



# G U R U S E D U C A T I O N

September 2015 Newsletter

## A NOTE FROM OUR C.E.O.

As we get ready to kick off the new school year, we have successfully on boarded twelve new teachers, revised our books, and finished our Fall training. I welcome the new gurus on the team and I look forward to get to know you better over time. Join me in congratulating Kritha Jalakram for winning the Most Valuable Employee of the year award, and Kurt Neswald, Romeo Marquez Jr., and Kimberly Ky, for winning the Outstanding Teacher Award.

As we start our new sessions, I would like to emphasize that you all go through and follow the instructor protocol and procedures carefully. In a startup company trying to re-establish ourselves, we have to do everything right and neglect nothing- then only we might have a chance to success. This is resonating with what Napoleon once said, "All great events hang by a hair. The man of ability takes advantage of everything and neglects nothing that can give him a chance to success whilst the less able man sometimes loses everything by neglecting a single of chances."

With a mission of "giving an opportunity to teach every child life-relevant skills", we have to work collaboratively and I feel confident we can accomplish this as a team.

Teachers can advocate our program the best because they recognize that what we teach are very important skills, and should be taught in every school. I encourage you all to help expand our programs to new locations and we'll thank you with handsome new location bonus. I can tell you from my experience these skills are valued by all and so it is not a difficult selling process. If you are interested in this role, send me an email and I can arrange to get you the necessary information and training.

I am also excited to announce our new student referral program for Teachers. If you help bring new students to our programs, you'll get a referral bonus per student referred. Call Harshita, our marketing manager for details.

Best,

Ritu

"The day you're willing to veer off the lesson plan, follow a kid's lead, and learn with your students is the day you really become a teacher."

— Anonymous



# GURUS EDUCATION

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## UPDATES OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE

**From: Ashish**

### **Class Scheduling and Messaging System**

As most of the teachers work multiple jobs, you may sometimes forget about a class schedule and may not reach to the class on time. While such incidents are rare and far between, if they do happen, it may leave the waiting children at risk and we cannot afford even such a single such failure.

To avoid teachers missing class assignments, we are implementing 4 ways to inform you all about your upcoming classes:

- 1) **Teacher Dashboard** provides summary updates about your classes.
- 2) **Class schedule and phone calendar synchronization.** All of you must have received an email with the subject "Kickserv iCal feed for...". Click on the link in the email to add the calendar to your calendar. You would then see details of upcoming classes in your phone calendar. If you haven't received such email or have issues, contact Erika.
- 3) **Daily email** about your upcoming classes for the day.
- 4) **SMS message one hour before the class** as a reminder.

If you are running late or won't reach class for any reason, call Erika as soon as you possibly can so we can make alternate arrangements. If you can't reach Erika, call main office [510-573-2497](tel:510-573-2497) or Ritu at [510-703-9116](tel:510-703-9116). You should reach a human being to inform of any issues in reaching class in time.

### **Enhancements to Teacher Dashboard**

Teacher Dashboard has been updated and now has several new pages of additional information.

As before, use Teacher Dashboard to check your summary class schedule.

"Files" has been renamed to "Rosters and Paychecks." There, you'll find rosters for your classes and paycheck details.

Policies and Procedures link has Instructor Protocol, Communication Policies, Sample Google emails and other administrative items.

Teacher Resources has additional resources to help with teaching. These resources can also be found in your teacher handbooks.

Other additions:  
Archived Newsletters  
Management Contacts





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## Classroom Visits

Classroom visits from Kim will be put into effect starting this Fall! The goal of these visits is to increase quality and support. Due to the diverse nature of our teacher community, we are investing in the understanding of each teacher's approach to the curriculum and classroom management. This is in hopes to develop a sense cohesiveness and measurement of success.

These visits will be in the spirit of collaboration. It's all about teaming up to create greater efficiency and effectiveness for our class, so expect a debriefing during which discussion will be held around what went well and what resources you need to better support your students. In continuation of the collaboration, the insight will be shared with the rest of the teacher community through these monthly newsletters.

Teachers will receive notice at least one week in advance.



## New Books and New Looks

We have issued new editions for the following books:

PPS 101: Building Confidence

PS 201: Speaking with Confidence

CS 401: Public Speaking and Debate Combo Level 1

Public Speaking Teacher Handbook

Debate Teacher Handbook

Student books have changed predominantly in writing and visual style. The skills we teach are the same. Built right into the book are suggestions on how to engage the students! Please try the activities and discussion questions to boost application of the skills and integration of the concepts.

Teacher books have new lesson plan and course overview templates with sample lesson plans for precise preparation, icebreakers, games, topics, vocal warm ups, and more!

Like any release of a new product, feedback is crucial to improvement. So, we need your involvement. Help us answer: What works? What doesn't? Are your students engaged with the material? Are the teacher resources helpful? Feel free to make suggestions and additions!

Send your questions, comments, and/or concerns about classroom visits and new books to:  
[kimberly@guruseducation.com](mailto:kimberly@guruseducation.com)







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## FALL TRAINING 2015 RECAP

### CONFIDENCE:

#### What is it and why must we define it together?

Confidence is the backbone to our program. At the finish of each class, students should be more confident by applying the skills we teach them.

To explore this idea of confidence, Megan conducted a collaborative activity in which teachers were organized into groups of 4 to come up with concise definitions of the word. After we regrouped, she led us through a group discussion.

The definitions varied, but the essence was having an inner strength that is expressed outwardly, with full acceptance of self and process. Teachers nodded in reverence for each other's answers. We came to an understanding that we must know what confidence is in order to teach it.

Another aspect of this activity was Megan's modeling. In our classes, modeling confidence as we teach is imperative. During the debriefing of the activity, teachers gave feedback on how she taught. Here are the main points:

Effective use of space: walking around the room so presence is felt throughout.

Voice projection: having command and being clearly heard.

Use of language: being articulate and concise.

Teachers, you are invited to explore confidence at the start of your classes. It is useful to return to the definition as a way of establishing group goals and centering. Let the rest of us know how it goes!

If you have a personal definition of confidence, please email it to Kim to publish in the next newsletter.

### Lesson Planning:

#### The Balance of Science and Art

First, we create the structure. Then, we create the style. Your teacher handbooks will have a lesson plan template with samples broken down to a science. The elements to include, as well as the time allotted. Whilst this may seem overwhelming, it was designed to give you a sense of security walking into your class.

The template and samples illustrate an ideal class for 10-15 students. Although this is not the case for all of our classes, it's a good point of average. It is effective (moves in a sequence that builds off the lecture of the following week and progresses with purpose), efficient (breaks down time for each activity in order to move through all the materials in an hour), and easy to use (plus in activities and speech topics from the resource section).

### Mentorships

Most returning teachers will say they wish they had more guidance as they began with Gurus. To meet that need of guidance, we are encouraging mentorship! We will send out a list of teachers and their area of residence.

Make an effort to connect! These are the teammates who will give you valuable advice and maybe even sub for you in case of emergency!

If you are a new teacher, you are encouraged to use this format until you find your footing. If you are a returning teacher, you are invited to give constructive feedback so we can improve the structure.

The art of lesson planning comes when you walk into the classroom and nothing is as you planned for; students are adding last

minute, the range of ability is vast, nobody prepared their speech, the energy of the room is low- the list goes on. That is when we have to be flexible and creative. Luckily, you have the resources in the back of your handbook!

More topics from Fall Training in future e-mails.



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## A New Teacher's Reflection

From: Bianca

What better way to kick off the season of Fall, than with a productive training session?! We had the pleasure of saying hello to many faces, both seasoned and new, and even the opportunity to learn a little about our fellow Gurus. Although we each had our moments of feeling overwhelmed, it was nice to know that in a way, it was a new beginning for everyone; new curriculum, new staff, new classes, and new friends!

The foundation of Guru's Education begins with confidence, and as a team we should know that it's not always about following the lesson plan step by step, but adding our own style and creativity in order to bring the material to life. As we saw from our discussion, confidence begins with trust; trust in ourselves, trust in one another, and trust in our students. Only by creating this foundation of trust and confidence can we then begin to spread our wings and fly.

## WELCOME NEW TEACHERS!

Bianca  
Craig  
Daniel  
Jasmine  
Kodili  
Marisol  
Norma  
Sasan  
Sidney  
Zack

## Diversity is strength!

Our new teachers come from various backgrounds and interests. Imagine the magic that can come out of collaboration! Below are just some of the many talents we can utilize to develop more dynamic lessons:

- Theater
- Social Justice
- Photography
- Yoga
- English Education in South Korea
- Personal Finance
- Martial Arts
- Dance Education

Teamwork makes the dream work!

