



Teacher Profile - Chris Dittmann

How long have you been teaching at Connect Charter School?

Since 2005.

What is your favourite unit to teach?

I really like teaching democracy in grade 6 Social Studies, especially if there's an election happening. Having the students dig into real election issues and interview candidates is engaging and authentic learning.

What is your educational/professional background?

Out of high school, I initially did a business degree with a focus on international business. I wanted to become a diplomat and work at an embassy. Then I changed my mind and worked as an insurance salesman for a couple of years before getting the teaching bug and returning to university to earn my education degree. One of the best decisions I ever made.

What brought you to Connect?

Like a lot of the general public, I initially had no idea what a charter school was. A close friend's son attended Connect (then the Calgary Science School) and I put my resumé in to sub initially and then received an interview for a grade 7 Humanities position in December of 2004. I knew very little about the school when I started but became really keen on inquiry-based learning.

What do you consider the best part of teaching at our school?

I think the school having a specific mandate has ensured that I've had the opportunity to really dive into things like inquiry, technology and outdoor ed and learn about how those things connect to and enhance a student's learning. Teachers here are really committed to their practice and we're given a lot of professional development opportunities and support.

Tell us a bit about your family.

I'm not married and don't have children but my two sisters and mother all live in Calgary and we're pretty close. My father lives in the Okanagan and I often head out there on our school breaks. He and I are big German soccer fans.

What do you like to do when you're not in the classroom?

I'm a big hockey and soccer fan. I attend Flames games with my good friend Mr. Fawcett and am looking forward to supporting Calgary's new professional soccer team; Cavalry FC. I also like cycling and cross-country skiing and I'm part of the group of staff who work out on Thursdays after school. Other than that, I nap a lot.

What is your most recent rewarding moment as a teacher?

I coached our grade 7-8 boys basketball team and we just concluded our season. It was cool to see the boys bond together and just enjoy being part of the team. There were a couple players who were relatively new



to the school and it was neat to see them build friendships and find their place at the school. Coaching school teams creates a special connection with students as you're supporting them in something they're passionate about. You're part of their experience and they really appreciate it.



Bonus Questions!

If I gave you an elephant where would you hide it?

In the pile of laundry currently on my bedroom floor at home.

If someone wrote a biography about you, what do you think the title should be?

Helmet Required: The Chris Dittmann Story

If you were a box of cereal, what would you be and why?

Coco Puffs because I'm a bit kookoo.