



A Lesson on the Ecology of Public Schools

Melyssa Ferro, 2016 Idaho State Teacher of the Year



Teacher of the Year = Modern Day Lorax for Public Education

- Speak for those who have no voice
- Impart a message of responsibility



“Find Your Connection To This Ecosystem And Have An Impact!”

Symbiosis - interaction between organisms in close association with each other

- Teaching is a collaborative effort
- Avoid pay systems that create competition





-
- Quality teachers already exist in Idaho, need to give them resources to do their work - More than just another plea for \$\$
 - Instead of finding ways to put unqualified people into classrooms, address the issue of why qualified teachers are leaving

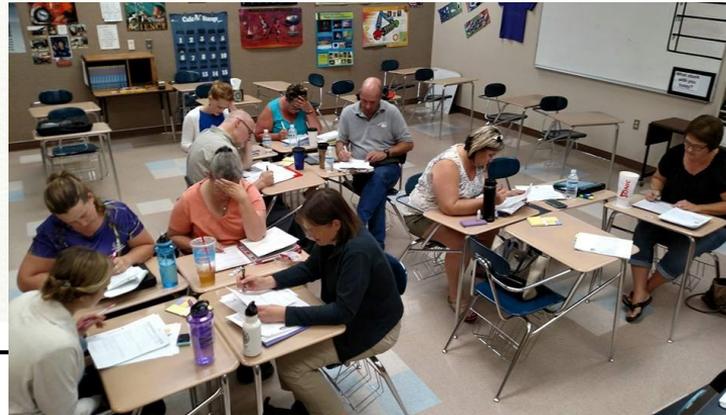
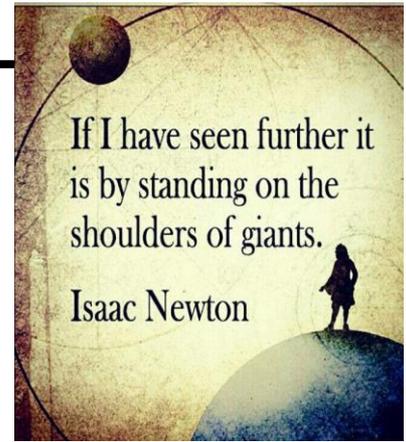
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
CLASSROOM SUPPLY BUDGETS
DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY
COLLABORATION TIME

RESPECT
FIELDTRIPS
VOICE
FLEXIBILITY



Peer-led professional development

- Membership in Idaho Ed Assn provides opportunities for collaboration
- Peer and new teacher mentoring programs are important to teacher retention



Community- group of interacting species living in the same place

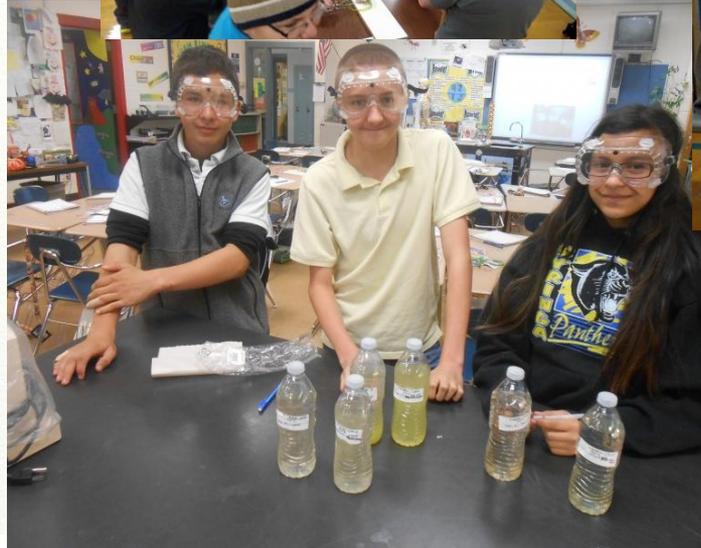


- Collaborative partnerships are key to providing resources
- Along X, Y & Z axes



Students helping at Sacajawea Elementary
Science Family Night

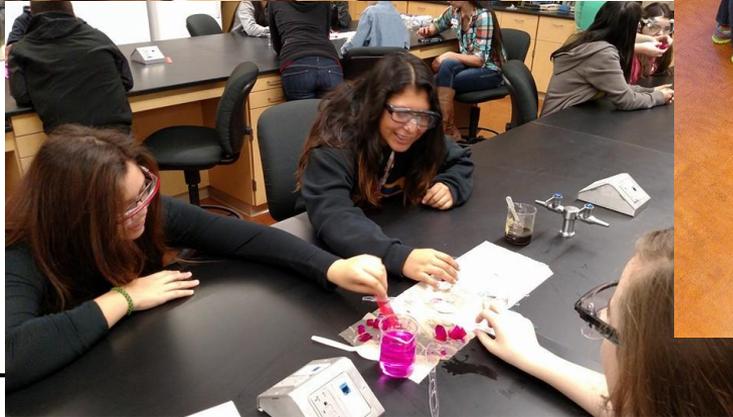
Spring 7th Grade Science Fair - BSU, Deer Flat, high school students



US Department of Energy Math & Science Bowl - BSU, Micron, HP, Idaho Power



Science Extravaganza - Northwest Nazarene University





Niche- position that a species has in its environment

- Students need to see themselves as scientists and engineers
- My kids need to look into the mirror of STEM education, not just peek in through the window
- Includes mentors who “match” my kids



Math And Science Summer Institute - C of I



Spring Advanced Research Projects





Abiotic Factors- nonliving things that affect ecosystems

- Learning should be engaging and hands-on
- Teaching 21st century skills - communicating, collaborating, perseverance, creativity, use of technology
- New science standards that make science a verb - analyzing, concluding, modeling, defending with evidence



Future City Engineering Competition



Discover Technology STEM Bus





Habitat- an organism's surroundings

- Place-based learning
- Authentic & engaging experiences
- Students need to see, smell, taste and roll around in science



Expedition Yellowstone



Habitat H2O - Tampa, Florida





Positive and Lasting Change in Our Ecosystem of Public Education?

Remember that teaching is collaborative

Help us build community partnerships

Give us the resources to make learning authentic & engaging





On behalf of my grandfather, John Albert Edwards, who served on the Idaho House Health, Welfare & Education Committee from 1965-1972 as a Republican representative of legislative district 9A, I want to thank you for this chance to address you today and remind you that you too stand on the shoulders of the giants who have come before you in Idaho's dedication to providing a high quality education for every Idaho student!

