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Other Tools and Tips to Equip New Teachers

By James Pingel

In addition to the dispositions and suggestions shared in the [Fall 2017 issue of *Shaping the Future*](#), here are a few other things you can do to help your new teachers experience success and grow in their teaching vocation.

- If a new teacher is coming from out of the area, ask your faculty and staff to help with the move-in day. Host a cookout or luncheon after the move is complete. Build camaraderie early in the welcome process.
- Invite new teachers (and their spouses) over to your house for dinner. Keep it low key. Tell them that they can eat and run. You simply want to have them over and get to know them better.
- Before school starts, arrange for a meet and greet with board members, pastors, faculty, and staff members in the new teacher's classroom. Put a gift-card tree together and place it on your new teacher's desk as a welcome to the neighborhood or community gesture of good will.
- Sit down with your new teachers and show them a photocopy of last year's yearbook pictures of your faculty and staff. Have them write down three things underneath each faculty picture to help them remember and identify their new colleagues.
- If you have a mentor/coach plan that does not directly involve you, arrange for the mentor and new teacher to meet and set up a schedule for the first months.
- Get new teachers into their classrooms as soon as possible. Ask them if they want or need modifications or changes (materials, posters, technology, etc.).

Be accessible and provide comfort from day one. Instead of asking a new teacher, "How are you doing?" ask this: "What can I do for you today?" Most new teachers do not want to bother their administrator with little things, but they do want to feel like they can come to you when they need to.

Tell new teachers up front that you will visit their classroom frequently during their first year. Walk through the observation forms you will be using. Lower their anxiety about your supervision and formal observations.

Mandate peer observations for new teachers. Tell them that they will be observed by their peers *and* observe their colleagues too.

Along with your business manager or bookkeeper, go through important financial issues or questions (e.g., TSAs, self-employment tax, health care options, etc.).

Set up and conduct orientation days covering basic school and classroom procedures. In addition, help them prepare their first two days of lesson plans. Make it concrete and something about which they can feel confident and prepared.

Offer and provide ways they should introduce themselves to their students and get to know their students. For example, encourage them to put together a short slide deck on their life and how it led them to your school or why they wanted to become a teacher.