

## From the Editors' Desk: What have we learned from teaching through a pandemic that we want to hold on to?



What a year! As we return to the classroom this fall, there are many things to be grateful for and many things to mourn. As the *Kaleidoscope* staff navigated this year as classroom teachers, we realized that we needed to turn inward to support each other and lean on the community we had built. Now was not the time for new projects or for bringing others in; it was a time for drawing on our relationships for the strength to cope with an impossibly difficult year.

So we asked ourselves: what if we wrote this issue ourselves? It could be a way to give something back to our community, who have given us their time, insights, and wisdom through sharing so many stories with us.

So here it is, our offering to you—authored by current members of the *Kaleidoscope* editorial staff, our peer advisors, and members of our writing retreat community.



**less than | Page 17**  
- Rick Barlow

What happens when we teach students they are "less than?" Rick describes the lasting impact of having been tracked in math as an elementary student and how he's worked to keep that from happening in his own classroom.

**Unexpected Achievements: Teaching English Language Learners in a Remote Environment | Page 32**  
- Ian Caldwell with Elizabeth Rocks

Ian shares what he learned about trust and curiosity in the classroom through working closely with an ELL specialist in his remote geometry class.

**Transfer of Qualities Page 25**  
- Erin Oakley

Erin explores how some things have been more present and important in the pandemic, like punctuation and warm tea.

**What is a good day for me in distance learning? | Page 44**  
- Brenda Minjares

Brenda describes the experiences that constitute a good day of remote learning. These glimpses into what school has looked like for many students and teachers throughout the pandemic are simultaneously haunting and

**The Teacher I Want to Be When I Grow Up | Page 36**  
- Christopher Lipski

Chris shows us what we can learn from and how we are always learning, even after decades in the classroom.

**Teaching in a Pandemic: Conversations with Teachers around the United States Page 26**  
- Michelle Vanhala

Michelle reached out to other teachers in her network that offered new perspectives on challenges and ideas for what we do not want to go back to.

**Recognizing Joy in 2020 Page 47**  
- Carlee Madis

Carlee, in verse, tells us the ways she has found joy in the midst of the pandemic.

**Where Do We Go From Here? Page 5**  
- Christopher Anderson

Using a comic, Chris tells us the story of grappling with the impossibility of teaching his typical curriculum virtually and how he had to prioritize what was most important for his students to learn.

**The Case for Resubmissions: Building a Values-Driven Assessment System in your Classroom | Page 31**  
- Kirstin Milks

Kirstin narrates us through the way she uses resubmission, showing us how this policy allows her to realize her values about school in her classroom.

**The Power of Compassionate Leadership: Interviewing Principal Marcy Leonard Page 39**  
- Brittany Franckowiak

Brittany describes the importance of leadership in adapting to difficult situations, particularly leadership that listens carefully and models compassion at every level.

**The Builder Analogy: Teaching During a Pandemic Page 20**  
- Sarah Berger

Sarah uses the analogy of constructing a living space for her 'tenants' (students) to illustrate the difficulties of teaching in a pandemic.

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