

December Staff Dev. Newsletter

A newsletter for the Seward Staff by Dr. Dominy

December Disillusionment? or December Moments?

We know from the research on new teachers that the end of November and December can be extremely difficult for new teachers and veteran teachers alike. Dr. Boogren accurately describes this period of time as the Disillusionment phase. Dr. Boogren states, "You may feel like you have hit the wall and struggle to make it day by day or even hour by hour. You might begin to question your commitment, capabilities, and perhaps even your self-worth during this phase. There is a chance that your self-care practices have fallen by the wayside because you are completely overwhelmed by school right now."

Dr. Boogren goes on to say, "What helps is focusing on the important things, including the relationships you have with your students, your support system, and yourself. Remind yourself that busy does not mean better." Dr. Boogren recommends the following self-care practices: sleep, exercising, eating well, practicing gratitude, practicing kindness, and appreciating humor.

Last year, we spoke about moments and how they can be created in each of our classrooms. Creating moments does not mean that we plan extravagant events that cost tremendous amounts of time. It means that we point out the great things going on in our professional and personal lives, we reach out and help someone who needs help, we connect with someone we have not made a connection with. We can shift our mindset from December disillusionment to December moments, but we have to make a cognitive choice to do so.

Dr. Boogren ends this section of her book by saying, "This phase will not last forever. With kindness, patience, and perseverance, things will change. Don't give up. We need you and your students need you."

Boogren, Tina. *The Beginning Teacher's Field Guide*. Boomington, Indiana, Solution Tree Press, 2018.

Cognitive Regulation

Our focus in our PLC's this month has been on cognitive regulation. Acquiring knowledge and skills requires students to engage in certain habits and dispositions including:

- Metacognition
- Sustaining attention
- Goal setting and monitoring

- Recognizing and resolving problems
- Decision making
- Help-seeking
- Getting and staying organized

Page 86 of our book, *All Learning is Social and Emotional*, has a learning process inventory. This would be a great tool for those of you who have a social-emotional teacher evaluation goal to survey your students regarding cognitive regulation strategies. Once you have the information about your students, the next step is to address the deficiencies through explicit modeling and one-on-one coaching conversations.

The connection between Cognitive Regulation and the Evaluation and Instructional Model

Cognitive regulation shines brightly in both the teacher evaluation model and the instructional model. In the teacher evaluation model, indicator 2.1, Providing and communicating clear learning goals is an excellent way to model goal setting as well as self-reflection. Indicator 2.4, strategies that appear in all types of lessons has a variety of strategies to help students develop their cognitive regulation.

The Seward Staff identified the following elements as critical to developing cognitive regulation:

- 11- Examining errors in reasoning
- 2- Tracking student progress
- 23-Noticing and reacting when students are not engaged
- 12-Engaging students in cognitively complex tasks
- 4- Using informal assessments of the whole class
- 5- Using formal assessments of individual students
- 1- Providing scales and rubrics
- 6- Chunking content
- 19- Reflecting on Learning

For more information regarding these elements please refer to your book, *The New Art and Science of Teaching*.