

## **FIRST YEAR TEACHING SURVIVAL 101**

### **A Common Sense Approach**

**by Charlotte Royall**

Take very seriously this great advice: Eat right, get plenty of sleep, get inoculated and have NO addictions.

There is truly a “fear of the unknown” when entering your first year of teaching. Whether it is your first year of teaching or a new location, you can make your first year smooth and enjoyable. Hopefully, the following tips will make you feel a little more prepared for your first year.

#### **1. The Interview-**

- a. Don't be afraid to ask questions, know exactly what you'll be getting into and with whom you'll be working.
- b. Be very clear-cut on what your duties will involve. Leave no surprises.
- c. Ask also about class scheduling, pay-scale, budget and principal's philosophy about fine arts.

#### **2. Paperwork, paperwork, paperwork!-Stay organized and ahead of the game.**

- a. Keep your college notes.
- b. Keep thorough lesson plans and JOURNAL. They're great to refer back to, year after year.
- c. Find out all administrative procedures. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Assumptions will cause more work and headaches later. (checking roll every day is very important!)
- d. Don't let the paper work pile up.

#### **3. Establish positive climate and control in the classroom.**

- a. Establish simple, but clear behavior guidelines. Be sure that you are in line with school policies. Post guidelines and discuss the very first day with your classes. STAY CONSISTENT!
- b. Don't allow the podium to be your fortress. Use all available classroom space.
- c. Get to know the kids, earn their loyalty.
- d. Be tough, demanding and nurturing.
- e. Be proactive, not reactive.

#### **4. Establish Important Relationships.**

- a. Administrators-your biggest ally
- b. Staff-Secretaries and Custodians-(most important relationship)
- c. Coaches and other academic teachers
- d. Parents, Band Boosters

**5. Borrow Ideas-this is the ultimate compliment.**

- a. Sit down with an expert. Ask lot's of questions!! Pay for his/her time. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Clinicians, other directors in the area, etc.

**6. Common sense points to remember:**

- a. Don't burn bridges-Don't make comments about previous director or performing ensemble. (Kids and parents form loyalties.)
- b. Don't try to change the program overnight.
- c. Dress professionally, kids notice.
- d. BE ON TIME!!
- f. Don't let your first year be your last!!

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