Right Start Newsletter

Elementary Edition January, 2008

GCS New Teacher Orientation for Teachers with Less than 6 Months Teaching Experience

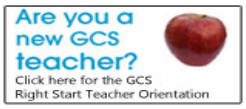
Who: **For Teachers with Less Than 6 Months Teaching Experience Who Have Not Attended a New Teacher Orientation**

Note:

Attendance is <u>mandatory</u> if you did not attend August 15, 16, and 17 or September 22 and October 6.

What: GCS New Teacher Orientation
When: February 27, 2008
4:30-6:30 PM
Where: Western Guilford High Media Center

- **Step 1: Create a GCS professional development account by going to www.gcsnc.com and Click on**



- **Step 2: Click on the link below to register:**
  GCS-Right Start New Teacher Orientation 2007-08-No Credit

View the world of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Look around your school and, chances are, you will see the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Children of different races and backgrounds are playing and learning together. Each of them (with hard work and help from parents and teachers like you) has the opportunity for a bright future. This is what King lived for and died to achieve.

Use King's birthday month to help students gain a better understanding of his sacrifices. Here are some ideas:

- Research with your class some important events in the Civil Rights era. For example: the first sit-in in Greensboro, N.C., Rosa Parks' refusal to move to the back of the bus, the March on Washington, the "I have a dream" speech.
  Give your class time to listen to Dr. King's speeches. Go to www.american rhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihavea

dream.htm. and www.thekingcenter.org.

- Have a "Dr. King Day" in your classroom. Call on students to demonstrate ways to show fairness, tolerance and kindness all day long.

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www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson046.shtml.

Resolve to use available resources

Remember these tips to make the second half of your year as efficient and effective as possible:

- Use your resources. Education is one of the most researched disciplines in the world. You can find thousands (if not millions) of great lesson plans in books, on reputable websites—and in the brains of your colleagues.
- Refresh your students. The first week back from winter break is an ideal time to remind students of the rules, policies and procedures you set up at the beginning.
- Know that you are not alone. You have colleagues to lean on and learn from. You also have a room full of students who will benefit from responsibility. They can—and should—straighten the room at the end of the day.
- Be thankful for parents. Politely ask for help with displays, stuffing folders, reading to students—anything that gives you more time to plan and implement instruction.

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Resources

Teachers who used the Marco Polo site for its free, standards-based content will love Thinkfinity. The new search engine makes it even easier to find professionally-developed lesson plans and activities. Click on the link and find background information and lesson plans. (www.marcopolo-education.org/teacher/teacher_index.aspx.)

Many teachers start the day with a message about the day ahead, followed by a question or two for students to think about. Morning Meeting Messages K-6 gives you more than 180 samples to get you started. They cover all grade levels and connect to curricula in math, science, social studies and language arts. (Ros Fisher et al., ISBN: 1-892-98917-4, Responsive Classroom, Northeast Foundation for Children, 1-800-360-6332, www.responsiveclassroom.org.)

Is this a possible answer to that math problem? Is there another way to solve this problem? Help students make sense

out of the numbers they see in their math textbooks every day. NumberSense is a collection of ten-minute activities to help them practice mental math, estimation, patterns and number relationships. (Barbara Reys and Robert Reys, ISBN: 1-572-32262-4, Pearson Learning Group, 1-800-321-3106, www.pearsonlearning.com.)

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Employ energy, good pacing and excitement

A calm classroom is certainly desirable, but there can be too much of a good thing. If you keep your classroom too quiet and your voice too soft, your students may be so calm that they get lulled to sleep.

Infuse enough energy and variety so your students will pay attention—just to see what happens next. Make them want to keep up with you!

Here are some strategies:

- Move around the room to check on each student and give attention where needed. At appropriate intervals, such as transitions from lesson to lesson, give your students the chance to move as well. Or teach some lessons with students at their desks; allow them to congregate in circles on the floor for others.
- Use worksheets. Yes, worksheets can be engaging—if they are the right kind. Research shows that "fill in the blank" types, which challenge students to think of information that fits the text, provide stimulation.
- Inject a little anxiety. It can be good for students. But anxiety is like salt—to be used very sparingly. Too much will cripple learning. But just a pinch—perhaps challenging students to come up with the right answer so their team will score a point in an academic game—can be inspiring.
- Share the love—of the curriculum. If you look forward to the time just after lunch because that is when you usually teach science, let the students know. Tell them exactly why you love it and express your wish that they will, too.
  And don't be afraid to supplement the curriculum by giving students "fun facts" and trivia about the subject that they don't have to know, but will just enjoy knowing.

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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 second administrative observation should be completed by January 15th. Your administrator may choose to do an unannounced second 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, 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 (minimum of 2 CEU's)

Happy New Year from the Right Start Staff

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