

July 2020 Client Corner: Teaching in the Time of Coronavirus

“You can’t keep the lightsaber in front of the camera the whole meeting! Please put all toys away!”

Teachers hear and say a lot of things, but that’s definitely one Sabrina never thought she would. Actually, there are a lot of things over the past three months that she never thought she would experience as a teacher.

As questions began to mount in early March about Covid and what school was going to look like for the rest of the year, Sabrina was right here with us. Things were changing so fast, and she recalled having a “wait and see” mentality. Teaching 6th grade science and math at a Title 1 school in Santa Fe Springs, Sabrina was just starting to hit her stride with her students when the stay at home orders were released. You spend the first few months of the year building trust and relationships with your students, and as I think we can all remember, middle school can be a particularly trying time for students.

On March 13th the official news hit that all public schools in California were going to be closed for “two weeks.” Sabrina quickly got packets ready for her student and set up some online learning. As we all know it soon became apparent that schools were going to be closed for much longer. Sabrina and other teachers used that initial two weeks to do online training and research for a more streamline approach to distance learning. Considering herself pretty proficient in technology as it pertains to education, she used Google Classroom, Flip Grid, Google Slides, and Kahn Academy with her students. Something that Sabrina (and I’m sure many other teachers) considers a God send was “Teachers Paying Teachers.” It’s a website where educators can buy and sell lesson plans and curriculum. Anywhere from a day’s lesson, to a full year of curriculum!

Not being in her classroom with her students was difficult. One of Sabrina’s favorite things about being a teacher is the day to day, face to face interaction with her students. Walking around, seeing how each student is doing, adjusting the lesson and the day to the progress of the kids. With distance learning that all flew out the window. Some kids thrived in the more relaxed “new normal,” and some kids really struggled with the lack of structure.

This whole process definitely brought a few laughs though. In one of her many one-on-one Zoom meetings with a student, Sabrina noticed the student’s dad continued to walk back and forth behind them, with no shirt on and the bottom half out of frame. Yikes. Suffice to say, he was no Brad Pitt.

Sabrina graduated from Cal State University, Fullerton with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice. She earned her teaching credential and Masters in Education from National University. Sabrina is a newlywed! She and her husband John were married on July 1st. She also has a 15 year old son named Marco and a 13 year old daughter named Mia.

