

NC Beginning Teacher Newsletter

Regional Education Facilitators – North Carolina Department of Public Instruction – bit.ly/NCDPIREF



A Message from the 2019 Piedmont Triad Regional Teacher of the Year, Sheila Patterson



Education is transformational ... for students, for teachers, for communities. As educators, we are at the center of that transformation process. It is an awesome responsibility and reward, and it is surely not for the faint at heart. As our student population changes (for example 52% of students in North Carolina this year will be non-white) we must adapt and change our thinking and approach. No matter how hard change may seem to be, it is our duty, our job, and our passion to transform education so it can transform our students.

My transformation began when I joined the North Carolina Regional Teacher of the Year team led by Mariah Morris, our 2019 Burroughs Wellcome Fund NC Teacher of the Year. Through this experience, I have been able to hear from fabulous speakers like Freebird McKinney and Tabari Wallace. I was able to begin to understand the amazing challenges that we have in front of us as educators. We must begin to see education not only as a career or passion, but we must become educational diplomats that help our teachers and our communities understand and overcome the barriers that so many of our students face today. We must transform education to address the equity needs and educational goals and outcomes of each and every student. Education is transformational.

Education is transformational for our students.

Education is the avenue through which students can overcome struggles and barriers that may be placed in their way through family situations, physical and educational disabilities, or entrenched cultural struggles. When students come to us hungry, neglected, or abused, we must remember that they CAME TO US. We have the power to meet them where they are. We can provide them with the tools they need to face these challenges as we provide a meaningful educational experience. Through collaborative efforts among teachers and community members, we can provide an educational environment that will allow our students to pursue 21st-century careers. Not only will this allow them to be successful in the classroom, but also in the amazing life they will live after they leave our four walls.

Education is transformational for teachers. By engaging in professional learning communities, applying research-based methods, and staying abreast of societal issues, we can grow and learn how to best serve our students. Growth mindset does not apply only to our students, but also to us - the educators. We must learn it is no longer enough to impart knowledge to our students in the vacuum of a classroom; we must engage in the response of our profession to a changing student population. We can no longer ignore the huge impact technology has on our students; we need to understand how technology will shape their education and their lives. Our role as teachers is not the same as it was when I became a teacher more than 20 years ago, and I embrace that. We can be transformed into educational diplomats, teacher leaders, and educational advocates.

Education is transformational for our community.

Schools and teachers, as the centerpiece of communities, provide a pivotal role for the direction communities can take. Schools must be inclusive, warm and engaging to students and parents, but also responsive to the needs of the community. By engaging community partners such as community colleges and local businesses, schools can forge partnerships that will develop the citizens we need to thrive in the 21st-century. While it is important to have local support at athletic events, community transformation takes place when schools invite the community into their schools for STEM events, apprenticeship programs, and job-shadowing days. These events help begin the dialogue addressing the needs of the community which allows students to see a positive future in their community instead of the desire to leave when they graduate. Communities must transform if they hope to grow, and schools are an integral part of that process.

Education is transformational; there is no doubt about it. We all have our transformation stories whether when we were a student or as a teacher. We must remember the power of that transformation. We know that every student deserves that experience. As educational leaders, we must help those around us discover their transformational power so they can be a part of the educational transformation process and not an additional barrier for our students.

Good luck with the 2019-2020 school year...and let the transformation begin!!!!

Stay Informed

There are two new websites that will help keep you informed on the teaching profession in North Carolina. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has launched a new website - www.dpi.nc.gov/. Useful information on Educator Preparation, NC TEACH, Troops to Teacher, state-wide data/reports and much more are at your fingertips on the NCDPI webpage. The 2020 North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey will be held March 2-31. 100% participation is this year's survey goal. Teachers like you will help our state reach this goal. Beginning in March you can see your school reach 100% completion on the website - www.asqnc.com. Stay informed by bookmarking the NCDPI and NC TWC pages today. Also mark your calendar to join #NCBTChat, the state-wide **Beginning Teacher Twitter Chat February 18th, 2020 - 7-8pm.**