**A Graduation Poem for Two**

**By Stephanie Klose**

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| **I am a teacher** |  |
|  | **I am a student** |
| **Twenty years my trade** |  |
| **Seven classrooms** |  |
|  | **Fourteen classrooms** |
| **Seven hundred children** |  |
|  | **Fourteen teachers** |
| **Have touched my life.** | **Have touched my life.** |
| **Every day I come** | **Every day I come** |
| **My choice, my call** |  |
|  | **They make me** |
| **I'm glad I'm here** | **I'm glad I'm here.** |
|  |  |
| **I come to teach** |  |
|  | **I come to learn** |
| **I come to earn a paycheck** | **I come to earn my diploma** |
| **I come to be with my friends** | **I come to be with my friends** |
|  |  |
| **I work very hard** |  |
|  | **They make me work hard** |
| **Lesson plans, forms and more forms** |  |
|  | **Projects, exams, oral reports** |
|  |  |
| **I have to correct so many papers** | **I have to write so many papers** |
| **When do I have time for my personal life?** | **When do I have time for my personal life?** |
|  |  |
| **I HATE HOMEWORK!** | **I HATE HOMEWORK!** |
|  |  |
| **I love my students** |  |
|  | **My teachers hate me** |
| **Sometimes I think the kids hate me** |  |
|  | **Most of my teachers are pretty cool** |
| **Sometimes they make me so mad** | **Sometimes they make me so mad** |
|  |  |
| **Like when it's only been ten minutes since lunch and they ask to go to the restroom.** |  |
|  | **Well, they won't let us talk**  **I write about what's important to me!** |
| **or when they won't talk** | **(silence)** |
| **or when they won't stop talking** |  |
|  | **It's like they don't think we have a life and we should just be able to stop talking when the bell rings.** |
| **(glare)** |  |
| **They can make me laugh** |  |
|  | **I like to play**  **I like to joke and mess around** |
| **They help me stay young**  **New music**  **New slang** |  |
|  | **"School sucks.”** |
| **I try to challenge them** |  |
|  | **They challenge me** |
| **Challenge their perceptions of the world and themselves** |  |
|  | **I challenge them back** |
| **I try to keep them on their toes** | **I try to keep them on their toes** |
|  |  |
| **Sometimes I'm so proud of them** |  |
|  | **Sometimes I get good grades** |
| **They work hard** | **I work hard** |
| **They rise to my challenge** |  |
| **They succeed** | **I succeed** |
| **I feel so proud** | **I feel so proud** |
|  |  |
| **All seven hundred have moved on** |  |
|  | **It's time to move on** |
| **I worry about them when they go** |  |
|  | **It's kind of scary** |
| **I hope I've provided them each with a little something that will make the way smoother** |  |
|  | **And exciting** |
| **And I am often reassured**  **as I grow to know my students each year because invariably I find something uniquely wonderful and special in each one** |  |
|  |  |
| **This gives me hope** |  |
| **Because** | **Because** |
| **They are the future** | **I am the future.** |