

An Inspirational Message from William Keegan Storrs

2022 Burroughs Wellcome Fund Charter Teacher of the Year



Everyone wants to do the impossible. Teachers especially. We're the kind of people who give everything 110% because we can't accept anything less. We work mornings, afternoons, nights, and weekends because we know that what we're doing matters for kids.

And that's what we love about this job, right? It matters. It **really** matters. But that's also the constant weight that teachers carry. For better or for worse, our job matters **every day**.

So we don't give up; we persevere. We hit a wall and keep going. We hit ten walls and keep going. But sometimes our strength doesn't feel like strength. It feels like tired. It feels like exhausted. And you have to know: it's not you. It's the job.

Teaching is not just really hard. It's impossible. And I mean that in the most literal sense of the word: it is not possible.

Now, I'm not saying that it's unrealistic to expect teachers to create real learning opportunities that powerfully impact students. We can. We do. But the role of a teacher - and everything that entails - has expanded to a point where one teacher simply can't do it all.

Keeping grades up to date, establishing relationships with families, preparing for instruction, aligning curricula, creating assessments, differentiating every lesson to meet the needs of every student, attending every single parent meeting and the PDs and the IEPs and the PLCs and the *H-I-J-K-L-M-N-O-Ps...*

If you've fumbled a commitment this year (or two or twenty), you're in good company. It's okay. It's expected. It's inevitable. Because at the end of the day, you're just you. You're one singular human being. And although you are likely one of the most powerful influences in the lives of your students, you're not mythical. Yes, you teach. But you also sleep, and you cry, and you laugh, and you cry some more, and you **live**. We can't forget to live.

Are you trying your best every day to do right by the kids? Of course, you are. That's why you're here. And I'm so glad that you are. Today, there are over 3,000 teaching vacancies in our state. But you're not one of them. You showed up. And if your best April-May self is only 60% (or 40% or 10%...) of your August-September self, then welcome to the club. Your best looks different every day. You shouldn't expect to run your 180th lap as fast as you ran your first. But you keep moving. You push through. And you finish.

Thank you for finishing. Thank you for teaching. Thank you for showing up. For doing your best for the kids. That's enough. **You're** enough. Your work matters.

And the next time you feel like you can't do this impossible job anymore, take a breath. Adjust your expectations. Remember your humanity. And in this profession where everyone seems to expect the impossible, just do the possible. It makes more of a difference than you will ever know.

Doing the possible:

- Make meaningful relationships with students by treating them with respect and being your genuine self.
- Plan and deliver instruction in the best (and most efficient) way(s) you know how.
- Manage behavior without expecting perfection (from them or from yourself)
- Communicate with families within a reasonable timeframe. 24 hours isn't too long to wait.
- Attend the meetings and events that you're able to. Say "I'm sorry, I can't" when it just doesn't work.
- Provide feedback in a meaningful (but efficient) way. Not everything you collect has to be graded. Consider in-class conferencing instead of written feedback, which students may or may not actually read.
- Focus on the places where you make a big impact, and let go of some things that aren't as meaningful.
- Don't let a mistake or a bad lesson get to you. Tomorrow is another day.
- Celebrate the victories, both for your kids and for yourself.
- Ask for help when you need it.

BT PD Corner

The Regional Education Facilitators are excited to partner with Digital Teaching and Learning for the North Carolina Beacons of Leader Development (NC BOLD) Conference in each region this year. The best part about 2023 NC BOLD is that not only will we have the digital track, but we will also have elements of Beginning Teacher Support embedded within the conference. Join one of our mini-conferences in a region of your choice for fresh ideas to immediately incorporate into your classroom practices!



This is a FREE event open to educators in North Carolina. See the complete list of dates and locations below. [Register here.](#)

Dates & Locations:

- Monday, July 24 - Pisgah High School: Canton, NC
- Tuesday, July 25 - Watauga High School: Boone, NC
- Wednesday, July 26 - Kannapolis Middle School: Kannapolis, NC
- Thursday, July 27 - Oak Grove High School: Winston-Salem, NC
- Monday, July 31 - Croatan High School: Newport, NC
- Tuesday, Aug 1 - Washington High School: Washington, NC
- Wednesday, Aug 2 - Rocky Mount High School: Rocky Mount, NC
- Thursday, Aug 3 - Gray's Creek High School: Hope Mills, NC

ELA: April BT Newsletter

Comprehension: Strategy Instruction

Providing students with explicit instruction on text structure and effective reading strategies supports students in comprehending complex text. Just like the content being taught, the strategies students need to learn to access texts need to be explicitly taught as well. Being taught when and why certain strategies are used allows students to choose flexibly from their repertoire when encountering challenging portions of texts.



Elementary Considerations:

Describing, modeling, and providing opportunities for students to practice using a variety of reading comprehension strategies, including making predictions, activating prior knowledge, setting reading goals, visualizing, questioning, making inferences, and summarizing ([p. 6-7](#)).



Secondary Considerations:

Modeling and teaching students to monitor comprehension and to use strategies to repair comprehension when they do not understand what they read ([p.9](#)).

Engaging students in using a variety of tools and strategies to visualize and use text structure to support comprehension ([p.9](#)).



Try It!

[This PLC planning chart \(p.11\)](#) helps guide conversation around making intentional decisions in regards to supporting the NCSCOS with strategy instruction.

By creating a common understanding amongst the PLC as to what the strategy is and how to use it, teachers can mitigate any potential challenges and deliver effect standards-aligned instruction.



In the Field

Heather Myers
Secondary Principal
Lincoln County Schools

See how Heather would use the *Say-Mean-Matter* strategy to build comprehension with her students by analyzing the text at various levels on [page 10 of the SCOOP](#).



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Resources & Support

Learn more in our [full issue of the SCOOP](#)

Bookmarks:



Try it! ([p.11](#))



Elementary Considerations ([p.6-7](#))



Secondary Considerations ([p.9](#))

Professional Learning
Opportunities:

[LIS Learning Series](#)



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Follow us!

Dr. Stacy Daniel
Section Chief for ELA & Languages
stacy.daniel@dpi.nc.gov

Mary Phillips
K-5 ELA Consultant
mary.phillips@dpi.nc.gov

Daniel Fugazot
K-5 ELA Consultant
daniel.fugazot@dpi.nc.gov

Kelly Schultz
6-8 ELA Consultant
kelly.schultz@dpi.nc.gov