

Why Aren't The Teacher's

Teaching AT F.S.P.

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It's Monday, 9:22 in the morning, and in less than 8 more minutes, my weekly cell-front tutoring "session" will be over just as fast as it started.

Every week it's the same ol' Routine of: Wham, Bam, Thank you Mam, and... Poof!! The Teacher gets escorted by the guard to the next cell for another "educational quickie". Actually, the current Nomenclature used to describe this travesty of schooling, is the infamous F.S.P "educational drive-by."

Here, at Florida State Prison, the way "Education" is being administered to those being housed on Close Management is so abysmal, that the education program exist as little more than a farce.

Sensible thinking people understand, education plays a key and critical role in rehabilitation and that prisoners should pursue it Vigorously. Many prisoners (like myself) whom have enrolled in the educational program here at F.S.P. have come to the undeniable realization and conclusion that "EDUCATION IS A MUST" if one not only wants to make themselves more employable when Re-entering society, but to also have a better chance at creating a better way to a better life once incarceration comes to an end.

Unfortunately, this Realization and conclusion is not shared with prison officials, (No matter how profoundly it may be based in truth) and it is obvious from observing the "Non-Chalant" attitude and, Non-Cooperative actions towards schooling and, providing an adequate atmosphere conducive to learning, that prison officials would rather Not be bothered with what they deem as a "Waste of time and money".

Just consider for a moment the Florida D.O.C.'s Rigid policy and practice of "Cell-front Tutoring" (it is the epitome of absurdity.) This awful practice is a complete debacle when it comes to the vital necessity of "communication" that has to take place between "Student" and "teacher" if any true learning is to take place.

See, in a setting wherein a teacher can actually teach a pupil manually, the lessons are "hands on" (meaning the teacher can actually illustrate, demonstrate or both, something like a Mathematical Procedure or an Operation for a Formula.) and if a student has trouble grasping specific concepts, functions, or instructions, the teacher enjoys the ability, (to the pupils' benefits) to show just "how" what, why and when" something being taught is suppose to go a certain way. Likewise a pupil not only enjoys the benefit of having any particular "questions" about the 'How, What, Why, and, Where'. answered and thoroughly explained.

Now in stark contrast to this, in the Cell-front tutoring setting, the basic and fundamental aspects of teaching are not just sullied and ignored, but they are utterly violated because there are too many cumulative detrimental factors that are too overwhelmingly impossible to contend with. Take for instance the detrimental factor of a physical barrier between teacher and student. The cell-door separates the teacher from making that essential "hands on" connection with the student. Moreover, a student's ability (and benefit) to ask questions and have them thoroughly explained when answered is virtually lost and obstructed because of the physical barrier of the cell-door and the several inches thick plexi-glass partition (with 5 little holes barely enough for air to squeeze through). →

INI Which has to be used when communicating with the teacher.

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Now if that physical barrier of the door is not detrimental enough to deter and discourage learning then couple that detrimental factor with the One: Lack of adequate atmosphere conducive to Learning."

How can a student, who is in a cell, and wherein the teacher is standing "2" feet away on the tier, even attempt to honestly learn something when over "90" other prisoners are "invited" to the lesson? Then there is the "noise" to contend with (toilets flushing, prisoners singing loud in their own cells while listening to the radio, prisoners just conversating with one another). the distraction caused by noise is more than significant to contend with. Now, as if that wasn't enough, then consider the "intense Scrutiny" a teacher (especially a Female, which more times than not it will be) is subjected to as dozens of dozens and, dozens of eyes will feast upon the physical form!! It is not uncommon, (in fact it's quite regular) that a prisoner (often times quite more than a dozen, will openly "masturbate" while brazenly ogling the teacher at a Cell-door trying to teach. Bluntly asked, how focused on teaching would you be if you knew people were getting off on you? All of these things contribute into the "Lack of adequate atmosphere conducive to Learning". The last detrimental factor to contend with when it comes to cell-door tutoring is a policy and practice designed to be effective and, consistent with goals and, objectives Regarding Rehabilitation of Prisoners.

Even though it is "No Surprise" (but it very well should be), Correctional Officers themselves are detrimental factors to contend with when Cell-Front.

Tutoring is being practiced.

Correctional Officer's can be the biggest and most Non-cooperative jerks when the teacher is trying to impart a lesson to a student whom is behind the cell-door.

First, the guard does not want to be stuck monitoring something he deems a complete waste of time and money on someone (i.e. a prisoner) whom he thinks is unworthy of this kind of attention. This is seen in the guards actions of blatantly "sighing" out-loud or making other exaggerated noises expressing his displeasure at baby-sitting a teacher when he could otherwise be sitting down relaxing while waiting for the next security check on the wing. Then, the guard will frequently remind the teacher that they've got "call-outs to attend to", and "security matters to see to", so if the teacher could just "slide some school work under the door" (which, teachers are often asked to do because the guard conveniently forgot the flat key.)

God forbid if the teacher tries to rebuff the guards persistent efforts at hustling things up, because the teacher could be subjected to the guard letting it be known that "certain liberties" can be taken by "Horny Inmates" whenever the teacher is "standing still" at a cell-door on the wing taking too long with her lesson. As nasty and, as vindictive as this is, without question it happens (Frequently I might add.) So couple this detrimental factor along with the others and, what do you got? You have an inadequate atmosphere conducive for learning, that is what you got.

Truly, it goes beyond being a crying shame and borders on the criminal side of things, when the circumstances surrounding the educational programming is so deplorable (and systematically prevents a teacher from teaching.) that the noble profession and purpose of teaching is reduced to a hollow and meaningless futile act that becomes detrimental to all.

So the next time someone ask me "Why aren't the teachers teaching at F.S.P.?" I'll kindly tell them why (just like I did here), but once I do, I'll ask them the bigger question: "What are we gonna do now that we know the answer?"

I Remain yours

IN Solidarity

De'anna Tha Doll

(All Comments or Suggestions are Encouraged & Appreciated)