



Gina Stahlheber

Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Gina Stahlheber

SCHOOL: Pioneer Middle School

Position: TIER III Teacher

Years in District: 12 years

Q. What does this Tier III writing class offer students at Pioneer Middle School?

A. We offer additional writing support to students who need extra help as part of an intervention program. The nice thing about offering this program in a middle school setting with class periods, is the other students think it's just another class. For our students, this is just their writing class and it doesn't carry the stigma of being in a special education class.

Q. Why is this important?

A. Students can feel as though they are labeled if they are in special education and this can carry a stigma for students. Student anxiety is a large part of learning disabilities. My students don't want people to think of them as being different. This class helps instill confidence in the students. You'll notice this classroom is like a family setting so students feel comfortable and just come in and do their work.

Q. Does it work?

A. It does work. My students just need focused support in writing to improve their skill level. For some students this might take a few weeks or an entire year, but most of the students eventually transition out of the program with the skills they need to be successful.

Q. What are some of the teaching strategies you use to help the students?

A. The first thing you need to do is let them know you care and develop trust. I know about their families, their interests and hopes and dreams. Once they know I am a safe person who just wants to help them learn, the barriers to their learning start to come down and we make progress.

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MOMENTS & MEMORIES FROM
GINA STAHLHEBER'S CLASS:



COMMENTS FROM GINA..

I love it when my students succeed, it's why I teach and who I am. When the light comes on for the first time and they finally understand it's an amazing feeling.

I always ask my students can I explain this differently to make it easier to understand.



And, I mean it. I want to know if there is something I can do differently to help. Students learn differently so I need to adjust to meet their specific needs.