

PLAN OF SUPPORT DURING THE STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

While most student teachers move through the student teaching experience with general ease, there are times when an individual student teacher may struggle. When this occurs, the cooperating teacher, in consultation with the college supervisor and Director of Student Teaching, may determine that it is appropriate to create a Plan of Support for the student teacher. The purpose of this procedure is to carefully monitor the student teacher's progress and provide additional, focused support at a midpoint in the student teaching experience. The process is intended to provide a consistent and fair approach to the student teacher while honoring the integrity of the department, College, school and profession. The procedure for establishing and implementing a Plan of Support is as follows:

1. Plan of Support Defined

A Plan of Support is a contract that is drawn up between the student teacher and Education Department. It identifies specific goals for the student teacher and a time frame for these goals to be reached.

The student teacher who is placed on a "Plan of Support" is one who started the student teaching placement without stipulations, but due to struggles and challenges is deemed an appropriate candidate for such designation. A Plan of Support allows the student teacher to continue in the placement under certain defined conditions and with full knowledge and understanding that failure to meet set standards could result in the termination of the student teaching experience. The Director of Student Teaching, in consultation with the college supervisor and cooperating teacher(s), will inform the Education Department that the student teacher will be placed on a Plan of Support for student teaching.

2. Reasons for Plan of Support Status

A student teacher may be placed on a Plan of Support for a number of reasons, some of which may be academic in nature and others of which may be non-academic or related to professional dispositions and behaviors. Academic performance would likely be related to the student teacher's demonstration of content or pedagogical knowledge, while non-academic reasons for placement on a Plan of Support would include the limited or inappropriate display of professional dispositions and behaviors and/or on-going mental or physical health issues.

A. Academic Reasons-The following examples of *academic-related* situations could result in the student teacher being placed on a Plan of Support:

1. *Repeated inaccurate or incomplete content instruction*
2. *Repeated inaccurate, incomplete or inappropriate demonstration of pedagogical knowledge and application*
3. *Failure to secure and maintain an effective learning environment*

B. Non-Academic Reasons-The following examples of *non-academic* situations could result in the student teacher being placed in the student teaching experience on a Plan of Support:

1. *Repeated failure to perform effectively or carry out one's assignment in the student teaching placement*
2. *An inappropriate attitude toward learning and supervision.* This could include, but is not limited to, a disrespectful, resistant or hostile attitude toward the students, cooperating teacher, building administrator and/or college supervisor.
3. *Repeated concerns about levels of professional dispositions and/or behaviors*
4. *Failure to abide by the Statement of Commitment to Professionalism*
5. *Failure to respect or maintain confidentiality*
6. *Chronic absenteeism or tardiness*
7. *Inappropriate or disruptive behavior*
8. *Behavior that is irresponsible, damaging, or possibly harmful to the students*
9. *Consistent mental or physical health issues* that affect the student teacher's performance. The student teacher will be advised to seek counseling, therapy or medical assistance whenever possible and appropriate.
10. *Other issues of a unique nature.*

3. Notification Procedures

- A. Student Teacher- The student teacher will be notified in person and in writing of his/her status. A follow-up meeting with the college supervisor, and/or the cooperating teacher(s) or Director of Student Teaching will detail the conditions of the Plan of Support. The student teacher will be required to sign a statement indicating his/her acknowledgement of the conditions of the probationary period. (See Appendix H.) The student will also, with the aid of the college supervisor and/or Director of Student Teaching, create a set of goals and objectives to be put into place and achieved during the Plan of Support.
- B. College Supervisor- The college supervisor will be notified in writing by the Director of Student Teaching of the student teacher's Plan of Support and the conditions thereof.
- C. Cooperating Teacher- The cooperating teacher will be notified in writing by the Director of Student Teaching of the student's Plan of Support and the conditions thereof.
- D. Education Department- The Director of Student Teaching will notify members of the Education Department of a student's Plan of Support status.

4. Length of Plan of Support

The length of the Plan of Support period will be at least two (2) weeks and may include an extension beyond this point. In some cases, an extension of the student teaching experience beyond the required 16 weeks, might be warranted, depending on the nature of the criteria and the student teacher's progress.

5. Support Process

- A. During the Plan of Support period, the assigned college supervisor will schedule weekly visits in the student teacher's school setting. The purpose of these visits will be to monitor progress towards the student teacher's goals, monitor overall progress towards the "normal" expectations of student teachers in the related weeks of the student teaching placement, observe the student teacher teaching in either a small or full-group setting, and confer with the cooperating teacher and student teacher. Following each visit, the college supervisor will provide written (See Appendix I) suggestions and resources as related to the student teacher's goals in each meeting and in-between meetings as needed. In addition, the college supervisor will communicate the student teacher's progress towards his/her stated goals and student teaching in general. The college supervisor will further communicate his/her observations, recommendations and conclusions to the student teacher and cooperating teacher.
- B. At the end of the Plan of Support period, the college supervisor, in consultation with the cooperating teacher, will make a recommendation to the Director of Student Teaching on the status of the student teacher. The recommendation will be communicated in person and in writing (See Appendix I) to the student teacher by the Director of Student Teaching and/or college supervisor.

6. Criteria For Success

The Director of Student Teaching will notify the student teacher and college supervisor in writing of the conditions necessary for successful completion of the probationary period. This notice will include:

- A. specific criteria, including goals and objectives for performance
- B. a timeline for implementation of the stated goals, objectives and performance measures
- C. frequency and number of observations
- D. weekly progress reports
- E. the person or persons responsible for determining if such criteria have been met.

The student will acknowledge, in writing, the receipt of and acceptance of such notification and conditions (See Appendix H).

7. Determinations

At the end of the initial two-week period, one of three determinations will be made with regards to the plan of support:

- A. The student teacher has successfully met all goals and has demonstrated all other "normal" expectations of a student teacher at this point in the student teaching experience. With this determination, the student teacher is free to continue the student teaching placement without any additional stipulations.

The original Plan of Support will be further deleted from any future references. The student teacher will be notified of this decision by the college supervisor.

- B. The student teacher is making steady progress towards his/her goals and other expectations of student teachers at this point in the student teaching experience, but will continue with a Plan of Support on a week-to-week basis until goals and other expectations of student teachers have been fully met to the satisfaction of the cooperating teacher and college supervisor. At such time, the Plan of Support will be lifted and the student teacher will complete the student teaching placement without any additional stipulations. The original Plan of Support will be further deleted from any future references. The student teacher will be notified of this decision by the college supervisor.
- C. The student teacher has failed to make adequate progress towards meeting his/her goals and/or normal expectations of student teachers at this point in the student teaching experience. Recognizing that the student teacher has a very limited probability of successful completion of the student teaching experience, the student teaching placement will be terminated. The Director of Student Teaching will notify the student teacher in person of this decision.

8. Appeals Procedure

Students who have been placed on a Plan of Support may appeal the decision to the Education Department. The process for writing an appeal is described on the Education Department's website at:

<http://www.hope.edu/academic/education/Handbook/Appeals%20Process.pdf>