

## TEACHING DIVERSITY

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When society and the economy are struggling which it is most of the time teacher and student morale go right out the window. Motivating both teachers and students becomes more challenging than ever.

There is no question that an unstable society and economy is demoralizing for both teachers and students. Even though the motivation to learn is down so to speak that is no reason for not being able to do something about it. Teachers can uplift spirits and skills. Teachers need to look beyond the problematic to the needs and wants of the students.

Communication is the key to success. We need to keep students involved. We need to talk honestly with students. This allows for participation. Students have something to offer. This allows students to participate in sharing ideas and being more creative. We are then asking students to do more but at one and the same explaining the situation to them which makes it understandable.

Communication needs to be two-way. We need to give students time and space to verbalize their concerns.

It is especially important for teachers to be visible and approachable. Teachers need to treat students with respect and show concerns for their personal and academic well-being. This allows for the possibility of not only diversity but for a moral society.

Teachers need to provide direction. But a teacher cannot do everything. A teacher allows for participation in the classroom. This allows students to have a say in what is meaningful for them and what is not. In this way we are all in this together.

No one wants to come to school to feel like a failure. One way to keep spirits up is to celebrate progress along the way rather than waiting for the completion of any tasks. This must be something that is very real. Celebrating success can inspire the whole class.

Recognition of individual achievements can expand appreciation of school itself not only for the individual but also for the whole class. Students need acknowledgement. In times when society and the economy are struggling students need it more than ever.

Nothing brings students forward more than having teachers speak with them as valued human beings. Teachers need to make everyday connections with students.

Motivation is contagious. So is dismal doom. Even self-motivated students in the classroom can wither away and perish in a demoralizing classroom. Teachers cannot fake appreciation. Students know. It takes time to recognize student's individual abilities and talents, to help them develop.

Teachers that treat students with respect and show concern for their personal and academic well-being are most likely to be the most successful and have the most fun. A good teacher understands that relationship-building, education and creative thinking are key to getting students to try out new skills and to further their development. Helping students communicates to them that you care.