

**Teacher of the Year Special Session**  
**3:00-5:00 p.m., July 8**  
**Summary Notes from Group Discussions**

**Activity #2 Small Group Discussions on Teacher Preparation**

1. As a beginning teacher, regardless of how or where you were prepared, what were the most valuable skills you brought to your first classroom?
  - Energy and enthusiasm
  - Field experience/classroom experience
  - Content knowledge
  - Confidence/optimism
  - Organization skills/time management
  - Idealism
  - Creativity
  - Passion
  - Served as a positive role model in the school
  - Compassion for others' life experiences
  - Caring about the whole child
  - Communication skills
  - Discipline skills
  - Hard work ethic
  - Knew what you *didn't* want
  
2. What skills did you not yet possess that you most needed?
  - How to deal with diverse populations/working with special needs students
  - Was too soft – needed to be more confident and firm
  - Control of emotions
  - Understanding of the reality of teaching
  - Classroom management/disciplinary skills/how to start the year/how to start and set rules
  - How to deal with parents/parental relations
  - Differentiation
  - Quality assessment/assessment in general
  - Knowledge of how to navigate in a professional community/dealing with the school climate and territoriality
  - Ability to find more resources
  - Management of bookkeeping/recordkeeping – dealing with the paperwork burden
  - Needed a mentor – felt isolated
  - Collaboration skills

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3. As TOYs, you have a new lens with which to look at yourself, your profession, and others in your profession. With regard to new teachers' preparation and ability to step into a classroom and teach, what are you seeing? Are they well-prepared and ready for the challenges they face? What do you see that is positive and effective and what is missing that would make these new teachers more effective?

Critical Observations/What's Missing:

- False sense of confidence/thinks teaching is easy
- Irreverent at times/lack of professionalism
- Not enough reflective practice
- Poor teacher preparation coursework
- Lots of theory but no practice/ Lack of classroom experience
- Need mentoring on: shared assessments, collaborative communications (effective mentors need better training)
- Seeing the "job" as a "job" instead of a "career"
- Lack of behavior management skills
- Don't know what accomplished teaching looks like

Positive Observations/What is Effective:

- Implementing technology effectively/no fear of technology
- Energy and enthusiasm
- Passion for teaching kids
- Organizing content into courses
- More collaboration skills
- Creativity – can step outside the box
- Fearless, in general

**Activity #5 Large Group Discussion**

1. If there were no constraints – other than your own imagination – how could you, as a teacher, be a teacher in a much larger arena (community, statewide, national, etc.)? What would allow you to do more of what you want to do?
  - The role of the teacher needs to be redefined and needs to include: paid collaborative time during the school day and paid collaborative time to be "at the table"
  - Being honored by being allowed to leave the classroom more
  - More time for teachers to train other teachers in pre-service and with practicing teachers – at the state, school, district, and national levels
  - Teachers need to support each other and promote each other within and outside of the classroom
  - Need to get more involved in teacher preparation
  - ***MUST HAVE CLASSROOM TEACHERS AT THE TABLE***