

Staff at Mediocrity Middle School (MMS)

Rosemary Escalante – You are an outstanding teacher decorated with an Excellence in Teaching Award from 2012 and countless other accolades for your efforts over the past 30 years. You are a team player who, while carefully questions and critically consumes new initiatives, maintains an open mind and is always leading the field with new and improved ideas for your classroom and MMS. You have positive relationships with students and staff but occasionally run into challenges with administration when you express your concern that MMS is not exactly “being all that it can be”.

Lyle Ditto – You have been on staff for 20 years. You use laminated lesson plans from 1994. You use your professional development time and money to learn new and improved ways to use the photocopier. You love how you can now print straight from your computer. This also serves as your commitment to technology integration. People with sleeping disorders like to talk with you after school because it helps them to get a good night’s rest. You have mastered the monotone and refuse to vary your voice unless you are stabbed with something sharp. You are still waiting for the pendulum to swing back so that your teaching style becomes new again. You foster a deep dislike for Jimmy Brandwagon.

Jimmy Brandwagon – You are always positive, always keen, always sensing where admin wants to go and cheerleading the charge. You never critically consume any idea. If it is good enough for administration, it is good enough for Jimmy. You always prod negative staff members to “get on board”. You plan and fully participate in all social functions. Students, parents, and administrators like you so much they ignore your lack of organization and your mediocrity as a teacher.

Ima Grinder – You are the unsung hero on staff. You understand pedagogy, learning and, most of all, kids. You soak up professional learning, flawlessly incorporating new concepts into your well-established teaching philosophy. You are the hardest worker on staff, but yet you always wonder if you could do more for the kids. When a student is unsuccessful, you take it personally - like you have failed. You started your own “study group” with Jimmy and Rosemary because you still NEED to know how to reach those students who are hard to reach...and you are willing to try anything. You simply don’t have time for staff drama. In fact, it wears you out.

Nancy Notime – Your car has yellow paint on both bumpers because you often bounce off of school busses on your way to and from school. You are very positive to people you face or happen to be with. You send kind notes to staff members to make yourself look caring and concerned. Inside you really don’t give a rip. It is all about you in your mind. You are, in your own words, “The nexus of the web of interrelationships for MMS”. You are not involved in any extra curricular activities, and you refuse to help students outside of class time. You always bring up your concern that there is never enough time to support the latest bandwagon idea administration or other staff members serve up.

Carol Novice – You are a beginning teacher mentored by Rosemary Escalante. You are very positive, work extremely hard, and involved in several aspects of the school’s extra curricular program. You have the potential to become an excellent teacher; however, you feel isolated and lonely and you are looking for professional direction from the culture.

Peter D. Outt – You have been the staff workhorse for many years. You have coached virtually every sport successfully in the extracurricular. You love every aspect of your job, and always have a professional attitude. The students love you and it is shown by the weekly parade of former students who drop by to visit. Division Office has tapped you on the shoulder a number of times to move to administration, but your passion is teaching. You eagerly and easily embrace professional learning when you can see how it can be effective. Initiatives you see as useless, you simply ignore, knowing that you

will never be challenged. Accordingly, you rarely speak in staff meetings or at professional learning sessions.

Tim Toxic – You are recently divorced from Lynne Toxic-Saboteur and still bitter about it. You are always negative. When someone else shares a personal success story you feel compelled to top it by stating, “So you think that’s something, I…” You also love to speak up at staff meetings, sharing your wisdom on EVERY topic… Most of your colleagues have little use for you with the exception of Lyle Ditto who thinks you should be the principal. You think professional development days should be utilized for school improvement initiatives like discussing a ban on hats, gum chewing and hallway loitering.

Lynne Toxic-Saboteur – You are bitter toward Tim and you take a shot at him every possible opportunity. You make conversation in the staff room by asking your favorite question, “Did you hear what the administration of this school is thinking of doing this time?” You like to blame the PC’s, the Board, Central Office, and administration before considering how other staff are at fault. Collaboration for you is giving out the key to your filing cabinet. Unless a colleague has been on staff for ten years you refuse to share your material because YOU had to pay the price of preparation so it wouldn’t be fair for others to coast…

George Boozer – You have 5 years to retirement and have pretty much given up. Your classes are generally disorganized and classroom management has pretty much been abandoned. Student marks are high so parents tend to back off, and you are likable enough that when an administrator enters the room, your kids (for the most part) settle down. You have changed schools numerous times and have had a couple of long-term leaves of absence – the last one two years ago when your former principal began discussing evaluation. Your current assignment is study hall support, supervising silent reading for PLC teacher release, and three classes of grade 6 science. You would love to be better and you are miserable because you aren’t, but you aren’t sure where to start and are nervous about opening up your practice because you know it’s so bad.

Garry McKeegstra – You are a dynamic teacher who engages your students at all times. What you engage your students in, however, is often controversial. You are on a first name basis with the lawyer who currently represents the ATA. You vocally support professional development as long as it does not involve sharing or learning, preferring to advocate for PD that reflects your “autonomy as a professional”. If someone wants to talk about Mission, Vision, Values, or Goals you feel a sick day coming on. You don’t not like to “Waste Time” with weaker students and believe that all students can learn if they are streamed appropriately.

Izzy Rising – You are now entering your third year of teaching. You have been a quiet, positive fresh face for the first two years, but now that you have a permanent contract, you are determined to become more vocal and a little less accommodating with “your time”. You love your job, but you were a little unprepared for the workload. You can’t figure out how Nancy Notime does her job giving so little time, but you are very curious to get to know her better and find out her “secrets”. As a teacher, you are a little traditional but kids think you are cool so they accept it.

Yuill B. Goode – You came onto staff with Izzy, but you were immediately more successful. Your energy is amazing, and the kids and parents absolutely adore you. Other administrators often email you ads for positions that are open in their schools. Your classroom is lively and engaging with lots of activities; however, you have never opened a *Program of Studies*. You are becoming very comfortable with what is working for you and don’t feel that you have a lot more learning or improving to do. In your mind, you are pretty much an accomplished professional.