

The Role of the Cooperating Teacher

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Mentor and support the student teacher with resources for planning and teaching
2. Review and approve lesson plans and materials
3. Weekly dialogue (minimum); weekly dialogue report shared with student teacher and supervisor
4. Two formal observations of the student teacher are requested (using the WWC form or another of preference)
5. Midterm evaluation forms and dialogue with supervisor
6. Final evaluation forms and dialogue with student teacher and supervisor
7. Alert supervisor if issues arise

The Warren Wilson College Teacher Education program hopes that the student teacher and cooperating teacher will form a partnership that will in some ways make the Weekly Dialogue Report form that follows unnecessary. At the same time, the rush of events during the school day may mean that both need this reminder in order to be sure to discuss critical issues.

Note to the student teacher:

As you take over more of the planning for the classroom, be sure to discuss your teaching ideas with your cooperating teacher. If you want to make significant changes in class routines or try a different organization of time or class work, talk this through thoroughly before implementing the changes. As always, you will need to listen to the comments of the veteran teacher who is advising you. You may not always agree with his or her suggestions, but your attitude should be one of the apprentice or novice; that is, the experience and expertise of your cooperating teacher is worth borrowing. Be sure to communicate your respect for the manner in which the cooperating teacher manages and instructs the class. Please keep in mind that the cooperating teacher will still be in charge of his/her class after your student teaching finishes.

The School Administrator

Each student teacher is required to request a formal evaluation by a school principal or other designated teacher-evaluator in the system. The Teacher Performance Appraisal Instrument, or TPAI is typically utilized with beginning teachers, and this is the student teacher's chance to see his or her teaching through the eyes of an administrator. Of course, this is also a chance for the student teacher to shine in the eyes of a future employer. Concerns about the evaluation instrument or arranging the evaluation should be addressed with either the cooperating teacher or your college supervisor.