

2013 Ceremony Networking Session: Transcript: *On Teachers and Teaching* (4:12)



[Sue Wilson, Principal, United North Elementary, Alexis, IL.](#) I'm Sue Wilson. I'm from a rural town in Alexis, Illinois. We are a pre-K through 5th grade building. And when it comes to doing one good thing, we do a multitude of things, and it takes all of that together. We have a PBIS program that is very strong. We have an RTI program that I would match against anyone. We also have Daily Five that we have brought into our reading programs that we have seen tremendous success with. One of the biggest things I can say is, I have a staff—every staff member, they care. And that's what it all comes down to.

[Beth Ann Bader, Principal, Chandler Traditional Academy—Liberty Campus, Chandler, AZ.](#) Chandler Traditional Academy, in Chandler, Arizona. We're a traditional school, but we are learning to be cutting edge. We have had to embrace technology, we've had to embrace change, and there is so much coming at us, with new initiatives [from our district], with new initiatives from our state. And what I would like to say, the principal ahead of me said it so well. I want to support our teachers. I have five dedicated teachers here with me today from across the grade levels. I honor them and I trust them. And I think in this day and age that we have to trust our educators, our teachers. We are told by legislators, by people outside of our noble profession, how to teach—what to teach, and how to do it—and I have to say, we have to honor those of us who go in every day in the trenches and work with our children. Our little ones and our high schoolers. And children of all backgrounds, children of all needs. And we have to rely on our education, we have to rely on our backgrounds, we have to rely on our intuitive insights. And we have to have the vision of each of our schools. I encourage all of the administrators here: trust your teachers. Because your treasure is in your teachers.

[Darlene Braun, Principal, St. Joseph's School, Pierre, SD.](#) My name is Darlene Braun and I'm from Pierre, South Dakota. I teach at a small Catholic school; I'm principal there and one of our best practices, with Common Core, and the higher level thinking, and cognitive guided instruction— I looked at my teachers and found that they were very, very tired, and spent all

their time at school. And so we have departmentalized at second grade, up to fifth grade, where we have teachers teaching math in the morning and then to a different class [of math students] in the afternoon. Language Arts in the morning and Language Arts in the afternoon. And if your teachers are looking ragged, this is something you really need to consider. They love it. So that is our best practice right now.

Cindy Scwec, Principal, Fair Oaks Elementary School, Marietta, GA. I am Cindy Scwec and I'm from Fair Oaks Elementary School in Marietta, Georgia, and I thought we were the only crazy people departmentalizing. We are departmentalized first grade through fifth grade, so the kids have one teacher for English Language Arts, reading, writing, and another teacher for math, science and social studies. We approached it for your same reason—they were so exhausted. But the other reason is because we're about 97% free lunch and about 80% English language learners. So we had to approach instruction in a different way and we also had to approach professional development in a different way. Our teachers *have* to be content experts in order to for teachers to have a full toolbox to reach into when they have that child who really doesn't understand. So our professional learning is very focused into those content areas for our staff and we feel like we are doing the best for our kids and for our staff.