

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 19—23
 Spring Week of Prayer

March 29
 2018-2019 Preliminary
 school budgets due to
 SACOE

March 30—31
 OU Alumni Weekend

April 1
 OU Alumni Weekend

April 2 –6
 Spring Break

April 9
 Classes resume

April 20
 Mid-term progress reports
 go home

April 23—27
 Spring IA Assessments—
 optional this school year

April 28
 Adventist Education
 Sabbath

April 29
 SAC Board of Education—
 Zoom/Skype

May 7 –11
 Home & School Teacher
 Appreciation Week

May 24-27
 Academy Graduation
 Weekend

May 25
 Last day of School
 Noon dismissal

May 28
 Memorial Day holiday

May 29-31
 Teacher Post Week

May 31
 NAD Data Roll Up and
 Closing Reports due



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From the Vice President for Education

In 1997, Brad Cohen was named Sallie Mae's *First Class Teacher of the Year*. Living in Atlanta, Brad was famously portrayed in a Hallmark movie as the teacher who stood in *Front of the Class*. Why is this so important? Brad, now a school administrator in Cobb County, suffers from Tourette's Syndrome, and was thought to be an ineffective teacher by some principals and parents who couldn't see beyond his outward behavioral symptoms. Brad says, "I have had countless experiences...One thing stands out more than anything else: enjoy what you do and reflect on your style of teaching so you can improve."

At this time of year teachers often lose that spring in their step, yet we continue to express wonder, hope, and the love of learning despite our exhaustion. This never seems to fade, regardless how long you've been teaching.

We are praying for our loving God to impart His spiritual gifts upon you—words of wisdom, knowledge, understanding, discernment, faith, health, and miracles (1 Corinthians 12:8-10). As Jesus' coming draws closer, teaching in the 21st Century will not grow easier.

The students we teach are exposed to dark elements that bombard their sense and dull their minds through music, television, video games, and the internet. Some of our students come from broken homes. Some come from homes that are Adventist in name only. And today's society forces them to quickly leave behind their childhood and grow up faster than they should.

Let us run the race, not only for the prize, but may those that come behind us find a heritage of faithfulness that they can pass on through Godly lives. You—amazing teacher—have the God-given ability to sow seeds of joy, love, and redemption for each student you come into contact. What is best about hope is that it never fails. We teachers are called to be experts at uplifting, encouraging, bringing joy, and teaching respectful discourse. Galatians 6:9 tells us, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."





In our fall IA data we discovered that our students are barely proficient in reading. If you are a student of current trends in education you will have heard the terms RTI and MTSS. MTSS is defined as "the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions" (Batsche et al., 2005). Response to Intervention is the umbrella structure of Multi-tiered Structural Supports. In the RTI umbrella, everything is a by-product of being able to read.

The question is, how do we move our students to solidly proficient in reading so that our IA data scores in writing, science, social studies, and math computation will increase? The best way to do this is to examine the following questions:

1. What is reading?
2. How do we learn to read?
3. How can parents most effectively help their children?

Teaching reading is doing rocket science. There is a tried, true, and explicit way of teaching reading, and if you don't do it right, the rocket ship doesn't launch. If it does launch, it will most-likely explode before reaching its apex.

William Bennett (1986) once said that a parent belongs at the center of a young child's education. The single best way to improve elementary education is to strengthen parents' role in it, both by reinforcing their relationship with the school and by helping and encouraging them in their one critical job of teaching young. Not all teachers are parents, but all parents and teachers.

Reading starts from a foundation known as early and emergent literacy goals. There are important factors in reaching these goals: 1) student must leave kindergarten, first and second grades with the elements of

print, sound-symbol relationships, and basic sight words; 2) home perspectives and attitudes about reading and the importance of literacy must be established (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

In Pre-kindergarten most early readers invent most of the words since they don't know what a letter is or the names of most of the letters. They use pictures to help tell or create a story. They often memorize stories, and the word they learn to read first is typically their name.

Emergent readers have learned sounds and their corresponding letter symbols. They have mastered CVC words, and basic sight words. They are also learning to write their own stories using CVC words and inventive spelling. Most notably they have grasped the concept that spoken and written words convey important messages. Emergent readers also learn to read by looking at visual picture cues, making sense of what they are reading, sounding out words, skipping words and returning to find the word that makes the most sense, using a base of sight words, and of course, asking for help. Both early and emergent readers read books over and over again, need to talk about books, and feel good when they recognized and know most of the words.

Parents can help their child at home by practicing sound-to-letter correspondence, practice weekly sight words in and out of context (remember a sight words is not to be sounded out but recognized within three seconds), and help speed up fluidic rate to increase prosody (expression). Parents can also promote a love for reading at home, demonstrate left-to-right with return sweep, stimulate the imagination, improve listening, speaking and viewing skills, and manipulation of language.

In our next article we will discuss just-right-books, frequently asked parent questions, and questions about phonics and dysgraphia/dyslexia.



Our new theme for the remaining quinquennium is *Grow Excellence*. It is replacing our thematic emphasis, *Picking Up the Pace*. While *Picking Up the Pace* will not be discarded as a catch phrase in SAC, *Grow Excellence* will align our initiatives with the Southern Union's theme: *Advance Growth*. We are thrilled to roll out this positively affirming and motivational theme for our Conference schools.

But the wisdom that is
from above is first pure,
then peaceable,
gentle,
and easy to be
intreated,
full of mercy and good
fruits,
without partiality,
and without hypocrisy.
-James 3:17

Berean Charlotte Learns 2 Serve

This past month the middle school students of Berean Junior Academy in Charlotte went to Florida to participate in a 2 Serve Conference and training. The goal of the conference is to provide an opportunity for students, attending junior academies in the Southern Union, to have a "Bible Conference" type experience that is based on training and service to spread the gospel and hasten the return of Jesus.

Jim Ingersol, former Southern Union Associate Director of Education for Secondary believes,

"Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace and ensure it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." 1 Peter 3:11,12

"It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for, but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." COL 69

"With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon coming Savior might be carried to the whole world." ED 271

Each student participated in disaster relief training, providing church services for four churches and participated in four community-wide block parties at the four churches.



WORKSHEETS

Don't Grow Dendrites

Based on the book by Marcia Tate, PhD
by: Ron Twitchell, Editor, Utah Council of Teachers of Mathematics Journal

Having sat through many workshops in the past. I know what it is like to enter the classroom with high expectations only to find myself confined to a room with a lecturer. I dread these kinds of workshops as I have a very limited attention span and will not receive the important information whenever it is finally delivered. I prefer the workshops that have activities to keep my attention. As a teacher, I can tell by body language when a class is falling away. I refer to it as the "dead fish syndrome." Participant's eyes roll to the back of their head, and I anticipate they will go belly up at any moment. This is not a good teaching environment. I believe the best way to teach mathematics was best summed up by a presentation I attended with Michael Cookenmaster, which was entitled, *Worksheets Don't Grow Dendrites*, by Marcia Tate. While I must admit that worksheets and pages from the anthology are convenient, easy, and most importantly within my comfort zone to use, it is by far the best practice in teaching. In this presentation, we are given twenty teaching strategies that engage the brain by facilitating the growth of dendrites.

I had never heard of dendrites until Marcia Tate's presentation, but from what I understand, dendrites allow for synaptic growth in the brain, and facilitate learning. The twenty dendrite-building methods of instruction are :

- Writing
- Journals
- Storytelling
- Mnemonic Device Visuals
- Movement Role Play
- Visualization
- Metaphor
- Analogy
- Reciprocal Teaching
- Music
- Humor

- Graphic Organizer
- Brain Storming Games
- Drawing
- Artwork
- Field Trip
- Project/Problem-based Work Study
- Technology Manipulatives

Many years ago I saw the movie *Teachers* with Nick Nolte as a social studies teacher who has lost his spark for teaching. One of the teachers in the show is nicknamed, "Ditto," because he operates his class only through worksheets. His class is neat and orderly and could best be described as sterile. Unfortunately for most students, sterile describes a state of non-growth. Nothing grows in a sterile environment, and that includes education. The strategies listed above are not as neat as worksheets, but then again fertilizer is messy, but *very* effective.

Note: Marcia Tate is an educator, professional development consultant and researcher on brain-based learning. Dr. Ron Twitchell and Dr. Michael Cookenmaster are former colleagues.

