

# THE NEW

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To embrace, encourage, and empower through a network of Christian educators.

# Nazarene Educators Worldwide



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CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE



## A Prayer for Mutual Respect and Protection Marilyn J. Dominick, Retired Public School Administrator

As I write this article, I can't resist the temptation to keep checking the newsfeeds regarding the recent ambushes of police officers in Louisiana and Texas, among other places. I am searching for answers, trying to understand what has happened and how we, as a nation, and more specifically as educators, can address the racial tension and hatred that is translated into such senseless loss of life on both sides of the issue.

In each of the recent situations, an angry young man plotted violence against police officers in general, without regard for the families and communities that are impacted.

Is there anything our schools and educational staff can do to positively impact our communities in these situations? I think we can, so I decided to call upon the police officers in my family to find out their perspective on what has happened.

I have been married for forty – five years to a great guy who has spent his career as a NY State Trooper. Our sons have followed in his footsteps, one with the State Police and the other as an inner city police officer in Syracuse, NY. Here are some things they have shared with me. I hope you find their input helpful as you enter your classrooms in the new school year.

- Hold a discussion in your classroom about those who work in law enforcement, exploring what your students know and believe about that work. This will give you valuable information about the culture of the families of your students. Encourage students to share their own personal encounters with police officers and to share whether those were positive or negative, and why. It is good for students to voice their reasons for how they feel about experiences with law enforcement as this may help them truly sort out their feelings. Find out specifically who in your class has a family member, neighbor, or friend who is a police officer. (Continued on page 3.)

## Teacher Morale By Lance Howard, School Administrator and Vice-Chair of NEW

When you arrive at school and encounter your teammates, what is your perception of their morale? Are they mostly positive or mostly negative? Do they exude the fact that they love teaching, their kids, and their career choice? Or, do they send a different message that leaves you wondering why they are so miserable and still teaching in a classroom?

The subject of teacher morale has been a topic of conversation in schools and homes for a number of years. We instinctively understand that a positive person makes us feel good, while a negative person leaves us feeling spent. So, what do you do if you are trying to help others keep a positive focus or if you are a spent teacher?

In the research reviewed on this topic by the National Association of Elementary Principals (<https://www.naesp.org/resources/2/Principal/2006/J-Fp46.pdf>) they share the conclusion that several studies of teacher morale show that by listening to teachers and supporting their work with recognition and resources, principals can build and maintain a learning environment in which teachers feel appreciated. (Continued on page 2.)

## **A New School Year**

**By Melodee Simmons, Preschool and Early Childhood Learning Center Representative**

It's that time of year again. Vacations are ending, days are starting to get shorter, and we are looking at the start of a new school year.

Some of you had the summer off, while some have been working all summer in a Summer Camp program. Whichever one you have been involved with, it is time to get back to the regular school routine.

The children have also been in different routines, and they will need to get back into the everyday schedule. For some young children, it is easy to return to preschool and the daily routine. For other children, it is difficult to separate from Mom and Dad and be left with people they don't know or have not seen for a few months.

We have the opportunity to help these children learn:

1. Their parents will always return to get them.
2. School can be a fun place.
3. It is good to learn how to make new friends.
4. Jesus loves little children.

To welcome the children and their families, we need to provide a pleasant and organized room, a place that is inviting and draws the interest of the children. We need the parents to feel they are leaving their child in a place that is comfortable and will offer the children activities that will be fun as well as educational.

It is important to have a good daily routine that alternates between active and quiet activities. Young children need the daily routine to give them security. The routines help the young child know what to expect next. With varied activities, the children remain interested and have less time to miss their parents.

It is most important to remember these are very young children. They don't understand why Mommy and Daddy left them. Show the children your love and the love of Jesus. Have patience, and give them time to build their trust in you. When the children are settled in the routines, you will be ready for a wonderful year. That is what I pray for each of you.

Have a fantastic year!

(Continued from page 1.)

## **Teacher Morale**

**By Lance Howard, School Administrator and Vice-Chair of NEW**

One key element discussed in the research article revolved around the dynamic between school leadership and the instructional team. The article cites that administration needs to be responsive to input and feedback from their teaching staff. Two additional commonalities among teachers who have left (either the field of education or their previous schools) cited having a lack of recognition from school leadership and an inadequate level of support.

So a few suggested steps to help maintain staff morale involves building leadership helping teachers know that their administration is there for them. Provide resources that teachers need to be successful. Help staff keep focused on their primary responsibility of teaching students. Reduce additional duties/tasks/paperwork that can be a distraction. Continue public displays of commendation and appreciation as a means to help teachers and staff feel accomplished. (Charlotte Advocates for Education 2004).

We can all be the change that we would like to see in our schools, so consider these factors to help make a positive impact within the various levels of influence and responsibility that you hold at your campus. Here's to a positive school year with great levels of learning that includes a wonderful sense of accomplishment, satisfaction, and high morale for all!



It is only the middle of July. However, it seems that the children just ran outside my room, and the doors to the classroom just closed on another year! Now school supplies flood the stores, and ads for back-to-school supplies are in all of the store flyers. Annoying ads are on the television reminding us that another year of classes is just around the corner. I do not understand how the summer season that seemed to last so long when I was a child can go by so quickly now!

It is already time to get ready for another new year. How do we properly prepare ourselves for the year ahead? The first thing I do is to pick a theme for the year. I feel that a new theme motivates me to dive into the year with both purpose and direction. I use that theme to decorate my room, promote my lessons, and give my students a feeling there is something new to look forward to in my classes. Because I teach high school and have students for successive years, I never want my students to feel they have to face all the same activities they experienced last year.

I must also get set to face the routine of classes again. An excellent way to accomplish this task is to give myself some challenging assignments. I choose some books that will challenge my thinking in academic way. I find some new novels that I might want to use in my classroom to expand my teaching selection. I plan to visit some sites that would challenge my thinking and expand my academic horizons. I never want to be stagnant in my own learning. Students will notice if their teacher is also a learner. Sharing where I have traveled, what I have read, and what I have learned can be an example of what I am asking them to do.

The most important task for any new year is to GO! Go to the Lord in prayer for each student whom He will place in your classroom. Only He knows the purpose that He has for each student that He has placed in a classroom. It is our job to find and fulfill that purpose. To accomplish that important job, we must GO to His Word and find the support and direction that we need for our very significant occupation. Shaping the lives and minds of children is just as important as educating them.

Our responsibility is not just the facts that we teach them but the core values that we exemplify each day. We are not in our classrooms by accident. God has placed each individual teacher in a situation where He intends to use him or her for His eternal plan. We need to be aware of why He has chosen to place us in that classroom to teach in this specific year.

What is His plan for our life in that classroom with each child with whom He has trusted us this year? I certainly want to accomplish His Will in my classroom for this year, don't you?

So Get Ready to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit. Get Set to follow the direction He gives. And Go serve the Lord with gladness in the classroom where He has specifically selected for you to serve this year.



**(Continued from page 1.)**

### **A Prayer for Mutual Respect and Protection**

**Marilyn J. Dominick, Retired Public School Administrator**

- If possible, invite a law enforcement member to speak to your class about his or her work and to assure the students that police officers work to help people and keep them safe. Putting a human face on law enforcement may help students see the personal side of an officer with a family and a life. Have them write thank-you notes to police officers.
- Talk with your students about being vigilant. Many times, students are exposed to situations that may be dangerous or alarming to them. Encourage them to tell a responsible adult, whom they trust, about anything that concerns them. This includes things they might see on social media. In both recent cases of police ambush, the attackers articulated their plans on social media.
- Partner with families. Agree to support each other by reinforcing the fact that law enforcement people are in place to help and protect, not to put you in jail if you are not a good girl or boy. When my husband would hear this from a parent when having a meal on duty, he would take the time to speak with the child about his role in keeping them safe and helping them if they have a problem or get lost.
- Find out about community events in your area that show police officers in a positive light. Here in Syracuse, our police take kids shopping at Christmas, host a bike give away twice each year, and compete in sporting events as a team. Anything we can do to promote a positive opinion of law enforcement will help.
- Before, during and after all of these activities (plus the ones that you think of), PRAY!!!! Only God can change the hearts and culture of those filled with hatred. Pray for that change, and pray that police officers will think and act with great integrity while protecting us.

Educators have a unique opportunity to impact the thinking and beliefs of many students. No one else gets that opportunity, so please believe that you CAN and WILL make a positive difference as our nation struggles with current events.

God bless you as you minister in our schools!

