

# A Newsletter for Beginning Teachers in NC



Regional Education Facilitators - NC Department of Public Instruction  
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## A Message from the 2018 Northeast Regional Teacher of the Year, Kaley Kiffner



As a new teacher, the early months of the school year are often filled with uncertainty. Which students will you have in your class? How will they respond to your lessons? What barriers will you need to break down to reach them? This past month has brought additional uncertainty and disruption to the back to school journey, as eastern North Carolina braced for and was severely impacted by Hurricane Florence. Storms like this have lasting physical impacts on our physical environment and even greater impacts on the wellbeing of our students and families. As educators, we have the unique responsibility help our children weather **emotional** storms as well on a day to day basis. From making friends and learning new skills, to navigating home situations and family dynamics, you play a fundamental role in the lives of our young people.

As your year progresses and you are forced to overcome obstacles, I want to stress how important you

and your classroom are to help our students through their emotional storms. Your classroom is the “eye” in their storms of day to day life. Your classroom climate provides a calm and safe place where they feel love and valued. While chaos and instability may be awaiting them after the final bell rings, **YOU** are the constant anchor that their hearts can call home. No matter what else this school year brings, stand firm with your value of self worth and the reason **WHY** you answered the calling to be a part of this powerful profession.

The task before you may seem great during various points of the school year storm, but know that the clouds, in time, will clear. Know, down to your core, that the knowledge and effort that you tirelessly invest in your students become shining rays of success that will be cherished forever. Take pride in the work that you do and the impact that you have on the children of North Carolina. Thank you for joining over 100,000 other passionate professionals in the field of education in our state, and congratulations on a successful start to the 2018-2019 school year.

## >>>>>>>Thriving in Your First Years as a Teacher<<<<<<<<

Six realistic, low-stress steps you can take to improve your teaching in the hectic early years of your career.

**Write reflectively:** Simply by writing about your classroom experiences, you're already developing yourself as an educator. Writing is widely recognized as a tool to alleviate stress and manage anxiety. It's important for teachers to write as a way to vent about stressful days, grow from mistakes, and appreciate successes. **Record things you want to change:** Create a document specifically designed to record your mistakes and plans for improvement. Whenever a lesson plan goes awry, jot down a note about how to make it better in the future. **Observe other teachers:** New teachers are often required to observe veterans, but we shouldn't stop there. Even after you fulfill your observation obligations, make time to email different teachers in your building that you admire and let them know you want to stop by their classrooms to see them in action. Most teachers will be glad to work with you and to talk afterward about your thoughts and observations. We get better at teaching when we talk productively about our practice. **Learn a new skill:** Making time in your life to learn about something you're interested in can help remind you what your students encounter every day in your classroom: As much as it can be exciting to learn something new, it's also scary. It's important that we regularly look for chances to experience life the way our students do, so that we can be empathetic to their situation. **Take charge of your PD:** There are many ways you can be proactive in your professional development (PD). Social media websites like Twitter and Pinterest provide an entire network of teachers seeking discussions and other opportunities to connect. **Be kind to yourself:** Practicing self-care is essential to your continual improvement as a teacher. If you're not taking care of yourself, you cannot be the teacher your students need. By making good choices that lead to a healthy mind and body, you'll enable yourself to have a happier teaching experience. When trying to be a better teacher, the key is to not be hard on yourself. Teaching is a tricky and time-consuming job. No one has perfected it yet, and you won't be the first. *Read the full article here:* <https://www.edutopia.org/article/thriving-your-first-years-teacher> .