

## **A Suggested Sequence for a Student Teaching Placement**

A sequence for having the student teacher assume teaching responsibilities needs to be developed. A framework can be in place before the student teacher arrives; however, discussing the specifics of the schedule with the student teacher will give him/her a sense of direction and ownership. It is important to remember that this timeline is a suggestion; the progress and comfort level of the student teacher may result in modifying this plan.

### **Things to think about for the first two weeks of the placement:**

- get acquainted with your student teacher
- clarify your expectations, philosophy and concerns, no matter how minor they may seem, to prevent confusion and frustration
- explain classroom, school or district policies for discipline, confidentiality and reporting
- share necessary, important information about your school, classroom, students
- allow the student time to peruse resources, texts, materials, etc.
- make sure your student has the opportunity to meet other staff
- give your student a tour of the building (or assign one or two students to do this)
- provide some type of activity/time for the student teacher to get to know the students – interviews, intro activities, etc.
- provide opportunities for observations – guided as well as personal choice observations are beneficial
  - allows the student to become familiar with students/classroom
  - facilitates discussion and allows for clarification, challenges and potential problems
- hold and lead a brief, daily conference - encourage the student teacher to ask questions and voice concerns/frustrations
  - discussing the observations may give you an idea of the student teacher's perceptions, accuracy of observations, and "withitness"
  - call university supervisor if concerns/questions arise
- hand over responsibility for routine classroom tasks – attendance, calendar, read aloud, small groups, bulletin boards
- assign unit topics that the student can begin to develop for future teaching
- allow the student to begin teaching a "simple" class – one that is fairly formatted, shorter in duration, not heavily content-rich, small groups within a class, one they are comfortable taking on, etc.

### **Things to think about for the next two weeks of the placement**

- get the student teacher more involved in the classroom
  - don't give them too much too soon, most students won't tell you if they are feeling overwhelmed or anxious
    - model the first lesson and then permit the student teacher to teach a second, similar lesson to the class
    - let student teach your plans
  - your professional judgment is essential in this first phase and can significantly impact the future success of your student
- discuss and refine future responsibilities weekly
- carefully review lesson plans at this point
- remain in the classroom as your student teacher begins to have more direct responsibility for planning and teaching
  - observe interactions with students, instructional practices, management strategies, etc. that can be positively reinforced at brief, daily conferences
  - record any concerns or changes that should be made and discuss them before the student teacher works with students again
  - check to see if suggestions are followed and reinforce that practice. if you do not see attempts to incorporate feedback, allow your student a chance to explain the reasoning behind not making changes

- if you have any concerns about your student's progress, contact the university supervisor
- start giving less specific feedback as the student teacher demonstrates the ability to plan appropriately and listen for/encourage more sophisticated analysis from your student
- give written observational notes to your student so they have concrete, prompt feedback and a record of strengths/weaknesses
  - keeping your focus to one or two key themes every time you observe might make your job and your student's ability to improve easier
- be aware that as your student picks up more responsibility, time and stress management may become a concern (feelings of being overwhelmed, anxious and inadequate may surface in some manner)
  - positive, specific reinforcement from you will help (remember that false, exaggerated compliments will backfire in the long run)

### **Things to think about at the midpoint of the placement**

- a summative triad conference should take place sometime in the sixth-ninth week
- your student teacher should be moving from a self centered survival mode to the role of a student-centered "teacher" evidenced by their observations, reflections on student interactions, student learning, instruction, etc.
- leave the classroom for brief periods of time when you feel the student teacher has management under control, as long as you do not have students with safety plans

### **Things to think about for the final weeks of the placement**

- two or more weeks of full time teaching is required
- weekly conferences may change with the student teacher becoming more of the facilitator, analyzer, reflector – what is going well and what isn't
  - focus on refining instructional strategies, utilizing varied methods of assessment and anticipating problems that may occur
- lesson plans may not have to be as detailed, unless the student teacher is not exhibiting the professional skills to back off, although short and long term goals should still be discussed along with effective teaching strategies
- a summative triad conference should take place in the last weeks of the placement

### **Other things to think about during the placement**

- allow the student teacher to observe/participate in parent teacher conferences if possible (role play if not)
  - the student may learn ways to deal with difficult parents in a positive, professional manner
  - the student may lead one of the easier conferences after methods, goals, ways to interact are shared and modeling has occurred and all parties are comfortable with this set-up
- the student teacher should have the administrator come in for an observation
- plan for the transitioning back of the class to the cooperating teacher
- allow for your student to make observations in other classrooms – timing of this is personal and depends on the quarter the student is placed in your classroom
- feedback is crucial to the student teacher's optimal professional growth at all stages of the experience, so continue to share observations about the student teacher's performance, interactions, and growth through the experience