



# A Newsletter for Beginning Teachers in NC

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## A Message from : Sandhills Region Teacher of the Year-Mariel Barker Sellers

### First Annual BT Summit

DPI is hosting 8 regionally based BT Summits the last week in June. There will be break-out sessions specifically designed to address the needs of beginning teachers and each summit concludes with a keynote speaker and door prizes. There is no registration cost for participants. Each LEA/Charter will be given a cap as to the number of participants they can send. Check with your BT Coordinator to learn how you can participate in this professional development opportunity.

June 27- Southeast & Western

June 28- Sandhills & Southwest

June 29- North Central & Northwest

June 30- Northeast & Piedmont-Triad

Valentine's Day is HUGE in the life of a school. Little ones are excited to receive cards from their classmates and some of the older ones are giving and receiving flowers, balloons, and candy. There is an excitement in the air. Being prepared for this holiday will make it fun for both you and your students.

Happy Valentine's Day!



If you've found yourself anywhere near a drugstore or a Hallmark lately, you've surely noticed that love is in the air. For teachers, this season of love is the perfect time to reflect on the opportunity we have to experience and express love through the important job that we do. By now, I am sure it has become clear to you that teaching is much more than just a job. In many ways, it is a labor of love. The hours you spend preparing assignments, providing feedback, analyzing student data, calling home, and worrying about your students can feel overwhelming. But we don't do all of these things for the sake of professionalism, we do them out of love—love for our schools, love for our profession, but most of all, love for our students. And believe me, the love that you pour into your job certainly does not go unnoticed. A funny thing hap-

pens when I reminisce about my own time as a K-12 student. Somehow, most of what happened to me during those thirteen years has been wiped away like chalk on a chalkboard, with only a few dusty streaks of memories remaining. I remember pockets of information—a historical figure here, an important equation there. I remember a little bit more about several terrific lessons. But I remember the teachers who stood before every classroom in clear, sharp, Technicolor detail. Their clothes, their mannerisms, their temperaments, their voices, and even their perfumes are as clear in my mind now as they ever have been. It was only after several years of teaching that I realized that it wasn't the content, nor the classrooms, nor the daily routines that made me fall in love with school—it was my teachers. As a teacher, the impact you have on your stu-

dents is immeasurable. You set a lasting example for them as a professional who strives to do his or her job well, who treats each student with care and dignity, who exhibits a love for life, and who makes learning enjoyable. The time you spend with your students leaves an indelible mark on them during such a critical time in their lives. Your classroom might be the most loving environment a student encounters on a daily basis. YOU might be the spark that ignites a love for learning in every student you teach. I commend you for selecting this challenging, important, and immensely fulfilling profession. The work you do can be difficult, but your students and colleagues recognize that your work as a teacher is a labor of love. As we move through the second half of the school year, I hope you know how much you are loved and appreciated, and how very important you are to the students you teach.

[Mariel Barker Sellers: Columbus County Schools-East Columbus High School- Science](#)

## Partnering Students: Who Works Well Together?

When it's time for students to work together, how do you partner them: draw names, let them choose, or assign them in groups? Classrooms today house a very diverse population of learners, and it is important to know each child's academic ability, learning style, and personality. Grouping students can be a challenge. Did you know an AIG student and an at-risk student do not always make the best partnership? One might argue, the AIG student can help

the at-risk student achieve at a higher level. Often, this is not the case. The at-risk student can be intimidated by the AIG child. The AIG student may choose to complete the assignment on his/her own and no learning takes place for the at-risk student. When partnering students, here's a Kagan strategy: partner an AIG student with an above average student and an average student with an at-risk student. These partnerships,

more often than not, produce positive results. In addition, it is extremely important to pay attention to personalities. This is also a factor in determining if students are able to work together effectively.

