

For an educator, the traditional New Year on January 1 does not hold the same excitement as the beginning of a New School Year! There is something magical about new school supplies, a new grade level, and a new opportunity to learn more than you know right now. For a beginning teacher, the excitement of “my first class” is a one-time experience. Working on the activities for that first day, planning how to introduce yourself, and deciding on that first day outfit are NEW YEAR experiences. Veteran teachers have seen Septembers come and go, but every year is different and the expectations are always exciting. Those of us who have seen many Septembers can still remember the anxiety of starting a new year. Please take time to look at the start of the school year through the lens of a beginning teacher. What do you see? Many opportunities exist for supporting a novice teacher. It’s going to be interesting this biennium to review the many ideas that chapters initiate to make their support meaningful.

Our “Support Beginning Teachers” Committee will be providing ideas as well as resources to assist you in your planning. The International website is also a great place to look for possible activities, projects, and programs. Check out [www.dkg.org](http://www.dkg.org) and look at the “Supporting Early Careers” icon at the bottom of the page.

Supporting beginning teachers is our state project for this biennium. Many of your chapters have included mentoring as one of your major activities for some time now. This is a great time to reflect and evaluate your successes. Have you been successful in reaching and helping the first year teachers in your area? If you’ve not included this in your chapter activities, we encourage you to take advantage of making a difference in a new teacher’s outlook on the “world of teaching.” With this being our state project, we want to recognize chapters throughout the biennium which are offering quality support. We encourage you to record volunteer hours (in or out of the classroom) and the amount of money spent toward your support. This information will be compiled state-wide and sent to International which in turn will send this information to Washington, DC. We will share our state-wide data with our legislators to demonstrate the value our “leading women educators” are adding to impacting excellence in education and to inform them of the important work the members of our Society are doing to increase the number of educators who remain in education.

Happy New School Year! Make September the month you reach out to a new teacher and let him/her know that other teachers are out there wishing them the best and want them to be successful. Make September a month “to remember” in the lives of the many novice teachers entering our classrooms during the 2011-2013 school years. A teacher’s NEW YEAR really does begin in September! This is our opportunity to lead, serve, and impact in our communities, our state, and our nation.