Fire-Up Conference

*Aquinas College*

*October 20, 2014*

**Session 1**: Learn History by Doing History: Michigan History Day Contest

*Sean O’Neill, Professor of History, History Day Regional Coordinator, GVSU*

* Michigan history day is a program (20-30 years experience) that makes history fun and exciting. It is a contest
* Primarily middle and high school students, “junior and senior”.
* Kids can show their work as a paper, documentary (10 min), performance (10min), exhibit (tabletop display) or website. They are able to do it individually or as a group (2-5).
  + Have 10 min interviews with panel of judges. Allows them to gain experience with interviews.
* Regional, state and national contents. Different districts within states.
* **March 21st, this year’s History Day Contest – sign up to help out!**
  + Graded on historical quality, relation to theme and clarity of presentation.
  + Themes are chosen every year. This year: Leadership and Legacy in History.
* Expected to use primary sources.
* Learn process of improving projects. What more research can you do? What more evidence can you provide?
* Historical Society of Michigan – sponsors for NHD - hsmichigan.org

**Session 2:** Jedi Mind Tricks for Avoiding First-Year Burnout

*Dave Stuart Jr., High School History/English Teacher, Founder of teachingthecore.com*

* Blog – TeachingtheCore.com
  + PollEv.com/davestuartjr – leave specific feedback.
* Foundational Concepts
  + 50% of teachers leave the teaching profession within 5 years
  + Burnout: losing a focus on and passion for impact
    - Cure? 🡪 IMPACT: promoting the long-term flourishing of your students
* 4 basic mind tricks…

1. You are not your job.

* My job vs. my identity. Separate self-worth from performance.

1. Failure = Progress.

* Every time you fail, you figure out something that doesn’t work
* Equals about 3-4 years of experience as a first year teacher – further ahead.
* TED Talk – Angela Duckworth

1. Care more about them than about them liking you

* Focus on them in the long-term

1. Teaching is character building

* Google “KIPP Character Strengths”
* Pitfalls…

1. Workaholism – pick the most important stuff

* Set hours for yourself
* Having a beautiful classroom is not as important as teaching well
* Find people to hold you accountable
* Say ‘No.’ – cant do everything
* You NEED ways to cultivate an identity outside of teaching

1. Externalism

* Encourage people to enter your room without warning
* Keep your door open
* Be open and honest about where you’re struggling

1. Gossip

* Definition: Casual or unconstrained conversation about other people
* Redirect the conversation
* Avoid certain people if necessary

1. Jealousy

* Send a positive message to someone you’re jealous of
* Encourage them; call out their strengths; sing their praises

**Session 3:** Strategies for Solving Adolescent Behavior Problems and Improving Student Achievement

*Dave Foley, Retired Junior High School Teacher*

* The goal: Spend your time teaching rather than doing discipline
* Keys to successful classroom management

1. Take charge of the classroom when the bell rings – start with topic of interest, make sure everyone is tuned in
2. Have a discipline plan – things will go wrong, need to know what to do
3. Not just threats, there must be consequences

* To get kids to behave – find out what they don’t want to have happen
  + Best options (what they don’t want): loss of their time, loss of territory (loss of their chosen seat), negative peer pressure (they don’t want to be unpopular among peers)
  + Secondary choices: detentions, calls to home, sent to office
* Only **one** rule needed – anything that interferes with your ability to teach or a student’s ability to learn is a problem
* Its okay to be inconsistent – police car story, sometimes you get lucky. Students are able to relate this scenario to their life.
* Universal classroom management techniques – Pause. Look toward the problem. Speak quietly. Walk toward the problem. Involve them in the lesson
* Let them decide their fate – give them a choice (would you rather sit where you are and pay attention to the lesson or go sit away by yourself, would you rather do your assignment in class or should I start on another lesson)
* Don’t ask questions that are counter productive – (Why’d you do that? Why are you talking?)
* Don’t take away their dignity – students will lash back at you and put up a front. Remember they are young people
* It’s the behavior you don’t like, not the kid – attack the problem, don’t attack the person
* Discipline is a two-act drama:

1. Act 1 – the disruption
2. Act 2 – your reaction

* How to control your reaction – be calm.
* Name on the board = staying after class– do not add checks next to them, add them up in your head. The time they stay after class depends on how the rest of class goes. Pavlov’s dog.
  + “I’m not staying” – that’s your choice however you’ll get a detention. Talk to the during individual work time.
  + Only give detentions for issues out of your classroom management, otherwise it looks as if you are struggling with classroom management
  + “Fairness doctrine” – haven’t let others do it, if I do it with you people may think you’re a ‘teachers pet’
  + “I can’t stay” – I’ll walk to class with you (time it so you know how long it takes for the future)
* If you need to finish up lesson without packing up, close door. Spend time with student if they disrupt. Negative peer pressure from peers.
* Seating chart – alphabetical or choice
  + If misbehavior move students around. Negative peer pressure from peers when they are moved.
  + Bartering for a seat change by better behavior
  + Use seating chart to raise student achievement; mentors and monitoring grades
* Peer pressure for Better Behavior
  + The three strikes technique – during games/projects/group work. Third strike 🡪 work quiet and individually
* Dealing with Disruption
  + What to do when you don’t know what to do…
    - Bad day? Send them to another grade level for the hour (ex. 8th goes to 6th)
    - End the disturbance. “I’ll talk to you at the end of class.” When they come to you **let the student do the talking**, “What happened?” or “If you were the teacher, what would you do?”
* Getting Students to Come Prepared to Class
  + Collecting collateral: ex. Keys, money, ID…
  + The hanging sign in the doorway – hits their face as they walk in
  + Sign by the clock (ex. TEST DAY next MONDAY)
* Making sure students understand the lesson
  + Class quizzes covering critical concepts. Students do not put name on quizzes. The ‘Beep’ Game – go over quiz and students beep if they got it wrong. Helps you find out what needs to be reviewed before assessment.
* Information comes from, the *Ultimate Classroom Management Handbook* (Jist Publishing) – Dave Foley

**Session 4:** Everyone Makes Mistakes, Oh Yes They Do!

*Terry Stockton, Affiliate Professor, GVSU*

* It is okay to totally fail at a lesson. It allows us to be successful later.
* What terrifies us at being successful?
  + We tell lies because being wrong or not knowing something makes us “less”. We are afraid to be wrong.
* Continuum of Success – “good kids/students”, things are justified, easier to handle/teach
* Continuum of Failure – students you assume, “you’ll probably end up working at the gas station.” Slippery slope between being a good/bad student. Partly based on grading system.
  + Known as ‘A’ or ‘B’ student. Set up so that grades define us.
* What can you change about this?
  + We understand that grades are problematic, but we cannot get rid of them. We can change paradigm as a teacher.
    - Always live and teach the 3 R’s:
      * Read
      * Write
      * Risk - keep your students off-balance. Create something innovative. Don’t be afraid to try new things, don’t be afraid to fail
        + Students see failing and discover that its okay to fail and make mistakes
    - Learning from others helps us grow, helps make us stronger. There are **always** people who are better than us who also know more than us.
    - NEVER STOP LEARNING!
* Find different strategies to address your students
  + Ask them if it was effective
* Trust is difficult, but the rewards from it are extraordinary!