. Every day I find a different way to do something to find my niche, my own way to be as successful as I can be."

In pursuit of this improvement, Johnson will be joining other new teachers attending the Beginning Teacher Institute in June. She's looking to "Find some contact with other first year teachers, to have someone else to bounce ideas off of. And to gain some skills from more experienced teachers on how to make it easier on ourselves and be better instructors for our students."

See below for more information about the Beginning Teacher Institute.



EVENT SPOTLIGHT: First Annual Beginning Teacher Institute

Dates	June 18-20, 2008
Location	Westward Look Resort 245 East Ina, Tucson
Times	8:00am-4:00pm
Cost	\$225
Deadline	4/25/2008

While teaching is an extremely rewarding career, it is not without its difficult and challenging moments. As a beginning teacher, the challenges can even be greater. Our First Annual Beginning Teacher Institute is designed for beginning teachers who have one to two years of teaching experience. Classroom management, the use of data, and creating a professional development path for you will be just a few highlights of this Institute.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Judy Rea, Project Director Mentoring/Induction



Judy coordinates mentor training for the Arizona K-12 Center and is a mentor trainer herself. After teaching for 25 years in California, and then working there as a mentor for another three years, she's happy to be sharing her experience in Arizona.

"The people I work with here are very receptive and extremely focused," Judy says. "They are choosing this career path and are excited to learn techniques to support new teachers. I'm very impressed."

Judy taught kindergarten through fifth grade in California, primarily in the East Bay community of San Ramon. She discovered Arizona through visiting her daughter who attended the University of Arizona, and

by coming to watch Spring Training baseball games. Before joining the Arizona K-12 Center, she worked at the Arizona Department of Education administering a federal professional development grant.

As a teacher, Judy particularly liked "Working with students who didn't fit, who had trouble learning." Now she enjoys preparing teachers to mentor other teachers.

In addition to her daughter living in Scottsdale, Judy has a son based in California in the Sacramento area. Neither have pursued careers in teaching, but her five-year-old granddaughter recently declared her interest in pursuing the profession.