



Cooperating Teacher (CT) Roles & Responsibilities Summary

Introductory Activities:

1. Discuss daily schedule/routines/procedures.
2. Brief students on important school rules.
3. Introduce student teacher (ST) to colleagues/principal.
4. Review letter to parents introducing ST, if permitted by your school.
5. Getting started:
 - a. Design ways to integrate ST into the classroom that go beyond observing.
 - b. Share background experiences and teaching philosophy.
 - c. Develop ideas with ST regarding:
 - i. Lessons
 - ii. Curriculum goals/objectives
 - iii. Lesson planning
 - iv. Activities that ST can initiate with students
 - d. List classroom responsibilities ST can assume (i.e. taking attendance, calendar activities, reading to students, assisting 1:1 with student, correct homework and provide feedback).
 - e. Discuss possible extracurricular interactions with students, staff, parents, etc.
 - f. Establish a mutually acceptable schedule for meeting one on one with ST to discuss teaching and learning. STs are expected to follow the cooperating teacher's schedule arriving early, staying after school and attending meetings, etc.
 - g. Discuss ways you intend to deliver on-going feedback, both orally and in writing.
6. Review the Rider University Student Teacher Evaluation based on the Danielson framework.
 - a. Midterm evaluation due by the end of the 7th week.
 - b. Final evaluation due on the final day of student teaching.
7. During this introductory period, the cooperating teacher creates a plan for how and when the ST will assume more teaching responsibilities. The plan reflects the ST's strengths and needs and establishes specific goals. *As with any student population, the skills and knowledge STs possess vary based on experience and exposure. Meeting with the Rider Supervisor to discuss the professional development plan for the ST is critical.*

Ongoing Activities: Establishing a Collaborative Teaching Model

1. Rider University advocates a co-teaching/collaborative model for student teaching. In this model the teacher and student share the responsibilities for teaching and assessing students. *The goal is not to relinquish the classroom to the student teacher but instead for the ST to take advantage of the unique opportunity to work side by side with a highly qualified teacher for an entire semester.*
2. The Cooperating Teacher serves as a model, coach and facilitator, and evaluator.
 - a. **As a model**, the cooperating teacher demonstrates methods, management strategies, assessment practices, record keeping, best practice and ongoing, professional growth through professional reading, participation in conferences and study groups. The astute ST carefully notes the teacher's behavior and is prepared to ask questions regarding the processes, procedures and strategies the teacher employs throughout the day to manage, motivate, and teach students.
 - b. **As a coach**, the cooperating teacher helps the student teacher prepare for teaching responsibilities. These responsibilities include reviewing and commenting on lesson plans, observing the ST, and providing consistent feedback. STs are required to maintain a binder containing all lesson plans and reflections. A format for written plans can be found on Rider's website at https://www.rider.edu/sites/default/files/files/edust_Lesson_Planning_2012.doc. Supervisors often expect ST's to use a specific lesson plan format particularly in the beginning of the semester, that requires detailed elaboration and a record of the ST's thinking. This may entail scripting of certain parts of the lesson as a means of rehearsal.
 - c. **As an evaluator**, the cooperating teacher assesses ST performance. The process should lead to improvement and encourage the ST to engage in thoughtful self-evaluation. Discussion should take the form of thinking together about what transpired. As with any student, the evaluator should endeavor to highlight strengths before noting needs. Decide together on the skills and knowledge the ST needs to acquire. Building ST confidence throughout the student teaching experience is essential.
 - d. The core of a successful student teaching experience is the quality and relevance of the feedback provided by the cooperating teacher to the student teacher. Feedback strategies vary depending on the individual, task and context. To be effective, the cooperating teacher needs to be strategic in thinking about how best to present the information recognizing that it is necessary to first establish rapport, trust and confidence with the student teacher. Once the student is comfortable and more at ease, the following should be considered when providing feedback:
 - Timing:** When and how often.
 - Amount:** How much feedback and how much to stay about each point.
 - Mode:** Oral, written, visual demonstration, and modeling.
 - Focus:** Focus on processes; avoid personal comments.
 - Comparison:** Show growth and improvement over time.
 - Comments:** Use positive comments. Describe specifically what ST should do. Choose comments and ask questions that cause the ST to self-evaluate, reflect, and revise.
 - Clarity:** Check for understanding. Define terms. Be specific.
 - Tone & Body**
 - Language:** Convey respect, empathy, and support.

3. Dealing with a weak student teacher can be frustrating and create tension between the ST and cooperating teacher. The key to dealing with a struggling student is to maintain a professional stance throughout the internship. Seek to find the student's strengths while attending to weaknesses. Very few students perform inadequately. Of the few who do, some lack the dispositions for teaching such as motivation and effort. Other students may lack the self-esteem and self-awareness needed to project themselves as teachers or are missing the content knowledge required to teach. Whatever the reason, if after a reasonable length of time it becomes evident the ST is not making expected growth or improvement, the cooperating teacher should contact the supervisor or field placement office. A meeting with the ST, the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor should be arranged quickly to develop an intervention plan. If the ST continues to struggle in spite of the plan, then further discussion is necessary and other interventions explored. As stated in the Student Teaching Handbook, the school reserves the right to terminate a ST placement at any time.

4. Resources

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