

## 45 - Stop, Drop, and Roll - Supporting Our New Teachers

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**Purpose:** The purpose of the transcripts is to provide readers and listeners with a written version of each episode of the UAGC Center for Early Childhood Education's Early Childhood Chatter Podcast so they can follow along with the audio content. [www.uagc.edu/ece-center/chatter-podcast](http://www.uagc.edu/ece-center/chatter-podcast)

**Audience:** Current Active & Enrolled Students

### Episode Transcript

**Host Dr. Shipley:** Hello everyone and welcome to Early Childhood Chatter with Dr. Shipley and Dr. Heald. We will upload a new episode every other week on Wednesdays.

**Host Dr. Heald:** Twice a month, we will come to you with a 10-minute professional development that you can quickly listen to for new ideas to try.

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Today, we have Maura Kelley with us, and Maura is a lifelong learner who has a passion for making connections and building a network of responsive innovators that focus on what's

best for our students. Currently, she is an instructional coach and an adjunct professor.

She works with kindergarten through 12th grade students, teacher candidates, educators, and other like-minded professionals on the daily. Every day is different for her. Welcome, Maura.

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Thank you. And it is every day is different.

**Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker:** That makes the job fun, right?

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** It's unexpected.

Like today, I was subbing.

**Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker:** Oh, there you go. Yeah, everything.

Your day goes faster when you don't know what's going on.

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Exactly.

**Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker:** Maura, the title of your session is \*Stop, Drop, and Roll, Supporting Our New Teachers.\*

This is so important because we have new teachers listening. We have people that are veteran teachers out there that are supporting new teachers. So why is it so important, and why did you choose the title of this session?

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Well, I think there's a crisis.

I think we have new teachers coming in, very few at this point into the profession, and we have a lot of teachers leaving at a higher amount. So, the exodus is alarming and startling, to say the least. So, I think it's really important for districts to provide capacity, to build relationships, connections, and resilience, really, in our teachers, especially our new teachers.

**Dr. Stephanie Heald Speaker:** I can remember back, it seems like yesterday, I can remember walking into this classroom that had materials, but I wasn't really sure what to do and where to go, and it's just so much and so overwhelming. So, I did hear that you have a new teacher network. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Yeah, exactly.

We have, we created a new teacher network where once a month, we gather all the new teachers in the district, and we check in. We talk about communication, especially around parent-teacher conference time. We talk about expectations at each building.

And then we also talk about risk-taking and taking a step towards their passions, really to build that trust and also encourage hope for the future. Behavior management is also a hot topic always, but I was just working with a student teacher this morning who is just, it's pretty scary to get out in front of a classroom of your own and start learning your presence. So, we also work with that energetic presence is what we kind of talk it through as how do you relay learning and have fun.

**Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker:** So, I love that. And I think that even if you don't have that new teacher network, like set and established, I think one, you could make one, right, or you could still be doing this, even if there's not a bunch of teachers. So, what is the feedback that you're getting from those participants that's actually in this network?

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** It's high.

It's actually really great in the sense that, for the most part, on a Likert scale, they're above the mid-range of feeling provided for, supported, and successful. In addition to the new teacher network, we have mentoring within our district. So, they have a mentor that's assigned to them, but sometimes it's just helpful to have other like-minded new teachers in the room and kind of bounce off ideas because what could be my struggle might not be your struggle.

And to kind of talk through, like, what worked for you---that collaboration is so important in education.

**Dr. Stephanie Heald Speaker:** Yeah, you know, that is so important.

Like I said, I can remember just being full of excitement and emotions, but at the same time not knowing where to start. What advice do you have for a new teacher who is just hired into an early childhood education environment as like a first starting point?

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Oh gosh, I think first starting point, and I hope that most districts have this, is get to know your PLC, who you're working with, and what's, you know, their take on the building. I think honestly being that sense of belonging first off helps open the door for everything else that's to come.

So, what is it that I need to know about this building and this position? And then making those connections, like I said, that collaboration piece is so important for our new teachers.

**Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker:** So, I like to make sure that new teachers know that they're not alone.

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Yes.

**Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker:** There's other people out there that are facing the same things. So, with these teachers that you're helping right now, what are the obstacles that you're seeing that some of our listeners might also be seeing, so they don't feel alone, and how are they trying to overcome these obstacles, or how are you mentoring them to get through these obstacles?

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Great questions. Yeah.

I mean, well, I don't even know if I should mention the monkey in the room on everyone's back is COVID. And so how do you teach with COVID? How do you teach with masks or if we go remote and pivot teaching? So how are you prepared? And that's one of the main things that new teachers are nervous about. In addition, it's also how do I meet all the learners' needs? And so, one of our biggest actions that most of our teachers want support with is analyzing data to make informed decisions for small groups.

And so that ECE piece of who has it and who doesn't have it, that data protocol. So how do I do that in a timely fashion in the classroom? Right on the spot. That is one of our biggest concerns that our new teachers have come in, is how do I meet all the learners' needs, let alone make sure Billy doesn't mess with Susie and everyone's safe and healthy?

**Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker:** Right.

I always say that differentiation is one of the hardest things that you will ever do as a teacher to ensure that you are taking a child and making the plan for them. And so, you're exactly right.

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Yeah.

And some of the things we talk about are those strategies, the differentiation strategies of, okay, so I just observed this activity. I noticed that these three don't quite have it yet. What can I do right now for those three to intervene? And so those are the strategies that we kind of discuss.

We did a lot of discussion with, brought in some other teachers within different buildings to share what their experience is. So, it's not just coming from me or the curriculum director or anyone else. It's from their colleagues.

**Dr. Stephanie Heald Speaker:** Yeah. Well, you know, when we use that data to drive our instruction and our curriculum, we're really able to see the most monumental gains in our students because we're truly meeting them where they are and providing them with the support to move them forward from that point. So that's great.

Maura, for our audience, we generally have three takeaways. If you were to give our listeners three things that you want them to know about your session and perspective, what would those be?

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Oh my gosh. Well, networking builds community and community fosters our new teachers to stay.

So, it's crucial to retention. So those two things, the networking that build the community. So, making sure the colleagues, they know who they can go to.

They have someone they can in each building or they have a mentor they can talk to. And that retention piece is then fostered with that support. And I don't know, you probably have heard the story about a marigold and the oak tree.

And we always like to talk to our staff about being a marigold for all. And so, I talk to our new teachers about finding their marigolds. So be a marigold for your colleagues.

So that means be a good listener, try to be problem solving, positive and solution focused.

**Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker:** Perfect. I love that.

Be a marigold for your colleagues. That's something I've never thought about. So that's something that they can definitely take with them and use today.

Because even with veteran teachers, we all need support. So, I love that. As we end, what is one challenge that you want to share with our listeners that they can take and try?

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Oh, my gosh.

Well, today, in today's world, mental health is so key. And you hit the nail on the head. Everyone needs a marigold.

And so, I challenge everyone to reach out to a teacher and check in on them. All teachers, every veteran, new, and just they need connections, they need support. And it could be something that they hadn't thought that you cared as a veteran teacher.

And that could just be something that turns their day around. And for a new teacher, they can find maybe exhale and say, I have this question. I didn't know who to go to.

**Dr Tisha Shipley Speaker:** 100%. Before we end, I'll tell you that I was using the kid's bathroom the entire first year. Nobody told me that there was a bathroom for teachers.

And so that was somewhere I needed a marigold to check on me.

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** That is so true, though, even the supply closet, you know, just a little things.

**Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker:** You're exactly right.

Maura, thank you so much for being here. This was great. And we hope to talk to you again soon.

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Thank you so much. Have a great day.

**Dr. Tisha Shipley Speaker:** You too.

**Maura Kelley Speaker:** Bye.