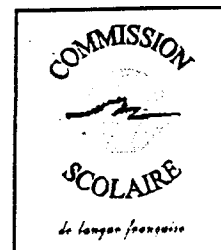




Department of
Education



Prince Edward Island
Teachers' Federation



BEGINNING TEACHERS

INDUCTION PROGRAM

HANDBOOK

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HANDBOOK

Beginning Teachers Induction Handbook
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Appendix

- Employee Assistance

Background:

The Beginning Teacher Induction Program (BTIP) began as an idea of the Teachers' Organizations of Atlantic Canada in the early 1990's. Given the demographics of the teaching profession at that time, it was clear that the late 1990's would begin to bring many, many beginning teachers into our schools. It was also very clear from both research and actual "field" experience that beginning teachers face issues and concerns unique to teachers in their first five years of teaching and deserved special forms of support and assistance as they enter the teaching profession.

Proposals to develop a program for beginning teachers were sought from teachers in Atlantic Canada. The successful developers, Florence Samson from St. John's, Newfoundland and Jessie Lees from Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island completed their work and the development stage of the project in 1995. In 1996, the development trained a group of teachers and other educators representing the six partners; the Prince Edward Island Teachers' Federation, the Prince Edward Island Department of Education, the Faculty of Education at the University of Prince Edward Island, and the three School Boards on Prince Edward Island; The Commission Scolaire de langue française, the Western School Board and the Eastern School District. Since 1996, this Beginning Teacher Induction Committee has provided "hands on" support to both beginning teachers and their mentors.

Mentoring is one of the fundamental building-blocks of our program. The BTIP Committee believes that mentoring relationships from the basis of support and assistance to beginning teachers and also that a healthy and productive mentoring relationship will allow mentor teachers, other teachers in the school and school administrators to grow professionally.

Collaboration between all of the partners in this effort is a second integral building-block of this program.

The Beginning Teacher Induction Program Handbook is an example of the collaboration in action. It contains very specific and practical suggestions/ideas on the first day, classroom management, hints for classroom organization, planning, reflective practice and a myriad of other use and ideas and information. Use this handbook to assist you as you embark on your teaching career and discuss the ideas found here with your mentor and other teachers.

The Beginning Teacher Induction Committee sincerely hopes that this handbook will prove to be a "concrete" example of the support and assistance to you, the beginning teacher, and that it will launch you into a successful and rewarding teaching career.

I. Beginning Your Career as a Classroom Teacher

Summer is over and the new school year is about to begin. Making the year meaningful for you and your students requires advanced preparation. Here is a checklist to help you get started. Take advantage of the experience of other staff members. Ask for their help. You will be or have already been assigned a mentor. A list of things to ask your mentor or principal might include the following. (Extra bullets are provided for your own idea)

1. SCHOOL ORIENTATION

Ask about Policies and Procedures

- opening day
- registration
- class lists
- enrollment
- parent information forms
- hospitality fund
- school-wide rules
- school keys and security schedules and timetables - school layout
- student fees
- petty cash
- staff parking
- student supervision duties
- school arrival and dismissal times - bussing
- textbooks
- student lockers/locks
- field trips
- use of Public Address System
- teacher planner
- fire drills
- photocopies
- paper and other supplies
- student evaluation
- staff meetings
- library resources for students/teachers
- school handbook (policy, procedures)
- school assemblies
- substitutes
- additional student supplies
- student handbook
- homework
- milk, pizza, hot dog money, etc.
- use of washrooms/fountains
-
-

2. DAY ONE - YOUR CLASSROOM

- plan the first day in detail
- duplicate materials needed for the first few days
- prepare an outline for the first week
- prepare the classroom arrangements and seating plan
- make signs for the room
- put your name outside the classroom door with a class list
- prepare class list and post copy
- make a checklist for forms that need to be returned

- organize your daily plan book
- plan a textbook-distribution record
- set up learning centers
- locate the emergency kit for your classroom
- bulletin boards
- post timetable
- announcements
- emergency evacuations plan for class

A. Suggested File Folders To Set Up

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substitutes • teaching assistants • professional development • parent correspondence • late and absent notes • staff bulletins and memo • | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • record keeping and examples of student work • staff lists • PEITF information • Area Association information • Good teaching ideas and strategies |
|---|---|

B. Resources & Materials

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • classroom supplies • attendance materials • textbooks and accompanying materials • use of library resources • appropriate curriculum guides | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supplementary teaching materials • appropriate books + reading or reference • A/V equipment/computers • |
|---|--|

3. YOUR STUDENTS

A. Your Students

- Find out which students are receiving special help
- Review cumulative record cards
- Prepare an inventory to find out student interests
- Review your provision for individual differences

B. Prepare a package to send home during the first week

- Welcoming newsletter/course outline
- PEITF introduction cards
- Supply lists and costs, what the school provides
- Forms required by the school
-
-

C. PLMDC

The Provincial Learning Materials Distribution Centre provides the authorized resources and learning materials which appear in the Elementary, Intermediate and Senior High editions of the Program of Studies. Check the Program of Studies in your school for a list of authorized materials for the subjects which you teach. The book contact person in your school may order materials supplied through the PLMDC.

II. HELPFUL HINTS FOR CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION

The following list of questions is intended to assist you in developing classroom procedures which will help you to organize yourself and your classroom. **Not all questions are applicable to all grade levels.**

Question	Your Answer
<p>What is your policy regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of pen, pencil or computer?• Late work?• Incomplete work?• Neatness?• Missing work?• Due dates?• Make-up work?• Distributing supplies and materials?• Putting away supplies and materials?• Classroom interruptions?• Use of pencil sharpener?• Use of the washroom or fountain?• What students do when they are finished their work/test?	

Question**Your Answer****How do you intend to:**

- Post assignments?
- Explain assignments to various groups?
- Keep students working from one assignment to another?
- Let students know what assignments were missed while they are absent?
- Explain how assignments will be graded?
- Keep students aware of requirements for long term assignments?
- Identify work turned in without a name or identification mark?
- Dismiss the class?
- Use cues or signals for getting student attention?

For effective monitoring of work, how and when will you:

- Make sure you get around to all students, not just the distracting or demanding?
- Look carefully enough at students' work in progress to catch errors?
- Achieve total class participation in oral activities?

Question

Your Answer

How do you want students to hand in work in regard to:

- Where they should place the completed work?
- When they should hand in their work?
- How you will keep track of whose work is and whose is not turned in?

What will be your policy regarding:

- How students are to exchange papers?
- How students are to mark papers they check?
- What you will mark and what you will let the students mark?

What will be your policy regarding:

- Checking for turned-in work?
- Work not turned in:
 - a. On time?
 - b. By the end of the day?
- Specific Feedback?
 - i. Grades (marks)
 - ii. Written comments
 - iii. Graded by student or teacher

Question	Your Answer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria for displayed work? • How and when to return papers to students? • Having students correct their own papers? • Checking and returning corrections? • Determining report card grades? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. components to be included b. Weight or percent for each component • Grading daily assignments? • Recording grades with notations for identification and clarification? • Having students keep a record of their own grades? • Grading completed stages of long-term assignments? • Student self-assessment? 	

III. The First Day

A well-planned first day is crucial. It sets the tone for the remainder of the year. Make your first day a meaningful one for you and the students by being prepared, organized, and welcoming.

Begin your first day with a friendly businesslike manner. Discuss your classroom expectations with students. Classroom management works well when you provide the framework and then form rules co-operatively with the students. A few general rules work better than a long list. Expectations worded in a positive sense have greater impact than does a list of things not to do.

Plan for a memorable and interesting day. Learn students' names as quickly as possible in order to personalize your teaching.

Consider starting a journal or meeting with other new teachers and your mentor on a regular basis. Get to know your school's guidance counsellor and librarian. They are valuable resources. Write to yourself each day, and look back on a regular basis. Take time to talk informally with both new and experienced colleagues.

In your first year of teaching, you will meet many challenges. You are no longer a student-teacher and your conduct and appearance must show that you take teaching and learning seriously. Focus on being professional.

HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE FIRST DAY

The following suggestions can help you to have a good first day. Aim to be prepared, organized and welcoming.

1. Try to make your classroom a warm and inviting environment.
2. You can introduce yourself with a little information about your interests. Students can introduce themselves in the same way.
3. Communicate your expectations at appropriate times. Effective classroom rules may be developed cooperatively. Ensure that students have opportunities to understand the rules, procedures and consequences.
4. Your first activity can be an educational one requiring no prior distribution and recording of books, etc. Housekeeping items can wait a little while, possibly until the second part of the period or of the day.
5. Initially, teachers generally focus on whole group instruction. Try to choose activities at which students can succeed.
6. Plan back-up materials for students who complete assignments quickly.
7. Plan activities which fill in time gaps and help to focus students on what you want them to learn.

(e.g. One or two mathematics problems, a thought-provoking question, a brief paragraph with blanks in it for the students to complete.) These can be written on charts or an overhead projector transparency so they can be used in future.

IV. Some Strategies for Effective Teaching

- Greet students when they enter the room.
- Insist on attention of students or class before speaking.
- Discuss rules and consequences frequently.
- Regularly check attendance.
- Frequently move around and scan all areas of the room.
- Monitor student academic work and behavior closely and provide specific feedback.
- Teach time management, social/personal, communications and organization skills.
- Organize activities to maximize students participation and success.
- Have clearly expressed and understood expectations.
- Develop a familiarity with as many different instructional strategies and teaching styles as possible.
- Return work to students promptly with appropriate comments.
- Provide frequent, specific, positive feedback on both academic work and behavior.
- Be fair, friendly and firm.

PLANNING

The more grounded you are, the greater will be your success in the classroom. With thoughtful planning in place, you will be confident in providing quality learning opportunities for your students.

LONG-TERM PLANNING

To carry out your teaching responsibilities, you will need to do long-term planning. You will find the curriculum guides of great assistance. Your planning should include:

- Objectives for the course and the strategies to reach these objectives
- How you will evaluate student progress
- What resources you will need
- The time to be allocated for each unit

SHORT-TERM PLANNING

Each unit should be planned outlining the content and process you plan to use. Topics for individual lessons are designed to increase knowledge and skills based on previously learned concepts and skills. Planning helps provide learning opportunities and avoids needless repetition.

DAILY PLANNING

It is good teaching practice to prepare a brief overview of what you plan to teach. These daily overviews should list the materials to be used. The daily routine should be written up before you leave school each day. In the event that you will be away, it will provide a guide for a substitute teacher to follow. Initially, you may plan too much for your class to accomplish in a day in each subject. However, as time goes by, you will become much better at planning more accurately.

TRY TO AVOID WORKING UNREASONABLE HOURS

VI. DAILY REFLECTION FOR ON-GOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It can be helpful to monitor your professional growth by spending 5 - 10 minutes at the end of each day reflecting on the day's events. This reflective practice will help you to:

1. Problem solve
2. Plan
3. Monitor and adjust
4. Make appropriate choices

You can focus on one topic each day using the following questions to guide your reflections:

1. What worked well and why did it work?
2. What needs fine tuning?
3. What do I need to do to enhance this area or who do I need to see?
4. What am I doing that I do not need to do?
5. What kind of information or assistance would help?

Example of topics include classroom organization, lesson preparation, student behavior management, and student interest level.

ALLOW TIME TO GET TO KNOW SOME OF YOUR COLLEAGUES

VII. Classroom Management

Wondering how to maintain a positive classroom environment with a minimum of disruptions causes more anxiety for beginning teachers than any other aspect of their new career. Classroom management focuses on prevention and problem solving rather than on punishment. A secure, inviting classroom, along with purposeful activities and respect for the dignity of everyone, prevents most discipline problems. Your role as teacher is crucial in establishing an effective learning environment. Your objective is to instil inner self-control in students, not merely to exert your control over them. Set the tone of your classroom from the start by being firm and fair, friendly yet professional. When you are more confident of your ability to maintain order, you will be more relaxed, and the students will perceive you as a person who really cares. Without order in your classroom, very little learning will take place. Remember that children are basically good and that inappropriate behavior is a purposeful response to a need for power, freedom, love, and fun (Glasser).

Discipline and good behavior are learned, and they must be constantly reinforced. Guide your students to know what to do in all situations rather than punish misdeeds. Help your students understand that with rights come responsibilities. Encourage your students to be responsible for their learning and behavior. When students make choices, they learn new skills and gain social awareness from the outcome of those decisions.

1. What Works

Tell students what you expect, provide a model for good behavior, check for understanding, and allow for practice and follow-up. Don't assume that students know how to act appropriately. They need to be taught and coached to manage their behavior.

Create a classroom environment that provides structure and support and reinforces positive behavior. Set your standards high; be clear and realistic in your expectations. Classroom conflict is more likely to be reduced if you:

- arrive in the classroom before the students to
- organize and prepare before each lesson
- insist that everyone be treated with a wholesome respect
- listen to student opinions and consider their feelings
- maintain your sense of humor and tolerant attitude
- assist children to make appropriate choices
- teach students decision-making skills
- help students to live with mistakes and take them in stride
- use a quiet, friendly tone of voice
- show faith in each child and build on strengths

- help children to increase their feelings of self-esteem
- believe that all children are capable and lovable
- have a low-key, consistent, and matter-of-fact manner
- use realistic, logical consequences, and enforce them
- move around the classroom

You will make the difference in how your classroom “feels”

2. What Does Not Work

Even with the most tact and careful preparation, children will test you. Let the students know that while you disapprove of their actions, you still value them. If you are going to show that you are angry, do it because you have decided it is appropriate not because you are “out of control”. Be aware of the legal rights and responsibilities of both teacher and students from the School Act. If you have any concerns or questions, contact your **Board of Governors of PEITF at 1-800-903-4157**.

Teachers who have discipline problems often:

- accept excuses, bargain or blame
- act hastily without knowing the implications of actions
- offer “bribes/rewards” for behavior
- preach, nag, criticize, shout, and threaten
- punish as a way to teach appropriate behavior
- punish the whole class for the misdeeds of a few
- rescue children rather than teach problem solving skills
- use put-downs, sarcasm, embarrassment, or humiliation

Dealing with power struggles can be difficult for beginning teachers. When this happens to you, try to:

- ignore the student’s attempt to engage you in a power struggle
- insist that teaching and learning needs be met
- describe to the student, in objective and explicit terms, the behavior that you cannot accept
- give a warning, stress the consequence, and then follow through
- arrange for time out from the classroom or school
- seek intervention by appropriate school personnel
- communicate with the parents to draw up further action plans

3. Classroom Routines/Procedures Checklist

Be aware of school policies and procedure for the following:

- roll call, absentees, students who leave early
- tardy students
- behavior during PA announcements
- distributing supplies and materials
- format for assignments
- what students do when they are finished
- putting away supplies and equipment
- dismissing the class
- make-up work
- washroom routines
- lining up
- playground
- fire drills and emergencies
- lunch
- hall movement

4. Rules and Consequences

Give thought to establishing rules, consequences, and procedures. Having the children participate in making classroom rules gives the students a sense of ownership.

a. Tips for Rules

- keep rules short, precise, and succinct to focus on specific behavior
- limit yourself to six rules
- post rules, and send a copy home
- state rules in positive terms whenever possible
- teach rules, possible use role play and/or quiz
- when enforcing rules, preserve student dignity

b. Sample Rules

- students will bring all needed materials to class
- students will raise their hands for permission to speak
- students will walk in the classroom or halls

c. Tips for Consequences

- be clear and specific
- have a range of alternatives
- use consequences, not punishment
- relate to a rule
- use natural or logical consequences

Suggested consequences for above sample rules:

- students need to retrace their steps by walking
- teacher will not respond to a child who has not raised his/her hand

5. Guidelines for Effective Discipline

a. Three Basics To Remember

- Monitor Student Behavior

- S Use an “active eye”. See what is going on. Don’t become preoccupied with someone or something and ignore the rest of the class. In terms of discipline and effective teaching, one teacher on his/her feet is worth two in the seat.
- S Simply looking the student directly in the eye for prolonged contact while you continue your lesson sends a non-verbal message that says “I saw what you did, and I want it stopped!”

- Be consistent

Have the same expectations of all students for appropriate behavior. Your students should know that you will enforce rules consistently and apply an appropriate consequence. Your goal is to be fair, but that might mean not applying the identical consequence to all students. If one student frequently fails to return homework, you may apply a different consequence than you would to the student who forgets his/her homework for the first time. Knowing that you will be fair, but not equal, your students should understand that being equal is not always fair. To be consistent, be certain that the consequences you apply are reasonable and appropriate.

- Promptly Manage Inappropriate Behavior

Effective classroom managers know that misbehavior must be handled immediately or there is risk of a snowballing effect. To provide maximum time for learning and to reduce minor behavior problems, you can employ strategies that deal with behavior in the least amount of time, with the least disruption and the least negative feeling.

b. Strategies

- Proximity

Continuing your lesson while you move about the room, pausing near “trouble spots” can let the students know that even though they aren’t near the teacher’s desk, they are still expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior. You getting “boxed in” behind your desk or podium encourages misbehavior in the far corners of the room.

- Pause

Continuous teacher talk may give students a noise screen for their own conversations. An occasional pause - just a few seconds of silence brings an off-task student back in focus.

- Asking for a Response

S Hearing one’s name can be an attention-getter, even if one is not paying attention.

S Working on off-task student’s name into a questions can often bring the student back into the lesson. Remembering the student’s dignity, say the student’s name first in order to allow him/her to hear the question to be answered. The purpose is to get the student back into the lesson, not to embarrass him/her.

- Active Participation

Sometimes having the student respond to a question or become involved in an activity can eliminate the undesired behavior. Asking for a show of hands, having students perform a physical activity, or having each student write a quick answer to a question can make all students accountable for an immediate response.

VIII. Communicating with Parents/Guardians

Developing a strong home-teacher partnership is important. Be sensitive to different family configurations. You and the parent/guardians share a common goal: to help students achieve their fullest potential. The parent-teacher-student conference is an excellent way for parents/guardians to be involved in the education of their children.

Your approach will have a lot to do with the level of cooperation you might receive. Very few parents/guardians object to a teacher's approaching them with an idea that might help their child if the idea shows the teacher's commitment to the success of that child. Parents/guardians may react negatively when told, "Here's what your child did today!" Consider parents/guardians as part of the solution to discipline problems.

1. Meet-the-Teacher Night

The first formal introduction to parents/guardians will usually be a Meet-the-Teacher activity. This is a time to introduce yourself and your curriculum. Be well prepared for the session.

- You will want to talk to colleagues to find out what parents/guardians expect from the session.
- As a first year teacher, be prepared to instill confidence regarding your instructional abilities. Let your enthusiasm show!
- Discuss rules and operating procedures in your classroom, the subject(s), goals of the curriculum, expectations for students, instructional materials.
- Identify how home and school can work together. Inform parents/guardians of when, where, and how you can be reached, and discuss how parents/guardians can best support their child's learning out of school.
- Cautionary notes - don't let one parent monopolize the discussion or sidetrack you; have a conference sign-up sheet available so that parents/guardians may speak with you about their children individually.

2. Communications Checklists

The best communications climate is a comfortable one; if you are relaxed, parents/guardians usually will relax, too. There are many communication techniques that will lead to a successful conference. You may wish to use some of the following:

1. Before the Conference

- Before your first meeting with parents/guardians, review the academic history of the student.

- Be well prepared; collect dated samples of student work completed throughout the term to show improvement or decline in quality.
- Compile appropriate material to substantiate your evaluation.
- Ensure privacy.
- Have appointments posted outside the door and keep to the schedule; parents/guardians needing additional conference time should be invited to come at a later date.
- Have chairs and coffee available outside the classroom.
- If the conference is part of the regular reporting period, send home a newsletter describing your programs and some of the topics being studied.
- If the students are not included in the conference, meet with them beforehand so that they are aware of what will be discussed.
- Prepare a conference form for record keeping to keep the discussion focused and to be an aid for future conferences.
- Send out an interview confirmation sheet; ask parents/guardians to return it.
- Successful conferences deal with only a few issues because of time constraints; make sure you know what points you want to cover.

2. During the Conference

- Greet the parents/guardians at the door.
- Be clear and concise in your comments; be an attentive listener.
- Introduce yourself with a friendly voice, but keep opening comments to a minimum to allow for more discussion time.
- Keep the parents/guardians involved by encouraging them to share pertinent information with you.
- Maintain the focus, and keep the discussion on track.
- No matter how many problems a student has, find some positive things to report.
- With the parents/guardians' help, develop some goals for the rest of the year.

3. Concluding the Conference

- Check that the parents/guardians have a clear understanding of what was discussed.
- Highlight the conclusions and the agreed-upon actions.
- If needed, set another date for an interview.
- End as you began - on a positive note.
- Thank the parents/guardians and walk them to the door.
- Summarize the points covered, and add them to your files.

4. Follow-up

- After a few weeks, phone the parents/guardians with a progress report.
- Keep your principal informed.
- Send a note home the next day thanking the parents/guardians for their time and interest.

5. Ways to Communicate Regularly with Parents/Guardians

- Keep file cards for each child, noting the positive things that have happened; then send home a couple of happy grams a term using this information.
- Make phone calls about good things the child has accomplished.
- Send newsletters containing student work.
- When you discuss a problem with parents/guardians, be truthful, sincere, and objective; they will respect your integrity.

3. Sample Conference Formats

a. Regularly Scheduled Conference

- Introduction
 - S state the purpose of the conference
 - S share something positive about the child
 - S update on past concerns, if necessary
- Academic Achievement
 - S discuss academic strengths/weaknesses
 - S present documentation
 - S seek parental input and reaction to information
 - S develop one academic goal
- Social Interaction and Behavior
 - S discuss social strengths/weaknesses and behavior
 - S present specific examples
 - S seek parental input and reaction
 - S develop a behavior/social goal, if necessary
- Other Issues
 - S seek parent input and discussion of other issues
 - S provide additional information
- Closure
 - S review goals
 - S plan for follow-up
 - S close on a positive note

b. Problem-Solving Conference Format

- Introduction
 - S cite purpose - statement of concern
 - S update the situation

- Description of the Problem
 - S describe the problem, present documentation
 - S describe what has been done
 - S seek parent input and reaction to the problem

- Problem Solving
 - S seek parent input and suggestions
 - S discuss different alternatives
 - S suggest possible solutions

- Action Planning
 - S develop an action plan for improvement
 - S identify specific actions

- Closure
 - S plan for follow-up
 - S close on a positive note

IX Establishing a Positive Environment

1. Building Students' Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is how people feel about themselves. It's their perception of self-worth. Students with positive self-esteem feel good about themselves. If students do not value themselves, they will present themselves to others as negative. Ultimately, one's sense of worth shows up everywhere.

There is a correlation between academic achievement and self-esteem. You can foster self-esteem and you can make a difference. You can promote a feeling within a child of being loveable and capable. You can create a safe and accepting environment where each child feels free to grow and change. As you begin to shape a child's self-esteem, you also nurture you own. It is important to consider how classroom organization and routines can build self-esteem.

2. Tips for Fostering Self-Esteem

- acknowledge positive qualities
- be non-judgmental, and accept students as they are
- demonstrate appropriate ways of releasing anger
- develop skills to help a child feel better about himself/herself
- emphasize what each child knows
- encourage positively; say, "You can succeed"
- give children choices
- inform parents/guardians about student growth
- keep boundaries that allow give and take
- listen reflectively and genuinely give support for growth and change
- participate, facilitate and share feelings
- provide a safe classroom-minimum risk fosters openness and honesty
- provide acceptance
- teach self-awareness
- provide undivided recognition
- reaffirm a child's existence with a compliment or an acknowledgment
- respect others' feelings
- see uniqueness
- separate the action from the person
- structure opportunities for success
- use humor, but not at the expense of students
- use "I messages" such as "Heather, I hear exciting events in your story"
- validate feelings

3. Encouraging Students

Not all students react to praise the same way. Your objective in using praise is to get students to develop an internal focus of control to improve behavior and academic achievement. Here are some suggested uses of praise:

- At times, give praise privately to avoid competition, embarrassment, or “teacher’s pet” syndrome.
- Be careful **not** to compare one student with another: “Gee, you have almost caught up to Karen”.
- **Don’t** minimize a student’s success: “Your math assignment must have been easy, you finished so quickly”.
- Draw the student’s attention to his/her effort and ability: “Thank you for picking up the paper. You really helped the class save time”.
- Praise needs to be genuine and matched by your body language.
- Vary your praise, and be creative. Don’t simply say: “great”, “fine”, “wonderful”. Be specific with praise.

X Teaching Strategies and Classroom Complexity

In any given day, you may have more than 1,000 personal interactions with students. Each of these complex interactions must be interpreted on the spot. Respond to these intermediate needs as you teach, and make the time to really reflect on what you are doing and planning to do. Teaching is working with the curriculum and working with people. When these dimensions overlap, teaching becomes multi-dimensional.

Teachers often feel alone as well as busy. Their personal lives are often as full as their professional lives. For these reasons, it is important to develop a repertoire of teaching strategies that become second nature. By having many teaching strategies, you can continually monitor the class and make adjustments during the busy, complex, teaching and learning process.

Vary your teaching strategies. Often the process of learning is as important as what is being learned. Teacher talk or lecture has its place in instructional strategies, but don't fall into the trap of teacher talk when things get difficult.

Internalize and put into practice the principles of learning:

- Learning requires the active participation of the student.
- People learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.
- Learning is both an individual and a group process.

Teaching strategies can be grouped into five broad categories:

- Direct instruction - the teacher imparts knowledge or demonstrates a skill.
- Experiential learning - the students experience and feel; they are actively involved.
- Independent study - the students interact more with the content than with the teacher or other classmates.
- Indirect instruction - the teacher sets up strategies, but does not teach directly; the students make meaning for themselves.
- Interactive instruction - the students interact with one another and the information; the teacher is organizer and facilitator.

Consider many things when you choose which type of teaching strategy to use. Consider the nature of the topic, the resources available, and the age, maturity, and learning styles of the students, as well as your teaching style. Your lessons will be more successful if you structure opportunities for your students to be involved and to apply the information they have learned.

Learning together provides for multiple intelligences, and promotes interdependence, face-to-face interaction, individual accountability, and group skills. There are a variety of approaches to grouping students for learning activities.

- Group investigation - have groups of two to six students work together using co-operative inquiry, discussion, co-operative planning, and projects.
- Jigsaw - have individuals with the group learn parts of the material, discuss it with like members from other groups, and then teach their own group.
- Teams, games - have team members assist one another to master materials or skills in order for the team to compete against other teams.

Teaching is both complex and difficult. It requires that you experiment and find your most effective teaching style while recognizing the different learning styles of your students. You will need to search out new and different methods to motivate your students and present material.

- ask yourself, “If I did this again, what things would I change?”
- decide what works well and what doesn’t
- determine the key that made it work
- determine what connections were made to other learning or real life
- determine what unexpected connections were made
- discuss ideas with your colleagues and share your questions and experiences - you will need time to reflect on your teaching practice and to develop your teaching skills
- make a note of the best resources
- try different methods of grouping for instruction for different lessons

Teaching is challenging and exciting work. Identify your mistakes, and plan to correct them. Identify your successes, and build on them. **Remember, you are a life long learner too!**

XI Taking Care of Yourself

When we get sick or face a crisis, we can hardly wait until we are well again. Our wellness depends on our lifestyle and on how we cope with physical and emotional demands.

First-year teachers are going through the transition from student to professional teacher. Transitional phases are sometimes difficult and painful. You may be away from family and long-time friends for the first time. You may be aware that your expectations and your ability differ. You may also be overwhelmed by your workload and, therefore, work late into the night, on weekends, and at lunch and recesses, to the point where your health and wellness begin to suffer.

You are facing a challenge that all first-year teachers face: the challenge to strike a balance.

1. Personal Life and Work Life

Your work can consume you. There is so much to do and learn. Personal life often suffers in the first year of teaching. Exercise is forgotten, and there is no time to meet new friends let alone join them for activities outside school. Taking time to relax every day and to exercise relieves stress and makes your transition easier. It keeps you healthy. Exercise and meeting friends will maintain your energy.

You may have a variety of emotions, and it's important to stay connected with what's really going on. Experience it fully, and act accordingly. Everyone had a first year. Laugh at yourself, and enjoy your talents even when others do not. Recognize your emotions. You can express them appropriately rather than at times when "they just come out". You will need to decide if you can live with the difference between the dream you had of what teaching would be and your discovery of what it really is.

2. Perfectionism and Surviving

To have the perfect lesson and the perfect class, where all students are working to their potential all the time, is impossible. Realize that there are students in your classroom with so many personal and home problems that no matter how your lessons are planned or what you do, they are not going to do any work. Do not take that personally. It does not mean you are not being a good teacher. Look for the help of colleagues when you need support or ideas.

A teacher needs to contain the demands and set priorities. It takes too much energy to be perfect all the time. No one else expects a first-year teacher to be perfect. Surviving the first year depends on letting go of thinking you have to do it all, all the time.

3. Asking for Help vs. Doing It All Yourself

You are a trained teacher with new ideas and information. Situations or concerns may come up that you do not know how to handle. Ask others, and ask early. It is not a sign of incompetence to ask questions. Other people have experience in areas that you may not have. Asking early may save a lot of grief and a lot of time. Ask for support. Be honest about how hurt or how excited you are about a situation or project. Ask any of the following for help/advice:

- local president
- mentor
- other beginning teachers
- school counsellor
- staff rep.

4. Saying Yes and Saying No

It is all right to say no to too many extra-curricular activities or assignments. First-year teachers often think they have to do everything that is asked of them and do it well. There are only so many hours in a day, and you have only so much energy. If something is too much for you, say so. It doesn't help anyone for you to be so stretched that you cannot do anything well or you are not getting the sleep you need.

We tend to manage the symptoms of stress rather than make changes in the source. If you cannot figure out how to get into balance, get support from friends and staff members.

For more information, check with your PEITF rep. or area coordinator and seek out information about employee-assistance programs at 368-5736 or 1-800-239-3826; or check in the appendix of the Beginning Teacher Handbook for a copy of the Employee Assistance Pamphlet.

XII. Preparing for a Substitute

Many schools have developed a policy/handbook for Substitutes. If your school does not have one, the following information may be useful.

To ensure that a quality education program continues in your absence, advanced preparation for a substitute is important. Such planning will help to maintain a consistent routine in a safe and caring environment. Students should be aware of your expectations for behavior when a substitute is in charge of the class. The substitute is an important part of the education system and provides for meaningful and authentic teaching and learning opportunities in your absence.

It is a good idea to prepare an information folder or organize a successful day for both the substitute and the students. The folder should include the following:

- class list with phone numbers
- class rules, expectations and responsibilities
- classroom routines
- daily and weekly timetable, showing bell times
- homework assignments and policy
- information about students with special needs, including special health needs
- interesting supplementary material the substitute could use
- map of the school, including the fire exits
- names of some students who could be of help
- notes on procedures such as taking attendance, opening exercises
- seating plan
- supervision schedule and guidelines
- up-to-date daily plan book

It is not always possible to anticipate everything that a substitute will need, so it is helpful to indicate the names of teachers and/or teachers' assistants who may be able to provide assistance.

XIII. Action Plan

The mentor/mentee relationship is one that matures and blossoms throughout the school year. It has been said that if you are not trying to improve then you are in a state of decline.

We would like the mentee, with the assistance of the mentor, to develop an action plan in an area that needs to be addressed. It could be the development of curriculum, skill strengthening or addressing a problem area.

Take some time to identify the area you are going to work on and explore the options available to you in the development of an action plan. Finally, use the six questions in Section 3 to write out your action plan. This format will ensure the mentee will follow through with concrete implementation steps.

STEPS IN DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

1. Identification

- ☞ Clarification
- ☞ Understanding

- 📎 Listening
- 📎 Questioning
- 📎 Summarizing

2. Exploration of Options:

- ☛ Brainstorming
- ☛ Listening
- ☛ Suggesting
- ☛ Questioning
- ☛ Summarizing

3. Action Plan:

A. What will be done?

B. How will it be done?

C. Who will be involved or affected?

D. Where will it be done?

E. When will it be done?

F. How will it be monitored and evaluated?

If you need assistance, call

CHARLOTTETOWN: 368-5738

OUTSIDE CHARLOTTETOWN
1-800-239-3829 (Toll Free)

FAX: 1-902-368-5737

Main Office Location:
Suite B, Yates Building
Harbourside Access Road
Charlottetown

**Remember, E.A.P. is
voluntary and confidential**

**...It's your program - when
and if you ever need it.**

... Offering Help with a variety of problems such as:

- parenting
- financial matters
- marital stress
- legal matters
- emotional stress
- worksite harassment
- drugs
- eldercare
- gambling
- food
- alcohol
- job stress
- physical problems

Solving little problems prevents big problems.

E.A.P. can help!



Your Employee Assistance Program

eap

Confidential Assistance with
Personal Problems

SOME QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

A Joint Program of
The Government of P.E.I.
The Regional Administrative School Boards
The Regional Health Authorities
and
Union of Public Sector Employees
P.E.I. Teachers' Federation
Canadian Union of Public Employees
P.E.I. Nurses Union
International Union of Operating Engineers

**Employee Assistance
Program**

A JOINT PROGRAM OF YOUR
EMPLOYER AND YOUR UNION

eap

What is the E.A.P.?

It is an assistance plan to offer confidential professional counselling services to an employee to help resolve problems that affect your personal life and may effect work performance. The program is completely voluntary; the aim is to provide access to confidential counselling.

It also offers wellness training sessions in the workplace.

Why do we have an E.A.P.?

Each of us, no matter what our position in the organization, encounters a variety of problems in our lives. In most situation we can work them out. However, sometimes the problems are too large for us to solve and they affect our personal health and happiness, our families, and our performance at work. When this happens we need help in resolving the problems.

The E.A.P. exists to help employees resolve problems as early as possible, before they seriously affect self, family and/or employment.

Who can use the program?

All probationary and permanent employees, as well as all other employees with six months continuous service, within all Provincial Government Departments, Agencies and Commissions, the Regional Administrative School Boards, and the Regional Health Authorities can use the program.

E.A.P. will deal with what kind of problems?

The E.A.P. deals with everyday problems which affect our personal well being and may affect our job. These may include marital, family, and relationship concerns, legal or financial matters, alcohol or drug abuse, emotional, physical problems or issues of harassment, or job related stress.

How does the program work?

When you identify that you have a problem simply call the EAP office to arrange an appointment. If work performance has deteriorated, your supervisor may offer assistance. Participation is voluntary.

A Counsellor will meet with you, complete an assessment of the problem, provide short-term counselling and information; and, if necessary, refer you to an outside agency, and provide follow-up services. Mediation or critical incident stress debriefing (CISD) is available to a worksite.

What about confidentiality?

The E.A.P. is designed to allow you to resolve your problems under strict privacy guidelines. The office is located away from any major worksite. If any information needs to be shared with your supervisor, your written consent must be first obtained. Entering the E.A.P. does not affect your present job or your opportunities for future jobs. All records are closed after two years of inactivity or at your request.

What will the E.A.P. cost?

There is no cost for employees to go to the E.A.P. Counsellors. If further counselling is necessary, a Counsellor will outline community and private services available. Any costs associated with private services would be your responsibility.

Leave may be granted for the purpose of counselling and treatment.

Where do I call?

Province wide access is available by phoning the E.A.P. office at 368-5738 in Charlottetown or toll free 1-800-239-3826 outside of Charlottetown during normal government work hours. The Counsellors will travel across the province and meet with an employee at a mutually convenient time and place.

