Looking ahead to 2022

By Natalie Blewitt
Growth Team coordinator

It is not long to go now until the 2021 school year is over. For those of you in your first year, congratulations you survived!

The first year of teaching is always the toughest and now is a great time to reflect on the year that was.

Remember those successes you have had throughout the year and know that you have made a difference to all the students in your class(es).

The last few weeks of the school year can often be difficult. We are all tired, but it is important to remember that the students in front of you are also facing a myriad of emotions too – especially those in a primary school setting.

They are often excited as the school year is ending and Christmas will be coming soon!

But your students may also be feeling quite anxious about what happens next. Often feeling happy and settled in your class, students can become overwhelmed at the end of a school year as they are facing the uncertainty of who their teacher will be next year, whether they will have any friends in their class.

Before you start to build your class lists for the next school year, you can ask your students to write down three or four friends they would like to have in their class.

Teacher judgement is obviously critical here but endeavour to have a least one friend from their list.

That way, when they return in 2022, they will be more settled and happier to come to school. For your more anxious students, check with your administration team whether it is possible for the student to meet their new teacher.

You will be amazed at what a difference these two little actions will make. Don't forget when compiling class sizes, plan not to exceed the general class sizes limits. Where it can be achieved, schools are to attempt to reduce class sizes in line with the notional class size targets.

Hopefully, many of you will have secured a teaching position for the 2022 school year. If you haven't, don't despair as schools will continue to employ staff right up until the commencement of Term 1.

Continue to monitor the JobsWA website and apply for those schools/positions you are interested in.

School leaders will return to worksites a few days before Term 1 starts, and many will still be requiring staff.

Going to a regional or remote school is a wonderful opportunity so if you are offered a position in one of these areas, grab it and make the most of the experience.

You may also want to apply to the Casual Teacher Pool to broaden your employment options for 2022.

If you are remaining at your current school, start the conversation with your line manager/admin team with regards to your graduate entitlements.

If you are in your first year, you are entitled to additional non-contact time. Now is a great time to raise this as new timetables will be compiled for the new school year.

Think about when you want to attend your remaining graduate modules as well. Remember, as a graduate teacher, you are required to complete all four modules in your first 30 months of teaching.

Graduate teachers may attend training modules in their own time and can be paid two days as additional earnings professional time off in lieu.

Some of the 2022 graduate module dates and venues have already been published on the Department of Education's Professional Learning Information System, or PLIS, with the remainder of the year expected to be online soon.

Pictured here are new educators and SSTUWA Growth Team coordinator Natalie Blewitt at a graduate module.

As an early career teacher, the SSTUWA has got you covered.

You can keep in touch with the Growth Team via email: neweducator@sstuwa.org.au or Facebook (New Educator Network – WA).

You can seek advice on industrial issues from our Member Assist Team. Contact them via email: memberassist@sstuwa.org.au or by phoning 9210 6060.

If you are not a member with us yet, now is a great time to join and take advantage of our exclusive joining offer.

Become a SSTUWA member today and we will waive your subscription payments until 3 February 2022.

You can join by visiting the SSTUWA website or contacting the Membership Team on 9210 6000. Make sure you take the time over the Christmas and New Year period to rest and recharge.

It has been a busy and challenging year. Next year will be an opportunity for a fresh start and to try new things from your teacher toolkit.

Merry Christmas from the Growth Team and we look forward to catching up with our new educator members in 2022.

Authorised by Sally Dennis, General Secretary, The State School Teachers' Union of W.A.
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