

***Teachers That Sparkle***  
***Back to School***  
***To Do List***

- Prepare home for work return or first position.
  - Discuss your daily schedule with your family.
  - Take care of needed appointments and things at your home prior to the first day back to school.
  - Develop a routine within your home of when you will do household work, take care of your own children's needs, and allow yourself time to decompress.
  
- Ensure your family and friends understand the time commitment for back-to-school activities.
  - The first month of back to school is extremely busy and stressful. You and your family need to understand this.
  - Make sure everyone has your schedule, as there will be time commitments outside of regular working hours and you need to be prepared.
  - A great way to include your family is to involve them with as many back to school activities as you can. Let them help you with your room set up. Let them visit you during appropriate work time and see where you will be spending your next year.
  - If you are bringing your own children to your school, let them come and meet the staff. However, make sure they understand expectations of staff children at the campus...when in doubt, ask!
  
- Plan your route to and from school. Determine times of arrival and departure.
  - Will you deal with traffic each day? If it is possible, you need to prepare for this.
  - Prepare a home departure time in the morning that allows you time in case you run behind, or a small incident happens. Running late will only make you feel rushed or overwhelmed.
  - Think about the end of your workday. Do you plan to stay and work late each day or specific days of the week? Do you have after-school meetings on some days of the week? Will you be driving in traffic?
  - What is the best route for you to take to and from school? Plan for this and make sure you review it during "normal" traffic time, not necessarily in the middle of the summer.
  - The more you plan, the better you will feel!

- Organize your workday.
  - Will you eat breakfast before leaving your home? Do you need to feed children or others in your home each morning?
  - Lunch? Are you ordering lunch each day or bringing your own? How do you prepare your lunch? Will you allow time in the morning or the night before?
  - Do you have a plan for your work outfits? Do you plan it each morning, at the last minute, or do you think ahead?
  - Will you allow yourself time in the morning after arriving at school to set up your day? Are you planning to set up the day before prior to leaving the school?
  - How will you prepare your daily materials that you need for your students?
  - What is your emergency back up plan? If your own child becomes ill? If there is a household emergency? Think ahead and plan so you are not just reacting when the time comes.
  - A schedule is one of the most important things to develop and to follow. Work with your team and design one that will fit your assignments AND FOLLOW IT! Set alarms and reminders. Your tardiness will affect others and it will be a sure-fire way for you to sever relationships.
  
- ***Plan for Back-to-School Staff Development Days.***
  
- ***Plan your time to prepare your classroom.***
  
- ***Prepare your meet and greet materials.***
  
- Ensure you understand all campus procedures and ask questions if in doubt.
  - Your district and campus will have expectations. They will communicate these to you and will provide them somewhere in writing. They are expected to be followed.
  - The most important parts of the day are arrival, lunch, and dismissal. You do not want to lose a child or forget to feed them. Make sure you know these procedures WELL. This will make or break your year.
  - There are no dumb questions when it comes to policy and procedures. You will not be looked at poorly if you ask questions. You will be judged for not following expectations. This will be part of your evaluation. You want to get this right.
  
- Plan to meet your team and get to know each other.
  - You will be spending a lot of time with your team and if you do not know them, build a relationship with them, it will be a long year.
  - You do not need to plan to necessarily be best friends, but you want a relationship that is productive and professional. The more you know about your teammates the more you can connect with them. This goes from your end also. They want to know that you will come on the team and be a productive player.

- As with anything in life, there will be people you love and people that you would not choose to spend time with. This may be one of your teammates and that is ok. Understand that what they do or say is not necessarily about you...don't take it personal. I find that most people who treat others like this are usually struggling with their own situations and just lash out to others.
- Complete your lesson plans for the first week (or two) of school.
  - Plan ahead as much as you can.
  - I promise, you will think you have everything planned for the day (especially your very first day of teaching) and it will not be enough. Over plan...I would always rather have too much to do than not enough. Students do not do well with a lot of down time and if you run out of things to do...down time will happen.
  - Building relationships and ensuring that students understand expectations is the most important things you can do during the first two weeks of school. If you get this right, the rest of your year will be smooth. Discuss this with your team and your school, but most schools understand this and will build time into the schedule for this. Take advantage of it!
  - Failing to plan is planning to fail. It may sound silly, but it is 100% true. A lesson plan is not just a document that someone (another teammate for example) puts together and hands to you. We will cover this in future training, but it is IMPORTANT that you understand what is on the plan and how to deliver the plan. If you don't ask! As you get to know your students, you will see that some adjustments will need to be made. That is ok. You are doing what is best for students and ensuring that they learn.
- Schedule self-care activities throughout the Back-to-School time.
  - I am a proponent of self-care. Teaching is hard and back to school time is CRAZY. You need to plan time to take care of you or you will feel it.
  - Whatever you do to decompress, schedule time to do that in your week(s).
  - Talk about your experiences with someone you TRUST.
  - Reflect and journal about your experiences.
  - Remember, it is ok to cry, get overwhelmed, or confused. But do it in a manner that is professional. Do it away from others or in your own home. Do it with people you trust. You are developing your reputation and perception is reality. You do not want someone to have the perception that you cannot handle it. You can...and we are here to help you with that.
- Breathe...the week(s) will be very busy, but you will be ok. One step at a time.
  - When in doubt, stop, breathe, and remember...we got you! And you've got this!