

Principal Copy

STARTING

RIGHT

HELPING NEW TEACHERS

IN WELS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

**WELS Commission on Parish Schools
2929 N. Mayfair Road
Milwaukee, WI 53222**



PARISH SERVICES

Evangelism
Worship
Youth Discipleship
▶ Parish Schools
Adult Discipleship
Special Ministries

Dear Board of Education Chairman and Principal:

Soon many congregations and schools will be welcoming another of God's gifts to His church. A graduate of Martin Luther College or a new experienced teacher may soon join your ministry team.


What a joy it is to welcome these gifts of God into our ministry! What a privilege it is to have new ministers of the Gospel join us on our ministry team! We thank and praise God that He has enabled these men and women to enter the teaching ministry and commit their lives to His service.

We want to assist them make a good beginning in their ministry within your congregation. The enclosed materials will help you consider some of the issues which face teachers as they begin their ministry in your congregation. We encourage you to read and discuss these issues and consider ways in which you can help your new teacher.

Some of the issues may require board of education and/or congregational action. Other suggestions may be implemented by the principal, other teachers, or members of the congregation. Some involve adjustments to the community. Others are concerned with adjustments to the culture and practices of the school. Some are social and some are professional. Not all of the issues will apply to every teacher; however, all of the issues should be considered as a new teacher is welcomed into your fellowship.

May God help you celebrate the gift which He has given to you. May He also help you welcome your new teacher so that he/she can **start right** in ministering to the needs of the children and their families.

Yours in Christ,


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Introduction

The Commission on Parish Schools and the District Parish Schools Coordinators have studied the challenges facing the beginning teacher. All of our studies confirmed the published reports regarding beginning teachers in America.

Nationally, 20% of new teachers leave the teaching profession after one (1) year in the classroom. 40% - 50% of beginning teachers will drop out of teaching within the first seven (7) years - and most within the first two (2) years. Beginning teachers throughout the United States typically have the following difficulties during their first year of teaching:

1. Difficult Work Assignments Other professions gradually increase the novice's work responsibilities over time. In the teaching profession, beginners often start out with more responsibilities than veteran teachers and are expected to perform all of their duties with the same expertise as experienced professionals.

2. Unclear Expectations Schools have myriad formal rules and procedures that are new and unclear to beginning teachers. Beyond formal expectations, there are many informal routines and customs that are even more difficult for new teachers to learn.

3. Inadequate Resources Entry-year teachers often find their classrooms lacking instructional resources and materials. When teachers are most in need of quality instructional resources and materials they often have the worst in the school.

4. Isolation Beginning teachers often suffer from emotional isolation when they are assigned to the most physically isolated classrooms. They may also suffer from social and professional isolation. Experienced teachers are not likely to offer assistance to beginning teachers, even when beginners are clearly experiencing severe difficulties.

5. Role Conflict Conflict often exists between the roles of teacher and young adult. New teachers may be living away from home or the safety of college for the first time and may have just moved to a new community. They may be opening bank or charge accounts, renting and furnishing an apartment, or buying a car for the first time. They may be beginning a marriage or starting a family. The conflict between the roles of teacher and young adult often leads new teachers to perceive that neither role is being given sufficient time and attention. This perception can lead to strong feelings of guilt and unhappiness.

6. Reality Shock Many teachers embark on their first teaching assignments with highly idealized perceptions of teaching: they tend to envision themselves spending the entire day fostering their students' academic growth. Early on, they find that teaching actually includes a wide range of nonacademic duties, including disciplining students, collecting money and forms, completing administrative paperwork, and serving as parent-substitutes. The discrepancy between the beginning teacher's vision of teaching and the real work of teaching can cause serious disillusionment. (Stephen P. Gordon, *How to Help Beginning Teachers Succeed*, ASCD, 1991)

Our research with WELS beginning teachers indicates that their challenges center in the following seven areas:

1. Spiritual Growth: A desire - but lack of time - for: personal Bible study and devotions; worship life; and study and discussions with other teachers.

2. Interpersonal Skills: A perceived lack of skills in: working with difficult people; managing conflict; communicating with adults; and organizational leadership.

3. Time Management: A lack of proven strategies of: time management; ability to delegate responsibilities; prioritizing and planning; and balancing personal and family time.

4. Health and Wellness: A need for help in: stress management; maintaining fitness for life; and a following a healthful diet.

5. Personal Financial Management: A desire for assistance in: budgeting, taxes, and financial planning; purchasing appropriate insurance; developing a savings plan; and understanding issues related to TSA/IRA and the WELS pension plan.

6. Re-Location to a New Setting: A need for assistance in: moving to a new community; finding appropriate housing; learning about the community; and preparing for the cultural change of a new community.

7. Classroom and School Procedures: A desire for the assistance of a "mentor teacher" to provide personal time and attention to understand classroom and school procedures.

Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to assist you, the principal and the board of education, to help your new teacher make a good beginning in his/her ministry to children and their families.

Guidelines

The following guidelines will help guide you in the process of orienting your new teacher to the ministry of your congregation within your community.

1. Before the Teacher Arrives

- ☞ Special letter of welcome including handbooks, inquiry about travel plans
- ☞ Congregation and Board policies to support the new teacher:
 - Financial considerations (Congregations should pay travel expenses and consider sending a cash advance or partial salary for initial expenses.)
 - Provisions for housing
 - If time and travel allow, consider inviting the new teacher for a visit immediately after graduation from MLC
 - Review these guidelines for orienting new teachers
- ☞ Information concerning:
 - Date of installation
 - List of textbooks
 - School calendar

2. When the Teacher Arrives

- ☛ Meet the new teacher and introduce him/her to other teachers, pastor, board members, and congregation
- ☛ Assist in finding an apartment, if appropriate, and provide orientation to the community
- ☛ Provide orientation to the congregation, its customs and procedures
- ☛ Make arrangements for home visits
- ☛ Supply a school key

3. Ongoing Orientation to School Policies & Procedures

- ☛ A suggested checklist is provided for your assistance which should not be limited to one session
- ☛ A suggested checklist is provided for the teacher's assistance
- ☛ New Teacher Assessment for ongoing support (cf. Appendix C)

4. Assign a Mentor Teacher

- ☛ Select an experienced member of the faculty who is willing to provide personal time and attention to serve as the new teacher's mentor

Additional Resources

Assist teacher in identifying and using professional resources to address items 1-7 on the previous page.

The First Days of School: How to be an Effective Teacher, (Harry K. Wong Publications, 1991) is a very useful tool for the beginning teacher and for experienced teacher in addressing some of the practical aspects of the teaching profession.

School Orientation Checklist for New Teachers is provided for your use as appendix A. It lists items of concern for beginning teachers as they begin their ministry in a new school. It will serve as a guide for you in orienting your new teacher to your school and to your community.

Teacher's Checklist for the Beginning of School is provided for use by your new teacher as he/she prepares for their first year of teaching. It lists many of the items which need attention prior to the beginning of school.

Needs Assessment for New Teachers is provided for use by your new teacher to help in identifying those areas perceived to be in greatest need of attention as he/she prepares for the new school year.

ASCD Videos: Mentoring the New Teacher is a series of eight videotapes examining problems that first year teachers encounter. They are available from the NPH Audiovisual Library.

In Closing

Serving in the public ministry of the gospel is a privilege given to only a few. Supporting and assisting newly called public ministers of the gospel is an even greater privilege. We pray that this will assist you in the great privilege of supporting and encouraging the new teacher who has joined you in the gospel ministry in your congregation. We further pray, that your new teacher will be a blessing to the children and families within your congregation and find personal joy and fulfillment through serving God as a member of your faculty.

SCHOOL ORIENTATION CHECKLIST FOR NEW TEACHERS

(To be used by the principal in discussions new teacher)

Date Completed	Item or Task
Policies and Procedures	
	1. Registration
	2. Lunch Money
	3. Playground Duty
	4. Grading, Report Cards, and Cumulative Records
	5. Public Health Nurse Service and Health Records
	6. Lunchroom, Lavatory, and Hall Rules
	7. Emergency Situations
	8. Church Attendance
	9. Home Visits
	10. Parent-Teacher Conferences
	11. Parent-Teacher Meetings
	12. Faculty Meetings
	13. Board of Education Meetings
	14. Bus Schedules
	15. Teachers' Conferences
	16. Field Trips
	17. Vacation Schedule
	18. Staff Hours
	19. Enrollment Policy
	20. Classroom Management Plan
	21. Paycheck Procedures
	22. Sick Leave, Substitute Teachers, Emergency Leave
	23. Handling Money or Valuables
	24. New Teacher's Personal Portfolio
	25. Topics from New Teacher's Personal Filing System

Curriculum	
	1. Daily Class Schedule
	2. Blocking Texts for the Year
	3. Lesson Plan Policies
	4. Courses of Study
	5. Testing Program
	6. Use of Library
Supervision of Instruction	
	1. Classroom Visits and Follow-up Conferences
	2. Team Ministry Conferences
	3. Assistance with Classroom Management
	4. Teacher Performance Assessment Report to WELS Office
Physical Plant	
	1. Heat and Ventilation
	2. Use of Lights
	3. Night Use of School and Classrooms
	4. Use of the Gymnasium (if applicable)
	5. Bell Schedule
	6. Care in Locking Doors
Equipment and Supplies	
	1. Location of School Supplies
	2. Supplies Purchased by Teacher vs. Supplies Provided by School
	3. Location of School Supply Store
	4. Petty Cash Policy
	5. Operation of Audio-Visual Equipment
	6. List of Supplies which Students are to Provide for Themselves

Teacher's Signature

Date

**TEACHER'S CHECKLIST FOR THE
BEGINNING OF SCHOOL**
(New teacher's checklist for beginning the school year)

Completed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Item or Task
Policies and Procedures	
	1. Chain of command for suggestions / complaints
	2. Registration Procedures
	3. Handling of Money or Valuables (incl. Petty Cash & Lunch Money)
	4. Lesson Plan Requirements
	5. Student Records to be Kept - Deadlines for Entry
	6. Teacher Dress and Appearance Expectations
	7. Teacher Illness & Substitute Teachers
	8. Classroom Management Plan
	9. Classroom Volunteers
	10. Field Trips
	11. Use of Telephones
	12. Mail Delivery
	13. Playground Duty and Rules
	14. Grading, Report Cards, and Cumulative Records
	15. Lunchroom, Lavatory, and Hall Rules
	16. Emergency Situations - Injuries, Illnesses, Fire, Earthquake, Tornado, etc.
	17. Attendance Procedures - Classroom and Church
	18. Home Visits
	19. Parent-Teacher Conferences
	20. Parent-Teacher Meetings
	21. Faculty Meetings
	22. Personal Leave for Medical or Business
	23. Staff Hours & Vacation Schedule
	24. Paycheck Procedures

Classroom Activities	
	1. Obtain a Student Roster
	2. Set up Attendance and Grade Books
	3. Verify Quantity & Condition of Textbooks and Teacher's Manual (if used)
	4. Coordinate Use of Classroom with Other Teachers (if necessary)
	5. Organize Student Desks
	6. Check Condition of Desks
	7. Put up Bulletin Boards
	8. Determine and Post Classroom Expectations, Routines, & Procedures
	9. Develop a Student Information Filing System - incl. Name, Address, Phone #, etc
	10. Check Storage & Use of Overhead Projector and Other Audio-Visual Equipment
	11. Check Teacher Writing Materials and Erasers
	12. Verify Operation of Windows, Shades, Blinds
	13. Verify Operation of Desk Drawers (Teacher)
	14. Check Room Supplies and Storage
	15. Verify Operation of Heating and Ventilation Controls
	16. Check Storage Areas
Curriculum	
	1. Obtain and Study Copies of Pupil Textbooks and Teachers' Guides
	⇒ Instructional Goals
	⇒ Subject Matter to be Taught
	⇒ Scope and Sequence
	⇒ Possible Learning Centers
	2. Obtain School Curriculum Guides
	3. Identify Supplemental Resources
	4. Determine Special or Experimental Programs to be Covered During the Year
	5. Determine Availability of Library or Media Resources
	6. Block Textbooks for the Year
	7. Determine Testing Policy and Schedule
	8. Develop a Daily Class Schedule
	9. Prepare First Day Lesson Plans in Detail (Plan 3x more than anticipated need)
	10. Share Topics from Personal Filing System

Teachers and Other Personnel	
	1. Take Breaks or Go to Lunch with the Other Teachers
	2. Visit other Teachers' Classrooms - Ideas?
	3. Meet the Secretary, Cook, Librarian, Custodian, etc.
	4. Share Your Personal Portfolio
	5. ASK QUESTIONS
Physical Plant and Facilities	
	1. Obtain Keys for the School and Rooms
	2. Check Fire Alarms, Exit Routes, and Extinguishers
	3. Check Recess and Play Areas
	4. Verify Bell Schedule
	5. Check on Building Use Policies
	6. Determine Storage Areas for School Supplies and Equipment
	7. Check on Availability and Use of Telephones
Church and Community	
	1. Obtain and Study Map of the Community
	2. Locate and Visit Homes of the Students
	3. Learn about Occupations of Parents and Other Congregational Leaders
	4. Identify Museums, Historic Sites, Zoo, Library, etc.
	5. Determine Congregational Norms for Dress, Communion Procedures, etc.
	6. Locate School Supply Stores

NEW TEACHER NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Section I

Please check the item(s) that describe your position this year:

- ☐ First year teacher ☐ Returning teacher after time off
☐ New grade level ☐ Experienced teacher in a new school

Please check your assignment level:

- ☐ Early Childhood ☐ Primary ☐ Intermediate ☐ Upper ☐ Secondary

Section II

Please choose the response for each item that most nearly indicates the level of support needed in the following areas:

1. Little or no need for assistance
 2. Some need for assistance
 3. Moderate need for assistance

4. High need for assistance
 5. Very high need for assistance

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>_____ Teaching from a Scriptural viewpoint</p> <p>_____ Using Law and Gospel properly</p> <p>_____ Conducting Christ-centered devotions</p> <p>_____ Providing Christian discipline</p> <p>_____ Organizing & managing my classroom</p> <p>_____ Understanding the curriculum</p> <p>_____ Planning for instruction</p> <p>_____ Obtaining instructional resources</p> <p>_____ Grouping for effective instruction</p> <p>_____ Using a variety of teaching methods</p> <p>_____ Evaluating student progress</p> <p>_____ Diagnosing student needs</p> <p>_____ Celebrating individual differences</p> <p>_____ Assisting students with special needs</p> <p>_____ Administering standardized tests</p> | <p>_____ Communicating with my co-workers</p> <p>_____ Communicating with the principal</p> <p>_____ Communicating with parents</p> <p>_____ Counseling students</p> <p>_____ Understanding the Team Ministry Program</p> <p>_____ Completing administrative paperwork</p> <p>_____ Understanding my legal rights & responsibilities</p> <p>_____ Becoming aware of special services provided to our school</p> <p>_____ Dealing with stress</p> <p>_____ Facilitating group discussions</p> |
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Section III

Please respond to the following questions:

A. List any professional needs you have that are not addressed by the above items:

B. What types of support that are not currently available should the school provide to you and other new teachers?

Thank you for your help in completing this questionnaire!

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