

LIFE AS AN EQUITY COACH

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The Transition to public Schools:

Before beginning her journey teaching at a Public School, Two Rivers Magnet Middle School, she began her teaching career at both Catholic and Private Institutions. Here, the expectations of the kids was different compared to those with Public Schools. Behaviorally, at Catholic and Private Institutions, kids seemed to be more driven and respectful towards their instructors, and making sure they are listening attentively to what their teacher is sharing with them. However, Karen Adrian was unaware of the challenges she would be faced with when transitioning to teaching at a Public School.

At the Public School, she noticed that the teacher staff appeared to be larger and now she was teaching a larger population of students. She struggled at first with developing strategies to bring her classroom together, but quickly began to adjust to teaching in a new type of schooling system. She adopted the strategy of "I'll Wait" to get her students to regroup and refocus their attention on the lesson. Starting a new chapter, teaching at Public School, of course results in some newfound obstacles to arise, but Adrian was quickly able to adapt to the realm of Public School teaching.

She loves being there for her students as their teacher and seeing her student's growth. That is such a rewarding experience in itself.

Life as a Teacher and an Equity Coach:

Two River's Magnet school has a strong mission for equity, ensuring that all students, as well as all teachers, have the same opportunities, and all have the proper support. Every classroom follows the Equity Centric Classrooms (ECC), meaning that all classrooms develop a specific teaching method to utilize in their classroom.

Adrian's job as an equity coach requires her to seek out each teacher's performance and ensure that they are following the strategy they strive to teach. Also, it is an essential part of her job that if she witnesses a teacher saying something they shouldn't or doing something they shouldn't, she must report it so it can be resolved.

Adrian is not only responsible for teaching her seventh grade students, but it also responsible for obtaining her duties as an Equity Coach for the Middle School alongside her coworker.



Accepting the Position

Two Rivers Magnet School initially sent out emails in search of two equity coaches to observe teachers and their performance within the classroom.

When the job was first presented to Adrian, she was hesitate on accepting it as she didn't feel strongly about her diplomatic qualities. These authoritative skills are required of the position and she wasn't sure if she would be able to deliver.

However, once she gained support from the rest of the teaching staff, and was able to work along side a fellow coworker, she took on the role of being an equity coach. Being able to disperse the roles made the role seem more appealing.

Challenges faced in the Classroom:

While Adrian was observing a classroom she noticed something that needed to be brought up right away. A teacher was opening sharing how she carries a Taser with her while in Hartford for self defense as an example why having a taser at school is not appropriate.

Adrian was astounded that she would say that to her students. That is only teaching them that people who live in Hartford are perpetrators, when perpetrators live everywhere, and any environment can become dangerous. She communicates how we need to be cautious of what we say to children as there are looking at their teachers as authority figures whom they feel they should believe.

This also brings to light the issue of teachers feeling like Equity Coaches are policing them and out to get them. This is farthest from the truth, they are playing a vital role in keeping the classroom running smoothly so students have a positive experience in the classroom.

Despite overseeing challenges along the way, Adrian absolutely loves her job. When I told her that her students are lucky to have her as their teacher she immediately responded, without hesitation, "no, I am lucky to have them." That truly shows how much she cares about her students and enjoys the positive impact she has made on them, and continues to make on them every day she walks into the classroom.

She's not only contributing to her school in a such a positive way, but she is also an amazing role model to her students. These are the types of teachers that make students feel welcome in the classroom and excited to come to school, ready to learn. Her energy is so upbeat and positive while also being affirmative when she needs to be. She is doing amazing things for her school and should be very proud of herself for the strides she continues to make.