



Ten Commandments for Successful Teaching	1
The Principal's Perspective	2
TechnoInfo Corner	2
Planting a Seed	3
Notes from the GSTEP Director's Desk	3
TechnoInfo Corner... continued	4
Partner to Partner Cook County and Valdosta City School System News	4
Greetings from the Editor	4

The TIPSTER

Volume 3 Issue 1 September 2004

Valdosta State University
College of Education
Georgia Systemic Teacher
Education Program
GSTEP Teacher Induction

DID YOU KNOW??

As of November 1, 2004 you can find the

TIPSTER Newsletter
ONLY on-line at

www.teacherresourcebank.com



Ten Commandments for Successful Teaching

I am often asked why and how I have spent the majority of my life in a classroom.

Answering why is easy. There is nothing else I wanted to do. Answering how takes more thought. I believe how can best be answered by sharing my ten commandments for successful teaching.

First, every teacher must have a philosophy and practice it. Mine is simple. School should be meaningful and fun. To make school meaningful, I try to make every objective that I teach practical. When studying fractions, the students cook. When learning to write letters, the students write letters. To make school fun, I try to celebrate each day. For example, the Statue of Liberty's birthday is October 28. My students celebrate by studying France, making a proportional model of the statue, discovering why the statue is green, and learning what the inscription means. Students who enjoy school learn more.

Second, teachers should be positive. We must be positive about our profession if we expect others to be positive about us. We are the only profession that touches all other professions, and that alone should make us proud. We must also be positive about the children we teach. They are not perfect, but they all deserve a chance to succeed.

Third, there is no substitute for planning.

When we plan, we must make provisions for children's different learning styles. We must teach children how to think and quit trying to teach them what to think.

Fourth, every teacher should have an enforceable discipline plan. A well-disciplined class is one where learning can take place. To accomplish this, a teacher must be fair, firm, and non-confrontational.

Fifth, we must demand the best from our students. Students will give their best if teachers demand it. Many students will try to just get by if teachers accept this. We want our world to be the best it can be; therefore, we must demand the best from our students.

Sixth, we must realize that we cannot save the world. Although we try to save all children, there are some that we cannot save. We cannot get bogged down in failures, but celebrate the daily successes that we experience.

Seventh, we must "help hopes happen." Children come to us from all walks of life. Many are already influenced by negative factors. We must accept these children and do our best to improve their lives. Every child deserves a bright tomorrow. It is humbling for me to think that a future president of the United States is sitting in some teacher's classroom today. No one knows who that individual

is, but some teacher is helping this child's hopes happen.

Eighth, we must work together. No idea that I have should be limited to the students in my classroom. If it works, I want to share it so more students will benefit. Teachers must work as a team to save our most precious natural resource, our children.

Ninth, we must never give up. We can do anything we make up our minds to do. If we don't give up, we set an example for our students not to give up.

Last, we must give each child our best. We could have been doctors, lawyers, accountants, or anything else. We wanted to help children so we became educators. Every child deserves for us to be the best that we can be.

Practicing these commandments has made me a better teacher. I have taught in an elementary school, a middle school, and a high school. Each class I have taught has been composed of students; they have just come in different sizes. Teaching with these commandments has helped me make a difference in their lives. Every student I have had the privilege of teaching has made me what I am... a **teacher**.



Vallye Blanton
Lake Park Elementary
1994 Georgia Teacher of the Year
National Board Certified

The Principal's Perspective

Pot-pourri n.

1. A mixture of dried flower petals kept in a jar and used to perfume a room. 2. A musical medley of literary miscellany. 3. Any incongruous mixture.

Once again, I find myself down to the wire with obligations I have made when I know time is at such a premium at home, school, with friends, and colleagues. As professional educators, we cherish the opportunity however to share with perspective peers the wisdom gained through little trial and much error, with hopes those who succeed us will travel a smoother road. Before I begin this incongruous rambling of morsels of wisdom from one who has "been there, done that", let me congratulate you for choosing this most admirable profession. As I tailgate through my in-town travels, it never ceases to amaze me what one will stick on their bumper. One sticker however stands out in my mind over the thousands I have read while slamming on my brakes, "Without educators who would teach the doctors, lawyers, dentists, veterinarians, etc." While society continues to use education as the scapegoat for its ills, education is still one of the most admirable professions around. Ask any adult the names of three people who had a profound impact on their lives and you will find at least the name of one educator. With this in mind, I share with you some thoughts that may help make that influence a positive one.

1. From the first paycheck you receive, take out the maximum you can for a tax sheltered retirement fund. When I was single and began to work in the Valdosta City Schools, I was told by a wise, retired friend that I would never miss that which is not available. Though you think you need it all now, and that "tomorrow I'll",

the "Tomorrow Isles" never come and you will never have what you need unless you begin the first day saving.

2. Become actively involved in the activities of your school. Breaking Ranks II devotes an entire section of their findings to the importance of "personalizing" the school environment. The old adage, "They'll never care how much you know, until they know how much you care." are words you can live by if you are going to be a success in public education.

3. Be a team player. The public schools are not Burger King so do not plan to have it your way all of the time. Gradually change the things that are within your locus of control always keeping what is best for your students' number one. For those things, which are outside your locus of control, be well read, know your research, and give advice when asked then MOVE ON!

4. Read, read, read, and in your spare time READ! As you prepare for your first interviews I recommend:

* Marketing Your Educational Leadership Skills by Daresh, John

Though this book is designed for educational leaders, it is easily adapted to teachers. If you have not already purchased these for your personal library, do so and read cover to cover before day one.

* Classroom Management that Works, by Marzano, Robert

* Classroom Instruction that Works, by Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock

5. Have a life outside of your job. Although it is difficult at times, it is important as a teacher to get away from it all. Too often,

young teachers who do not have a life outside of their students too often cross the lines of professional, ethical behavior with their students because they are so close in age. Never allow your professional relationships with students to turn personal!

6. Establish a network of peers in your field that you respect. Graduate school is a great place to begin to develop a network of professional educator peers. The lessons learned through networking are often the best you will ever have. If you are going to pay the price of attending graduate school, do your homework and be sure to attend a reputable one!

7. If you do not like the way this potpourri smells, than the best advice I can give you in your career is to take time for yourself, be mindful of your physical, emotional and intellectual health, and never forget to take time to smell the roses.

Good Luck!

Dr. Steven Hankla, Principal
Lanier County High School
Lakeland, Georgia

PS: Feel free to contact me at shankla@lanier.k12.ga.us if I can help you in any way.

TEACHING TIP:

Always remember: Kids are people and deserve to be treated accordingly.
Focus on learning rather than on compliance and control.



TechnoInfo Corner

Invitation to Ask the Experts

As a teacher, do you have some questions about teaching strategies, classroom management, students with special needs, or anything about teaching? If so, GSTEP would like to offer you an invitation to ask your questions and receive answers from educational experts. Just click on the Ask the Experts link on the VSU Teacher Resource Bank Web page

(<http://www.teacherresourcebank.com/>) and post your questions. The experts will respond to your questions and post answers on the Ask the Experts bulletin board.

We are fortunate to have four knowledgeable experts with a variety of teaching experiences. Together our four experts have a total of 93 years of teaching experience and nu-

merous awards. I would like to feature our four outstanding experts, Ms. Vallye Blanton, Dr. Sheryl Dasinger, Ms. Jan Godwin, and Ms. Cheryl Rice.

Ms. Vallye Blanton is a literacy coach at Lake Park Elementary School. She has previously taught at Lowndes High School and Lowndes Middle School. Ms. Blanton awards and accomplishments include 2002 National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT), 2000 Christa McAuliffe Fellowship, 1999 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics, 1994 Milken National Educator, and 1994 Georgia Teacher of the Year.

Dr. Sheryl Dasinger is a professor at Valdosta State University in the Early Childhood and Reading Education Department. Dr. Dasinger also teaches half day in a first grade classroom at S. L. Mason Elementary

School. In 1991, Dr. Dasinger was selected as Teacher of the Year for the Ozark City School in Ozark, Alabama.

Ms. Jan Godwin was a high school science teacher for 30 years and is now a science specialist at Coastal Plains RESA. Ms. Godwin awards and accomplishments include National Board Certified Teacher, Teacher of the Year, STAR Teacher for three years, semifinalist for Georgia TOTY in 1988-89 and 2000-2001, Atlanta Journal Constitution Honor Teacher Award, and President of Delta Kappa Gamma Honor Society for Women Educators.

Story continued on page 4

Planting a Seed



Every Path Has Its Puddle...

Of the numerous opportunities in education, few are as rewarding as training new teachers. Unfortunately, research tells us that those new teachers are leaving the field at an alarming rate. In fact, according to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, one third of all new teachers in Georgia quit teaching within the first five years of service.

The Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program (GSTEP) at Valdosta State University, the University of Georgia, and Albany State University are committed to helping new teachers become expert teachers and to helping keep those teachers in the classroom. One of the ways GSTEP hopes to accomplish this is through a web-based professional development system called the BRIDGE.

The BRIDGE is available at www.teachersbridge.org and is intended to serve as a platform where new teachers can be supported and mentored as they make the transition from new teacher to expert teacher. The exciting part is

Be Positive, Prepared, and Professional!

that the BRIDGE is new, in development, looking for your participation, and costs nothing for you to use except for a willingness to become involved and share your expertise and experience with new teachers.

Because the BRIDGE is so new, the greatest current need is help with building its content. This is easier than it sounds, as Shakespeare said, "action is eloquence". The first step is to visit the website, www.teachersbridge.org. The second step is to register. The registration link can be found in the middle of the web site and is a quick process that will allow you to select your own login and password. Once you have registered, there are two ways you can help: one is to submit materials; the other is to review materials that have already been submitted.

What should you submit? We are looking for materials of various types that will help new teachers. The materials that you submit to the BRIDGE can take the form of links to existing web pages that contain information that you think would assist new teachers or if you are interested in being published, you could submit your own unpublished writing or video clips. Remember we are trying to give new teachers immediate and free access to materials that explain best practice, describe instructional

strategies and classroom management techniques, and explain ways of assessing their students. If you know of any online resources that might help, please consider submitting them to the BRIDGE.

Another way to get involved is by volunteering to review materials that have been submitted to the BRIDGE. The review process is entirely web based and there is a detailed rubric which helps you to clearly identify strengths and weaknesses of the materials being reviewed. One way to substantiate your own professional development is by serving as a Reviewer for the BRIDGE.

Remember...visit, submit, and review. If you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the GSTEP office at (229) 249-4918 and we will be happy to answer any questions you may have.



Dr. David Monetti
Psychology & Counseling
Department
GSTEP Chair, Early Field Experience &
Service Learning
Valdosta State University

Notes from the GSTEP Director's Desk

It is hard to believe that the Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program (GSTEP) has been in existence for four years and will soon be entering its final year of funding. As we enter this period of time, VSU GSTEP partners will be working on three major goals--the validation of assessment instruments, the integration of GSTEP programs into the existing infrastructure of partnering institutions, and the dissemination of information about resources/programs developed. Much of our current work reflects these goals. Currently, GSTEP program evaluators are working with the Testing Scoring

and Reporting Services

(TSARS) Office at The University of Georgia to design a validation study for the Accomplished Teacher Framework Assessment Instrument, a rubric that can be utilized by beginning teachers and their mentors to determine professional strengths and weaknesses. You may be contacted in the near future to participate in this study.

Work to integrate GSTEP programs and resources into existing institutional infrastructure also continues. This necessary step is being taken to ensure that teacher support systems funded by GSTEP are sustained after the grant period ends. Examples of integration efforts are many. Teams of educators from five school districts have been trained to redeliver Teacher Support Specialist (TSS) training to prospective mentors chosen by their respective districts; selected P-12 and higher education faculty received facilitator training in the Classroom Organization and Management Program (COMP) so that they can provide classroom management training to teacher candidates and beginning teachers; and educators, P-16, received leadership training in how to implement service learning programs that result in student achievement.

While P-16 educators continue to publish and to present at local, state, and national meetings, more assistance is needed from our "grass roots" to get the word out. You can help us in our dissemination task by spreading the word about GSTEP induction support resources that you have found beneficial. For example, tell others about the BRIDGE Resource Bank (<http://www.teachersbridge.org>), share copies of *The Tipster* newsletter, and encourage colleagues to pose their professional questions online to the "Ask the Experts" panel (See TechnoInfo Corner for details). Remember: GSTEP is here to assist you as you strive to increase student success. Have a great year!

Dr. Pamela Hertzog
GSTEP Director
Valdosta State University



An ongoing task has been the dissemination of information to inform others about teacher development resources created by GSTEP.

REGISTER FREE
at **Evan-Moor.com**
for a weekly education
newsletter with ideas,
tips, clip art and lesson
plans.

and Reporting Services
(TSARS) Office at
The University of
Georgia to design a
validation study for the
Accomplished Teacher
Framework Assessment

Instrument, a rubric that can be utilized by beginning teachers and their mentors to determine professional strengths and weaknesses. You may be contacted in the near future to partici-



Partner to Partner



Cook County Schools

CELEBRATION FOR COOK COUNTY SCHOOLS

Cook County Schools held a "Celebration" for its first and second year teachers on Tuesday, May 18th at Circlestone Country Club. The purpose of the celebration was to show appreciation to the teachers for their participation in the half-day workshops that were held throughout the school year. Dr. Fred Rayfield, Superintendent of Schools, welcomed everyone to the luncheon and thanked them for their dedication to the program. After a wonderful meal, JereAnna Hargett introduced the speaker, Dillard Ensley, a former teacher and principal in the Cook County School System. Mr. Ensley related to the audience what a challenge teaching is. It must be taken seriously. You must provide the love and care for children who might not receive either at home. Mr. Ensley also told about many of his experiences in the past and how things have certainly changed over the years. Everyone enjoyed his humorous stories. All of the teacher induction participants were recognized for their outstanding work.

The teacher induction program is continuing this fall beginning with five days of New Teacher Orientation. Two of these days all new teachers to the system will be participating in the COMP Program. The COMP Program will meet three additional times throughout the year. The HELP Center will also be back to provide assistance to all first and second year teachers regarding issues that they have concerns about. Cook County is also in the process of writing an Induction and Mentoring Program.

Laura Hill
Director of Federal/Special Programs
Cook County School System



Idea Corner:

Quote of the Day:

Read one quote a day for a personal uplift. Include a quote on parent newsletters. Use a quote to spark a classroom lesson.

"Even if you are on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." - Will Rogers

"Write on your heart that every day is the best day of the year."
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

"It's never too late to have a happy childhood."-Tom Robbins

Jere Anna Hargett
Cook County Schools
PreK Director

Jan Folsom
Cook County Schools
Professional Learning/Secondary Curriculum Director

Valdosta City Schools

"Another school year has come upon us, and we are finding ourselves in one of two places:

- * Fired up and ready to go
- * Looking for the matches!!



Either way, the boys and girls have entered our classrooms and a book is in your hands, and someone is calling you TEACHER!!

It's an awesome feeling. I can't imagine what it has been like for our new teachers. They are eager and want to do well.

Let's help them!! Let's let them know they are not alone in this quest to "make a difference". No one should feel alone; no one should plunge into the "close the door and do your own thing" syndrome. We have come to far and collaboration is too powerful to suffer alone.

We are a community of learners... that's what we want our students to realize. Let's show them how it's done. Whether you have just entered the classroom or thinking about making an exit, the load is lighter when you share.

Have a wonderful year... may your students catch your love for books, ideas... learning!"

Maude Johnson
Personnel Director
Valdosta City School System

TechnoInfo Corner

continued from page 2

Ms. Cheryl Rice is a second grade math and science teacher at S. L. Mason Elementary School. Ms. Rice also teaches a class at Valdosta State University in the Special Education and Communication Disorders Department and is Nationally Certified in the area of Early Childhood Exceptional Needs. Previously, Ms. Rice was a preschool special education teacher at S. L. Mason Elementary School. In 2003-2004, Ms. Rice was selected as Teacher of the Year for the Valdosta City School and State Finalist for Georgia Teacher of the Year in 2004.



Dr. Diane Judd
Early Childhood and Reading Education
Chair, GSTEP Technology Committee

Greetings from the Editor

Although we welcomed fall along with several hurricanes, we know the press must still operate so we are glad to be able to bring you another edition of the *Tipster* newsletter. I extend my deepest gratitude to the writers for this edition and to Cindy Musgrove, whose talents are many and creativity is beyond words. We want this newsletter to be a great resource for teachers so please submit your ideas for the new "Idea Corner" to: spandrew@valdosta.edu

Thanks!
Shirley Andrews, Editor