

Week in review

This week was mostly unremarkable. Monday I was in second grade, Tuesday and Friday PE, Wednesday sixth grade science, and Thursday I was in third grade. The highlights, or in one case “low”light, were probably the PE classes and the third grade class. Science was a “students work on projects while sub circulates” day- not that it was a bad day, just a relatively uninteresting one. Second grade just wasn’t memorable this week.

Tuesday’s PE class included some 4th and 5th graders who played a game called “homerun derby” where they used a fat bat and tried to hit a small gatorskin dodgeball across the room to a predefined homerun zone. The 4th grade class didn’t get a single homerun leading me to switch to actual game mode toward the end. 5th grade did better. The big part of this job though was the work with mentally and physically impaired students- three classes to be precise. These classes started with some running, though some were pushed in wheelchairs or otherwise helped along by assistants meaning those assistants got a bigger workout than many of the kids. Then with varying degrees of success the students practiced hitting the ball when pitched to them. Again, the assistants played a big role here, not only swinging with them, but in some cases just getting them to the plate to take a turn. The third class had more severely impaired students, so they didn’t even have the ball pitched to them. Instead, there were T-ball setups, one of which I brought out to them. The classes ended with free-time as these kids can’t go for a full 30 minutes of structured gym time. They got to choose balls or oversized scooters (2 feet x 3 feet (!) I think) and spent the rest of the time with them.

The third grade class was truly a low point. I was worried from the moment I read the note saying to get the help of one of the teachers next door if the class gives trouble instead

of calling the principal over, which apparently one sub did three times last year. I actually did not have to call him over, but the one time he did come was in the middle of a crisis so of course I ended up looking bad. I'd better cross this school off for any sort of permanent job should my life go in that direction. There was one student who actually got so mad at one point he stormed out of the room slamming the door behind him. This was shortly after the principal's visit when some students were set on finding some money that was thought to be lost or stolen instead of working in their reading groups. Another student got frazzled and needed some calming time, saying he had a bad day yesterday and was trying to avoid one today. Well, depending on what that bad day entailed, he may have failed as it was certainly a bad morning for him (and me) from that point on. By the afternoon things got better though the math group tended to be every bit as chatty as the regular class (they switched for math). There was also an assembly at the end. The student who had stormed out during the morning was supposed to sit next to me, but instead the principal had him help with the awards presentation, rewarding students for positive behavior/work over the last few months.

The other PE class was my reward for Thursday's third grade. Over the entire day I only had five classes. This had part to do with the fact this teacher worked in three different schools and so had two travelling times, and part to do with Friday being a light day with only one class at one of the schools instead of the usual four, so I was able to go home for lunch (this was in hometown district). All classes went very well. The first school had a volleyball unit going and her classes had their first day playing a real game so I had to go over the rules, though we really didn't keep score. The other three classes played some tag games. It was a nice way to end the week.