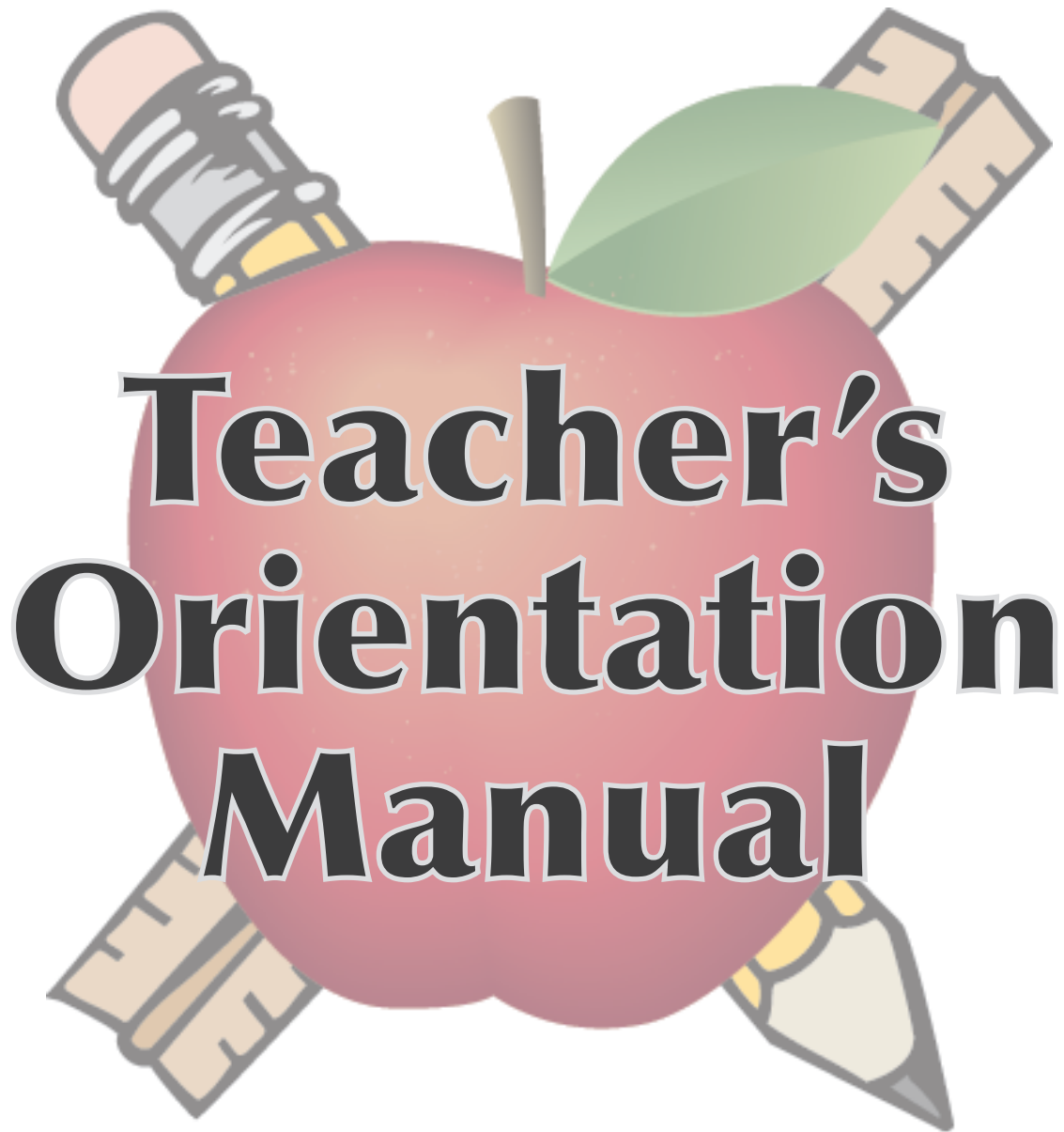




ABC Unified School District
ACADEMIC SERVICES



2008

ABC Unified School District
16700 Norwalk Blvd., Cerritos, CA 90703
(562) 926-5566 • www.myabcusd.org

Teacher's Orientation Manual

Acknowledgments

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Superintendent

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Celia Spitzer, Clerk
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David Montgomery, Member
Armin Reyes, Member
Sophia Tse, Member

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Academic Services

Teacher's Orientation Manual

Welcome

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for choosing to work in the ABC Unified School District. I am pleased that you have joined our team of over 2,400 employees who bring alive our vision that students in ABC will be as well educated as any in the world—right here in our schools. In ABC the most important interaction in education is the one that occurs directly with students. We believe the teacher is the cornerstone of that interaction. It is everyone's job in ABC to support the efforts and mission of individual teachers.

Teachers have the marvelous opportunity to promote the increase of knowledge and skills in their educational communities. Students, parents, and colleagues prosper when a teacher generates exciting educational challenges. The successful teacher is one who enhances learning for children and adults.

Our best teachers promote the growth of individual students. Effective teachers adapt, modify, and customize learning to maximize its impact. As a teacher you will have the opportunity to mentor and counsel students in an educational setting. In addition, teachers exert a powerful influence on students when they model good character and wholesome behavior.

You are joining a school district that possesses incredible human resources. Our supportive parents strongly promote their local school. We have created a network of community agencies that provide services to students who need assistance. ABC has powerful staff development opportunities for teachers to grow and expand their learning.

I look forward to working with you to meet the expectations and fulfill the dreams we have for the students we serve.

Sincerely,

Gary Smuts
Superintendent

From the Superintendent

Welcome

August 2008

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to ABC Unified School District! Thank you for joining our outstanding teaching professional team who are committed to improving student achievement in the District. ABC is committed to a high quality professional development program and hope that you will take advantage of the many opportunities offered throughout the school year.

We have developed a professional development program so that experienced teachers as well as beginning teachers receive the support they need to be effective educators. Academic Services provides a variety of professional development opportunities throughout the year. Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D) is sponsored by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and is a cooperative effort between ABC USD and the ABC Federation of Teachers (ABCFT) to provide professional development opportunities for all teachers. First and second year teachers receive support through their participation in the Beginning Teachers Support and Assessment Program (BTSA). Our Peer Assistance and Support System is also a cooperative effort between ABC and ABCFT to assist all teachers in expanding their subject matter knowledge and teaching strategies to improve instruction and student performance.

We encourage all our teachers to be active learners. Your school site will provide opportunities through inservices, conferences and workshops. The Academic Services Department at the District Office utilizes an online registration process for professional development activities. We hope that you'll join us in these programs as part of your continuous growth as an educator.

Sincerely,

Valencia Mayfield
Assistant Superintendent,
Academic Services

Welcome

Foreword

This manual has been prepared by Academic Services especially for teachers new to ABC, as a way to provide some immediate assistance to the newest members of our district. We hope that this manual will help make your transition smooth.

The first two chapters are designed for both experienced teachers and those new to the profession. These chapters are filled with information about ABC as a district. Chapters Three, Four, and Five are designed more for those new to the profession. Master teachers pride themselves on their ability to take an idea and bend, stretch, or twist the idea to fit into their own teaching situation. As you read through the information, keep in mind that not all ideas are applicable at all levels. Some work best with elementary students, some best with secondary students, and some work with students of all ages. Pick and choose the ones that seem to fit you and your situation best.

Becoming a teacher is a process. We see this Manual as a beginning. We hope this Manual will become a valuable and growing resource for you. It is intended to be a working document. Write in it, add to it, and place some of your best ideas in it for safekeeping and ready access.

Foreword

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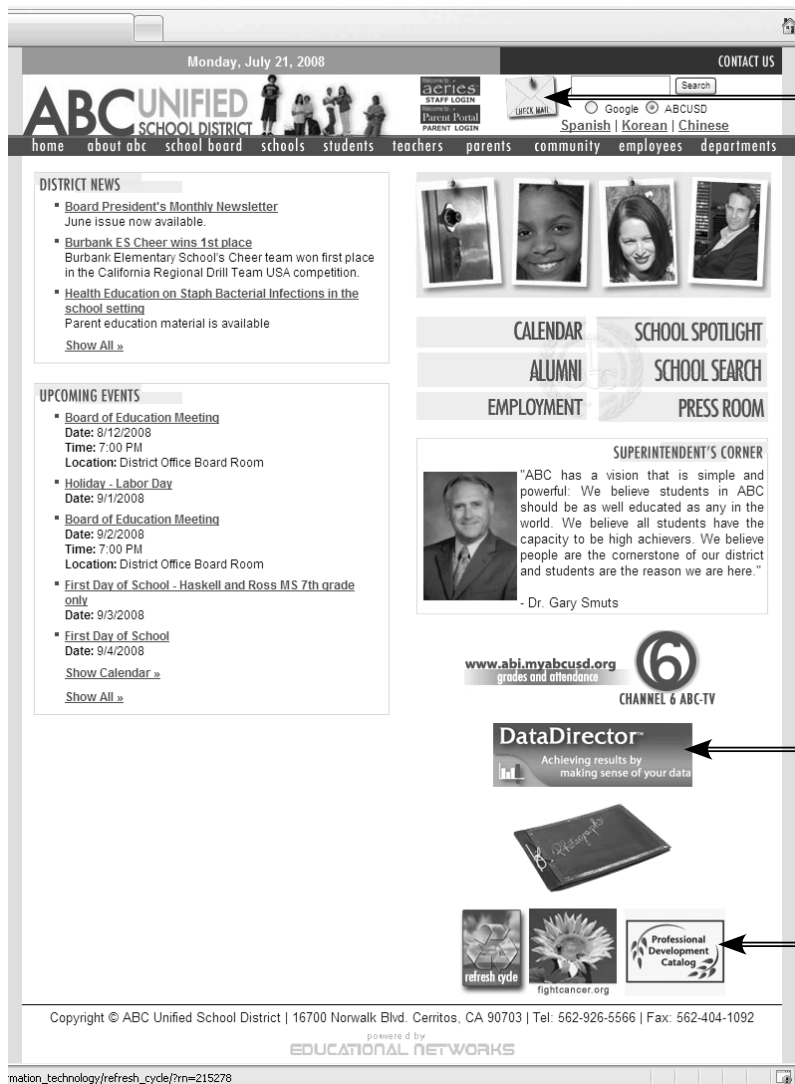
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ABC Website

Find District & instructional information at www.myabcusd.org



GroupWise Email

DataDirector

ABC Professional Development Catalog

District Email

All teachers in ABC have their own email account and are asked to check their email regularly. ABC uses Novell Groupwise as their email program. Teachers are assigned a login ID and an initial generic password. Talk to the technology coordinator at your site if you have questions regarding access to your account.



Telephone quick list

District main telephone line (562) 926-5566

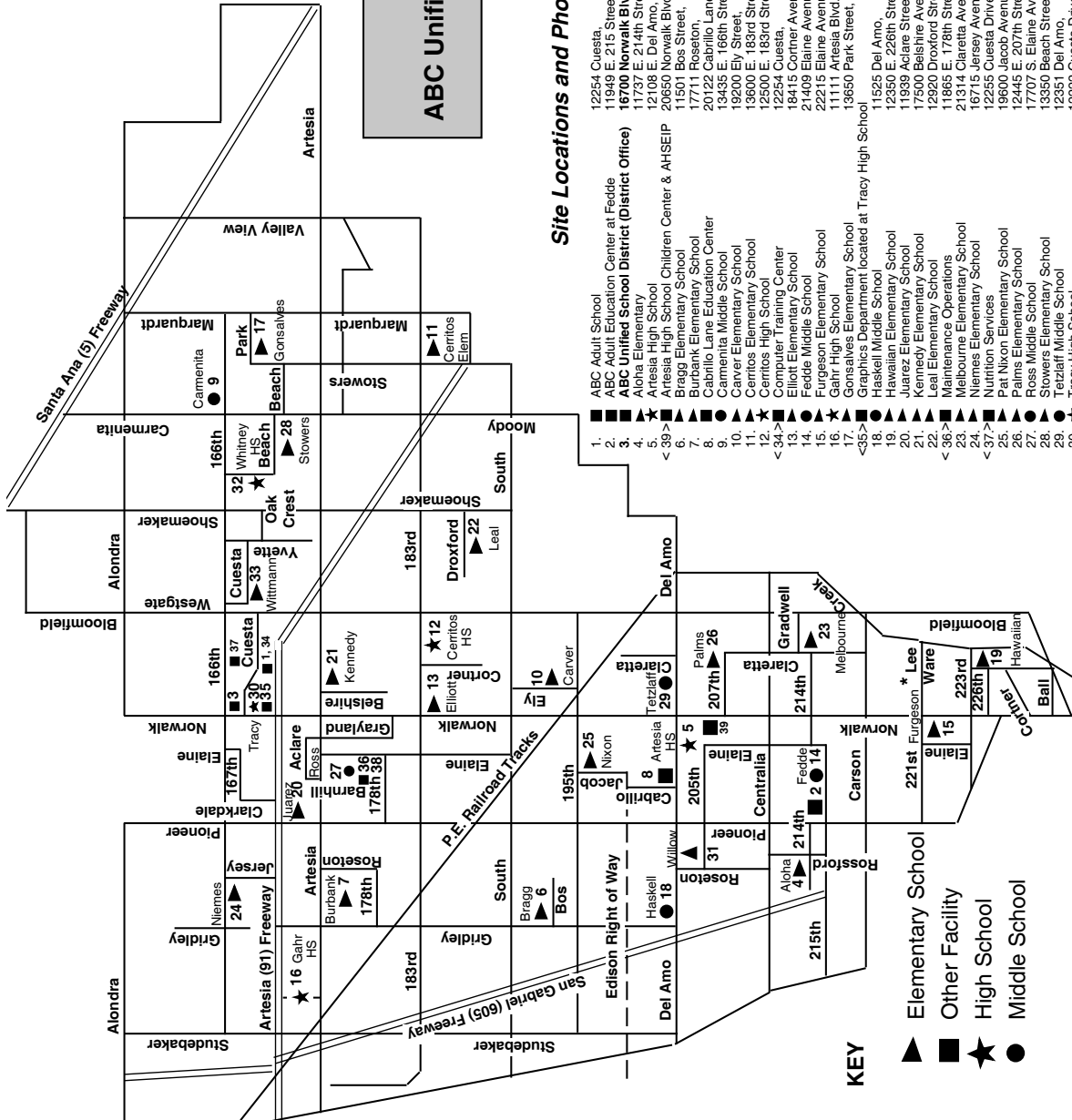
	Extension
BTSA/Induction – Stacey Hamagiwa	21142
Community Liaisons – (Language Translation)	
Chinese – call Special Projects to schedule	21136
Korean – Judy Park	21115
Portuguese – Mary Esteves	21371
Spanish – Norma Ramirez	21116
– Veronica Hernandez	21114
Curriculum and Instruction – Debi Gonsalves	21132
ELD Programs – Mary Eckardt	21136
ER&D – Betty Harris	21500
GATE – RoseEllen Shea	21136
Graphics – Chris Whelen	22226
Human Resources – Dr. Carol Hansen, Asst. Sup.-HR	21170
Credentials – Yolanda Quesada	21177
Sub Desk – Jose Lopez	21168
Information & Technology – Colin Sprigg, Director	21131
Program Specialist, Technology – Mary White	21166
Language Arts Program Specialists	
Elementary – Christine Balbuena	21123
Secondary – Pam Richards	21124
PASS Program – Rich Saldana	22448
Payroll/Fringe Benefits – Rose Ella Kerns	21300
Professional Development - Debi Gonsalves	21132
- Leslie Fagan	21132
Resource Center – Mary Thomas-Reilly	21235
Science Program Specialist – Paul Killian	21143
State Testing (STAR, CAHSEE etc.)	
Testing Technician – Debbie Duran	21205
Union Office – ABCFT	21500

Complete extension list available on the ABC Unified School District web site at www.abcusd.k12.ca.us

Map of ABC District



Map of
ABC Unified School District



Site Locations and Phone Numbers

Site Number	Site Name	Address	Phone Number
1	ABC Adult School	12254 Cuesta	926-6724
2	ABC Adult Education Center at Fedde	11949 E. 215 Street	926-5566 ext. 25156
3	ABC Unified School District (District Office)	16700 N. K Blvd.	926-5566
4	Alpha Elementary	11737 E. 214th Street	924-8329
5	Artesia High School	12108 E. Del Amo	926-5566 ext. 21601
6	Artesia High School Children Center & AHSEIP	20650 Norwalk Blvd.	926-5566
7	Bragg Elementary School	11501 Bos Street	860-5580
8	Burbank Elementary School	17711 Roseton	865-6215
9	Cabrillo Lane Education Center	20122 Cabrillo Lane	809-9011
10	Carmenita Middle School	13435 E. 166th Street	926-4406
11	Carver Elementary School	19200 Ely Street	865-1257
12	Cerritos Elementary School	13600 E. 183rd Street	926-1315
13	Cerritos High School	12500 E. 183rd Street	926-5566 ext. 21801
14	Computer Training Center	12254 Cuesta	926-5566 ext. 21550
15	Elliott Elementary School	18415 Corner Avenue	865-5216
16	Fedde Middle School	21409 Elaine Avenue	924-2309
17	Ferguson Elementary School	22215 Elaine Avenue	421-8285
18	Gahr High School	11111 Artesia Blvd.	926-5566 ext. 22001
19	Gonsalves Elementary School	13650 Park Street	926-1347
20	Haskell Middle School	11525 Del Amo	926-5566 ext. 22226
21	Hawaiian Elementary School	12350 E. 226th Street	860-6529
22	Juarez Elementary School	11939 Aclaire Street	865-6278
23	Kennedy Elementary School	17500 Belshire Avenue	860-3378
24	Leal Elementary School	12820 Droxford Street	865-0209
25	Maintenance Operations	11895 E. 178th Street	Artesia
26	Mainbourne Elementary School	21314 Claretta Avenue	926-5566 ext. 22403
27	Niemes Elementary School	12255 Cuesta Drive	824-1658
28	Palms Elementary School	19600 Cuesta Drive	926-5566
29	Pat Niles Elementary School	12445 E. 207th Street	860-6549
30	Ross Middle School	17707 S. Elaine Avenue	924-8331
31	Stowers Elementary School	13350 Beach Street	926-2326
32	Tracy High School	12351 Del Amo	865-9539
33	Wittmann Elementary School	12222 Cuesta Drive	926-5566 ext. 22400
34	Willow Elementary School	11865 E. 178th Street	Artesia
35	Whitney High School	11733 E. 205th Street	865-6209
36	Wittmann Elementary School	16800 Shoemaker Avenue	926-5566 ext. 22300

KEY
 ▲ Elementary School
 ■ Other Facility
 ★ High School
 ● Middle School

8890-GCC-(Rev. 8/08-228/48)

District Schools

Elementary Schools

School	Address	Principal	Ext.
ALOHA	11737 E. 214th St., Lakewood 90715	Julie Yabumoto	22500
BRAGG	11501 Bos St., Cerritos 90703	Annette Janeway	22600
BURBANK	17711 Roseton, Artesia 90701	Stephen Cizmar	22700
CARVER	19200 Ely St., Cerritos 90703	Debbie Berlyn	22800
CERRITOS	13600 E. 183rd St., Cerritos 90703	Dennis Wilson	22900
ELLIOTT	18415 Cortner, Artesia 90701	Beth Bray	23000
FURGESON	22215 Elaine, Hawaiian Gardens 90716	Mayra Lozano	23100
GONSALVES	13650 Park St., Cerritos 90703	Claudia Ross	23200
HAWAIIAN	12350 E. 226th St., Haw Gardens, 90716	Laurie Cordova	23300
JUAREZ	11939 Aclare St., Cerritos 90703	LuAnn Adler	23400
KENNEDY	17500 Belshire, Artesia 90701	Melissa Valentine	23500
LEAL	12920 Droxford St., Cerritos 90703	Laura Makely	23600
MELBOURNE	21314 Claretta, Lakewood 90715	Kathy Neder-Olivos	23700
NIEMES	16715 S. Jersey Ave., Artesia 90701	Meg Jimenez	23800
PAT NIXON	19600 Jacob Ave., Cerritos 90703	Melinda Baek	23900
PALMS	12245 E. 207th St., Lakewood 90715	Beverly Spicer	24000
STOWERS	13350 Beach St., Cerritos 90703	Eileen Blagden	24100
WILLOW	11733 E. 205th St., Lakewood 90715	Linda Dohm	24200
WITTMANN	16801 Yvette, Cerritos 90703	Patrick Walker	24300

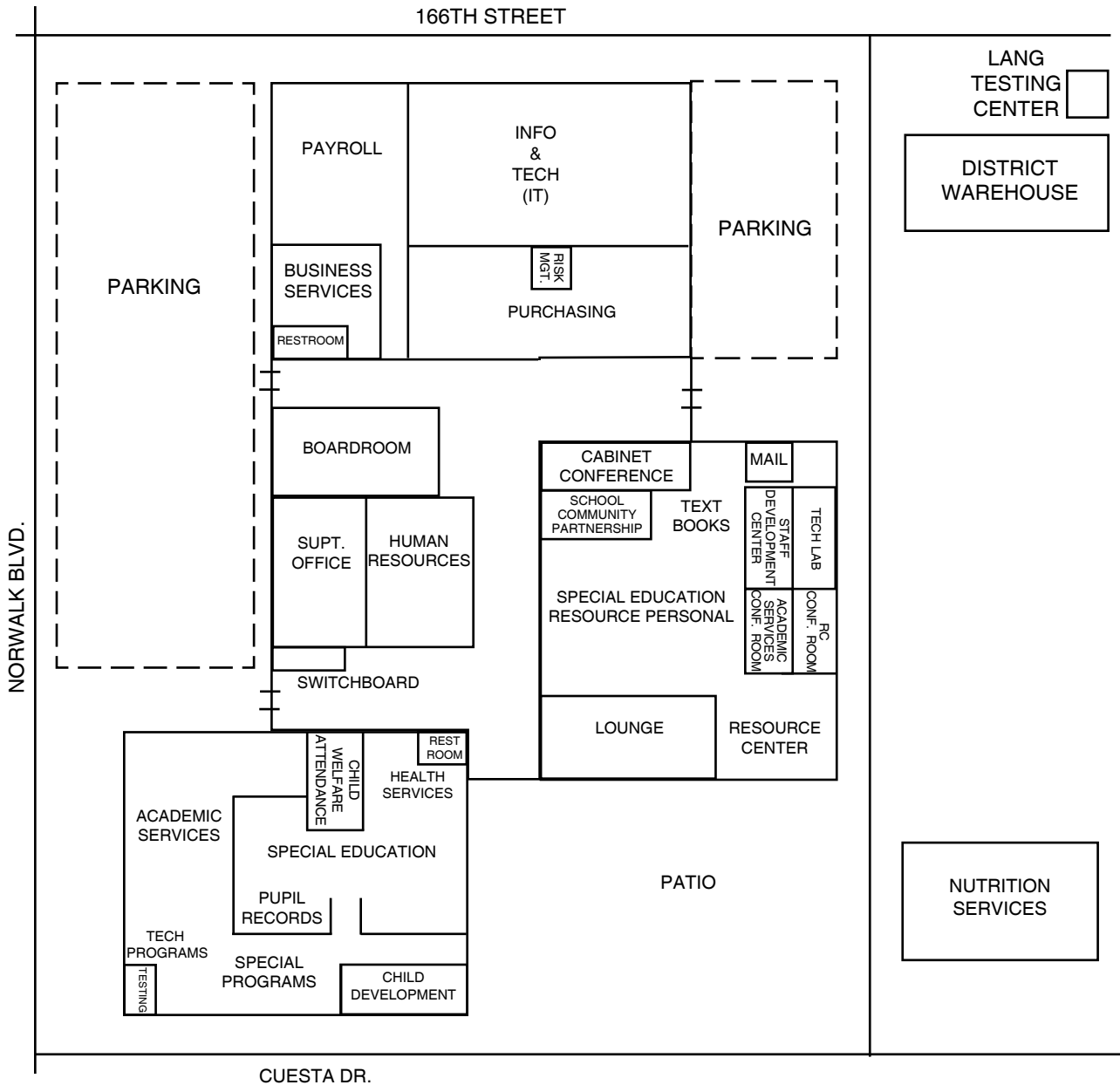
Middle Schools

School	Address	Principal	Ext.
CARMENITA	13436 E. 166th St., Cerritos 90703	Rhonda Buss	24400
FEDDE	21509 S. Elaine, Haw.Gard. 90716	Rochelle Wollman	24600
HASKELL	11525 Del Amo Blvd., Cerritos 90703	Camille Lewis	24700
ROSS	17717 S. Elaine, Artesia 90701	Ricardo Brown	24500
TETAZLAFF	12351 Del Amo Blvd., Cerritos 90703	Crechena Wise	24800

High Schools

School	Address	Principal	Ext.
ARTESIA	12108 E. Del Amo, Lakewood 90715	Sergio Garcia	21600
CERRITOS	12500 E. 183rd St., Cerritos 90703	Janice Peterson	21800
GAHR	11111 Artesia Blvd., Cerritos 90703	Gina Zietlow	22000
TRACY	12222 Cuesta Dr. Cerritos 90703	Jeff Green	22200
WHITNEY	16800 SHOEMAKER, Cerritos 90703	Patty Hager	22300

Map of District Office



802-281/21

Union information

ABC Federation of Teachers

Teachers in ABC Unified School District K-12 are represented for bargaining purposes by local affiliates of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the California Federation of Teachers (CFT). As members of a professional union, local affiliates of CFT-AFT are responsible for negotiating and maintaining the contracts that determine the wages, hours, and working (professional) conditions for the teachers they represent.

Through local bargaining, CFT-AFT members gain their health and welfare benefits.

Contracts must be ratified by members of the local affiliate.

Local affiliates in public schools bargain contracts under the authority of the RODDA Act. This act gives public employees the right to organize for bargaining purposes and requires their employees to bargain with them.

A requirement of locally negotiated contracts is that teachers must join the unified organization of the AFT-ABCFT local affiliate, or pay a representation fee. That fee covers all the expenses incurred in contractual representation.

Through local bargaining, members gain their health and welfare benefits.

Contact Person: Laura Rico, President
ABC Federation of Teachers, Local 2317
CFT AFT/AFL-CIO
12028 Centralia Road, Suite 204
Hawaiian Gardens 90716
ext. 21500

Salary schedule


**ABC UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
CERTIFICATED MEMBER'S SALARY SCHEDULE
2007-2008
Schedule A
(Non-Credentialed Only)**

STEP	A	B	C	D	E	F
	BA	BA+15	BA+30	BA+45 or MA	BA+60 inc. MA	BA+75 inc. MA
1	38,861	39,872	40,910	41,972	43,065	44,184
2	40,225	41,269	42,341	43,443	44,573	45,731
3	41,630	42,713	43,823	44,962	46,131	47,331
4	43,088	44,208	45,357	46,538	47,748	48,988
5	44,594	45,754	46,945	48,165	49,419	50,704
6	46,159	47,354	48,588	49,852	51,147	52,477
7	47,772	49,012	50,289	51,596	52,938	54,313
8	47,772	50,729	52,049	53,400	54,791	56,215
9	47,772	50,729	53,869	55,271	56,707	58,182
10	47,772	50,729	55,757	57,205	58,694	60,219
11	47,772	50,729	57,707	59,206	60,747	62,325
12	47,772	50,729	59,555	61,279	62,872	64,507
13	47,772	50,729	59,555	61,279	65,074	66,766

Salary Schedule

**ABC UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
CERTIFICATED MEMBER'S SALARY SCHEDULE
2007-2008
Schedule B
(Credentialed Only)**

STEP	A	B	C	D	E	F
	BA	BA+15	BA+30	BA+45 or MA	BA+60 inc. MA	BA+75 inc. MA
1	45,994	47,143	48,321	49,530	50,769	52,038
2	46,453	47,614	48,805	50,025	51,275	52,558
3	48,079	49,281	50,514	51,776	53,070	54,397
4	49,762	51,005	52,281	53,588	54,928	56,302
5	51,503	52,792	54,110	55,463	56,850	58,272
6	53,307	54,638	56,004	57,405	58,841	60,311
7	55,172	56,551	57,964	59,414	60,900	62,422
8	55,172	58,531	59,994	61,494	63,031	64,606
9	55,172	58,531	62,094	63,645	65,237	66,868
10	55,172	58,531	64,267	65,873	67,520	69,208
11	55,172	58,531	66,515	68,180	69,882	71,630
12	55,172	58,531	68,844	70,566	72,329	74,137
13	55,172	58,531	68,844	70,566	74,861	76,733
14	55,172	58,531	68,844	70,566	74,861	76,733
15	55,172	58,531	68,844	72,682	77,107	79,034
16	55,172	58,531	68,844	72,682	77,107	79,034
17	55,172	58,531	68,844	72,682	77,107	79,034
18	55,172	58,531	68,844	74,862	79,420	81,406
19	55,172	58,531	68,844	74,862	79,420	81,406
20	55,172	58,531	68,844	74,862	79,420	81,406
21	55,172	58,531	68,844	77,109	81,802	83,847
22	55,172	58,531	68,844	77,109	81,802	83,847
23	55,172	58,531	68,844	77,109	81,802	83,847
24	55,172	58,531	68,844	79,422	84,256	86,362
25	55,172	58,531	68,844	79,422	84,256	86,362
26	55,172	58,531	68,844	79,422	84,256	86,362
27	55,172	58,531	68,844	81,804	86,785	88,955
28	55,172	58,531	68,844	81,804	86,785	88,955
29	55,172	58,531	68,844	81,804	86,785	88,955
30	55,172	58,531	68,844	84,258	89,387	91,687



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Introduction to District Resources

ABC Unified School District, provides services and resources to 19 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 5 high schools, ABC Adult School and ABC Secondary School in south eastern Los Angeles County. We are confident that you will find what you're looking for in ABC. At the very least, you'll find a knowledgeable staff member who will help you locate another resource. Although we're proud of all of our services and resources available through our divisions of Academic Services, Human Resources, and Business Operations, the following reflects a sampling of those which may be most beneficial as you begin your teaching career.

*You will find what
you're looking for in
ABC Unified School
District.*

The District Office

Academic Services

The Academic Services Department provides the services which go directly to the schools. Within this division you will find Curriculum and Professional Development, Pupil Support Services, Special Education, Special Programs, Child Development Services, and Information and Technology. District Resource Teachers for such programs as Language Arts, Science, Technology, Migrant Education, BTSA/Induction, English Language Development, GATE, and assessment are also available in Academic Services.

Professional Development

Professional development opportunities

Academic Services provides a variety of professional development opportunities throughout the year. These seminars are designed for all teachers, new and experienced. Professional development opportunities are regularly posted on the ABC online Professional Development Catalog. You may access the catalog from the ABC district website. Look for the Professional Development Catalog icon to login and register for courses. Teachers will also receive information from the L.A. County Office of Education (LACOE), area universities, outside agencies, and professional organizations regarding opportunities for staff development. For more information call Debi Gonsalves, at extension 21132.

Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D):

Educational Research and Dissemination is an American Federation of Teachers (AFT) sponsored, research-based professional development program. It is a cooperative effort between ABC USD and the ABC Federation of Teachers. This program offers courses on topics that include reading, mathematics instruction, classroom management, instructional strategies, family involvement and managing student behavior. When these opportunities are available teachers will receive notification through District mail. For more information call Betty Harris, at extension 21500.

Beginning Teachers Support and Assessment Program (BTSA) Induction Program:

The BTSA program is funded by the state and implemented through Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE). New teachers are provided training and support throughout the school year. For BTSA information call Stacey Hamagiwa, BTSA Resource Teacher, at extension 21164.

Peer Assistance and Support System (PASS)

Our Peer Assistance and Support System is the result of ABIX (Villaraigosa, 1999). It is a cooperative effort between ABCUSD and the ABC Federation of Teachers to assist all teachers in expanding their subject matter knowledge and teaching strategies to improve instruction and student performance.

All probationary 1 teachers who are new to ABC will be participating in the PASS program. Additionally, the program serves teachers who wish to volunteer for participation in PASS and veteran teachers in need of sharpening their professional skills. Teachers are supported in the program by highly qualified peer coaches who serve them both in and outside the classroom. For PASS information call Rich Saldana, at extension 22488.

ER&D

What is ER&D?

Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D) is, an AFT-sponsored, research-based professional development program designed to help local union affiliates build the capacity to deliver high-quality professional development training to their members—teachers, paraprofessionals, and school-related personnel.

The AFT has long recognized its responsibility to reach beyond traditional union “bread and butter” issues. Created in 1981, the ER&D program represents one of the union’s major efforts to improve student achievement by making a difference in its members performance and professional growth while encouraging them to become users of research.

Addressing the professional needs of its members and helping them to perform their job responsibilities more effectively strengthens both the AFT union and the institutions in which its members work

ER&D Program Goals

- **Increase staff effectiveness in order to improve student performance.**
- **Strengthen the union through the power of professional issues.**

How is ER&D different?

ER&D offers professional development opportunities and learning experiences that are very different from traditional inservice training programs. It is unique in that it:

- provides solid, research-based content
- is created and delivered by classroom teachers and school personnel
- is an ongoing process, rather than a single inservice event
- provides a non-threatening, non-judgmental learning environment
- includes opportunities for self-reflection in addition to application and implementation of instructional strategies, resulting in real change in practice
- validates existing practice while encouraging professional growth
- builds a sense of pride in the AFT and in the quality of a service that the union provides

What do ER&D participants learn?

The ER&D program offers courses on topics that include reading and mathematics instruction, classroom management, family involvement and managing student behavior. The AFT develops these courses in collaboration with leading education researchers, synthesizing reliable findings on best practices and translating them into a user-friendly format that connects the research to its applications in the real world of classrooms and schools. ER&D classes are presented using strategies that, according to research, provide the most effective adult learning experiences.

How is an ER&D program established?

The AFT holds annual winter and summer training institutes that prepare union members to deliver professional development training to their peers. Local union affiliates, often in collaboration with their school districts, then design ER&D programs to fit their local needs, with program content being disseminated in a variety of models and formats. In many places, ER&D courses are offered for continuing education units and/or university credits, enabling many educators to meet license renewal requirements, earn advanced degrees or even qualify for incremental salary increases.

BTSA induction

Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Induction Program

The LACOE Induction Program is a funded grant through the California Beginning Teachers Support and Assessment program sponsored by the California Department of Education and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The grant requires all teachers who hold a SB2042 Preliminary Credential in their first and second year, to participate in a professional growth experience that provides support, assessment, staff development training, and coaching from a mentor and other experienced staff. The BTSA induction program is required for all eligible 2042 candidates as a means of completing the requirements for a Professional Clear Credential.

Beginning Teachers

Beginning Teachers are those new to teaching within their first and second years of employment. Beginning Teachers have not taught in other settings or district. They may be new to teaching from careers in business and industry or fresh out of college training programs. Each beginning teacher is matched to a Support Teacher who will provide curricular and classroom support in the form of weekly contacts and at monthly trainings. Professional growth needs will be identified through a support assessment and the assistance of a trained assessor. All information shared is considered highly confidential and will not be shared for evaluative purposes. Eligible teachers will send an application to the coordinator of the program.

Each beginning teacher is matched to a teacher who serves as a Support Provider completing the requirements for a Professional Clear Credential.

Support Providers

Support Providers are experienced teachers who have the enthusiasm and interest to assist beginning teachers by sharing their expertise with curriculum, strategies and classroom management. They will confer with their Beginning Teacher and provide the guidance and support needed in the first two years of teaching. Support teachers will come from a pool of experienced teachers, who have a special interest in assisting beginning teachers, or may be recommended by the principals. Support Providers also receive the New Teacher Center additional training in FAS, a support and assessment tool developed by the New Teacher Center at UCSC. They will assess the professional growth needs of the beginning teacher and will assist the new teacher in developing collaborative assessment log setting professional goals and reflecting on professional growth.

BTSA (cont.)

The Goals of the BTSA Induction Program

- To provide the beginning teacher with meaningful support and peer coaching which is appropriate to his/her teaching assignment.
- To provide first and second year teachers support through the assistance of experienced teachers who successfully demonstrate the skills and attitudes associated with exemplary model teachers who have learned and practiced behaviors that encourage positive peer relationships and respect.
- To jointly develop a Professional Growth Plan through input provided by the beginning teacher, the assessor, and the support provider(s).
- To provide candidates a means of completing the requirements for a professional clear credential.

To assist in accomplishing these goals, two formal observations and assessments are completed with each Beginning Teacher. The outcomes of the assessments are used as the basis for the collaborative development of the Individual Induction Plan. Support services vary for each BTSA participant and are based on individual situations and needs. We make every effort to assign support providers at your site, so that they can provide ongoing support for you.

New Teacher Center @ US Santa Cruz Formative Assessment System

The NTC Formative Assessment System (FAS) develops professional habits of mind that will guide teachers' practice over their professional lifetime, and supports the development of highly qualified teachers. FAS is a series of collaborative processes characterized by a consistent focus on student learning, multiple measures of classroom practice, and reflection with a highly qualified support provider or mentor. A variety of carefully designed tools are used to assess and support each beginning teacher's development in relation to the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP).

The focus, process and pacing of each FAS process are determined collaboratively by the mentor and beginning teacher. A Collaborative Assessment Log is the central tool and provides a framework for mentor beginning teacher conversations. During each meeting and classroom visit, the Collaborative Assessment Log reminds the beginning teacher and mentor to celebrate classroom successes, prioritize challenges, and commit to next steps. The Collaborative Assessment Log not only guides the interaction, but serves to document professional growth and directs the mentor's use of appropriate formative assessment tools.

In the beginning of the year, it is important for beginning teachers and mentors to learn about the students and each other. Exploring School and Community Resources provides an avenue to learn about the school's local community, demographics and resources that can support student success. Additionally, beginning teachers

BTSA (cont.)

To assist teachers in understanding their student's learning needs, mentors and beginning teachers assemble a Class Profile early in the school year. First, the beginning teacher and mentor synthesize available assessment data about each student and identify the range of learning needs. Next, they create flexible groupings for instructional purposes. During the process of Assembling a Class Profile, the beginning teacher identifies a case study student that will launch a yearlong inquiry into meeting the learning needs of a specific subset of English learners or special population students.

The process of Setting Professional Goals requires beginning teachers to reflect on their practice, determine an area of focus and develop a collaborative plan to reach their desired goal. Ultimately, the beginning teacher's Professional Goals will serve as the foundational plan for support and formative assessment throughout the year.

Once the beginning teacher has set his/her Professional Goals, a process of examining practice begins. Beginning teachers and mentors Analyze Student Work and Plan Lessons based on the assessed learning needs of the students. As part of this inquiry cycle, mentors Conduct Classroom Observations to build a common understanding of the teacher's practice that is used to guide collaborative planning and professional development.

Communicating with Parents about student progress is a critical part of every teacher's role and responsibility. During the fall, beginning teachers and mentors review assessment data relevant to the case study student, and plan a parent conference. They discuss ways to share progress and foster collaboration with parents to promote student learning.

Reviewing Progress at Mid-Year gives beginning teachers an opportunity to reflect on, and celebrate progress to date in meeting their Professional Goals. The intent of this process is to keep the Professional Goals a living, flexible roadmap for work between the mentor and beginning teacher.

Following the Mid-Year Review is a second cycle of examining practice. Once again, beginning teachers and mentors Analyze Student Work to determine the learning needs of the students and Plan Lessons that differentiate instruction, resulting in greater instructional effectiveness. Mentors Conduct Classroom Observations, during which time they link planning, teaching and analyzing practice.

The mentor and beginning teacher prepare a second conference with the parents of the case study student in the spring. As beginning teachers plan to Communicate with Parents they engage in research on the effects of teaching on student achievement. The learnings from this action research can then be applied to other students and content areas with support from the mentor.

Finally, Reflecting on Professional Growth provides an opportunity for beginning teachers to reflect about professional growth over the course of the year. Beginning teachers identify specific successes and key decisions that impacted student learning by reflecting on standards based evidence. Reflection during this guided process serves as a springboard for instructional planning for the upcoming year.

Foremost, each teacher must construct his/her own knowledge in order to grow professionally. The NTC FAS fosters professional learning through the development of dispositions for collaboration, data-driven instruction, goal setting and reflection on practice. Establishing those professional habits from the beginning of a teacher's career ensures consistency in practice over a professional lifetime and ambitious teaching everyday.

PASS

What is PASS?

The Peer Assistance & Support System (PASS) program is the result of state legislation (ABIX Villaraigosa, 1999) and is based upon the peer assistance review model. The ABCUSD and the ABC Federation of Teachers believe that, when linked to a standards-based evaluation process and continuous school improvement program, the PASS program will enhance the skill levels of the all the district's teachers. PASS expands the authority of teachers by including their expertise along with that of administrators in providing collegial support, assistance and review. Evaluation, improvement and continuing employment decisions are not shifted away from administrators.

Who Participates in the PASS Program?

PASS serves Probationary 1 teachers new to ABC Unified School District, unit members volunteering for the program, emergency teachers, and any veteran teacher who receives an unsatisfactory evaluation.

What is the Goal of the PASS Program?

PASS will provide formal and informal opportunities for exemplary teachers to share their expertise and assist colleagues. New and experienced teachers will expand their ability to engage students in learning, create an effective teaching environment, organize subject matter, plan instruction, assess learning, and continue their professional development.

How Does the Program Work?

Each teacher will have a Professional Support Team. It will consist of the teacher, peer coach, the administrator, and a colleague (if desired). Together, they will write a plan for the participating teacher. The peer coach will facilitate meetings of the Professional Support Team.

During a teacher's time in the program, the peer coach will conduct classroom observations and file timely post-observation reports to each participant. Reports will also be forwarded to the PASS council. The peer coach will also provide opportunities for PASS teachers to observe exemplary practice either by modeling or arranging release time to visit other classrooms. Additionally, the PASS program will be working with the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program to provide participating teachers additional opportunities for professional growth.

By May 15th, the final evaluation of the participating teacher must be completed by the peer coach, with input from the PSP team, and reviewed with the teacher. The teacher may include an attachment. Teachers in the program have all contractual guarantees in place.

The recommended actions of the evaluation will be one of the following:

- A. Return to the regular evaluation cycle.
- B. Continue in the PASS program.
- C. Further remediation will not be successful.

The PASS Council votes on the peer coach's evaluation and sends its recommendations to the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources.

Who Do I Contact?

You can contact the PASS coordinator, Rich Saldana, at ext. 22448, if you have questions. The PASS office is located in the ABC Maintenance and Operations facility at 11865 178th Street in Artesia.

Resource Center

There's some serious classroom enrichment going on in this area! You'll see that there's more to the Resource Center than laminating machines. This is a hands-on facility, but trained staff will help begin your projects. They are constantly searching for new materials to add to the collection and say that some of the most effective materials found are a direct result of suggestions from teachers and para educators.

The Resource Center is located at the District Office.

Teacher Resources Available Online

(Under: Departments – Resource Center)

- Educational Video Tapes - Video Catalog available as pdf.
- Supplemental activities for students
- Can't find what you need? Call x 21235 or email mary.thomas-reilly@abcusd.k12.ca.us

Self Services and Equipment

- Catalog of Instructional Packets and Posters
- Ellison Decorative Dies - Alphabets, numbers, plants, people, and much, much more.
- Spiral punch and binder
- Learning aids for the classroom
- Button machine
- Lamination (12" machine only)
- Drill press
- Pouch Laminator

*** Resource Center Staff will laminate large items on the 25" and 40" laminator.**

Policies and Regulations:

- The Resource Center is available to all teachers, para educators and parent volunteers working in the ABC Unified School District for resource materials and equipment.
- District policy requires a charge for laminating materials, badges, spiral binders, posters, buttons, and banners. School and departments have accounts set up with the center for teacher use.
- All materials used for student projects will be charged to the site. Please bring your own construction paper.
- Special workshops can be scheduled upon request for individual teachers para educators and parent volunteers.
- No children are permitted in the Resource Center, due to Board Policy 6116.
- Persons using the Resource Center are asked to observe closing hours and to clean their work areas.

Resource Center

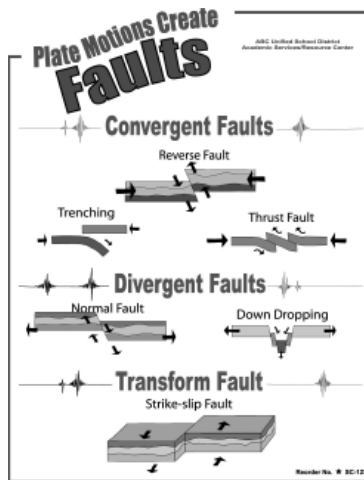
Samples:

- Posters and Banners
- Personal signs



Transition or Linking Words
For Grades 3 - 5

Show location				
above	around	between	inside	outside
across	behind	by	into	over
against	below	down	near	throughout
along	beneath	in back of	off	in the right
among	beside	in front of	on top of	under
Show time				
about	during	until	yesterday	finally
after	first	meanwhile	next	then
at	second	today	soon	as soon as
before	third	tomorrow	later	when
Compare two things				
likewise	as	in the same way		
like	also	similarly		
Contrast things (show differences)				
but	still	although	on the other hand	
however	yet	otherwise	even though	
Emphasize a point				
again	in fact	for this reason		
Add information				
again	besides	finally	as well	
also	for example	for instance	along with	
another	next			
and				
Conclude or summarize				
as a result	finally		in conclusion	
therefore	last		in summary	



We also: Duplicate DVD's (non copyright material only)

ABC Resource Center

16700 Norwalk Blvd., Cerritos, CA 9070

Hours - Monday - Friday

8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

(Closed Winter Recess and Spring Break)

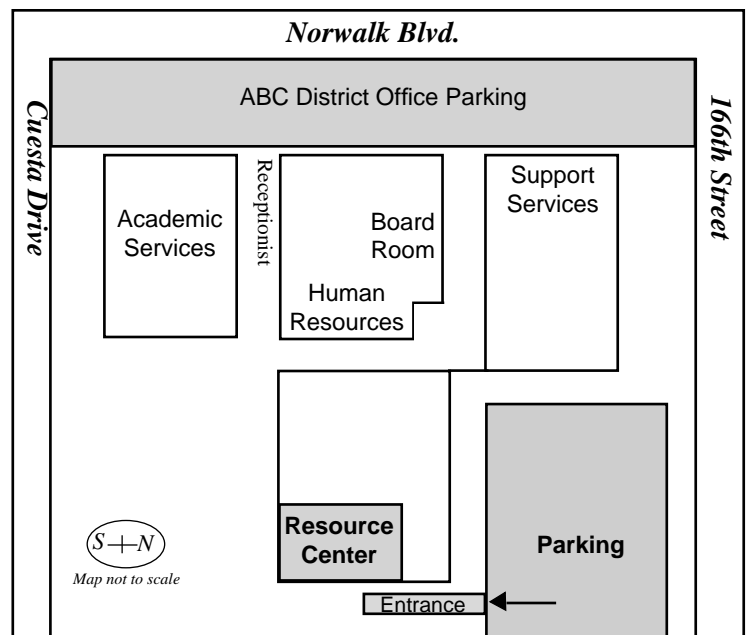
Contact the Resource Center for Summer Hours

For more information contact Mary Thomas-Reilly

(562) 925-6666 extension 21235

Mary.Thomas-Reilly@abcusd.k12.ca.us

Fax Number (562) 404-6308



Special Education

Special Education Services

The ABC Unified School District is a part of the ABC/Norwalk-La Mirada Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). Special education services are offered for students birth to age 22 within the ABC Unified School District, the Norwalk-La Mirada School District as well as other programs and services outside of the SELPA.

When a student is having difficulty in school, a Student Success Team composed of general education staff and administration meets to discuss the needs of the students. The Team determines if accommodations are necessary in the general education classroom to assist the student in being successful. If the student requires additional assistance, general education interventions using research-based methods are implemented and progress is monitored. Referral for possible special education services is made only after general education interventions are found to be ineffective for the student.

Whenever a student is determined to require special education services by meeting State eligibility criteria, they must be considered for placement in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This educational setting is the one most similar to general education students or non-disabled students of the same chronological age of the student that can best meet the student's needs. This includes mainstream opportunities in general education classrooms for as much of the student's day as is appropriate. In some cases only designated Instruction and Services are necessary for the student to be successful in school.

All special education students are required to have access to the core curriculum and materials that are available for non-disabled students of the same grade level. The curriculum and materials may need to be modified or accommodations made to allow the student to access them.

Designated Instruction and Services

These support services enable the student to benefit from their educational program. In some cases, this is the only special service the student receives. These include but are not limited to:

- Speech-Language Therapy
- Adapted Physical Education
- Deaf/hearing Impaired Itinerant Services
- Visually Impaired Itinerant Services
- Counseling

Special Education (cont.)

Resource Special Programs Grades K-12 (all schools)

These services are usually provided to students eligible for special education who need special education services for less than 50% of their school day. These students are usually seen daily, however other schedules that appropriately meet the needs of the students are also implemented. In some cases, students are shared between the general education and special education staff in a Learning Center Model where special education teachers work with students at risk of failure prior to them even being referred for special education services.

Special Day Classes

Students eligible for special education services who require educational support for more than 50% of the school day may be seen by a Special Day Class teacher. These students may have specific learning disabilities, severe language disorders, physical handicaps, health problems, severe emotional disturbances or mental retardation. Students are grouped according to grade/age and their educational needs. They are mainstreamed in general education classes as appropriate. Special Day Classes are located at several elementary, middle and all high schools in the District.

Chapter Three: Getting Started

Physical Environment and Materials:

Materials and supplies	Page 20
Room arrangements	Page 22
Bulletin boards	Page 25
Building information checklist	Page 26

Setting Expectations

Goals for the first day	Page 30
Rules and consequences	Page 31
Procedures	Page 32
Early parent communication	Page 34

First Days of School:

Activities	Page 35
Assessing the first day	Page 37
Daily reflection log	Page 38

Materials and supplies

One thing you will need to do is plan how you will organize the space in your classroom, thinking about how and when materials will be needed, as well as who will be using them, will help with your plans.

Teacher materials

The materials you will need for your own use may include teacher manuals for all the textbooks you will use, a grade book and a lesson plan book. Also, you may need pens, pencils, tape, scissors, stapler, paper clips and dry erase markers. Some teachers like to have a timer or bell to use as a signal for student activities. A simple tool kit (hammer, screwdriver, and pliers) can come in handy for many things. Many of these items can be stored in your desk.

Textbooks

Once you have identified the books your students will be using, you will need to locate a book for each student. Knowing whether or not students will keep these books in their desks will determine the need for storage or distribution of the books. Having a bookcase readily accessible for students to store shared text or reference books will make the use of those books easier.

Other classroom materials

Supplies that your students will need may include pencils, paper, rulers, glue, eraser, crayons and scissors. While many students prefer to have their own materials, you should plan on providing those materials in sufficient quantities for all students. Other materials that may be used on a frequent basis include markers, paper towels, art paper, tape, stapler and scrap paper. Tissues and Band-Aids are frequently needed. The supplies that students will be allowed to use should be stored in a cupboard or drawer until needed. Many parents appreciate knowing what materials their child will be needing. A list included in a first day letter to parent can accomplish this. *

*See Appendix A-1 through A-4 for first day letters to parents.

Materials and supplies

Storage of materials

Planning ahead can help you prepare your classroom for the orderly storage of the many materials you and your students will be needing. As you look around your classroom, think about where students will store coats, sweaters, gym shoes and lunch boxes. Where will they turn in their completed work? Are there games, learning centers or project areas that need to be established? Think ahead to the types of equipment you will have or need. Check the audio/video equipment, overhead projector, and pencil sharpener to see that they are working properly. An extension cord of your own might save you some searching later. Some materials will be used so infrequently (holiday or bulletin board materials) that you may want to use storage boxes that can be placed on top of file or wardrobe cabinets until needed.

Planning ahead can help you prepare your Classroom for the orderly storage of the many materials you and your students will be needing.

Room arrangements

Keys to good room arrangements

- A. Room environment should facilitate safe movement around the room.
- B. High traffic areas should be free of congestion.
 - Pencil Sharpeners
 - Trash cans
 - Supply areas
 - Teacher's desk
 - Learning centers
- C. Students should always be visible to the teacher.
- D. Frequently used materials need to be readily accessible
 - Maps
 - Flag
 - File cabinets
 - Books
 - Projection screens, outlets
 - Every day supplies (paper, paste)
- E. Students need a designated area for personal belongings (hats, coats, shoes, lunches, etc.)

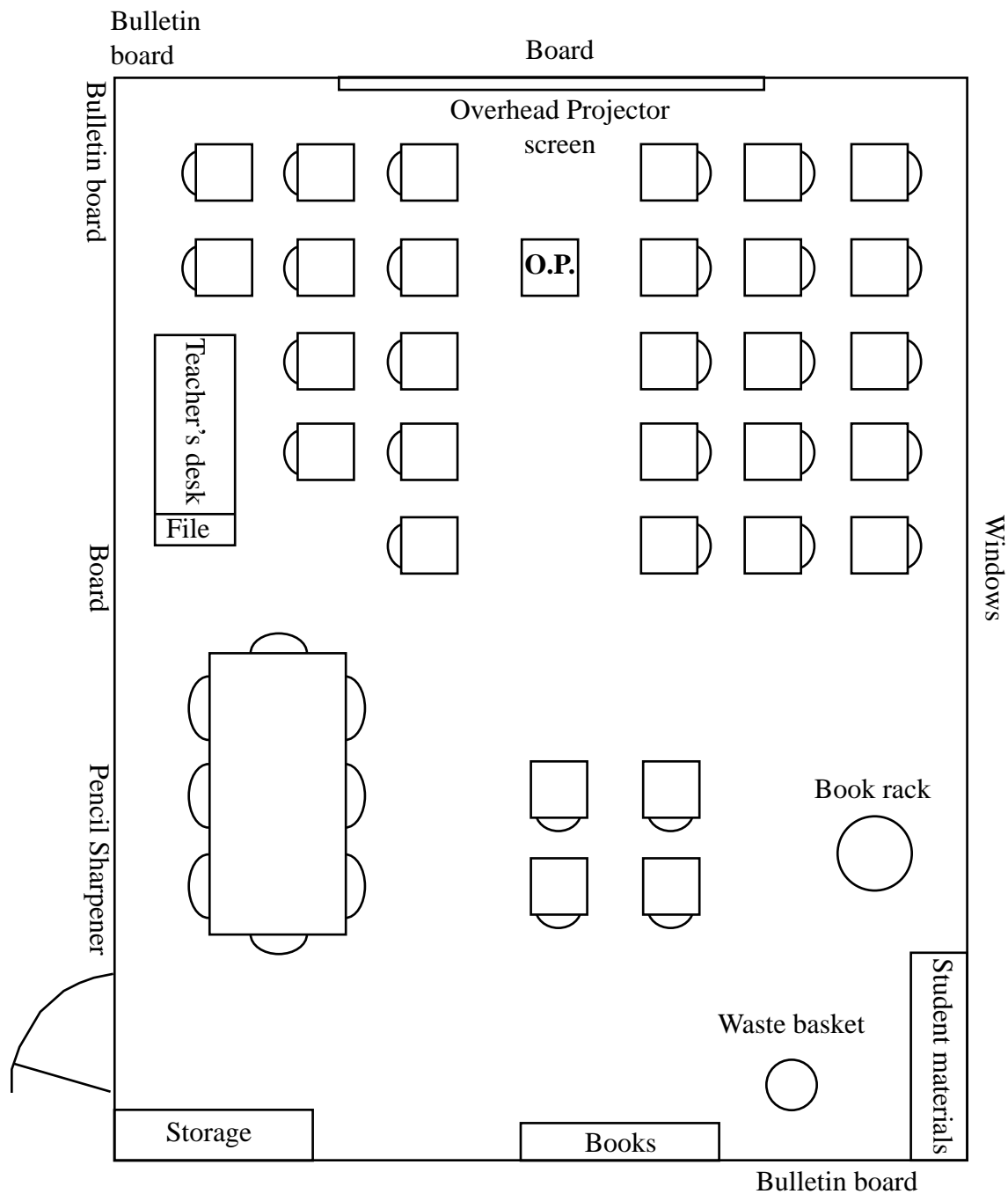
Tips for arranging furniture

Consider placing student's desks in rows facing the major instructional areas at the beginning of the year to minimize distractions. As you begin to know your students, you may want to change the environment to facilitate better learning.

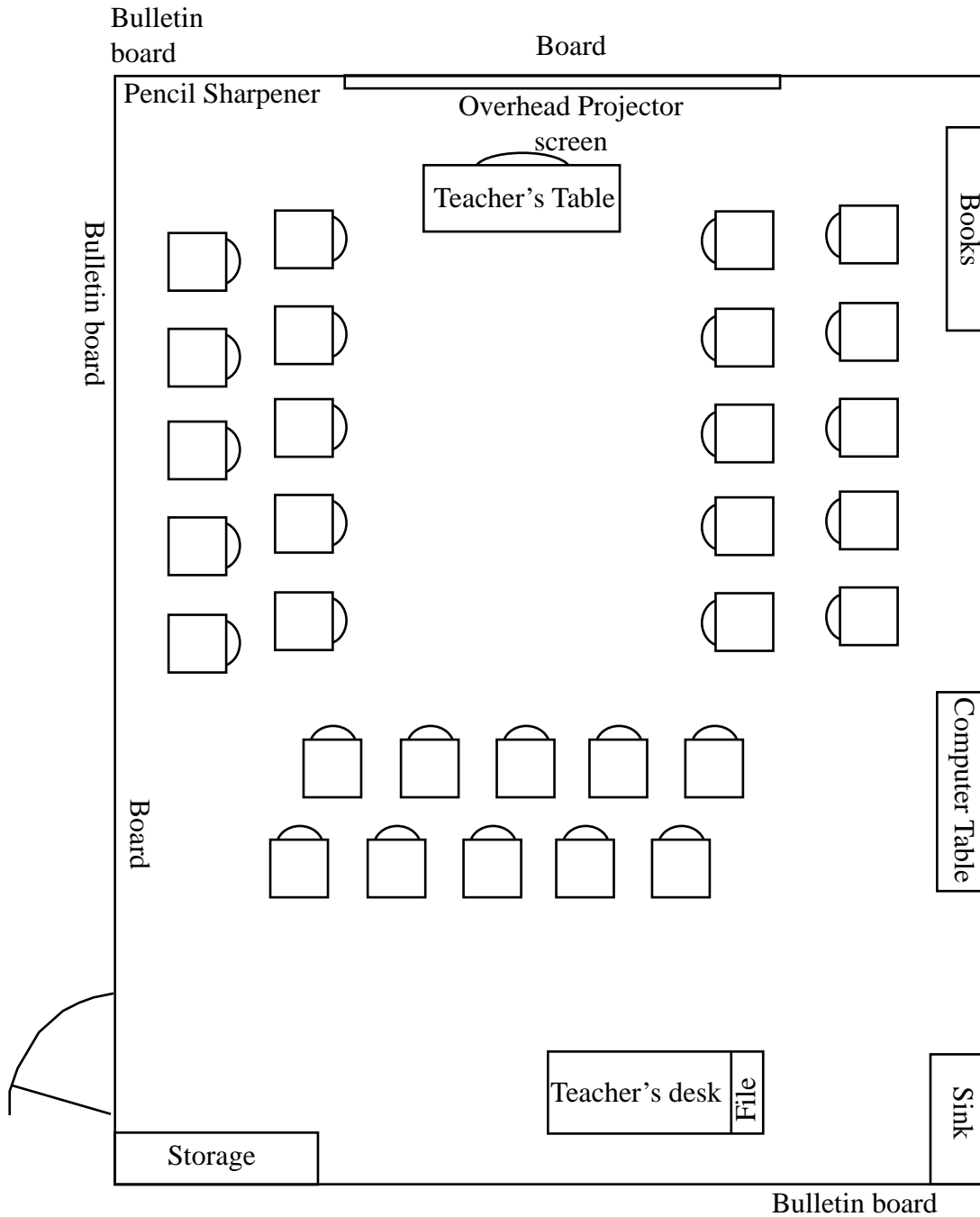
- A. Keep in mind possible distractions such as:
 - Windows and doors
 - Animals and other interesting displays
 - Small group work areas
- B. Note where electrical outlets are located before you place equipment.

Possible room arrangements are found on the following pages. After the first few days or weeks of school you may find you need adjustments for crowd control or better movement. You might want to reassess the room arrangement then.

Room arrangements



Room arrangements



Bulletin boards

Helpful hints

- A. If possible, have boards/displays completed before school starts.
- B. If you are doing child-initiated boards, have ideas ready.
- C. Background for bulletin boards may be done with neutral colors, fadeless paper, fabric, wallpaper...
- D. Take a picture of your bulletin board for future reference.
- E. Try to use reusable or laminated letters which can be made at the Resource Center in the District Office or purchased at teacher stores. *
- F. If you need ideas, ask to look at some other rooms around your school.
- G. Display shelves or boxes work just as well as boards.

Bulletin board ideas

- Guess Who? Baby Pictures
- Safety
- Things done over the summer
- Fall
- Information board
- Alphabet
- Birthday board
- Number line
- Welcome
- Student name board
- Calendar
- Colors
- Rules and Policies
- Child of the week and/or teacher of the week
- Reading board (book covers)
- Weekly schedules
- Famous people
- Assignment board
- Rules
- Student-created bulletin boards by project or theme
- Student work display
- Schedules

*See Resources, Page 70 for Teacher's Stores

Building information checklist

Here are some things to think about before the school year to help you organize your first days.

<u>Question</u>	<u>Check</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1. Do you have keys to your classroom or other rooms you may need access to?	_____	
2. Do you have the necessary furniture for your room?	_____	
3. What are the “school rules” and policies you will need to present to students?	_____	
4. Are aides available and, if so, on what schedule?	_____	
5. What are the procedures for obtaining classroom books and checking them out to the students?	_____	
6. What expendable supplies are available, and what are the procedures for obtaining them?	_____	
7. What audiovisual materials, and equipment are available, and what are the procedures for obtaining them?	_____	

Building information checklist

<u>Question</u>	<u>Check</u>	<u>Notes</u>
8. What is the required paperwork for the first day of school, everyday attendance, and the lunch program?	<hr/>	
9. What is the procedure for the arrival of students on the first day of school; for every day after that? (See #13 and #18)	<hr/>	
10. What is your class roster? Do you have any special education or resource students? Do they, or any other students, leave your room during the day? If so, what are their schedules?	<hr/>	
11. What time will your class have music, recess, P.E., lunch, or library?	<hr/>	
12. Are there any special events or assemblies you need to be aware of the first week of school?	<hr/>	
13. How do students leave at the end of the day? Do you have any bus riders and do they leave early?	<hr/>	
14. What are your school's policies about rules and consequences, suspension, and keeping students after school for either makeup work or detention? Do parents need to be notified?	<hr/>	

Building information checklist

<u>Question</u>	<u>Check</u>	<u>Notes</u>
15. What duplicated materials are available and what are the procedures?	_____	
16. How do you get assistance from the office for emergencies, illness or discipline problems?	_____	
17. Do you have a “buddy” teacher who you can call in case of an emergency?	_____	
18. What are the procedures for early dismissal and late arrivals?	_____	
19. When is the principal available, and when should he/she be consulted?	_____	
20. When is the school nurse available and what are appropriate reasons for making a referral?	_____	
21. Is a counselor available and what types of referrals does he/she want?	_____	
22. What resources are available in the district for help in diagnosing or working with students with severe learning or behavior problems?	_____	
23. What janitorial services are available for your room and what should you do if they are inadequate?	_____	

Building information checklist

<u>Question</u>	<u>Check</u>	<u>Notes</u>
24. Are you familiar with the parts of the building to which you may send students (library, restroom, etc.) and do you know the procedures to follow?	_____	
25. Have you prepared a handout for students or a bulletin board display of rules, major class procedures, and course requirements?	_____	
26. Do you know the bell schedule?	_____	
27. Are your lesson plans for the first few days of school ready for each class?	_____	
28. Have you prepared time fillers* to use if needed?	_____	
29. Do you know if any of your students have some handicapped condition that should be accommodated in your room arrangement or instruction?	_____	
30. Do you have a district and school calendar?	_____	
31. Where are student files kept and what are procedures to access them?	_____	

*See Appendix A-29 through A-35 for sponge activities.

Goals for the first day

When you establish your classroom expectations, it's important for you to remember that the goal is to help students become more responsible. The intent for administering rules and procedures is to help students learn appropriate and productive life skills within a safe and comfortable environment. Also, keep in mind that your responsibility goes beyond content information. Teaching and developing student behavior is a critical part of your job as a teacher.

The activities of the first day of school (examples listed below) should lead to some specific goals. These goals might fit into three categories:

- The teacher getting to know the students
- The students getting to know the teacher and each other
- Classroom organization and management

Teacher getting to know the student

- Review and diagnostic activities, both formal (testing) and informal
- Maintain a whole-group focus in instruction and review
- Monitor student activities, both academic and social
- Actively engage all students in learning activities

Students getting to know teacher and each other

- Teacher greets students, demonstrates personal interest
- Students introduce themselves to each other
- Design activities to make students feel unique and successful. Keep activities simple but meaningful. Hands-on activities resulting in a product or a sense of productivity are beneficial.
- Establish an accepting climate
- Student self-assessment activities

Classroom organization and management

- Acquaint students with room and materials they will use (supplies, text, building)
- Teach appropriate behavior, rules, procedures, consequences, attention signal
- Explain homework
- Demonstrate that teacher is well-prepared and purposeful
- Provide an overview of curriculum to be studied
- Preview curriculum as motivational device

Rules and consequences

Give thought to establishing rules, consequences and procedures. Some teachers find it desirable to have the children participate in the making of classroom rules - this gives students a sense of ownership.

Tips for rules

1. Limit yourself to 3 rules
2. State rules in positive terms whenever possible
3. Keep rules short, precise and succinct to focus in on specific behavior
4. Post rules and send copy home
5. Rules need to be taught - possibly use role play and/or quiz
6. Enforce rules so as to preserve student dignity

Sample rules

1. Student will walk while in the classroom or halls.
2. Students will not talk when teacher or others are talking.
3. Students will bring all needed materials to class.
4. Students will raise their hands for permission to speak.

Tips for consequences

1. Be clear and specific
2. Have a range of alternatives
3. Consequences should not be a punishment
4. Should be related to a rule
5. Should be natural or logical

Suggested consequences for above sample rules

1. Students need to go back and retrace their steps by walking.
2. Students will describe the appropriate behavior.
3. Students will not receive reward as do students who come to class prepared.
4. Teacher will not respond to child who has not raised his/her hand.

Procedures

It is important to plan for routines and procedures that happen daily or frequently in the classroom. These procedures should not only be explained, but taught just like any content material.* You might also like to use the following Procedure Checklist to help determine procedures in your classroom.

What is my procedure?

- Roll call, absentees, students who leave early
- Tardy students
- Behavior during PA announcements
- Distributing supplies and materials
- Student movement within the room
- Headings for papers
- Degree of student talk during seat work
- What students do when they are finished

Comments

*See Appendix A-16 through A-19 for sample lesson plans

Procedures

What is my procedure?

Comments

- Putting away supplies and equipment
- Dismissing the class
- Cues or signals for getting student attention
- Makeup work
- Fountain, sink, bathroom, pencil sharpener
- Lining up procedures
- Playground
- Fire and disaster drills
- Lunch procedures
- Hall movement
- What to do when there is an interruption

Early parent communication

Opening day letter

Establishing expectations includes communicating and building a rapport with parents. A good time to start this is with a note home on the first day.* This letter may include:

- Introduction
- Preferred supplies
- Ways to contact me when necessary
- Upcoming events

***See Appendix A-1 through A-4 for Sample letters.**

(These letters are more applicable for elementary school parents. Secondary teachers may wish to consider a similar idea for use with the first open house or parent meeting. Check with your administrators to see what procedure is followed at your school.)

Activities

If you have followed the suggestions given for planning the first few days, you should now be ready to plan for activities that will help students to feel successful. Initial lessons and seat work should be kept simple and easy. This will help students to learn routines and procedures with less effort and frustration.

What you are able to accomplish may depend on interruptions and your accuracy in pacing students work time. You may want to over plan for the first days' activities.

Initial lessons and seat work should be kept simple.

Typical activities

Greeting students

1. Meet students at the door with a smile.
2. Teacher's name and class name on blackboard.
3. Have name tags available and/or on desks.
4. Provide appropriate seat work-color picture, dot-to-dot, brain teaser, etc.

Introductions

1. Verbally, or by letter form, teacher introduces him/herself with a few personal notes of interests about his/her education, pets, hobbies, family, sports
2. Students introduce themselves
 - A. Introducing him/herself, child can answer teacher's letter
 - B. Students interview each other and introduce each other to the class
 - C. Use an icebreaker activity**

*See Appendix A-16 through A-19 for sample lesson plans.

**See Appendix A-29 through A-35 for sponge activities

Activities

Familiarize yourself with classroom and other high usage areas

1. Coat rooms/coat hooks/lockers
2. Lunch room
3. Pencil sharpeners
4. Frequently used supplies
5. Lavatory/hall passes
6. Center activities
7. Containers for homework
8. Fire/earthquake drill directions (poster)

Presentation of rules, procedures and consequences

1. Teach
2. Model
3. Practice
4. Monitor behavior*

Content activities

1. Choose activities that children can be successful at in content areas
2. Initially, focus on whole group instruction
3. Avoid ability level grouping for the first few days
4. Plan backup material for those students who complete assignments quickly

*Time fillers***

1. Good books to read aloud/silently
2. Simple games (i.e. flash cards, Bingo, Hangman, 7 up, puzzles)
3. Brain teasers
4. Homework
5. Extra credit

Administrative activities

1. Attendance
2. Lunch
3. Dismissal
4. Special classes
5. Announcements/handouts/flyers
6. Letter to parents
7. Distribution of supplies

*See previous material on page 33.

** See Appendix A-29 through A-35 for sponge activities.

Assessing the first days

Helping students assess themselves

It is important to take time at the end of each day to direct students to reflect on the day's events. Asking a simple question such as, "tell me one thing we learned today" (or "tell me one thing we learned in reading, math, etc. today"), can help students to focus on specific activities. After a brief discussion of the day, the students can be led into a personal assessment by answering a series of questions. Asking what students liked, didn't like and want to do tomorrow can help students formulate their own personal evaluation of the day.

You can increase student's awareness of what and how much they are learning.

Another way of having students look at the day with a critical eye, especially with older students, is to use a "PMI." PMI is asking students what was a **positive** about the class, a **minus**, and/or something that was **interesting** about the day. Primary students can draw response and older students can write on paper or in a journal. Students can share in small groups, with the whole group, or take it home and share with parents. By including these activities in your day, you have increased the students awareness of what and how much they are learning. Also, you have increased school/home communication by having students focus daily on the academic successes they are experiencing and, in turn, sharing those with their parents.

Daily reflection log

A good way to begin monitoring your own progress as a teacher is to spend 5-10 minutes at the end of each day to reflect on the day's events. It is critical for you to monitor your progress as you begin, but it will be even more helpful as the year progresses. This reflective practice will help you to:

1. Problem solve
2. Plan
3. Monitor and adjust
4. Make appropriate choices
5. Recognize problems to enhance the learning environment

Here is a list of topics to reflect on. Focus on one to two topics each day to write on, answering these questions.

1. What worked well and why did it work?
2. What needs fine tuning?
3. What do I need to do to enhance this area or whom do I need to see?

Topics

Discipline
Management
Rules and procedures
Room arrangement
Daily flow
Time on task
Student interest level
Students developing
responsibility

Sample daily log

Room Arrangement, September 3:

1. What went well and why did it work?
The high traffic areas seemed to work well today. Children had plenty of room to hang coats, sharpen pencils and wash hands.

The hamster cage is in an area where it easily distracted several children. It needs to be moved. Perhaps, I'll move it to the back of the room so as not to be so easily distractible.

Daily reflection log

Choose one or two topics each day and spend 5-10 minutes recording your reflection. Make additional copies of log as needed. See sample log on previous page.

Class _____ Date _____

1. What went well and why did it work?

2. What needs fine tuning?

3. What do I need to do to enhance this area or whom do I need to see?

Chapter Four

On Your Way

Establishing a Positive Environment

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Parent Communication

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Introduction

A harmonious classroom is developed through a teacher's awareness of how to create a positive learning environment with emphasis on building a child's self-esteem. Through intentional, specific teacher behaviors and strategies, you will make the difference in how your classroom "feels" - to you and your students.

As you read the following sections on self-esteem and discipline, bear in mind that it is your behavior and your reaction to student behavior that will ultimately determine the climate of your classroom.

You will make the difference in how your Classroom "feels."

Building student self-esteem

Self-esteem is how people feel about themselves. It's their perception of self-worth. If students have positive self-esteem, they feel good about themselves. If students have negative self-esteem they will not value themselves and will be presented to others as negative. Ultimately, the result of self-esteem shows up everywhere.

Since there is a correlation between academic achievement and self-esteem, you become a facilitator of self-esteem and can make a difference. You can promote a feeling within a child of being lovable and capable. As the teacher, you can create a safe and accepting environment where the child feels free to grow and change. As you begin to shape a child's self-esteem, you also begin to nurture your own.

Tips for fostering self-esteem

- be non-judgmental; accept students as they are
- validate feelings
- see uniqueness
- encourage positively; say "You can succeed."
- reaffirm a child's existence; a touch, a compliment
- respect others' feelings
- provide undivided recognition
- provide a safe classroom; minimize risk
- foster openness and honesty
- participate, as well as facilitate; share feelings
- keep boundaries that allow give and take
- emphasize what each child knows
- use humor, but not at the expense of students
- give children choices
- teach self-awareness
- acknowledge positive qualities
- use "I" messages- "Heather, I hear exciting events in your story."
- separate the action from the person
- demonstrate appropriate ways of releasing anger
- listen reflectively and genuinely
- give support for growth and change
- develop skill to help child feel better about her/himself
- use praise

Building student self-esteem

Praise

All children do not react to praise the same way. Your objective in using praise is to get children to develop an internal locus of control to improve behavior and academic achievement. Suggested uses of praise:

- Give praise for desired behavior, and define the behavior. “Thank you for picking up the paper. You really helped the class save time.”
- Vary your praise and be creative. Don’t use trite phrases such as: great, fine, and wonderful.
- At times, give praise privately to avoid competition, embarrassment, or “teacher’s pet” syndrome.
- Praise needs to be genuine and matched by your body language.
- Draw the student’s attention to her/his effort and ability. “You sure learned those 10 addition facts quickly. Hawaii must have spent a lot of time practicing.”
- Be careful not to compare children to each other. “Gee, you have almost caught up to Karen.”
- Avoid teacher pleasing phrases. “I really like the way you used descriptive words in your poem.”
- Don’t minimize a child’s success. “Your math assignment must have been easy. You finished so quickly.”

Discipline principles

In order to develop a discipline program that will work for you and your students, there are some ideas that you need to examine. The bad news is that at some time or another, **all kids misbehave**. The good news is that **all kids can behave**. Further, **you have the right and responsibility to discipline your students**. It's important at the outset to clarify the difference between discipline and punishment. The purpose of discipline is to teach responsibility, train students in needed skill or correct an existing problem situation. The purpose of punishment, however, is to impose a penalty or seek revenge. The focus of discipline is on behavior, and what behavior will occur in the future. The focus of punishment is the misbehaving child and what's occurred in the past. Discipline can, and should, be imposed with a positive attitude and concern for the student's dignity. Punishment generally is delivered as a negative response generated by anger or frustration. Maintaining a positive relationship with students that facilitates a good learning situation is an important consideration in how you use discipline with your students.

The good news is that all kids can behave.

The following are some principles on which you might base your discipline plan. Consider them as you determine how best to work with your students.

- Dealing with student behavior is part of your job. Discipline should have as much energy and enthusiasm as content.
- Always treat students with dignity. This is the most important element in discipline. Treating kids with dignity works for you. Not using dignity can work against you.
- Responsibility is more important than obedience. Obedience is doing what we are told. Responsibility involves making the best decision. Sometimes being obedient is being responsible. Sometimes they conflict.
- Students must learn to accept responsibility. When a student tries to shift responsibility to others, guide him/her to accept it as his/her own. A student who says, "My parents forgot to sign my paper" should be encouraged to reword the sentence to "I forgot to get my paper signed."
- All interventions can stop misbehavior. More important is what happens later:
 - ✓to motivation for learning
 - ✓to student's sense of responsibility
 - ✓to student dignity
 - ✓to student-teacher communication

Discipline principles

Guidelines for effective discipline

1. Monitor student behavior

Use an “active eye.” See what is going on. Don’t become preoccupied with someone or something and ignore the rest of the class. It’s said that one teacher on his/her feet is worth two in the seat. This benefits your discipline program as well as having an effective teaching strategy.

2. Consistency

Have the same expectations for appropriate behavior for all students. Your students should know that you will enforce rules consistently and apply an appropriate consequence. Your goal is to be fair, but that might mean not applying the identical consequence to all students. If one student frequently fails to return homework you may apply a different consequence than you would to a student who forgets his/her homework for the first time. In knowing that you’ll be fair, but not equal, your students should understand that being equal is not always fair. In order to be consistent, be certain that the consequences you apply are reasonable and appropriate.

3. Prompt management of inappropriate behavior

Effective classroom managers know that misbehavior must be handled immediately or there is risk of a snowballing effect. Instead of one or two students involved, soon there may be several. In order to provide maximum time for learning and to reduce minor behavior problems, there are some strategies that you can employ that deal with behavior in the least amount of time, with the least disruption and the least negative feelings.

- **Eye contact**

Simply looking the student directly in the eye for prolonged contact while you continue your lesson sends a nonverbal message that says “I saw what you did and I want it stopped.”

- **Proximity**

Continuing your lesson while you move about the room, pausing near the “trouble spots” can let the students know that even though they are not near the teacher’s desk, they are still expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior. Getting “boxed in” behind your desk or podium encourages misbehavior in the far corners of the room.

- **Pause**

The continuous sound of “teacher talk” can provide students with a noise screen for their own conversations. An occasional pause - just a few seconds of silence - can bring an off-task student back into focus.

Discipline principles

Guidelines for effective discipline, continued

□ **Touch/gesture**

This can be added to the above strategy for emphasis. A touch on the shoulder - not a squeeze - or shaking of your head helps stress your message to the student.

□ **Asking for a response**

Hearing your name can be an attention-getter, even if you're not paying attention. Working an off-task student's name into a question can often bring the student back into the lesson. Remembering the student's dignity, it would be appropriate to say the student's name first, in order to allow them to hear the question they'll be expected to answer. The purpose is to get the student back into the lesson, not to embarrass him/her.

□ **Praising appropriate behavior**

With larger numbers of misbehaving students, addressing the whole group may be necessary. Rather than addressing the negative behavior, praising the students demonstrating appropriate behavior cues the misbehaving students and reinforces the other students.

□ **Active participation**

Sometimes having the students respond to a question or become involved in an activity can eliminate the undesired behavior. Asking for a show of hands, having students perform a physical activity or having each student write a quick answer to a question can make all students accountable for an immediate response.

□ **Rewards and reinforcement**

Rewarding students with enjoyable activity that is contingent on appropriate behavior can be effective in motivating students to commit to the completion of a task. "If we finish this chapter by 9:45, we'll have time to play the map game."

Hearing your name can be an attention-getter, even if you're not paying attention.

Discipline principles

Tips for effective discipline

- Give simple incentives for positive behaviors “The row that is quiet first goes to lunch first.” Give, rather than take away.
- Create a warm friendly atmosphere-the optimum condition for learning. Firmness does not negate a warm friendly atmosphere. A low, controlled voice is all the “ammo” you need for most classroom situations.
- Whatever you expect your class to be, you must be: on time, organized, prepared, cheerful, polite to all. Set a good, responsible example.
- Start fresh every day. What happened yesterday is finished. Act accordingly.
- Listen to what students are thinking and feeling. Students misbehave when they feel angry, fearful or bored. Teachers who can convey understanding are usually able to short-circuit the disruption.
- Provide instruction at levels that match the student’s ability. Misbehavior often arises out of frustration if the work is too difficult or out of boredom if the work has little value.

Severe discipline problems

Even though you may have planned your day to avoid down time, planned a stimulating, motivating lesson, taught the rules, consequences and procedures to your class, you will probably have a situation where the misbehavior is severe. Consequences, whether for major or minor misbehavior, should be logical, natural and related to the rule. Now is the time to think about what your options are. In order to be most effective, find out what the limits are in your school.

- Can you keep students after school?
- Is there a detention policy?
- What is the procedure for getting assistance from a counselor or principal?
- In what cases should the principal be involved in your discipline procedures?

Enlisting the assistance of parents is an important strategy to employ.

Having this knowledge will make it possible for you to keep your sense of autonomy in handling any situation. Getting assistance from others is different than giving away your role in the discipline plan.

Enlisting the assistance of parents is an important strategy to employ. Your approach will have a lot to do with the level of cooperation you might receive. Very few parents object to a teacher approaching them with an idea that might help their child if the idea shows the teacher’s commitment to the success of that child. Parents may react negatively when told, “Here’s what your child did today!” Consider parents as a part of the support for a mutually agreed-upon solution to discipline problems.

Introduction

Bringing parents and teachers together is a difficult job. A consistent joint effort on the part of the home and school is the key to the total development of the child and a means of strengthening the sense of community. The strong parent-teacher relationship is often overlooked. Through ongoing communication, parents and teachers begin working together and understanding each other's responsibilities and expectations.

The strong parent-teacher relationship is often overlooked.

There are several avenues of communication which you will need to address and they are touched upon in the next few pages.

Back to school night

The first formal introduction to parents will usually be in the form of some sort of “Back to school night” activity. This may have different names, but usually is a time to introduce yourself and your curriculum.

1. All about parents

You will want to talk to colleagues to find out what parents expect from this session. You should also seek information regarding the demography of the parent population.

2. About you

As a first year teacher, many parents will be coming to “check you out.” Be prepared to instill confidence regarding your instructional abilities. Communicate about your relevant experiences (camp counselor, club sponsor, etc.). Let your enthusiasm show!

3. All about your classroom

You might consider discussing the following:

- rules and operating procedures
- the subject(s)
- goals of the curriculum
- expectations for students
- instructional materials

4. Your presentation

You will want to be well prepared for this session. Some of the following techniques may be helpful:

- academic content standards
- handouts of curriculum, grading procedures, homework criteria, etc.
- use of overhead
- sample lesson
- outline of what you are going to address (watch your timing to be sure to hit all the relevant points)

5. Working together

This is a good opportunity for you to identify how home and school can work together:

- Inform parents of when, where, and how you can be reached.
- Discuss how parent’s can best support their child’s learning out of school.

6. Cautionary notes

- Don’t let one parent monopolize the discussion or sidetrack you.
- Have a conference sign-up sheet available
- Don’t get caught in a student conference situation. This is not the intent of the session.

Effective communication

Once you have opened the doors of communication with parents, you are on the road to developing a trusting relationship. There are several ongoing means of communication such as phone calls, newsletters*, progress reports, notes, happy-o-grams, volunteering and conferences (informal and formal). Here are some general tips for fostering effective communication.

How to communicate

1. Be professional in dealing with parents (avoid rumors and gossip.)
2. Be assertive, yet flexible enough to take appropriate suggestions from others.
3. Be direct with parents; be clear in what you say. Think through, in advance, what you are going to say.
4. Be sure to listen to parents; show respect.
5. Be friendly
6. Be positive with parents, even when discussing problems with their child. One way is to involve parents in the decision-making process.
7. Be sure to use plain English; don't use jargon a parent might not understand.
8. Be sure to have someone proofread any notes and/or newsletters going home.

Frequency of communication

1. Communicate as often as needed or desired.
2. For documentation, keep a record/log of notes, calls and other communication to and from parents.
3. If you have any doubt about the communication you are going to send to a parent, discuss it first with a colleague or your principal.
4. Inform the principal of any problems. This way the principal can be in a position to back you in case he/she receives an unexpected communication from a parent.

Communicate as often as needed or desired.

*See Appendix A-8 through A-9 for newsletter tips.

Parent teacher conferences

Tips and suggestions for parent conferences

- Make clear the four purposes of a conference
 - a. information getting
 - b. information giving
 - c. joint problem-solving
 - d. development of mutual trust
- Let parents see first-hand how their child is doing. Come prepared with computer printout or grade book, reports, papers, a copy of the textbook, grading policy, course objective and anything else that might enhance parents understanding of their child's progress. Parents are impressed with teachers who are organized. Remember to protect student confidentiality when opening your grade book.
- Sit in an arrangement where you are not behind your desk.
- Establish a positive rapport by making your first statement about the student a positive one - even if you really have to dig for one.
- When you are scheduling conferences (elementary), first call those who need the conference the most so that they have the widest range of times to choose from. You want them to come!
- Don't assume the adult's relationship to the child is the natural parent (many stepparents and guardian situations occur).
- Try to get a realistic picture of the home situation before you make any suggestions. Often your perspective is changed when you understand what the student has gone through.
- Ask the parents for their perception of the child's strengths and weaknesses before offering yours. Thank them for their helpful insight and seek their input. Be positive!
- Do NOT compare the student with a sister, brother or friend. Do NOT refer to the whole class in a negative way. Do NOT offer outside services (resource people, tutoring) that you can't guarantee will be available. Do NOT forget what you promised to do, and do it promptly.
- Don't let a parent berate you. If a parent becomes verbally abusive, simply say that you do not think that the objectives of the conference are being met and that you believe another time would prove to be more beneficial. The next conference should be in the office with an administrator and/or union representative.

Parent teacher conferences

Tips and suggestions for parent conferences

- ❑ Try to end every conference on a happy note. If some hostility was shown, document it by making a brief written evaluation of what transpired and keep it for future reference. You might want to inform your principal to expect a possible call.
- ❑ Stick to your schedule on conference day/night. If the parent seems reluctant to respond to your lead, schedule another time and date to finish up loose ends.
- ❑ After the conference is over, you may want to ask yourself the following questions?
 - ✓ How well prepared was I?
 - ✓ How well did I use time?
 - ✓ Did I start on a positive note?
 - ✓ Did I listen attentively?
 - ✓ Did I involve the parents?
 - ✓ Were follow-up plans made, if needed?
 - ✓ Did I gain any insights?
 - ✓ What needs to be changed?

Many parents do not have time or the opportunity to get involved in their child's school as they would like. However, they still desire a quality education. We should let all parents know how much we value and encourage their support and participation in this important aspect of their child's life. We know that they should and probably will respond in a positive way and in any way they can. Once we have reached out to them, exchanged our expectations of each other, encouraged them to keep us abreast of important happenings in their child's life, we can look forward to a great partnership and a rewarding year.

Parents desire a quality education for their children.

*See Appendix A-5 through A-7 for sample letter(s) to be sent to parents prior to conference.

Parent teacher conferences

Suggestions for parent teacher conferences

Teachers, like most professionals, have developed their own special language. There are many expressions which we use that may leave a false or undesirable impression. Here are a list of expressions which may leave a negative impression, when a kinder, more positive, phrase might be used:

Negative expressions

Must
Lazy
Trouble maker
Uncooperative
Cheats
Stupid
Never does the right thing
Below average
Truant
Impertinent
Steal
Unclean
Dumbbell
Help
Poor
Calamity
Disinterested
Expense
Contribute
Stubborn
Insolent
Liar
Wastes time
Sloppy
Incurred failure
Mean
Time and again
Dubious
Poor grade of work
Clumsy
Profane
Selfish
Rude
Bashful
Show-off
Will fail him

Positive expressions

Should
Can do more when he tries
Disturbs the class
Should learn to work with others
Depends on others to do his work
Can do better work with help
Can learn to do the right thing
Working at his own level
Absent without permission
Discourteous
Without permission
Poor habits
Capable of doing better
Cooperation
Handicapped
Lost opportunity
Complacent, not challenged
Investment
Invest in
Insist on having his own way
Outspoken
Tendency to stretch the truth
Could make better use of his time
Could do neater work
Failed to meet requirements
Difficulty in getting along with others
Usually
Uncertain
Achieving below their apparent ability level
Not physically well coordinated
Uses unbecoming language
Seldom shares with others
Inconsiderate of others
Reserved
Tries to get attention
Has a chance of passing, if ...

Taken from Conference Time, National Education Association

Evaluating students

Student evaluation is an ongoing cooperative process among teachers, students, and parents. It begins when the child walks into class the first day and the teacher begins observing daily skills and behaviors. There are many purposes for evaluation, including:

1. Gathering information on student progress to report to parents.
2. Gathering information on student progress to better meet future instructional needs.
3. To make students aware of their strengths and needs.
Evaluation can be done formally, including standardized tests, teacher-made tests, book tests, quizzes, daily work and homework. It can also be done informally by observation.

Tips for evaluation

- You will need to have a procedure for evaluating and grading in place at the beginning of the year because:
 - A. It will help you determine the evaluation methods you will use.
 - B. You will need to explain this carefully to students and parents.
- Talk with other teachers or administrators on grade level or subject area to learn about appropriate evaluation techniques and school policies.
- It is an important technique as a professional to develop good observational skills, focusing in on the whole child (social, emotional, physical, and academic).
- Keep an anecdotal record of specific student behaviors. Example: “Johnny stared out the window for 20 minutes today during instruction.”
- Keep a folder for each student to file samples of daily work, all correspondence to and from home, copies of student self-evaluation and student anecdotal records.
- Refer to student cumulative record to gather information such as: age, family unit, previous teacher’s comments, health and referrals for special services.
- Talk with other professionals who come in contact with the student. Be careful not to be unduly influenced by comments.
- Try to give tests midweek because students tend to perform better. On secondary level, check to see if a test day has been set.
- Determine a specific objective for each assignment and check the assignment for that objective.
- Develop methods for students to check papers occasionally. It is not necessary for the teacher to grade all assignments.
- Keep students and parents apprised of school progress with a progress report at the midpoint of a marking period.

Evaluating students

Reporting of evaluations

There are many ways to inform students and their parents of the child's progress in school.* It is important to have this kind of communication with the students and parents long before the first report card goes home.

Methods of reporting

1. Notes sent home
2. Checked and returned work
3. Sending home results from standardized tests
4. Telephone calls home-reporting outstanding performance as well as concerns
5. Progress reports
6. Teacher-student conferences
7. Parent-teacher conferences
8. Student-parent-teacher conferences
9. Report cards

*See Appendix A-7 for a sample of student self-evaluation forms (My Report Card).

Teacher evaluation

Teacher evaluations by administrators are often dreaded by beginning teachers. Although you may feel added stress, the purpose of these is to validate the positive features of your lesson and offer constructive criticism on needed areas. Keeping in mind, the following tips may help you.

Tips for principal observation

1. If possible, teach a lesson in a content area and use a format you are most comfortable with, without being overly creative or innovative.
2. Be prepared.
3. Dress professionally, but comfortably.
4. Inform the students that the principal will be coming to observe and why. Example: “The principal is coming into our class today to watch the teaching - learning process and how it is taking place in our classroom.”
5. Set up observation for a time when you feel the children are the most attentive.
6. Have specific objectives for your lesson. Give a copy of your objectives to your observer.
7. Don’t push through a lesson that you see is not successful. Make an alternate plan, just in case.

Post-observation conference with your administrator

1. Ask for a post conference soon after the observation.
2. Ask for a post conference scheduled after school so there is ample time.
3. Ask for a summary -
What did you see as my successes?
What did you see as my weaknesses?
4. Ask for clarification and examples to be given by the observer during the post conference.
5. Be sure to accept your strengths.

***Be sure to accept
your strengths.***

Instructional tips

Require participation by all students in whole group instruction by using the following

- Signal the class that someone else may be called on to add to, clarify or summarize another student's response.
- While some students are performing a task at the chalkboard, require others to do the same task in a workbook or worksheet.
- Call on students in random or unpredictable pattern.
- Ask questions of the class in a fashion that implies that any one of them could be asked to respond.
- Make use of wait time after asking the question and after student's initial response.
- Have materials ready so that your planning and preparation are not the causes of student being off task.
- To keep students motivated, vary your routines and materials.
- Plan for, and provide, appropriate activities for the early finisher and the "nothing-to-do" students (not just more of the same). Consider provisions to meet the needs of slower paced students, such as modifying assignments, giving help or giving additional time. Beware of holding up the majority of the class for these slower paced students.
- Provide frequent shifts of activities as opposed to long periods of just listening, copying or completing multiple worksheets.
- Consider ways to reduce the time that students spend waiting: for the teacher, lining up, etc.
- Realize that busy work types of duplicating sheets may keep students occupied but may not be a worthy "on-task" activity.
- Increase teacher-student academic interactions. Ask students more questions including open-ended, critical and creative types.
- Make certain that high, yet reasonable, expectations for all students are clearly stated.
- Move around the room regularly and systematically to insure on-task behavior and to answer student questions.
- Plan smooth transitions between instructional activities thereby reducing off-task behavior.

Time saving tips

- Make a “to do” list every morning. Check off tasks as they are completed.
- Train students to hand papers in, right side up, with their names at the top, into your completed work basket. Have a basket for each subject of class so papers are sorted for you.
- Assign each student a partner. When a student is absent, his or her partner can gather notes, handouts and assignments that the absent student has missed.
- When students check each other’s papers, have the checker sign their name at the bottom. Students are more careful when their names are on the checked papers.
- When you put student(s) names in your grade book, number the names in consecutive order. Have students write their names and number on their papers. You (or a student) can quickly put the papers in order. You can easily see which papers are missing and, when they’re corrected, they will be in the correct order to put in your grade book.
- Use an answer column along the right margin of the paper when doing math assignments from textbooks or short answer assignments from textbooks or short answer assignments. Have students transfer answers from the problem to the answer column. You can correct half a dozen papers at a time by looking at several answer columns. (Learning to copy answers into an answer column carefully is an important skill, especially for taking standardized tests.)
- Make a stencil from which you can cut out the answers to check multiple choice answer sheets.
- Put answers on transparency to have students check homework while you take attendance.
- Ask for clerical help from parents. Choose tasks for parents to do at home on a weekly or monthly basis. Ideas include: typing newsletters, preparing teaching materials, preparing book club orders, etc.
- For short warm-up activities, cut worksheets into mini-strips containing 4 or 5 items. This mini-worksheet can be done in a few minutes and helps to prepare the students for the lesson to come.
- Designate one spot on the chalkboard where you write what students should do as they enter your classroom. Teach students to look there and begin without wasting time. It will give an orderly beginning to your classes. (Good time to use a mini-worksheet - see above.)

Make a “to do” list every morning.

Time saving tips

- Write frequently used direction on chart instead of the chalkboard. When needed, hang the chart on the chalkboard. Good idea for: assignment guidelines, book report outline, paper heading, studying for test, many others.
- If your classroom is far away from the office or teacher workroom, keep a supply box “hidden” somewhere. Include: pens, pencils, scissors, class list with student phone numbers, tape, etc.
- Save time by designing your own lesson plan book. Take a page from your book and put in room numbers, times, subjects, special classes and any other constant features. Duplicate this page and, when you make your lesson plans weekly, you’ll only need to add the lessons for the week.
- Place extra copies of worksheets in a “homework box”. Students can help themselves for extra credit or extra practice.
- Identify your supplies (pencils, scissors, markers, etc.) with masking or colored tape strip.
- Use an overhead projector and transparency to write class notes and presentations instead of chalkboard. This way you can date and save them, use them again, give them to an absent student, or review them on another day.
- Make a poster to keep a daily list of assignments for students who are absent.
- Ideas for “floating” teachers: Make a box or use an AV cart to keep your “desk” materials with you as you travel from room to room.
- Instead of collecting checked homework every day, have students keep a folder and collect once a week for recording.
- Designate one day a week to send student work home to parents.
- Refile your materials as soon as possible so you can find them later.
- Have a bulletin board that includes special class schedules, announcements, lunch menu, or important things you or your substitute might need.
- Use one calendar to keep track of future important events - pocket calendar, desk calendar, lesson plan book, etc.
- Make two blank copies of student worksheets - one to use, one to file for future reference or to make copies for an answer key.
- Teach students to do as many clerical tasks (attendance, lunch count, etc.) as possible.
- Laminate often used materials for reuse in subsequent years.
- Have a personal care kit at school, which might include aspirin, needle and thread, etc.

Professional tips

- Dress as a professional.
An adult coming into the school should be able to tell the difference between you and the students.
- Model respectful behavior towards:
 - ✓ Self
 - ✓ Students
 - ✓ Staff
 - ✓ Parents
- Keep student information confidential.
- Keep informed about educational issues:
 - ✓ Local
 - ✓ State
 - ✓ National
- Action should reflect your belief that all children can learn. (You are the teacher for all children, not just 80% of them.)
- Be a salesperson for your content area as well as the profession.
- Be an active participant to improve the teaching profession.
- Continue to improve your professional skills by being a lifelong learner:
 - ✓ Read journals
 - ✓ Attend seminars
 - ✓ Participate in workshops and inservices

Educational labels

ABCFT	ABC Federation of Teachers
ACT	American College of Testing
AFT	American Federation of Teachers
ADA	Average Daily Attendance
AP	Advanced Placement
BAC	Bilingual Advisory Committee
BTSA	Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program
CAI	Computer Assisted Instruction
CAT	California Achievement Test
CTBS	Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills
DAC	District Advisory Committee
DBAC	District Bilingual Advisory Committee
EIP	Early Intervention Program, preschool special day class
ELD	English Language Development
ELL	English Language Learner
DIS	Designated Instructional Services (Speech, Adaptive P.E.)
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EIA	Economic Impact Aid; funds for bilingual programs
EIP	Early Intervention Program, preschool special day class

Continued on next page

Professional tips

Educational labels, continued

EO	English Only
ETN	Educational Telecommunication Network (Series of in-service sessions via telecommunications)
FEP	Fluent English Proficient
IEP	Individual Educational Plan; forms filled out for each student who qualifies for a special education program
IIP	Individual Instruction Plan; forms filled out for each GATE student not in a cluster or special day class
LACOE	Los Angeles County Office of Education
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
PASS	Peer Assistance and Support Service
PTA	Parent/Teacher Association
PTO	Parent/Teacher Organization
RETAC	Regional Educational Television Advisory Council (LACOE)
ROP	Regional Occupational Program
RSP	Resource Specialist Program for students with special learning education needs
SARB	Student Attendance Review Board; students are referred for excessive absences/tardies (district)
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
SDAIE	Special Designed Academic Instruction in English/Sheltered Instruction
SDC	Special Day Class; self-contained special education class
SDL	Special Day Class for students with severe Disorders of Language
SELPA	Special Education Local Plan Area
SIP	School Improvement Program
SSC	School Site Council
SST	School Study Team; meets to discuss/plan programs for students at risk
STULL	State-mandated teacher evaluation
Title 1	Federally funded program which provides for remedial, compensatory education for identified students.
Title 2	Federal funds that are used for highly qualified professional staff development.
Title VII	Federal funds to support educational programs for limited English speaking students.
Voc. Ed.	Vocation Education

Tips for coping with stress

It is not surprising that teaching is considered to be one of the more stressful careers. Much of the stress is beneficial to helping teachers live stimulating lives by pushing us to rewarding performance levels. However, there is a point where the pressure can get to us and begin to tear us down. This is called harmful, unrelieved stress or distress. *Over the year, far too many excellent teachers have left our profession because they couldn't cope with the stress. We do not want you to join that group of teachers!*

Feelings you may experience your first year:

- day-to-day tension with accompanying headaches, irritability and sore muscles
- frustration (spinning your wheels); working harder and accomplishing less
- a feeling of being overwhelmed by the demands of teaching
- routine boredom (the slump or rut that has encouraged many districts to add a midwinter break to the school-year calendar)
- lack of fulfillment and a dissatisfaction with teaching (“Maybe I wasn’t cut out for this”)
- a feeling of relief when a vacation break is coming up so you can get a chance to catch up and revitalize
- feeling of isolation (“Does anyone know or care how I feel?”)
- feeling of being looked upon as different because you are a newcomer (Don’t worry. You won’t always be a rookie.”)

***Feeling of isolation
 (“Does anyone know
 or care how I feel?”)***

Tips for coping with stress

Handling stress in a positive, healthy, productive way:

- Don't let problems pile up. Deal with them, if possible, as they occur.
- Find an outlet for tension reduction that works for you (exercise, hobbies, puzzles, games, etc.)
- Take good care of your health by having proper nutrition and adequate sleep.
- Avoid negative people, especially the grippers in the teacher's lounge.
- Schedule quality time with your family and friends and guard it selfishly.
- Learn to say "no" to well-meaning people who want to place demands on you that would cause undue stress. If you get hooked, delegate!
- Come a little early to school and relax and get set for a full day. Also, stay a little later after school to unwind and tie up loose ends. Solitude helps you to handle those frenzied situations.
- Set some time management priorities and make some decisions about your standards and expectations for yourself. You may be your own worst enemy.
- Maintain your sense of humor as you learn from your mistakes.
- Take the initiative to do something about stress. Find or start a support group to share ways of coping. If you need professional help, consult the personnel office of a colleague for a referral. This doesn't show weakness, but the wisdom to know when outside help is necessary.

Schedule quality time with your family and friends and guard it selfishly.

Phases of first-year teaching: A Marathon, not a Sprint

First-year teaching is a difficult challenge. Equally challenging is figuring out ways to support and assist beginning teachers as they enter the profession. Over the course of the last two years, Ellen Moir, Director of the Santa Cruz Consortium New Teacher Project and Director of Student Teaching at UC Santa Cruz, has been working with six colleagues to support the efforts of new teachers. In their day-to-day interactions with new teachers, they have noted a number of phases in the development of new teachers during their first year. While not every new teachers goes through this exact sequence, Ms. Moir believes these phases are very useful in helping everyone involved, - administrators, other support personnel, and teacher education faculty- in the process of supporting new teachers. These teachers move through several phases from anticipation, to survival, to disillusionment, to rejuvenation, to reflection; then back to anticipation. Here's a look at the stages through which new teachers move during that crucial first year. New teacher quotations are taken from journal entries and end-of-the-year program evaluations.

Anticipation Phase

New teachers tend to romanticize the role of the teacher and the position.

The anticipation phase begins during the student teaching portion of preservice preparation. The closer student teachers get to completing their assignment, the more excited and anxious they become about their first teaching position. They tend to romanticize the role of the teacher and the position. New teachers enter with a tremendous commitment to making a difference and a somewhat idealistic view of how to accomplish their goals. "I was elated to get the job but terrified about going from the simulated experience of student teaching to being the person completely in charge." This feeling of excitement carries new teachers through the first few weeks of school.

Survival Phase

The first month of school is very overwhelming for new teachers. They are learning a lot and at a very rapid pace. Beginning teachers are instantly bombarded with a variety of problems and situations they had not anticipated. Despite increased field experiences and required courses in teacher preparation programs, new teachers are caught off guard by the realities of teaching. "I

thought I'd be busy, something like student teaching, but this is crazy. I'm feeling like I'm constantly running. It's hard to focus on other aspects of my life."

During the survival phase most new teachers are struggling to keep their heads above water. They become very focused and consumed with the day-to-day routine of teaching. There is little time to stop and reflect on their experiences. New teachers spend up to seventy hours a week on schoolwork. Particularly overwhelming is the constant need to develop curriculum. Veteran teachers routinely reuse excellent lessons and units from the past. The new teachers, still uncertain of what will really work, must develop much of this for the first time. Even depending on unfamiliar prepared curriculum such as textbooks is enormously time consuming.

During the survival phase most new teachers are struggling to keep their heads above water.

"I thought there would be more time to get everything done. Its like working three jobs: 7:30-2:30, 2:30-6:00, with more time spent in the evening and on weekends."

Although tired, and surprised by the amount of work, first-year teachers usually maintain a tremendous amount of energy and commitment during the survival phase.

Phases of first-year teaching: (Continued)

DISILLUSIONMENT PHASE

After six to eight weeks of nonstop work, new teachers enter the disillusionment phase. The intensity and length of the phase varies among new teachers. The extensive time commitment, the realization that things are probably not going as smoothly as they want, and low morale contribute to this period of disenchantment. New teachers begin questioning both their commitment and their competence. Many new teachers get sick during this phase.

Compounding an already difficult situation is the fact that new teachers are confronted with several new events during this time frame. They are faced with back-to-school night, parent conferences, and their first formal evaluation by the site administrator. Each of these important milestones places an already vulnerable individual in a very stressful situation.

Back-to-school night means giving a speech to parents about plans for the year that may yet be unclear in the new teacher's mind.

Back-to-school night means giving a speech to parents about plans for the year that may yet be unclear in the new teachers' mind. Some parents are uneasy when they realize the teacher is just beginning and sometimes pose questions or make demands that intimidate a new teacher.

Parent conferences require that new teachers be highly organized, articulate, tactful, and prepared to confer with parents about each child's course of study and program. This type of communication with parents can be awkward and difficult for a beginning teacher. New teachers generally begin with the idea that parents are partners in the learning process and are not prepared for parents concerns or criticism.

Unfortunately, these criticisms occur right at the time when their self-esteem is waning.

This is also the first time that new teachers are formally evaluated by their principal. They are, for the most part uncertain about the process itself and anxious about their own competence and ability to perform. Developing and presenting a "showpiece" lesson is time consuming and stressful.

At this point, the accumulated stress of the first-year teacher coupled with months of excessive time allotted to teaching often brings complaints from family members and friends. This is a very difficult and challenging phase for new entries into the profession. They express self-doubt, have lower self-esteem, and question their professional commitment. In fact, getting through this phase may be the toughest challenge they face as a new teacher.

REJUVENATION

The rejuvenation phase is characterized by the slow rise in the new teachers' attitude toward teaching. It generally begins in January. Having a winter break makes a tremendous difference for new teachers. It allows them to resume a more normal life-style, with plenty of rest, food, exercise and time for family and friends. This vacation is the first opportunity that new teachers have for organizing materials and planning curriculum. It is a time for them to sort through materials that have accumulated and prepare new ones.

This breath of fresh air gives novice teachers a broader perspective with renewed hope.

Phases of first-year teaching: (Continued)

This breath of fresh air gives novice teachers a broader perspective with renewed hope. They seem ready to put past problems behind them. A better understanding of the system, an acceptance of the realities of teaching, and a sense of accomplishment help to rejuvenate new teachers. Through their experiences in the first half of the year, beginning teachers gain new coping strategies and skills to prevent, reduce, or manage many problems they are likely to encounter in the second half of the year. Many feel a great sense of relief that they have made it through the first half of the year. During this phase, new teachers focus on curriculum development, long-term planning and teaching strategies.

“I’m really excited about my story-writing center, although the organization of it has at times been haphazard. Story writing has definitely been revived by journals.” The rejuvenation phase tends to last into spring with many ups and downs along the way.

Toward the end of this phase, new teachers begin to raise concerns about whether they can get everything done prior to the end of school. They also wonder how their students will do on the tests, questioning once again their own effectiveness as teachers.

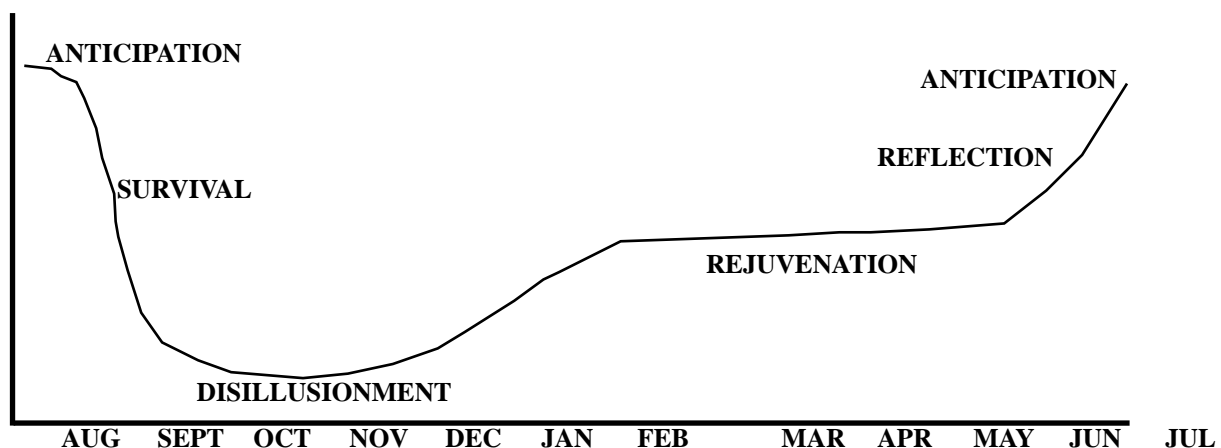
“I’m fearful of these big tests. Can you be fired if your kids do poorly? I don’t know enough about them to know what I haven’t taught and I’m sure it’s a lot.”

REFLECTION

The reflection phase beginning in May is a particularly invigorating time for first-year teachers. Reflecting back over the year, they highlight events that were successful and those that were not. They think about the various changes that they plan to make the following year in management, curriculum and teaching strategies. The end is in sight and they have almost made it; but more importantly, a vision emerges as to what their second year will look like, which brings them to a new phase of anticipation. “I think that for the new year I’d like to start the letter puppets earlier in the year to introduce the kids to more letters.”

It is critical that we assist new teachers and ease their transition from student teacher to full-time professional. Recognizing the phases new teachers go through gives us a framework within which can begin to design support programs to make the first year of teaching a more positive experience for our new colleagues.

PHASES OF FIRST YEAR TEACHING ATTITUDES TOWARD TEACHING



Homework tips

Homework is becoming a growing issue. Some schools have homework policies. Consider these purposes for homework. Homework can provide:

- different ways to monitor student learning other than tests.
- opportunity for practicing a skill or concept that has been taught.
- an opportunity to tie in school learning with real world experiences.
- open-ended activities that allow for success.
- means of communicating with the home on student progress.
- ways to actively involve the family in the student's education.
- preparing the student for in-school activities.

Homework Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- Do have a homework policy and be prepared to communicate it to students and parents.
- Do make sure students know objectives of the assignments.
- Do give feedback and acknowledgment on completion of homework.
- Do hold students responsible for completion of homework, but be sensitive to outside obligations.
- Do be aware of the resources that are, or are not, available at the student's home in order to complete the assignment.

Don'ts

- Don't give 25 problems if 5 will accomplish the objective (more is not always better)
- Don't give homework as punishment.
- Don't use homework as busy work.
- Don't assume that homework should be assigned every night. Check on your school policy.
- Don't assign homework just because a parent requests it.
- Don't make unrealistic demands on student's time.

Tips for substitutes

- Prepare a sub folder ahead of time.*
- Try not to schedule a test or quiz for a substitute.
- While planning lessons, take precautions not to incorporate manipulative materials, laboratory supplies and/or objects you don't want to disappear.
- Don't assume the substitute will be knowledgeable in your content area.
- If you feel the substitute would have difficulty following your daily lesson plan, leave one day's activities in a special folder for the sub to use.
- You may want to request a particular sub and ask colleagues for recommendations.
- Try not to be absent on Mondays and Fridays.
- Have a "buddy" teacher who can welcome your substitute and offer him/her help. When you return, check with your "buddy" to see how effective the sub was in the classroom. This arrangement can be reciprocal.
- Remember, you don't have control over what the substitute does or does not do during the day. Don't judge your effectiveness by someone else's standards.
- Remember when you were a sub and felt alone. Substitutes are people too. Make them feel welcome. Call them by their name. Do not refer to them as, "Oh, you must be Mr. Roberts today."
- You may want to inform the children ahead of time that you will be absent. If possible, preview the coming day's assignments. This preparation demonstrates to them your confidence that they can handle your not being there.

When you return, ask the children how the day went and then put the day behind you and begin anew.

*See Appendix A-20 through A-28 for tips for substitutes.

Chapter Five: Resources

Teacher stores	Page 68
Inexpensive supplies & prizes	Page 69
Books	Page 70
Corporate donations	Page 71

Teacher's stores

- A-1 Educational Supplies and Toys
7801 Canoga Ave.
Canoga Park
(818) 887-1491
- CM School Supply Co.
1025 E. Orangethorpe Ave.
Anaheim
(714) 680-6681
- Constructive Play Things
12372 Garden Grove Blvd.
Garden Grove
(714) 636-7831
(By Harbor)
(Prizes are cheap-buy in gross)
- Culver-Newlin Inc.
840 Wanamaker Ave.
Ontario
(909) 390-3715
- Lakeshore Learning Materials
2500 E. Imperial Hwy. Suite #190
Brea
(714) 256-6770
- Long Beach Teacher Supplies
5232 E. 2nd St.
Long Beach
(562) 438-9473
- Mead Products-Division of Mead Corp.
7571 Lampson Ave. #15
Garden Grove
(714) 898-4493
- Parent-Teacher Connection
4443 Candlewood
Lakewood (across from mall)
(562) 408-2322
- Pioneer Teacher's Supply
18809 S. Pioneer Blvd.
Artesia
(562) 402-7511
(10% off to teachers)
- Ranesco (Vocational Training)
634 N. Poplar. Suite # Unit G
Orange
(714) 978-9452
- Teacher Supplies
5630 E. La Palma
Anaheim Hills
(714) 777-2274
- Teacher Supplies
6561 Beach Blvd.
Buena Park
(714) 521-7607

**Check with local stores for supplies
which they may donate or discount for
TEACHERS.**

Inexpensive supplies and prizes

- Constructive Play Things
U.S. Toy Co.
12372 Garden Grove Blvd. (by Harbor)
(714) 636-7831 *Cheap prizes
- Costco Wholesale
A. Orangethorpe/Harbor-Fullerton (714) 738-7520
B. Norwalk **(562) 929-9885**
C. Signal Hill **(562) 427-2537**
- 99 ¢ Stores:
A. Orangethorpe/Brookhurst-Fullerton (714) 449-9969
B. Carson/Norwalk Blvd.-Haw. Gard. (562) 420-9900
C. Del Amo/Woodruff-Lakewood (562) 804-7991
D. Pioneer- Norwalk (562) 929-9984
- Paper Mills: Ontario Mills
200 Outlet and Value Discount Stores
10 Fwy/15 Fwy Ontario
(909) 484-8300
- Big Lots
11163 183rd St.
Cerritos
(562) 402-3147
- Smart and Final
9535 Alondra Blvd.
Bellflower
(562) 925-5065
5925 East Carson
Lakewood
(562) 425-0666
- Swap Meets:
A. Orange County: Costa Mesa
(end of 55 Fwy/W)
B. Anaheim Indoor Market Place
Orange County's Largest
1400 S. Anaheim Blvd., Anaheim
(714) 999-0888

Books

- Scholastic Warehouse and Bookfaire
1210 Redgum, Anaheim
(714) 237-1100
(cheap books for kids-50¢ books slightly bent)
- Borders, Books and Music
12615 E. Artesia Blvd. Cerritos
(562) 809-5775
(bring pay stub or business card & always get 15% off on kids books)
- Barnes and Noble
7651 Carson Blvd.
Long Beach
(562) 938-8330
- Cultura Latina
4125 Norse Way
Long Beach
(562) 982-1515
(Great Source of Bilingual Books & Music)
- Education 2000 & Bookstore
309-Pine Ave.
Long Beach
(562) 435-1199
- Long Beach Teacher's Supplies
5232 E. 2nd Street
Long Beach
(562) 438-9473
(Specializes in children's books)
- Lorsen's Books and Prints
116 W. Wilshire
Fullerton
(714) 526-2523
(wonderful selection of children's books)
- Once Read Books
5422 Village Road
Long Beach
(562) 420-1034
(Buy, Sell, Trade)
- Once Upon a Story
3740 E. 4th St.
Long Beach
(562) 433-6856
- Reader's Clubhouse
3972 E. Cerritos Ave.
Los Alamitos
(562) 431-1999

Corporate donations

- Albertson's Food and Drug Stores
17202 S. Norwalk Blvd.
Cerritos
(562) 860-9211
- Alin Party Supply
4139 N. Woodruff Ave.
Lakewood
(562) 420-2489
- Big 5
8990 Knott Ave. Buena Park
(714) 229-0135
Corp. Office:
Donation committee
Big 5 Sporting Goods
P.O. box 92088
Worldway Postal Center
Los Angeles, CA 90009
- Carl's Jr.
(Will adopt a school for a year.)
- Costco Wholesale Norwalk
(562) 929-9885
- Crawford's Markets Inc.
10951 E. Rosecrans Ave.
Norwalk
(562) 929-1839
- Western Dental Centers
12880 E. Whittier Blvd.
(562) 698-6555
(dental hygiene kits)
- Michaels
- Mimi's Cafe

HOW TO GET CORPORATION DONATIONS

WRITING CONTESTS

- Ask business if they would donate to your personal classroom or school
- be professional
- be specific about what you need
- be ready with a letterhead from your school (ask principal before hand)
- most businesses want a letter on school paper to confirm their donation (for tax deduction purposes)
- Where to look:
 - A. Auto Club of California
 - B. Mini Page
 - C. Kids Time Magazines
 - D. Education Magazines
 - E. Bookstores: There is a book of contests
 - F. Career Centers at High Schools
 - G. Local Supermarkets
 - H. Instructor Magazine

I Didn't Know...

I didn't know that years of school and college degree would be of little consolation when facing a room full of bright eyes on the first day of school. I thought I was ready...

I didn't know that five minutes can seem like five hours when there is idle time and an eight hour school day far too short for a well-planned day of teaching...

I didn't know that teaching children was only a fraction of my job. No one tells you about the conferences and phone calls, faculty meetings and committees, paperwork and paperwork...

I didn't know that it took so long to cut out letters, draw and color pictures, laminate - all for those bulletin boards that were always just there...

I didn't know that I would become such a scavenger, and that teaching materials would feel like pure gold in my hands...

I didn't know that an administration and co-workers that support and help you could make so much of a difference...

I didn't know that there would be children that I loved and cared for and stayed up late worrying about who, one day, would simply not show up. And that I would never see them again...

I didn't know that I can't always dry little tears and mend broken hearts. I thought I could always make a difference...

I didn't know that the sound of children's laughter could drown out the sound of all the world's sadness...

I didn't know that children could feel so profoundly. A broken heart knows no age...

I didn't know that a single "yes, ma'am" from a disrespectful child or a note in my desk that says "you're the best!" could make me feel like I'm on top of a mountain and forget the valleys I forged to get there...

I didn't know that after one year of teaching I would feel so much wiser, more tired, sadder and happier, all at once. And that I would no longer call teaching my job, but my privilege.

Karla Le Croy
College Station, Texas

Appendix

The **Appendix** is full of teacher-tested ideas and forms that you might want to use. The **Appendix** is referenced frequently throughout the Manual.

- Sample letters Appendix - Page A-1
 - Parent communication Appendix - Page A-5
 - Newsletter tips Appendix - Page A-8
 - First days Appendix - Page A-10
 - Sample lesson plans Appendix - Page A-16
 - Tips for substitutes Appendix - Page A-20
 - Sponge activities Appendix - Page A-29
-

Sample letter

September, 2008

Dear Parents,

A new school year is upon us and I would like to take this opportunity to tell you that I am excited about it, and I hope your child is also. Fifth grade is an exciting learning year. Children begin to progress rapidly and pick up new ideas quickly.

The daily schedule for the fifth grade is as follows. I will teach Reading, English, Spelling, Creative Writing, and Social Studies (Science will replace Social Studies in the second semester) to your child every day. From 12:04-1:00 each afternoon, the fifth graders will go to Mrs. _____'s room for Math. Mrs. _____ is currently on maternity leave and is being replaced by Mrs. _____ for approximately six weeks. This schedule will help the children get used to having more than one teacher, but also provide the benefits of having a "homeroom."

Please take a moment to look over the notes and papers your child brings home each day, and remember to look for the Friday folder which will be sent home each week containing the work your child has completed, and other important information.

I am looking forward to getting to know you and your child better. Please make every effort to attend the _____ School Open House which will be held on September 22 at 7:30 p.m. If you have questions before then, please feel free to call the school at _____ and leave a message. I will get in touch with you as soon as possible.

Once again, I am looking forward to an exciting year with a lot of learning taking place. I will see you at the Open House on September 22.

Sincerely,

Sample letter

September 2008

Dear Parents,

It's very exciting for me to start another year at _____ with your children. I did notice a few frightened faces and a few slow steps into Room _____ but, believe me this is very normal.

The following are a few suggestions that you might want to consider:

1. Put names on all materials brought to school.
2. Put names on any clothing that your child might take off and misplace.
3. Put your child to bed at a reasonable time so he/she is not tired in school.

We do provide some basic supplies. If you want to supplement these, the following is a suggested supply list that may be helpful.

1. Shoe box or cigar type box for supplies.
2. Fat pencils, crayons, paste, and blunt scissors
3. Folders with pockets for carrying home papers
4. Old sock to store chalk and erase student chalkboards

I am looking forward to meeting and working with all you. If you need to contact me, I am available at school from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily. You can reach me through the office by calling _____. If I am unavailable I will return your call as soon as possible.

Cordially yours,

_____ **School**
Room

Sample letter

September 2008

Dear Parents,

I look forward to sharing a successful year with your child. Second grade has many new and exciting experiences in store. Together we can share in the growth and development of your second grader.

It would be helpful if your child could bring the following items:

1. gym shoes for gym day
2. art shirt with your child's name
3. box of tissues to share
4. school box to keep in desk
5. small spiral notebook

Please make certain that all your child's clothes, supplies, and personal items are clearly marked with his/her name.

If at any time you have questions or concerns, feel free to contact me. I look forward to meeting you at our open house on _____.

Sincerely,

Sample letter

September 2008

_____ School

_____, Principal

Dear Parents:

Welcome to Third Grade! It is an exciting year and I am looking forward to working with you and your child. Here are just a couple of things to help start the year off right.

School starts at 8:00 a.m. Students are expected to be in the room by 8:00 a.m. Bus information is attached. The school day ends at 2:30 p.m. and, unless otherwise arranged, it is expected that your child will go directly home.

We eat lunch at noon. Please fee free to come and eat with us some day. It's quite an experience and the kids love it. If your child was part of the free lunch program last year, he or she will receive the same, but you must complete and return the forms that will be sent home during the first week. Milk is 10 cents and a hot lunch is 50 cents. Be sure tops are on thermoses.

My conference hour is 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. each afternoon. I like being notified of visits, but please drop by if necessary. If your work schedule prevents you from coming after school, we can arrange an early morning conference. Don't hesitate to call me at home. The best time is between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m.

Your child's supply list is attached. It includes two No 2 pencils, a box of 24 crayons, a ruler, and two regular rule (not college or primary) spiral notebooks. If possible, I would also like each student to have a set of eight water colors, but it is not required.

I hope this is the beginning of a great school year. I am looking forward to meeting every one of you.

Sincerely,

Parent communication

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE LETTER

Dear Parent/Guardian:

_____ Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held on November 9, (A-K) and November 10, (L-Z) from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Barring unforeseen circumstances, I anticipate your attendance. I appreciate this opportunity to meet with you in our mutual desire to maximize your child's learning experiences.

To effectively utilize the short amount of time we will have together, I thought we could both do some advance planning. Our primary goal is to establish a "total" picture of your son/daughter to facilitate quality learning. No one knows your child better than you, so I am counting on you to enhance my perception. Over the years you have probably discovered some important factors that have affected his/her success in a positive or negative way. I can help our mutual understanding by adding what I see here in school (work habits, abilities, social development, and test performance). As we team up, we will get a better grasp of what is best for your child.

Although this may be the first time we will meet, I am confident of our mutual desire to build a foundation of trust and respect for each other right from the start. Hopefully, we will develop a partnership in working out any problems that might arise, as well as in designing some creative ways to meet the unique needs of our common bond, your child.

I have genuine concern for student success, and want you to fully understand all that I am attempting to accomplish in my class. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions. If more time is needed at the conference, we can set up a mutually desirable time to meet and discuss and concerns we may have.

I am looking forward to meeting you and discussing with you our "joint venture."

Yours for teaming in successful learning,

Parent communication

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE LETTER

Dear Parent:

Next week you and I have a special opportunity to talk about a very special person. That special person is your youngster.

I want to be as well prepared as possible and I know you feel the same way.

When we meet I'll be talking about:

1. What we're doing in class this year, and what I expect of all students.
2. How well your youngster is doing, and what he or she needs to work on.
3. How you and I can work together to help your youngster get the most out this class (school).

You probably have some things that you want to talk about too, and perhaps some questions on how you can help.

It would help if I knew what questions and concerns you have ahead of time, because of the limited time we have scheduled. There is some space below to jot down any questions or concerns that you might have. Either send them back to school with your youngster or bring them with you when you come to conferences.

Questions I have:

Thanks for your help.

Your youngster's teacher

Parent communication

MY REPORT CARD

Terrific

So So

I Need Work

1. I read well orally. _____
2. I read well to myself. _____
3. I do my workbook carefully. _____
4. I can do addition work. _____
5. I can do subtraction work. _____
6. I can do tens and ones work. _____
7. I can write sentences of my own. _____
8. I can write stories. _____
9. I do my printing neatly. _____
10. I spell my words correctly. _____
11. I work in my journal carefully. _____
12. I do my homework carefully and on time. _____
13. I finish my morning work in the morning. _____
14. I take care of my supplies. _____
15. I keep my desk neat. _____
16. I work and play well with others. _____
17. I use my free time well. _____
18. I follow school rules. _____
19. I help to keep my classroom clean. _____

School is...

Newsletter tips

QUICK WAYS TO WRITE A STUDENT NEWSLETTER AND ACTIVELY INVOLVE THE STUDENTS.

Grades K-2

At the close of each day have the children brainstorm regarding things they worked on that day. Decide what should go into the newsletter and write it by the appropriate day. On Fridays, fill the newsletter just before lunch. Copy it for each child and send it home in Friday folders.

Grades 2-4

Give each child a copy of the newsletter form on Monday. Brainstorm things worked on each day. Children can decide what will go into the newsletter and record it themselves from the ideas on the chalkboard. This could be done individually, in small groups, or as a whole class.

Grades 3-6

Do a newsletter for the week on folder day. Have class list ideas for the week. Then as a writing assignment have them write a weekly newsletter. This will need to be modeled several times to help the children. It is a great way to work on grammar, communicate with parents, and review what's been worked on in class.

Remember to proofread.

Newsletter tips

NEWSLETTER

Week of: _____

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

Friday:

Notes:

First days

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Greet students at doorway

1. Take attendance and get correct pronunciation of names (5-10 minutes)
2. Introduce yourself and the class title (3-5 minutes)
 - A. Your background
 - B. Your interest in the subject that you teach
 - C. A little bit about the subject matter for the year
3. Outline the rest of the hour and the rest of the week (5 minutes)
 - A. Mention placement tests, materials they will need, seating charts, books, and ask for any questions
4. Getting acquainted activity (15 - 20 minutes)
 - A. Forced choices found in the Appendix*
5. Content worksheet (10-15 minutes)
 - A. Keep simple, but meaningful
 - B. Could be a very nice way to informally evaluate their abilities
 - C. Mind benders or teasers work well
6. Fill out index card
 - A. For your own personal file
 - B. Include name, address, phone numbers, parent names and work phone numbers if possible
 - C. Children's interests or favorite things

* See Appendix A-29 and A-31 for sponge activities (Forced Choice).

First days

THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Upper elementary classroom

Morning

8:30 Greet students at classroom door.

Assure children that they are in the right room.

Have each student pick a number from a jar which will correspond to a desk in the room. They should sit in the desk that has the number they selected.

Tell each student to read the message on the board after they have found their desk. The message should be some short welcome and then give instructions on completing an activity that can be easily accomplished by all students. Make sure that all materials needed to complete the activity are on desks.

After just a few minutes of allowing students to work on the introductory activity, stop the students and introduce yourself.

8:35 Tell the students your name and how to pronounce it. Have them say your name aloud. Give any other information you wish.

8:40 Explain your discipline program and your class rules.

8:55 Have students introduce themselves. After each student says his/her name, the entire class repeats the name aloud. Explain that now everyone knows how to pronounce all the names of people in the class. There is no reason to make fun of anyone's name.

9:05 Discuss the classroom, go over the different areas that the students need to be aware of for the first few days.

First days

Morning

- 9:10 Practice class routines and procedures. Remember to TEACH each routine and then practice. Introduce your signal that will mean you must have immediate attention from the entire class, then PRACTICE the signal.
- 9:25 Do a get-acquainted activity (the PEOPLE HUNT* is an excellent one). As the students are working on the activity, move about the room. Practice the stop signal a few times.
- 9:50 Discuss the daily schedule the students will be following this year. Explain when the special classes will be, what time lunch is, and any other daily routines.
Discuss the procedure for going to the bathroom and walking in the halls.
- 10:00 Take the class outside for a short (10 minute) recess. On the way outside, PRACTICE the routine for walking the hall.
- 10:15 After recess, review class rules and procedures.
- 10:20 Have students complete the INTEREST INVENTORY**. This will provide you with information on each student such as hobbies, family, life, etc.
- 10:45 Finish the day by reading aloud something of interest to the students. Poetry or short stories work well.
- 11:05 Hand out all notes to go home including your first day letter to the parents. Discuss with students the procedure to the end of each day (jobs, lining up, safety patrol, etc.)
- Tell student the procedure for the beginning of the day so that they know what to expect when they come to school tomorrow.
- 11:25 Dismiss students making sure they know the procedures discussed during the day.

***See Appendix A-33 for sponge activities (People Hunt)**

****See Appendix A-35 for sponge activities (Interest Inventory).**

First days

OTHER GOOD FIRST DAY ACTIVITIES

1. Have students complete the time capsule worksheets. * Children may wish to share their hobbies and favorites out loud with the rest of the class.
2. Have students begin writing in journals, starting with the topic, “My expectations for grade_____.”
3. Handout Language Arts books. Suggestion: You write the names of the student in the books. This will help you get to know them better and will also ensure that every book has a name. Do this while the class is working on a self-directed activity.
4. Do a whole-class reading or listening activity. If a reading lesson is chosen, make sure the material to be read is easy enough so that all students can comprehend.
5. Many other time fillers or sponge activities needed to fill spare moments can be found in the Appendix**.

***See Appendix A-32 for time capsule worksheets.**

****See Appendix A-31 through A-38 for examples of sponge activities.**

First days

Lesson Plan - First Grade

First few days

Morning

8:30 - 8:45 Opening activities

Attendance
Lunch count
Pledge-song

8:45 - 9:15 Journal Writing

Children write or draw in their journal-teacher dates the page. All children are encouraged to share.

9:15 - 10:20 Read Elmer the Patchwork Elephant (by McKee)

Class discussion using “guided questions”

1. How was Elmer different than all the other elephants in the jungle?
2. How did Elmer feel?
3. How did the other elephants feel about Elmer?
4. What did Elmer want more than anything else?
5. What did Elmer do to be like all the other elephants?
6. How did the elephants feel when Elmer was missing?
7. What did the elephants do to remember the day that Elmer returned to the jungle?

Make Elmer stick puppets. Encourage creativity.

10:20 - 10:35 Drink/lavatory break

10:35 - 11:00 Recess (longer the first week because of teaching routines-lining up, walking in hall)

Continued on next page

First days

11:00 - 11:15 Printing
Use clay to make the letter O - Big, medium and small sizes
Have children trace several times with their fingers

11:15 - 11:20 Line up for lunch

Afternoon

12:15 - 12:30 Drinks/lavatory break/rest at desks

12:30 - 12:40 Quiet time
Children look at books

12:40 - 1:30 Math-one to one correspondence
Hands on activity using peanuts
Line up Elmer puppets on floor
Match one peanut to one puppet
One peanut to one student, etc.
One peanut to one chair (reading chairs)
One peanut to one pencil (extra pencils)
One peanut to one eraser (Chalkboard erasers)

After the children have had many experiences matching one to one correspondence, collect peanuts and pass out to the children. Children should not eat peanuts, some may be allergic.

1:30 - 2:00 Phonics
Introduce Mr. M with his munching mouth. Play for Mr. M. Draw Mr. M.

2:00-2:25 Recess (longer for first week)

2:25-2:40 Lavatory/drinks

2:40-2:50 Elmer puppet parade
Set up rules and limits for marching. Play marching record and allow the children to march around the room displaying their Elmer Puppet.

2:50-3:00 Clean up/talk about day

3:00-3:05 Line up/dismiss

Sample lesson plans

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT - 12TH GRADE

Unit: State Government Court System - Part IV-Juvenile Courts

Objectives

1. To enable students to make wise judgments in a group decision-making arrangement.
2. To make students aware of the key differences in the Juvenile Court System as compared to adult courts.
3. To allow students to see first hand the issue of discrepancies in sentencing of similar cases and the deeper issues of racism, sexism, and socioeconomic discrimination.

Classroom arrangement

The class is divided into groups of three with each group being given a folder. In the folder are sheets of paper with information about three criminal acts by juveniles. The crimes are based on real cases with resulting sentences by the judges involved. This information will be held until later in the group process. The desks are arranged so that the three judges in each group can make a consensus about the disposition of each juvenile.

Procedure

Teacher goes over sheet of paper with state options in sentencing (explain the difference in juvenile cases) the guilty offender from probation to maximum security. There is also an option, in retrospect, to waive this case to the adult courts and give an appropriate sentence. Each group of judges has in their folder a scenario of three cases.

The first case is a juvenile who shot a rifle into a passing bus, wounding a passenger. The second case is a juvenile who kicked to death an elderly lady who wouldn't let go of her purse in a robbery attempt. The final case is a juvenile who tried to rob a taxi driver with a gun.

Each group has a mixture of variables. The sniper case one is a white female from a divorced situation in a low socioeconomic area of the inner city. Other groups have the offender as a black male from an affluent suburban family. Each group identifies the three variable characteristics of the offenders in each case, the sentence given, and a rationale for their choice.

Continued on next page

Sample lesson plans

Continued

A representative from each group puts this information on the chalkboard in the appropriate square. (Just the “who” and “what” - ask later for the “why”) The board will look like this:

Group #1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

“Sniper”	White Male Rich Max. Sent.	White Female Poor Prison-2 years
----------	----------------------------------	--

“Stomper”	Black Female Middle Class Min. Sent.	White Male Rich Prison-Life
-----------	--	-----------------------------------

“Stick-up Artist”	White Female Poor Probation	Black Male Middle Class Prison-5 years
----------------------	-----------------------------------	--

After every group has reported, discuss the discrepancies in “equal justice for all”. For what it is worth, have students look in their folders to see what happened in the real-life case. The “sniper” received probation, the “stomper” was tried as an adult and executed, and the “Stick-up artist” was tried as an adult and sentenced to five years in prison.

As time permits, discuss the class’ reaction to the real-life judge’s decisions. You may also want to talk about sentencing guidelines for judges and how much latitude they should be given.

Sample lesson plan

SEVENTH GRADE MATH CLASS

Board problems

- A. review problems put up on the chalkboard
- B. 3-5 problems in content area
- C. teacher takes care of administrative duties at this time

Correction of previous days work

- A. can be done orally, answer on overhead, or students show answers on chalkboard
- B. record scores randomly, quickly call out students name and put check in grade book if done, or collect'

Go over any troublesome problems

- A. ask students or do a few problems asking for assistance to double check understanding

Introduce a new topic

- A. history or relevance
- B. review any previous knowledge needed
- C. go over one problem
- D. do another asking for assistance
- E. have students do one at desk
- F. do another one asking students to tell teacher the steps
- G. have students do a couple more at desks

Give assignment and walk around checking for understanding

- A. look for the correct steps being used
- B. if students seem to have trouble, do a group review at the back of the room

Sample lesson plan

Grade 3

Morning

- 8:25 - 8:35 Attendance/lunch count
- 8:35 - 8:55 Current event-newspapers "Lake Residents Seek Weed Killer Controls". Brainstorm effects of weed killer. Introduce vocabulary: defoliants, ecosystem, chemicals, DNR, and herbicide. Discuss article put words in word bank for the week.
- 8:55-9:05 Children write in journals
- 9:05-10:05 Reading - Limericks. Read several limericks to children and see if they can recognize a pattern. Then choose several limericks to rewrite with the class model. Pass out dittos-limericks. Have children work with a partner to rewrite the limerick. At the end of the hour children can share what they wrote.
- 10:05-10:25 Recess
- 10:25-10:45 Spelling - children use their spelling words for the week in an original sentence.
- 11:05- 11:15 Clean up/dismissal

Afternoon

- 12:15 - 12:20 Attendance
- 12:20 - 12:40 SSR Sustained Silent Reading
- 12:40 - 12:55 Class plays bingo game with multiplication facts
- 12:55 - 1:30 Using manipulatives (place value cubes) children demonstrate the concept of multiplication - "i.e. 4×2 (4 sets of 2) nn nn nn nn"
- 1:30 - 2:00 Science - Pollution/litter. Ask a group of 3-4 children to predict the contents of the class wastebasket. One group member records the predictions (10 minutes). When complete put items predicted on blackboard. Check contents of wastebasket. Discuss how everyone contributes to litter and waste, and what can be done to minimize classroom waste and litter.
- 2:00 - 2:30 PE
- 2:30 - 2:55 Magic Circle- "Being a Friend". Have each child think of at least one attribute that makes them a good friend - share. Use yourself as a model first.
- 2:55 - 3:00 Clean-up/Dismissal

Tips for substitutes

Dear Substitute:

The information in this folder has been prepared to provide you with a good deal of general information about my class. Specific daily lesson plans will be furnished in addition to this. I hope the material is useful and that you have a good day with my group.

When you finish the day, please complete the enclosed evaluation sheet and return to the office with this folder.

Sincerely,

Teacher _____ **Room** _____ **Grade** _____

Home Phone Number _____

Inside you will find:

- Schedules (classroom and building)
- Emergency Procedures
- Classroom rules
- Building and playground rules
- Attendance forms
- Class list
- Time schedule
- Seating chart (if name tags not used)

Time Schedules

Routine

Doors open at _____

School begins at _____

Recess is scheduled for _____

Lunch time is _____

Noon recess is _____

Dismissal time is _____

Continued on next page

Tips for substitutes

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER INFORMATION

Name _____ Grade _____

Daily Schedule

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday

Recesses Time

- _____ to _____
- _____ to _____
- _____ to _____

Daily duties

-
-
-

Where to locate

- Lesson plans
- Materials/supplies
- A-V equipment
- Books

Who can help

- Other teachers
- Administrators
- Clerical personnel/nurse
- Helpful students

Tips for substitutes

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER INFORMATION

Name _____ Grade _____

Procedures

- Attendance
- Discipline/consequences
- Restroom/drinks
- Lunch
- Cost of a teacher's lunch
- Extra time
- Rainy days
- Illness
- Fire/Disaster drills
- Dismissal

Children who go to special classes

Name	Class	Day/Time	Name	Class	Day/Time
_____			_____		
_____			_____		
_____			_____		
_____			_____		
_____			_____		
_____			_____		

Tips for substitutes

CLASS LIST

Name _____ Notes _____

Grade _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____
16. _____
17. _____
18. _____
19. _____
20. _____
21. _____
22. _____
23. _____
24. _____
25. _____
26. _____
27. _____
28. _____
29. _____
30. _____
31. _____
32. _____

Tips for substitutes

SUBSTITUTE PLANS

Teacher _____ Date _____

Time

Activity:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Notes:

-
-
-
-
-

Tips for substitutes

FROM YOUR SUBSTITUTE

Name _____ Date _____

The day went...

About the lesson plan(s)...

Students who were helpful...

Students who were absent or tardy...

Any problems...

Comments...

Tips for substitutes

My signal for getting student's attention is:

All students should STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN.

Dependable students

Possible disciplinary concerns

Discipline

Students are expected to follow building rules as well as reasonable requests from adults. Specific room rules are:

Consequences for disruptive behavior

Health concerns

Extra duties

Check daily bulletin for any recess, bus, or yard duty.

Continue on next page

Tips for substitutes

Out of classroom activities

Speed reading, music patrol, A.V., library, staff, supervision, etc.

Name

Activity

Time

Student Classroom responsibilities

End of day room pickup, chairs, etc.

Fire drill procedures

Disaster drill procedures

Tips for substitutes

DAILY ROUTINE

Correspondence from home _____

Restroom _____

Drinking fountain _____

Pencil sharpener _____

Talk among students _____

Passing out books/supplies _____

Out-of-seat policies _____

What to do when finished with work _____

Where to turn in completed work _____

Failure to bring materials (pencil, paper, textbook) _____

Dismissal procedures are _____

General sponge activities

Inheritance fantasy

Ask students to write a paragraph telling what they would do if they won \$10,000 with the restriction they could only keep half. The other half must be given away. Have them explain who would get it and why.

Guess who I am?

Students write out on an index card biographical information and give it to the teacher. The teacher reads out aloud while the students guess who the person is. Have the teacher write one out too!

Forced choice

This is a very nice activity for any age group. It would work any time during the year, especially the first few days. It is an activity that the kids feel comfortable doing while getting to know each other in the process.

The activity can be a written one or done orally for the younger kids. The students are given a choice of two things. They must choose one and give a reason for doing so. One nice way to work this activity is to use the space in your room. After giving the two options ask the children to go to the side of the room identified for that option. This way the children can talk to the other students who chose the same item they chose. In the upper grades, you could start out the kids by having them write out their reasons and then have them group together by choices afterwards. The following are some suggestions for the choices:

ARE YOU A/AN:	Kite string	or	Clothes line?
	Addition sign	or	Multiplication sign?
	Goofy	or	Mickey?
	ALF	or	Batman?
	President	or	Captain?
	Hershey's Kiss	or	Snickers?
	Skateboard	or	Roller skates?
	Rebok	or	Nike?
	Rock-n roller	or	Rapper?
	Banana split	or	Shake?
	Roller coaster	or	Ferris wheel?

General sponge activities

ALL ABOUT ME

Write your answers now. Then, do it again in the spring.

1. Date

2. Full name

3. Favorite dinner

4. My favorite color

5. My best friend

6. My favorite singer

7. My favorite sport

8. I like to

9. My favorite game

10. My favorite TV show

11. When I grow up, I'll

12. I like to spend time

General sponge activities

Hunt for someone who can say “yes” to one of these questions. Have this person sign his/her name. Can you find a different person for each line?

1. can whistle _____
2. has freckles _____
3. has red hair _____
4. is wearing yellow _____
5. loves math _____
6. is new to our school this year _____
7. enjoys reading _____
8. worked on a computer this summer _____
9. lost a tooth this summer _____
10. watched or played baseball this summer _____
11. made a sandcastle this summer _____
12. has ridden a horse _____
13. has a birthday in July _____
14. has a birthday in October _____
15. wants to be a business owner _____
16. got sunburned this summer _____
17. can swim _____
18. has a pet cat _____
19. has an aquarium _____
20. loves yogurt _____
21. is left-handed _____
22. has brown eyes _____
23. likes pizza _____
24. wants to be a writer _____
25. has a cheese sandwich packed for lunch _____
26. has flown in an airplane _____
27. likes dancing better than school _____
28. has a great-grandfather _____
29. plays the piano _____
30. likes to rap _____

General sponge activities

INTEREST INVENTORY

Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____

1. If you could not watch television at home, what would you most like to do? _____

2. If your parents told you that you could do anything that you wanted to do this weekend, what would you choose?

3. What is your favorite subject in school? _____

4. What subject is most difficult for you in school? _____

5. If you could learn about anything you wanted to learn about, what would you choose? _____

6. What is your favorite television show? _____

7. What book or story have you read recently that was really exciting for you? _____

8. Other than watching television what is the most fun thing to do indoors? _____

9. Do you like to do your work best in groups or alone? _____

10. Would you rather read a book or watch a movie if you had to learn something? _____

11. Who are your two best friends in this class? _____

Primary sponge activity

- Be ready to tell one playground rule.
- Say numbers, days of the week, months...have students tell what comes next. "I went to the sporting goods store (grocery store) and I bought..." (each student names an item.)
- What comes between these two numbers: 31-33, 45-47, etc.
- What number comes before/after 46,53,32, etc.
- Write a word on the board and students make a list that rhymes.
- Put spelling words in alphabetical order.
- Count to 100 by 2's, 5's, 10's either oral or written.
- Think of animals that live on a farm, in the jungle, in water, etc.
- Give names of fruits, vegetables, meats, etc.
- Play Hangman using names of students, colors, numbers or other vocabulary words.
- List things you can touch, things you can smell, big things, small things, etc.
- List the colors you are wearing.
- Be ready to draw something that is only drawn with circles.
- Be ready to tell the names of children in our class which begin with J or M, etc.
- Write a word on the board. Children list words with the same long or short vowel sound.
- Flash fingers...students tell how many.
- Write a color word on the board. Have students draw something in or with that color.

Upper grade sponge activities

- Write down as far as you can count by 6's, 7's, etc.
- Take a number. Write it. Now make a face on it.
- Make a list of five things you do after school.
- You have five children. Make up five names.
- Scramble five spelling or vocabulary words, trade with someone, and unscramble them.
- Write a dialogue between _____ and _____.
- Name historical people with these initials: AL AH AJ NK IG VC.
- Write a question that would check the understanding of the story.
- Write a different ending of the story.
- Write synonyms for vocabulary words on the board.
- Play Hangman using students' names, vocabulary words, etc.
- List the continents of the world.
- List as many states as you can.
- Write down as many cartoon characters as you can.
- Name as many baseball teams as you can.
- List five parts of the body above the neck that have three letters.

Secondary sponge activities

- List as many states as you can.
- List as many countries and their capitals as you can.
- List all the places you can find sand.
- Write one kind of food beginning with each letter of the alphabet.
- Construct a crossword puzzle.
- Construct and/or do a word find.
- Draw a cartoon to illustrate a concept.
- Do five problems from the board.
- Make up word problems.
- Write a riddle about a story character.
- See how many words you can make from a given word or expression.
- Proofread a paragraph.
- Write headlines for newspaper articles.
- Locate cities at given latitude and longitude markings.
- Write as many homonyms as you can...past/passed.
- List as many parts of an auto as you can.

Teacher's Orientation Manual

I am a teacher! What I do and say is being absorbed by young minds who will echo these images across the ages. My lessons will be immortal, affecting people yet unborn, people I will never see or know. The future of the worlds is in my classroom today and this future has potential for both good and bad. The pliable minds of tomorrow's leaders will be molded whether artistically or grotesquely by what I do.

*Only
a
teacher!*

Several future presidents are learning from me today; so are the great writers of the next decades and so are all the so-called ordinary people who will make the decisions in a democracy. I must never forget these same young people could be the thieves and murderers of the future.

Just a teacher? Thank God I have a calling to the greatest profession of all! I must be vigilant every day lest I lose one fragile opportunity to improve tomorrow.

By Dr. Ivan Fitzwater
