Right Start Newsletter

Secondary Edition April, 2008

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL GCS ROOKIE TEACHER OF THE YEAR NOMINESS FOR 2008

Rookie Teacher Nominees	School	Rookie Teacher Nominees	School
A. Clark Erskine	Alamance Elem	Rachel Berg	Northern High
DeQuetta Chapman	Allen Jay Elem	Steven Oele	Northwest High
Shalya Hilton	Bluford Elem	Amy Lineberry	Northwest Middle
Karson Anderson-Phillips	Brightwood	Jennifer Omran	Oak Hill Elem
Avery Hanson	Colfax Elem	Karen Brendle	Oak Ridge Elem
Aisha Santos	Cone Elem	Allison Hunsucker	Oak View Elem
Jennifer Kramer	Eastern High	Matthew Rickard	Page High
JaTara Allen	Eastern Middle	Frances Jarrell	Peeler
Latricia Henry	Falkener Elem	Emily Goodson	Ragsdale High
Matthew Lehman	Gillespie Park Elem	Stephanie Herbin	Sedalia Elem
Shameca Staples	Grimsley	Alexandra Draughan	Shadybrook Elem
Bridget Kilcourse	Guilford Elem	Christopher Tangredi	Smith High
April Holbrook	Hairston Middle	Ann Mimm	Southeast High
Kathryn Russo	High Point Central	Heather Beveridge	Southern High
Jennifer Cooper	Hunter Elem	Alyson Frei	Southern Middle
Sara Nettles	Irving Park Elem	Lorin Hooker	Southwest High
Kimberly Perry	Jackson Middle	Loretta Dietz	Sternberger Elem
Jacqueline Hamber	Jamestown Elem	Amy Monsees	Sumner Elem
Elizabeth Stephens	Jamestown Middle	Katie Cruze	Western High
Cheryl Ramsey	Kiser Middle	Audrey Whichard	Triangle Lake
Melissa Feliciano	McIver Edu. Ctr.	Amanda Sevon	Welborn Middle
Jaime Herman	Mcleansville Elem	Katie Cruze	Western High
Jacqueline Mingo	Middle College@ Bennett	Nicholas Bush	Wiley Elem
Frances Graves	Monticello-Brown Summit Middle		
Michelle Kampner	Morehead Elem		
Jill Moore	Newcomer's School		
Gabriel Wiggins	Northeast High		
Sybil Dial-SeSimone	Northeast Middle		
Sylvia Bartow	Northern Middle		

2007-08 Rookie Teacher of the Year Finalist Named

Portfolios were submitted by Rookie Teacher of the Year nominees. A committee of administrators, career teachers, and community representatives reviewed portfolios. The five finalists are:

Nicholas Bush-Wiley Elementary
Clark Erskine-Alamance Elementary
Lorin Hooker- Southwest High
Jennifer Omran-Oak Hill Elementary
Matthew Rickard-Page High

The 2007-08 Rookie Teacher of the Year will be named during a May 14 breakfast, sponsored by the Guilford Education Alliance. The recipient of this award will receive a scholarship to earn a master's degree at UNC-Greensboro.

Keep your rules from falling apart

As the year wears on, some teachers manage to maintain a positive and productive classroom environment. Others struggle, with discipline problems growing more frequent. How can you keep your rules from falling apart? Here are some tips:

- Go back to what worked. If your classroom discipline has started to slip a bit, odds are it's because you are not consistent about enforcing the rules. Go back to what you did at the beginning of the school year.
- Don't play to the crowd. For a teen, a public reprimand will nearly always produce a negative reaction. Instead of calling out a student in front of the class, seek a less public place.
- Use nonverbal communication whenever possible. The less attention you pay to negative behavior, the better. Many teachers develop "The Look"—a no-nonsense facial expression that tells students you mean business.
- Keep focused. Give a short reprimand and then get back to teaching your lesson. The less students can distract you from teaching, the less time they'll waste on misbehavior.

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Source: Howard Seeman, *Preventing Classroom Discipline Problems*, ISBN: 978-1-56676-834-9 (Rowman & Littlefield Education, 1-800-462-6420 www.rowmaneducation.com).

Learning activities promote critical thinking

What are employers looking for today? Workers who can think critically and creatively. In this era of high technology, they want employees who can not only gather and store data, but also use it to solve problems.

And what are students looking for? Classes where teachers make learning lively and fun. To engage students in higher-order thinking, try these activity-based learning ideas:

- Build critical thinking into all areas of your instruction.
- Promote independent gathering of data and group problem solving. For example, have students analyze and debate current events. Group work makes learning fun and keeps students engaged.
- Use case studies that engage students in thinking about real-life applications in your content area.
- Get out of the classroom. When possible take students to see and experience relevant locations.
- Assign projects that require students to use their skills—and benefit society, as well.
- Design exams to include analysis and evaluation.

Creative thinking can get students "fired up" about your subject area. And excited students are more likely to attend class, participate in discussions and retain information.

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Source: Anne L. Sweaney, "Fostering Critical Thinking: Making Learning Fun," in *Extraordinary Teachers: The Essence of Excellent Teaching*, ISBN: 0-7407-1860-6 (Andrews McMeel Publishing, 1-800-943-9839, www.andrewsmcmeel.com).

Build a community of learners in your class

It's a well-known fact that peer relationships are at the top of any secondary student's list of priorities. Take advantage of that to promote learning. When your classroom becomes a caring community, your students will be more likely to take academic risks, acquire new skills and understand that they are in an environment where learning is valued.

How do you create such a community of learners? Here are some basic guidelines:

- Demonstrate respect for every one of your students.
- Take time to learn about your students' personal lives. Many may be taking on more responsibility at home. Be aware of their social interactions with each other, as well.
- Engage students in decision making. Support their growing independence as learners.
- Model the behavior you expect. Walk into class with a positive attitude. Smile and speak to your students as they arrive.
- Expect students to help one another. Provide opportunities

for students to work with partners and in groups.

- Make it safe to make a mistake.
- Reward positive social behavior. Students will imitate behavior that is rewarded.
- Emphasize mutual goal setting and shared responsibility.

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Source: Dave F. Brown, "Urban Teachers' Professed Classroom Management Strategies: Reflections of Culturally Responsive Teaching," *Urban Education*, May 2004 (Corwin Press, Inc., 1-800-233-9936, www.corwinpress.com).

Create opportunities for students to speak

It's a truism—but it's also true—that you learn to speak a language by speaking it. Students whose friends and families speak little or no English have fewer opportunities to gain the practice they need. Here are some ways to help:

- Practice role plays. For students who are just beginning to learn English, create real-life situations they may face: a trip to the dentist, buying groceries, ordering at a fast food place. More advanced students can play the role of the dentist or the clerk. Ask students to create their own scenarios, too. What situations in their lives would they like to prepare for?
- Pair students with English speakers. Ask people from your community to spend one-on-one time with your English language learners. Adults could serve as mentors for students, while also giving them valuable practice in speaking English in a low-risk environment. Or ask students who serve as tutors to pair up with students just learning English. That way, they will have someone to talk with in the hallway and before and after school.
- Create class activities that focus on speaking. Cooperative learning groups may give ELL students a chance to share their thoughts with a small group of students. They also provide a way to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills. Choose groups carefully so others will be supportive of what the ELL student has to say. Think-pair-share activities are also a good way to encourage oral communication.

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Source: Jerry Jesness, *Teaching English Language Learners K–12: A Quick-Start Guide for the New Teacher*, ISBN: 0-761-93187-2 (Corwin Press, 1-800-233-9936, www.corwinpress.com).

REMINDER

Please remember to keep your GCS Professional Folder updated. Please be sure to keep all the documentation from this year. The documents that should be in your BT1 folder are listed below. Your third administrative observation should be completed by April 15th. Your administrator may choose to do an unannounced third observation. The only observation that should have been announced was your first one.

As a BT1, you should have 3 administrative observations, 1 peer observation from another career teacher other than your mentor, a summative evaluation, an IGP, and your mentor log. North Carolina requires that you demonstrate continuous professional growth each BT year. The easiest way to document this growth is to earn a minimum of 2 CEUs between July, 2007 and June, 2008 and have it documented on the GCS Professional Development site. You should keep documentation for each BT year.

Documents That Should Be Included For First Year (BT1) Teachers
Mentor Log
FODA 1- Sept. 30th – Oct. 30th Observation 1
FODA 2- Jan. 15th Observation 2
FODA 3-April 15th Observation 3
Teacher (Peer) Evaluation
Summative Evaluation -April
IGP for Year 1
Documentation of Continuous Professional Growth (Example: Transcript from GCS Professional Development Site or GCS Professional Development Log

REMINDER

The 10 month payroll cycle for the 2007-08 school year is August 31, 2007 through May 31, 2007 even though the 2007-08 employment term is August 22, 2007 through June 16, 2008. To provide employees with a full check each month, it is necessary to pre-pay employees. Unless you chose the 12 month salary option or you work in a school that has an alternate school calendar, your last payroll check for the 2007-08 school year will be May 31st, even though you are required to work days in June to complete the 10 month employment term. We thought this might be a helpful reminder as you budget for the coming months.

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Induction Support Coaches

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We have moved from Eugene St. to:

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