**Case Studies of New Teachers**

**Bill**

Bill is a math teacher in a secondary school beginning his first full-time term assignment. Prior to this year’s assignment, Bill worked as a TTOC primarily in an elementary school. He is happy to be teaching at a grade level and within a curriculum area that is closer to his training and qualifications, and is quite confident in his knowledge of the math curriculum. However, Bill is surprised at the wide range of skills and capabilities of the students in his classes. He is willing to share samples of his students’ work. Bill is shocked at the gaps in math skills and the weak reasoning skills of some of his kids. In conversation with Bill, it is apparent he believes these problems are due to his students’ disinterest, lack of work ethic, and lazy-mindedness, rather than with his instructional approaches. He also blames the gaps in students’ skills on the lack of continuity and poor assessment practices he saw in elementary school.

**Valerie**

Valerie was able to find a full-year teaching position in a rural community, teaching a multi-grade 1/2/3 class. She is the only primary teacher in the school, and is struggling to find ways to access and share resources with other primary teachers within her district. After her first few months of teaching, Valerie confesses feelings of isolation and being overwhelmed. It has always been her dream to teach young children, but her vision of teaching is shaken by the myriad of challenges she has encountered already in her first school. There are many high-needs children in her class. The other three teachers in the school are kind and sympathetic, but Valerie sees they are each fully occupied with the many challenges within their own classrooms. Having just moved from the Lower Mainland into this rural community, Valerie feels little in common with those she has met here so far. She worries constantly about writing report cards and how they will be received by the parents of her students.

**Laura**

Laura is in her second year of teaching Grade 6. She describes her first year as a new teacher as a “survive and thrive” encounter. She acknowledges that time is a constant challenge that permeates her personal and professional life. Laura has no time for her boyfriend as she still finds herself planning every night for the next day. However, she has a positive outlook, says she loves coming to work each day, and thrives off the “energy of the kids.” She has good personal relations with other teachers in the school who gave her lots of encouragement through her first year. The other teachers assured her she was doing a great job, even though she quietly expressed concern about the lack of progress with some of her “weaker students.” This year, Laura has seven students with IEP’s, but see this is the new ‘norm’ in classrooms. She feels that as long as she builds strong personal relationships with the kids, they will enjoy coming to school, which is the main thing.