Guilford County Schools- Striving. Achieving. Excelling.

Right Start Newsletter

November, 2006 Elementary Edition

GCS Right Start Classroom Management Sessions Continue in November

Cohorts	Time	Dates
Pre-K	**With Linda Olinger**	
Elementary	4:00 – 6:00	11-8, 11-16 & 11-29

Note: All elementary locations are listed in your Right Start Notebook. ***Elementary Cohorts should bring the Champs materials (yellow insert in Right Start notebook) and the CHAMPs plan for activity and transitions that you've worked on since your last session.***

Links to register for Right Start Courses:
GCS-Right Start Classroom Management

GCS-Right Start Curriculum and Instruction

'Brain breaks' can help students stay alert

It's hard to keep young students with short attention spans calm and focused. Research shows that "brain breaks"—in the form of physical stimulation—can help students be more alert for learning.

Movement brings increased oxygen to the bloodstream and leads to increased concentration. Students have enhanced fine and large motor skills, and become more energized.

A break can take just a minute. During math, students can simply stop to roll their shoulders. During spelling, they can use their fingers to write the spelling word in the air.

To plan a longer time-out from concentration:

- Hang a sign on the door—"Please Do Not Disturb. Brain Break Underway"—to convey the message that the break is an important activity.
- Explain to students, "Brain researchers say we need to move so we can be more ready to learn."
- Take a five-minute break between subjects—especially in the afternoons when lethargy can set in.
- Let students walk around, examine things on walls and shelves, chat, drink water, talk to you one-on-one, etc. (Students whose voices rise above a whisper must return to their seats.)
- Don't allow students to read, draw or do any kind of work that requires concentration.

Reprinted with permission from the November 2006 issue of *Better Teaching*® (Elementary Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2006 The Teacher Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: "Transition Techniques: Maximizing Time on Task," Mrs. Powell's Management Ideas for Teachers, www.mspowell.com/awards.html

Give students starter prompts to identify what they've learned

Students take more responsibility for their learning when they are asked to think about their lessons.

Maryann Spafford, a second-grade teacher at Ravine Drive School in Matawan, New Jersey, gets her students thinking by wrapping up her lessons with a "Complete the Sentence" activity.

Spafford posts a chart in her classroom titled, "Complete the Sentence." The chart displays a number of sentence starters. For example:

- I learned that … .
- I now understand … .
- I'd like to know more about … .

Following a lesson, each student is responsible for selecting a starter and completing it in writing by applying information learned in the lesson.

The visual starters help students who have writing apprehension or writing difficulties to focus more easily and record their thoughts.

Immediately applying what they've learned helps her students with retention. And Spafford can determine if more instruction is needed to meet a lesson's objective.

Spafford says that sentence starters can also promote higher-order thinking. Try prompts such as:

- I'm beginning to wonder if … .
- This reminds me of … .

Reprinted with permission from the November 2006 issue of *Better Teaching*® (Elementary Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2006 The Teacher Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Contact: Maryann Spafford, Ravine Drive School, 170 Ravine Dr., Matawan, NJ 07747, 732/290-2780, mspaffor@marsd.K12.nj

Study buddies boost study skills

Younger students can often use some extra support and reinforcement as they begin to build good homework and study habits.

Most teachers in the early grades take care to ensure that students understand their assignments and what they are expected to do each evening. One Minnesota teacher takes it a step further.

This is what she recommends:

1. Break students into pairs (or groups of three if numbers are not even) and assign them to be study buddies.
2. Provide a few minutes of time at the end of each day for the study buddies to get together.
3. Have the study buddies check with one another to make sure they know and understand the assignments.

Later, if they run into problems while doing their homework, they can check in with their study buddies for a little extra help and/or support.

Reprinted with permission from the November 2006 issue of *Better Teaching*® (Elementary Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2006 The Teacher Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: "Works4Me," National Education Association, www.nea.org/works4me/wm020828.html.

Delta Kappa Gamma

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society is an international organization of women educators dedicated to enhancing the profession of education and assisting in the development of women educators. The society provides scholarships, professional development support, and other grants-in-aid for women educators in the United States and internationally.

The Beta Delta Chapter, one of four Delta Kappa Gamma chapters in Greensboro, sponsors the Shaw-Lewis Grant-In-Aid. This award is given to two first-year women teachers in Guilford County. The monetary award helps teachers acquire materials for instructional use. The Grant was named in memory of two outstanding women educators from the chapter.

Information about applying for the Shaw-Lewis Grant-In-Aid is provided below.

The Shaw-Lewis Grant in Aid For First-Year Teachers in Guilford County

Sponsored by the Beta Delta Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma Society for Key Women Educations

Guidelines:

1. **Female first-year teachers in a K-12 school in Guilford County may apply.**

2. Grant will be based on the merit of the proposal.

3. Two awards annually in the amount of $500 each are available.

4. Grant in Aid applications should be mailed by January 15 to:

   Anita Lawson
   6310 Lakebend Court
   Greensboro NC 27410

5. The letter of application should be written on school stationery and should include a description of the specific classroom needs the applicant has identified and the materials that would be purchased to address these needs, with their approximate costs. A telephone number and/or e-mail address should be provided.

6. The application should also include a letter of support from a supervisor or principal.

7. Award recipients will be determined by the Scholarship Committee of Beta Delta. Notifications will be made by February 15.

Getting Organized

Don’t overlook use of flash cards as study aids

Flash cards are nothing new. These study aids have been around forever—probably because they work!

Using flash cards is a great way for students to organize information—math and science facts, vocabulary lists, important dates in history and so much more. And because the cards are so compact, your students can use them anywhere and at any time. They can use them while they are in the car or waiting to be picked up after school, for example.

Teach your students how to use flash cards. Distribute some index cards. Have them write the words or questions they need to study on one side of the cards and the definitions or answers on the other. Explain that they should divide the cards into two stacks as they go through them. One stack is for what they know and the other is for what they need to study.

Not only are flashcards a great tool for doing a quick review, but by encouraging their use, you can help your students learn how to manage their time wisely and put those small bits of extra time to good use.

Reprinted with permission from the November 2006 issue of *Better Teaching*® (Elementary Edition) newsletter. Copyright © 2006 The Teacher Institute®, a division of NIS, Inc. Source: Sarah Richard, "How To Improve Study Skills," How To Do Things, www.howtodothings.com/education/a1893-how-to-improve-study-skills.html.

Got resources?

Did you know that the **Right Start** link, located under the Employee section of the GCS website, will take you to many resources for beginning teachers? On the Right Start webpage, just click on the **New Teacher Resources** link, located under *Important Links*, and you'll have access to templates for banners & bulletin boards, certificates, newsletters, test forms, and instructional strategies. While you're there, be sure to click on the link, **New Teacher Resources**, under *PowerPoint Presentations*. It will walk you through the many resources that *Learn NC, the North Carolina Teachers' Network* provides. Need ideas for a lesson plan? Click on the **Lesson Plans** link, located under *Important Links*, and find plans sorted by grade and subject area, as well as, websites for students and teachers. The Right Start staff knows how time-consuming resource-hunting can be. We hope our webpage will help you.

Happy Thanksgiving, from the Right Start Staff. We are thankful for you and the talents you bring to our students each day.

Right Start Office – 370-8098

Martha Snavely, Executive Director
Debbie Bryant, Office Support
Vernita Hill, Lateral Entry Coach
Sue Renn, Beginning Teacher Coach

Induction Support Coaches

Karen Boyd	**Beth Koziol**
Karen Cannon	**Susan Phillips**
Brian Herndon	**Pam Stewart**

REMINDER

Please remember to keep your professional folder up to date!

Did you remember to put your first observation from your administrator in your professional file?

Documents That Should Be Included For First Year (BT1) Teachers
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)