

Suggested Schedule of Activities/Observations with a Purpose (300 hours of field experience)

Observation is a very important skill in the intern experience. By learning what to look for, you can enhance your own planning and self-evaluation skills. During this field experience, you will be observing the students, the cooperating teacher, and the classroom procedures and routines.

Some suggested activities:

- Communicate with your teacher and make sure you clearly understand the expectations of the school
- Meet principal and staff and familiarize yourself with the layout of the school.
- Observe procedures, including set up of the room.
- Observe organization of materials, paper work, records, lesson planning, grade book, permanent records, etc...
- Learn the student's names, personalities, learning styles, personal interests, etc...
- Make note of any medical problems (allergies, etc...)
- Make note of students with learning disabilities, gifted, etc.
- Review the district's student learning objectives and curriculum.
- Review textbooks and other teaching materials.
- Briefly visit with Specials' teachers (if possible) and observe what is going on in music, art, computer & library.
- Observe the teacher's teaching style, classroom procedures, and management system.
- Observe behavior patterns and learn names of students.
- Check attendance, collect materials, make announcements, (with teacher approval)
- Become familiar with the needs of all children, especially exceptional children in the classroom and the programs and strategies that have been developed for them.
- Check and/or grade student's work in a timely manner (with teacher's approval).
- Co-plan and co-teach lessons with teacher.

To learn the workings of the school quickly, assuming light duties such as helping individual students or groups, making announcements, becoming acquainted with materials, the use of equipment (do you know how the school's VCR works, how to get an extra bulb for the overhead projector?) can be enlightening. Assist with the management and organization tasks in the classroom such as arrival-dismissal, collection of papers, distribution of supplies, movement within the halls, movement in the classroom, fire drill, attendance, lunch and lunchroom duties, and storage of materials. Offer assistance with the instructional process. You may be asked to work with individuals for reinforcement, lead group discussions, help in the use of the library, search for discussion materials, and tutor individuals and/or small groups.

Some suggestions during observations:

When observing students,

- Which students finish their work first and last? What is the quality of the work?
- What do students do in free moments, before and after class?
- In what way do students show their interest or indifference to the class or to the lesson?
- Which students are unpredictable?
- Which students tend to be noisy and disorderly and under what conditions?
- How and where do discipline problems seem to arise if they appear?
- What seems to hold students' attention?

- What are the students' attitudes toward the school, subjects, and teachers?
- What seems to be the least interesting class activity for the students?
- Which students are leaders?
- What problems do you anticipate as you begin teaching?

When observing the routines and procedures of the classroom,

- How are attendance and tardiness handled?
- Who is responsible for ventilation, proper lighting, etc?
- What is the procedure for greeting visitors to the classroom?
- What is done when a student becomes ill?
- Where is the teacher when students enter the classroom (the hall, in the room, etc.)?
- What is the routine for sharpening pencils, leaving the room, and talking to classmates?
- How are materials distributed and collected?
- How do students work together?
- Are there any automatic privileges and/or penalties?
- What provisions are there for students to talk with the teacher?
- What matters should be reported to the principal?
- How are library materials used? How do you develop a relationship with the media specialist?
- What are provisions for fire drills and other emergencies?

When observing the cooperating teacher,

- What strategies does s/he use when teaching?
- What is involved in planning a lesson?
- How are uncooperative students handled?
- What are some monitoring techniques that the teacher uses?
- How does the teacher get the students involved in the lesson?
- How are students held accountable for their work and their behavior?
- What does the teacher expect from her/his students?

When situations present themselves, get involved in routines, working, and talking with individual students, teachers, and staff.

And, by all means, have a good experience.