



# NC Beginning Teacher Newsletter



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## A Message from the 2020 Burroughs Wellcome Fund North Carolina Teacher of the Year, Maureen Stover



This school year is beginning like no other. While there will be challenges as we navigate the new normal, there will also be many opportunities for teachers to redefine the way we approach education. As we welcome students back into our classrooms, beginning teachers will play a key role in the blended and remote learning models. I am excited to see all the creative and innovative ways you will find to connect with your students emotionally and academically as you embrace your role as an educator. As you begin this school year, remember that you are an important part of your school's culture. This year will have challenges, but it will also provide you with unique opportunities to lead, opportunities to grow, and opportunities to be the best you that you can be.

Beginning teachers infuse excitement into our schools because you bring new ideas, new implementation strategies, and an eagerness to teach that is infectious. This year also will provide you with opportunities to lead. As a tech native, you have a unique skill set that will enable you to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of your students in remote and blended learning. You will have the opportunity to lead and assist veteran teachers in discovering the best applications, methods, and strategies to meet students' needs. This is true also as we transition back into our brick and mortar classrooms. Be confident in your ability to help other teachers. This year is new for everyone. Whether you are a beginning or a veteran teacher, EVERY teacher is in his/her first year of blended and remote instruction. Veteran teachers will benefit from your innovative and creative ideas to engage students and meet their social-emotional learning needs. The ideas and tech skills you bring to the table will be invaluable to the staff at your school.

As teachers, we always want to do things correctly. We think that we must be perfect. We do not give ourselves grace. We help our students develop a growth mindset and encourage them to consider mistakes as an important and valuable part of the learning process. However, many times we do not extend this model to ourselves. As a teacher it is important to remember that mistakes are also part of our learning process. When we view mistakes as a way to learn, it will make us better teachers. The key to using mistakes to improve our teaching practice is reflection. Reflection enables us to acknowledge a mistake, or something that did not go quite as planned, and then determine a different approach to that lesson or situation that can be used in the future to be more successful. When we change our thinking about mistakes from a negative to a positive, we improve our teaching practice, model growth for our students, and approach each day with a mindset to be a better educator.

It is also important to remember to breathe and to prioritize self-care. As teachers, we are always helping others. Sometimes that means we forget to take care of ourselves. In order to be our best selves for our students, we must focus on self-care. Each person's self-care routine will be different, but it is important that you find a way to disconnect from your profession and focus on yourself each week. My self-care routine includes exercise, yoga, and art journaling.

Click [here](#) to learn more about Maureen Stovers' journey from a U.S. Air Force Intelligence Officer to the 2020 Burroughs Wellcome Fund North Carolina Teacher of the Year.

These activities provide me with time to focus, reflect, and recharge to be my best self. While it can be difficult to find time in your busy schedule to engage in self-care, it is important that you schedule time for YOU! Taking time for self-care will help you be present for your students and enable you to focus on your development as an educator.

I am so excited to see all the amazing things you will do as a beginning teacher. You are unique. You are amazing. You are creative. You are innovative. You are the champion in the lives of the children you teach. Go confidently into your career and believe in your ability to do great things. Trust in your abilities to lead and share your ideas with your colleagues. Remember that things will never go perfectly, but when you approach challenges and mistakes as opportunities, you will grow as a teacher and improve your teaching practice. Make time for yourself and focus on self-care so you can be your best self for your students. I believe in you, and I know you will do amazing things this year!

## For Beginning Teachers By Beginning Teachers: BTOY Way

The Finalists and Regional Beginning Teachers of the Year for the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT) are a group of collaborative, diverse beginning teachers from across the state. This phenomenal group of teachers developed the site, [Bridging to Teaching Online Your Way](#) (BTOY Way), to share best practices, ideas, resources and materials. Although the site was created during the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, it will continue to be updated to supply resources as educators work to provide the very best instruction for students, no matter where they are attending class. Therefore, be sure to bookmark it to find info on topics such as virtual student accountability, self-care and other articles of interest organized for beginning teachers by beginning teachers.



Our mission is to empower and support beginning teachers in North Carolina. It is our hope to encourage teachers to continue to love what we do, even in differing circumstances like Covid-19. We aim to advance students across the state by mentoring future teachers on how to become incredible educators. We believe that meaningful learning can happen anywhere, whether in class or virtual. Through this online platform, we hope to provide teachers with the resources they need for effective practices.

