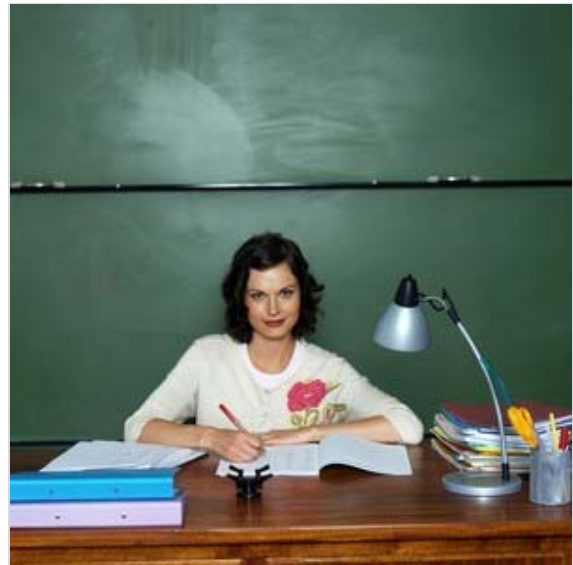




How to get your classroom organized for the new year

By Boston K-12 Examiner, Melissa Kitchen
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Organization brings peace of mind.
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In the previous article on how to build resilience to stress it was clear that there are things you can do to help. Building up

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Balance Reserves helps teachers to better handle the stress that is inevitable to their positions.

Where should you start?

Start by simplifying and organizing your physical space. De-cluttering your classroom, home, and even car can help begin to alleviate stress caused from a messy environment and time wasted looking for things.

Who can help?

Wendy Buglio, Director of Marketing and Technology of [The National Association of Professional Organizers - New England \(NAPO-NE\)](#), is just one professional organizer in the Boston area whose passion is helping people to get control of their physical clutter, tame their paper overload, and set up systems that work.

NAPO-NE shares with us several tips for busy teachers to get started organizing:

Keep only your most essential, daily-use supplies on your desk. Try to leave the rest clear for work space.

Tame your desk drawers with drawer organizers. And, store "like with like" – personal items in one drawer, extra

supplies in another. Having an assigned "home" for each item will make it easier to maintain when you are in a hurry.

Create a desktop file system to keep your papers under control. Use your inbox only for papers that need attention. Try to avoid handling a paper more than necessary; try to follow through with the action required.

When working with a file, keep the most recent papers in the front of the file. Whenever you open it, the current information will be on top.

When filing, staple relevant materials together. Paper clips tend to catch on other papers within a file.

Take advantage of your "best time." Take on your most difficult work when your energy is at its peak. This will help you focus and thus more easily complete tasks with less distraction.

Try to allow one hour of unscheduled time each day to handle unexpected tasks or to allow yourself some additional focus for complicated projects.

When you are facing a tight deadline, turn off the phone and email. A ringing telephone and constantly checked

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email can be distracting and detract from your mental energy and focus.

Treat big projects like a lesson plan. Break them down into smaller, manageable tasks with specific deliverables and deadlines.

Budget twice as much time as you think you need for any given task, to allow for interruptions and over-committing your time.

For assistance and tips or to find a professional organizer near you got to <http://www.napo-newengland.com/>.

For more resources on Balance Reserves and organizing for teachers check out www.wholeteacher.com.

Check back tomorrow when we get some tips on nutrition for teachers from Nicole Cormier, RD, LDN and the [Boston Nutrition Examiner](#).




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