# Right Start Newsletter

Elementary Edition February, 2007

## GCS New Teacher Orientation

**What:**

- GCS New Teacher Orientation is required for new teachers with less than 6 months of teaching experience who did not attend orientation in August or September

**When**: 4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday, Feb. 28th, 2007

**Where:**
Media Center
Western Guilford High
409 Friendway Road
Greensboro, NC 27410

**Please RSVP by GCS Courier to:**
**Debby Bryant, Induction and Success**
Please bring your copy of **Orientation to Evaluation** (green booklet on the inside cover of your GCS Right Start Notebook)

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I plan to attend the GCS New Teacher Orientation
Name:_____

School: _____

Teaching Assignment:
_____

## Lateral Entry Classroom Management Course

**If you are a lateral entry teacher who has not completed a classroom management session, you are required to register on the link below and attend these sessions. Other teachers who feel they need additional classroom management support may attend.**

**What:**
GCS Classroom Management for lateral entry teachers who have not attended a classroom management session

**When**: Saturday, Feb3, 2007
8:00-12:00 **and**
Saturday, Feb. 24, 2007
8:00-2:30

**Where: Southwest Middle School**
4368 Barrow Road
High Point, NC 27265

**To register, click on the link below**

GCS-Right Start - Classroom Management

## Create plan to handle breaking of class rules

You may already have a behavior plan or set of classroom rules in place. And chances are your students can recite them. But do they know the consequences for breaking those rules? Having a plan for handling misbehavior is just as important as having rules to follow.

As you adjust the plan to fit your own classroom management style:

- Make sure your students are aware of the consequences that await them if they break your classroom rules.
- Turn your plan into a handout and send it home to parents.

Here is a sample four-point plan of action:

1. First offense. Meet with the student privately. Make sure the student understands what the offense was, why it was wrong and that it should not happen again. Ask the student to think about ways to avoid this in the future.
2. Second offense. Take action—issue a time-out, assign detention or send a note home to parents.
3. Third offense. Involve a parent. Together, decide on a behavior plan that the student will follow at home and at school.
4. Fourth offense. Refer to your school's policies on discipline. Follow up with a conference with the parent.

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## Learn how to connect with 'difficult' parents

Communicating with "difficult" parents can be a challenge—but it comes with the territory. By creating an inviting atmosphere at your school, treating all parents with respect, keeping your words and behavior in check, you can work together to develop a mutual trust.

The goal is not only to work through whatever the current problem may be, but to let parents know that their voices can be heard.

Here are some things you should always do when dealing with parents (whether the parent is angry or not):

- Remain the kind and warm professional person that you are.
- Speak in a friendly but direct manner.
- Control your emotions.
- Maintain eye contact if you are meeting in person.
- Be accessible. Encourage regular communication. Make sure that every parent has your contact information.

There are some things you should never do when talking with a parent:

- Never argue with or yell at a parent.
- Never hang up during a telephone conversation.
- Never use sarcasm.

Part of your job as a teacher is to be the role model for effective communication. Show that you can keep your cool when dealing with tough issues. The better you can communicate with parents, the better they will communicate with you—and their children.

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## Help your students deal with difficult family issues

Problems that some students experience at school often begin at home—especially when there's a family crisis, like a divorce. The number of students living in single-parent families continues to grow. And for many, school is often the place where they feel the safest.

Here are some things you can do to help your students cope:

- Be observant. Recognize changes in behavior and schoolwork—increased attention-seeking or withdrawal; increased aggressiveness or apathy; difficulty concentrating; a marked drop in grades.
- Understand the importance of regularity and routines. At a time when their lives are otherwise in chaos, students appreciate the consistency and structure of school.
- Let students know you are available to listen. Over and over, students say that teachers have the most influence on their ability to recover from family trauma.
- Do not treat students differently than before. Students don't like being singled out by teachers. Write a note or look for an opportunity to talk privately.
- Encourage students to write or draw in a journal. They may want to share their thoughts; they may prefer to keep them private. Either way, they will have an outlet for their feelings.

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## Resources

Create a buzz about spelling in your classroom by visiting Merriam-Webster's Spelling Bee Hive (www.m-w.com/spell/index.htm). Aside from information about the National Spelling Bee, you'll find word games (including a daily printable crossword puzzle), a word of the day and a daily spelling quiz. Teach your students about how

some of their commonly-used slang words may end up becoming entries in the dictionary.

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This month, teach a unit on endangered animals with help from edHelper.com (www.edhelper.com). Students will enjoy learning about giant pandas, komodo dragons, sloths and other endangered species with mazes, art projects and word puzzles. Check out the critical thinking and reading comprehension exercises, too!

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Whether you need to create a word wall, print out a calendar, find phonics worksheets, flashcards or beginning reading activities, you can find over 5,000 free printables at www.abcteach.com. The award winning site also offers tools for creating your own documents.

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| Documents That Should Be Included For First Year (BT1) Teachers |
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| **Mentor Log** |
| **FODA 1- Sept. 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** |
| **Transcript from Professional Development Site (minimum of 2 CEU's)** |

We appreciate you and thank you for the work you do each day with your students.☺

**Right Start Office – 370-8098**
**Martha Snavely, Executive Director**
**Debbie Bryant, Office Support**
**Sue Renn, Beginning Teacher Coach**
**Vernita Hill, Lateral Entry Coach**

**Induction Support Coaches**
**Karen Boyd** **Jane Higgins**
**Karen Cannon** **Beth Koziol**
**Brian Herndon** **Susan Phillips**

**Keep your professional folder up to date! If you do not have a copy of the mentor log for first semester, please ask your mentor for a copy.**