



Keith Gradwohl

Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Keith Gradwohl

SCHOOL: Walla Walla High School

Position: Science Teacher

YEARS IN DISTRICT: 28 years

Q. What content areas are students in your 9th grade science class learning?

A. The Freshmen Science Program offers students elements of cell biology, chemistry, physics and astronomy. This program allows students to make choices later in high school. Maybe it was biology that appealed to them, so they can take more biology their junior year. Maybe it was physics or chemistry.

Q. Why does your science program appeal to students?

A. It's an inquiry based program so they have to be an advocate for their own learning. This challenges them to learn. We make everything as hands on as possible. They are getting experiences in the lab where they have to use their thinking, math and writing skills to pull it all together.

Q. What lesson are your students working on?

A. We are working on cell biology. We are testing to see if molecules will pass through a cell membrane. Different groups will be testing different factors in the lab and then will report on their findings.

Q. Why do you feel positive reinforcement is so important?

A. I prefer to give positive strokes rather than negative strokes. For example, if a student does something well I'll send out a postcard to their parents telling them what their child did in class. I also make positive phone calls to parents. It's interesting to hear the tone in their voice change when they realize the call is for something positive and not something their child did wrong.

Q. Are you glad science will become a state assessment graduation requirement?

A. I am. Science is all around our students and the world in which they live. Science is important so I'm glad it is part of the testing process.

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MOMENTS & MEMORIES FROM
KEITH GRADWOHL'S CLASS:



COMMENTS FROM KEITH...

My years of coaching have helped me become a better teacher. I understand there are different abilities on the baseball field and in the classroom. I work with all my students and try to share my time equally to provide them the support they need.

We look at each student's middle school science assessment data to determine their skill level. This tells us if they need additional help or possibly the honors program.



I would like to see our facility have additional lab space and technology. My lab has more room than the other labs, but we need improvements for our science program.