

# CSU Teach

## CSU Teach Spotlight

Step 1 Mentor Teacher: *Jennifer Sindyla*

Teaching experience: *15 years*

School: *Michael R. White Elementary*

What are your thoughts on CSU Teach and the Step 1 students?

*I think the CSU Teach program is a good program to introduce students to the "real world" of teaching. I felt the students participating in the program got a good first impression of what it was like to be in the classroom.*

How many students do you mentor? What subjects and grades?

*I mentored 6 students. They worked in a fourth grade classroom. Four of the students were math and two were science.*

What has been the most rewarding part of the mentoring experience?

*I've enjoyed sharing my experience, both good and bad, as a teacher ... Getting new ideas from the CSU students, [and] working together as a team to develop future teachers/student mentors.*

What has been the most difficult?

*Scheduling...many things have happened last minute around the school/district within the past 15 weeks. We have had to work around those surprises and reschedule observations and lessons. CSU faculty and students were very accommodating and flexible.*

Why do you think so many children are intimidated or turned off from math/science?

*Lack of experience in those subject areas ... So much of the teaching has been focused on reading and test preparation that other subject areas have gotten the short end of the stick.*

What's the most difficult part about teaching?  
The best part about teaching?

*Most difficult: the lack of home support and the lack of respect for education in general. It is very difficult to work with some students and families that just don't care!*

*Best part: Seeing the student faces light up when they "get it" and knowing you are making a difference*

What's the hardest part of teaching students how to teach?

*It is impossible to provide the "How to" for every situation a teacher will encounter in their own classroom one day. Experience is the best teacher and you learn by the experiences you have. You learn to problem solve as problems arise. You learn by making mistakes and fixing them for the next time around.*

*The hardest part about teaching students to teach is that you can not "create" these experiences. You have to make the most out of what you get and sometimes what you get might be a new situation for you as the mentor.*

What is one piece of wisdom you'd give to college students that you wished someone had given you?

*You don't have to know everything. Know how to find the information you need. Be willing and eager to learn what you don't know or have not experienced.*



The STEP 1 pre-service teachers and Ms. Sindyla's students.