



# A Newsletter for Beginning Teachers in NC



Regional Education Facilitators-NC Department of Public Instruction  
[www.regedfac.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/home](http://www.regedfac.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/home)

## Dear Beginning Teacher,



Hopefully, I am not the first to congratulate you on completing your school year, but if I am, as your colleague, it gives me great pleasure to say this loud and proud: YOU MADE IT!

The first thing you should do with your new found freedom from lesson planning, PLCing and grading is to take some time for yourself. As the Parks and Rec star Tom Haverford says, "treat yo' self." Getting away from it all is essential for you to be able to do it all again next year.

The second essential step this summer is to repair any self-esteem issues you may have gathered along the way. The combination of parent and student voices (along with your own expectations) can run quite a number on a young teacher. Silence those voices and realize you are tough because you made it through a year of teaching – I will say that again – you made it through a year of teaching!

A year of teaching is something only a minority of the population can actually

pull off. But an even greater sign of your toughness is that you are coming back!

Once you have properly decompressed and rebuilt that self-esteem by recognizing your accomplishment, the final thing for you to do before the next school year starts is to reflect. The ability to reflect on your lessons, units, as well as classrooms rules and procedures is the only way to make next year easier. Further, reflection is the only path to becoming a true master of the craft of teaching.

Often year one was about survival – rules, procedures and lessons out of necessity. Subsequent years should be about purpose. As educators, our *raison d'être* is about increasing student learning.

Therefore, reflect on your procedures, rules, lessons, units and ask yourself: did it drive student learning? Try to evaluate what was a best practice and what was a survival technique – eliminate the survival techniques and replace them with a better practice.

Use this year of experience you just gained by real-

izing that with a year of experience, you are the most equipped you have ever been in knowing what drives student learning and what it actually takes to get through a school year. Use what you learned and become a better a teacher.

I do believe that undertaking these three steps will make next year great. However, I do not want to set false expectations – next year can still be tough. I have been doing this for 12 years now, and reflecting on my practice still leads to changes in how I do things, while decompression and self-talks in the mirror are still essential. But the good news is that with these practices year after year, I have ensured that survival is not my status quo, but instead student learning through better teaching is.

All the best to the beginning, TOUGH teachers in the state of North Carolina.

~Brandon Brown  
Lake Norman Charter School  
2016 Charter School  
Teacher of the Year

## Summer PD

### BT Summits:

<http://btsummit.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/home>

### Online ASW Modules:

<http://ncasw.ncdpi.wikispaces.net/OnlineModules>

### PD Modules available through HomeBase:

<http://rt3nc.org/>

### Free PD at Capella:

[www.capella.edu/district-solutions/for-teachers/](http://www.capella.edu/district-solutions/for-teachers/)



"Have a great summer and please do not throw your books in the air or run through the halls -- wait until the students have left the building."

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## Problem-Based vs. Project-Based Learning

So, what's the difference between problem-based and project-based learning and what should brand new teachers start with? We talk about their interchangeability and how no matter which one you do, **teachers should be the head learners** in an environment where they are learning along with their students. Projects should take the *learning deeper, be meaningful and purposeful*. Integrating multiple curricular areas gives you more bang for your buck and group projects encourage **21st Century Skills**– the 4C's- *Creativity, Collaboration, Communication & Critical Thinking*. Finally, be sure to teach your students **Digital Citizenship skills** so they can discern real vs. fake news! Check out George Couros' book, *The Innovator's Mindset*. Enjoy! The podcast! ~Information from [Teachingbites.com](http://Teachingbites.com)

Podcast: <http://bit.ly/2rhXKrb>

**BT SUMMIT 2017 Continuing the Journey: Beginning Teachers Elevating the Profession COMING in JUNE to your region!**

**(REGISTRATION CLOSES JUNE 1st) If you are registered we look forward to seeing YOU at the BT Summit!!!**

