

April 2021 Newsletter

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Dear Friends,

New Teachers Collaborative (NTC) is one of Parker's signature adult learning programs, a cohort-based induction model that welcomes early career teachers to the profession. From its earliest days, Parker has been a place for teacher education and growth; the school's charter application in 1994 expressed the intention NTC manifests: *"The school will be a center for the community of educators. This means that student teachers and teaching interns will be incorporated into the program, and that the faculty will be actively involved in preparation of such teachers for work in the school and elsewhere..."* -Todd



Ruth Whalen Crockett, NTC Director
"We're all in this together"

"Schools are collaborative. Life is collaborative. The "we're all in this together" mentality of NTC was a life saver and sustainer for me in my first year of teaching. As a young teacher, it has now become second nature to seek out mentorship, collaborative planning time, reflective time with colleagues, whether or not my school intentionally creates time and space in the school calendar for it." - NTC '16

Since its 2002 inception, there has never been a year of the New Teachers Collaborative that felt more like "we're all in this together." Novice teachers and experienced mentors alike find themselves in uncharted waters, teaching in remote and hybrid environments that do not resemble the experiences they themselves had as students.

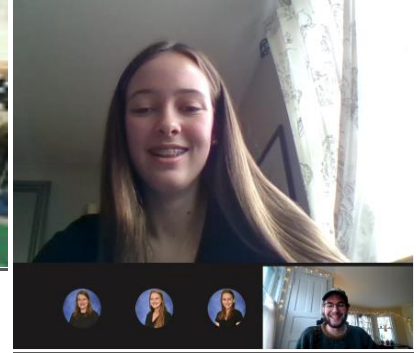
Since beginning my role as director of NTC in 2016, my primary goal has been to guide new educators to reflect deeply on their experiences as students and learners and understand how these experiences both guide and constrain our visions for ourselves as teachers. Strangely, this year, Covid-teaching conditions have allowed us to be less compromised by our own learning experiences. It has forced us to consider what is most essential to learning. Not surprisingly, the [10 Common Principles](#) remain our loadstar, and I have been heartened to see how our ten NTC interns



From Alec
"From Intern to Mentor"

Alec Hudson came to the NTC program as an Intern in the Fall of 2014 after graduating from UMass Amherst, embarking on a three-month cross-country trip, and long-term subbing at the North Central Charter Essential School (now known as the Sizer School). *"While there, administration had recommended that I look into the NTC program because they thought it would be a good fit for me. My interview and first visit to Parker was the same day as Senior Exhibitions, and after sitting in on one I knew I was hooked."*

During Hudson's NTC year, he was mentored by then director Beth Graham and former Parker teacher Laura Smith, but truly felt as though everyone in the school supported him that year. "In my first year at Parker, I felt that I could go to anyone for help or support. The NTC director at the time, Beth Graham, was always there to listen to my questions, thoughts, concerns, and self-doubts. Her empathy and listening helped me learn that adult learning is hard, and



From Jacob

After his graduation from Oberlin College with a bachelor's degree in English and a year at the Park School in Brookline, MA as a teaching apprentice, Jacob Arons was contemplating the next chapter in his journey in education. It was during this time that he learned about NTC from a former Parker family with a strong love for the program. "NTC certainly has its own draws, but the community and philosophy behind Parker really caught my attention. I have been delighting in the opportunity to teach students as individuals and get to know members of the community on a personal level."

Arons was drawn to NTC due to its structure and the support systems in place to help him succeed and grow as a teacher. "At the same time I am given space to refine my practice independently. I am both thoroughly supported and given appropriate space to grow in my position."

When reflecting on his work with Alec, his mentor, Arons reports that it has reflected his expectations of NTC to a 'T'.

have both embraced and wielded these principles.

This year's cohort has encouraged us to define how our on-line curriculum represents "less is more" and sought to better understand how asynchronous learning allows teachers and students to best exhibit "student-as-worker, teacher-as-coach". Our newest teachers continue to learn through strong examples. They have observed their mentors model mistake-making, continuous reflection, and perseverance under bizarre and less-than-ideal teaching and learning conditions.

As we seek to secure placements for the 2021-2022 school year, our 20th cohort, we look for diverse candidates who demonstrate expertise in their content. More so, we seek future colleagues who want to make mistakes and learn in collaborative spaces, after all, "we're all in this together."

that at times we may not have all the answers. She taught me that even as adults, we have to work on our growing edges, not avoid them." Hudson recalls that Smith had all of the skills of a teacher that he knew he wanted to be. "She helped me feel comfortable as a colleague, not just an intern, and she modeled the common principle of teacher-as-coach for me every day as I worked on my own practice."

Six years later, Hudson finds himself in the role of mentor to NTC Intern, Jacob Arons.

"At first it felt a little intimidating because I wanted to be everything that Laura was for me, but I found out rather quickly that I needed to be myself while working with Jacob this year." Hudson has focused on not assuming that Arons knows every detail of teaching, but also not explaining all that goes into the day-to-day life of teaching. "Since day one, I wanted him to feel like a co-teacher and a full member of our community. I know from my own experience that when you feel a part of the community you work in that you can then focus on teaching-and-learning."

Hudson has enjoyed the opportunity to coach Arons in this teaching role, but also realizes how much he has grown from being the mentor. "It is an amazing

"He supports me by sharing his experiences and giving me advice when I ask, but from the outset showed that he had confidence in my ability to plan and run lessons. I have had time to develop my teaching philosophy and strengthen my practice at the same time."

Arons has appreciated the additional mentorship by Ruth, NTC's director. "Ruthie has been a great teacher for me. She has not only encouraged me to think abstractly about teaching and its social implications, but she has also helped me to think pragmatically about how to teach effectively. She strikes a wonderful balance between supporting and challenging me as both a learner and a teacher."

reminder that adult learning IS a thing, and that it never ends - we are all lifelong learners. It pushes me to frequently be metacognitive with my own practice and moves, and I love it!"

The NTC program has encouraged Hudson go from Intern to Mentor, and he is grateful for the opportunity. "NTC is important because as with most things, I think people learn best by doing. At Parker we ask students to learn by getting their hands dirty and to "muck about" with what they are learning - we want them to be applying as they learn. NTC is very much the same model and because of that I think it is special. I know personally my life would not be the same without having gone through the program."



Kafi Beckles Chooses a Second Year of NTC

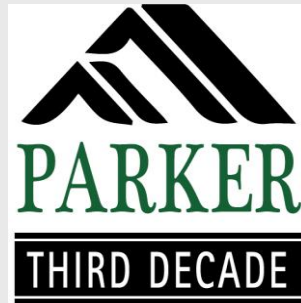
The question of why I chose to pursue the NTC program in the first place, is a good one. I was at a point in my life where it was time to consider what my next steps would be when thinking about a career. Before taking time off to start a family, all of my experience had been in corporate health and fitness. I knew I was interested in becoming a teacher, but I felt like I lacked the training and experience necessary to do the job well. I applied to NTC because it was an opportunity for me to learn how to teach in a safe, supportive environment, while also pursuing a Master's in Education. My first year at NTC helped me

develop my practice at a pace that was manageable yet challenging.

After one year of NTC I could have gone into the real world to teach, but I knew that I had more learning to do. Participating in the program for a second year has provided me the opportunity to grow. The support and mentoring that I receive from colleagues is an invaluable tool, as I continue developing my practice. This culture of mentorship encourages collaboration in lesson planning, reflection, and implementing new teaching strategies. My personal mentor continually encourages me to take risks and try different things in the classroom that I may have never thought of on my own. This partnership has been essential to my practice as I continue to develop as an educator.

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