

Assuming the Role of the Classroom Teacher

Early in your student teaching assignment, your supervisor from Warren Wilson College will meet with you and your cooperating teacher in order to create a teaching-responsibility calendar for the semester. Your cooperating teacher may already have a plan in mind, perhaps guided by his or her work with other student teachers. See the “Calendar Meeting Agenda” that follows for more details about this important first meeting.

The cooperating teacher, college supervisor, and student teacher should determine how a student teacher can best learn to balance the challenges of classroom management; custodial responsibilities such as bus and lunchroom duty; and most importantly planning, teaching, and responding to student work. The Warren Wilson Education faculty also wants to encourage the student teacher and cooperating teacher to determine when it is appropriate and good to have several adults in the room, such as for math or reading groups.

The student teacher, supervising faculty, and cooperating teacher need to discuss the roles of, and any issues with, resource team members, teacher assistants or adult volunteers. Student teaching includes learning about teamwork, and it is often the case that student teachers take on the role of *lead teacher* and need to coordinate the activity of adults as well as students in a given classroom.

Leading up to primary responsibility, it is possible the student teacher would benefit from **observing other teachers** in the school, watching for classroom management techniques, special materials in use or units in process, or observing with the purpose of seeing various teacher styles of classroom organization and routines. These observations should be guided by the cooperating teacher and may take place at the beginning or at any time during the student teaching assignment.

Primary Responsibility is the way the Warren Wilson Education faculty describe the most intense part of student teaching. To us, this is when the student teacher:

- is responsible for day-to-day preparation of **all** lesson planning, including resources, materials, activities, and assessments;
- maintains all grading/responding to student work and keeps official class records;
- has responsibility for all additional duties (busses, attendance, etc.) of the cooperating teacher;
- creates plans for the day, week, and unit and coordinates the work of other adults in support of these plans. This may include directing a teacher assistant or other support personnel

The minimum duration of primary responsibility should be five weeks of teaching (25 class days). Any absences during this time must be made up (and the student teacher is responsible for leaving plans for a substitute teacher).