



# Associate Teacher Manual

A Professional Development  
Steering Committee Project

ONTARIO ENGLISH  
Catholic  
Teachers  
ASSOCIATION



# The OECTA Associate Teacher Manual

## **Preface**

This manual is designed to support members of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) who voluntarily serve as Associate Teachers.

Teaching others to teach is a tremendous responsibility that brings immeasurable rewards. There is joy in sharing expertise and experience. By mentoring teacher candidates teachers are compelled to reflect on teaching practice and our professional growth. Often a dynamic collegiality develops between experienced and teacher candidates as future teachers are nurtured.

The following chapters are organized by topic and provide general information and advice, answers to questions and scenarios on each topic. This information will provide OECTA members with advice and direction about their rights as well as their responsibilities when acting in the capacity of Associate Teachers; help guide their interactions with members of a Faculty of Education and teacher candidates; and outline OECTA's perspective on the role of the Associate Teacher.

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# CHAPTER 1

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## SOME BENEFITS OF BEING AN ASSOCIATE TEACHER

### **1. *What are the benefits of being an Associate Teacher?***

Neil H. Scott in his 1998-99 report on the beginning teacher induction program in New Brunswick found that ninety-eight per cent of experienced teachers who participated in the program reported that they benefited from acting as a mentor to a beginning teacher. He also found that students, the Catholic school community and the profession benefited from experienced teachers and novice teachers working together.

### **2. *What is the relationship between being an Associate Teacher and personal growth?***

Teaching provides many opportunities for personal and professional growth. Associate Teachers have a unique opportunity to establish trusting relationships with novice teachers and other professionals that share a commitment to Catholic education. Volunteering as an Associate Teacher gives experienced teachers the opportunity to help teacher candidates launch their chosen career, increase their confidence in dealing with adults, fosters self-esteem and enrich a sense of self.

### **3. *How does volunteering to be an Associate Teacher add to professional growth?***

Associate teaching is an exercise in professional development that increases teachers' knowledge about new perspectives in curriculum and teaching as well as deepening reflective practice by sharing with other professionals. This is especially evident in areas such as classroom management, learning styles, and teaching strategies. Associate Teachers build communication skills particularly listening and questioning skills, establish formal networks among teaching professionals, and gain leadership experience.

### **4. *How does volunteering to be an Associate Teacher benefit a Catholic school communities?***

Associate Teachers contribute to the building of Christian community through their willingness to volunteer to assist others. In this role, Associate Teachers renew and confirm a commitment to the teaching profession as one of care and support for a new generation of teacher colleagues. Associate Teachers also serve as witnesses to the belief

that collaboration is at the heart of the educational enterprise and a gospel value. Through their voluntary service, Associate Teachers enhance not only the recruitment of new teachers to the Catholic school system but also the development of future teacher and civic leaders. In addition, Associate Teachers strengthen the connections between faculties of education and schools, ensuring a close connection between religious theory, learning and instruction, design research and best practice. In doing so, Associate Teachers ensures a legacy of Catholic teaching expertise across generations.

**5. *How does volunteering to be an Associate Teacher benefit the teaching profession?***

If teaching is viewed as a vocation, it could be concluded that experienced teachers are called to have a positive impact on the future of Catholic education. When a teacher volunteers to become an Associate Teacher, it reaffirms a commitment to the teaching profession, and assures that the experience of one generation of teachers is passed on to the next generation of teachers. By choosing to mentor prospective teachers about the profession, teacher candidates are better prepared for the future and an exciting career in Catholic education, as well as contributing to new teacher retention. Associate Teachers mentor prospective teachers about the requirements of the profession and like all teachers model the Catholic perspective of education, and instill in them the concept that teachers can and do make a difference.

**Scenarios**

1. Mrs. Lefleur has been teaching an intermediate class in the elementary panel for five (5) years. It is announced at a staff meeting that the school has been asked by a Faculty of Education to house some student teacher candidates for practice teaching purposes. The members of the staff are invited to volunteer to become an Associate Teacher. Mrs. Lefleur is interested but she has two young children at home and other family obligations.

**Advice**

Mrs. Lefleur has the experience and the inclination to become an Associate Teacher, however the decision is hers and she should follow up with the Faculty of Education regarding the expectations of such a voluntary experience. Having obtained the appropriate information she can then make a final decision.

2. It is a teacher's second year of teaching and even though this enthusiastic teacher had some difficulty with his Teacher Performance Appraisal and New Teacher Induction Program, he has excellent knowledge of the subject content. He wonders if being an Associate Teacher is a possible opportunity to address his own needs. The teacher candidate could share the teaching workload, and give the teacher more time to get organized.



**Advice**

As a rule no teacher should volunteer to be an Associate Teacher in his/her first two (2) years of obtaining a full time teaching position. Novice teachers participating in Teacher Performance Appraisal and New Teacher Induction Program should concentrate on those mandates – indeed their professional lives depend on it. Experienced teachers – teachers with five (5) years of experience or more may volunteer to become Associate Teachers, but the role should not be used for or seen as a vehicle for professional improvement.



# CHAPTER 2

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## LEGAL ISSUES RELATED TO THE ROLE OF ASSOCIATE TEACHER

This chapter provides an overview of the legislative and policy framework that Associate Teachers could bring to the attention of their teacher candidates. The contents of this chapter are not intended to be a definitive educational legal reference, but a reminder of some of the key legal rights and responsibilities that have implications for both an Associate Teacher and a teacher candidate. The Associate Teacher may direct the teacher candidate to the contents found herein as part of the practicum experience; however the responsibility for familiarizing the candidate with applicable legislation lies solely with the Faculty of Education.

### TEACHING PROFESSION ACT

Teacher candidates are associate members of the Ontario Teachers' Federation (*Teaching Profession Act*, Section 4.2) and are required to adhere to the *Teaching Profession Act* and the Regulation made under the *Teaching Profession Act*.

The Associate Teacher could direct teacher candidates, but is not required, to note sections of the *Teaching Profession Act* that deal with the duties of members. These include: General Duties of Members; Duties of a Member to His Pupils; Duties of a Member to Educational Authorities; Duties of a Member to the Public; Duties of Member to the Federation and Duties of a Member to Fellow Member. Teacher candidates should also learn the legal requirements concerning complaints about other teachers.

### Complaints about Colleagues

If serious professional concerns arise between a teacher candidate and an Associate Teacher, such matters should be dealt with in a professional manner between the parties. Keeping lines of communication open for frank discussion is the ideal way to resolve many conflicts.

If either party makes a formal complaint, the complainant is required to: "furnish him/her with a written statement of the report at the earliest possible time and not later than three days after making the report," when making an adverse report on another member (*Teaching Profession Act*, Section 18.1b)

The only exception to the above noted requirement of providing a written notice of an adverse report is a case of sexual abuse. In such a case, a member who makes an adverse report about another member concerning the sexual abuse of a student need not provide him or her a copy of the report or any other information about the report.

(*Teaching Profession Act*, Section 12.2)

## **CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT**

The *Child and Family Services Act* is founded on the understanding that everyone has the responsibility to protect children. As professionals who work with children, teachers have an obligation to report promptly to the Children's Aid Society or to a family and children's services office if they suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection. The Act defines the term "child in need of protection" and includes physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and risk of harm.

### **Duty to Report a Child in Need of Protection**

Associate Teachers may clarify with the teacher candidates their role in the duty to report a child in need of protection under Ontario's *Child and Family Services Act* (CFSA s. 72 (1), (2), (3)) and clarify that the faculty of education has educated the teacher candidate as to legal expectations. If a teacher candidate suspects or is told of an alleged abuse directly by the student involved, he/she must immediately report this to the local Children's Aid Society. The Associate Teacher can assist in this process, but the reporting must be done directly by the teacher candidate. Further information can be found in the Ministry of Children and Youth Services publication, "Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect" at [www.children.gov.on.ca/CS/en/programs/ChildProtection/Publications](http://www.children.gov.on.ca/CS/en/programs/ChildProtection/Publications)

## **EDUCATION ACT**

### **Duties of teacher**

264. (1) It is the duty of a teacher and a temporary teacher,
- teach**
    - (a) to teach diligently and faithfully the classes or subjects assigned to the teacher by the principal;
  - learning**
    - (b) to encourage the pupils in the pursuit of learning;
  - religion and morals**
    - (c) to inculcate by precept and example respect for religion and the principles of Judaeo-Christian morality and the highest regard for truth, justice, loyalty, love of country, humanity, benevolence, sobriety, industry, frugality, purity, temperance and all other virtues;
  - co-operation**
    - (d) to assist in developing co-operation and co-ordination of effort among the members of the staff of the school;
  - discipline**
    - (e) to maintain, under the direction of the principal, proper order and discipline in the teacher's classroom and while on duty in the school and on the school ground;

**language of instruction**

- (f) in instruction and in all communications with the pupils in regard to discipline and the management of the school,
  - (i) to use the English language, except where it is impractical to do so by reason of the pupil not understanding English, and except in respect of instruction in a language other than English when such other language is being taught as one of the subjects in the course of study, or
  - (ii) to use the French language in schools or classes in which French is the language of instruction except where it is impractical to do so by reason of the pupil not understanding French, and except in respect of instruction in a language other than French when such other language is being taught as one of the subjects in the course of study;

**timetable**

- (g) to conduct the teacher's class in accordance with a timetable which shall be accessible to pupils and to the principal and supervisory officers;

**professional activity days**

- (h) to participate in professional activity days as designated by the board under the regulations;

**absence from school**

- (i) to notify such person as is designated by the board if the teacher is to be absent from school and the reason therefor;

**school property**

- (j) to deliver the register, the school key and other school property in the teacher's possession to the board on demand, or when the teacher's agreement with the board has expired, or when for any reason the teacher's employment has ceased; and

**textbooks**

- (k) to use and permit to be used as a textbook in a class that he or she teaches in an elementary or a secondary school,
  - (i) in a subject area for which textbooks are approved by the Minister, only textbooks that are approved by the Minister, and
  - (ii) in all subject areas, only textbooks that are approved by the board;

**duties assigned**

- (l) to perform all duties assigned in accordance with this Act and the regulations. R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2, s. 264 (1); 2003, c. 2, s. 20 (1).

**Duty of teachers and designated early childhood educators to co-operate, etc.**

**264.1** (1) It is the duty of the following persons to co-ordinate the matters listed in subsection (2) and to co-operate with each other with respect to those matters:

1. Teachers.
2. Temporary teachers.
3. Designated early childhood educators.
4. Persons who, under the authority of a letter of permission, are appointed by a board to positions designated by the board as requiring an early childhood educator. 2010, c. 10, s. 16.

### **Same**

(2) The matters referred to in subsection (1) are:

1. Planning for and providing education to pupils in junior kindergarten and kindergarten.
2. Observing, monitoring and assessing the development of pupils in junior kindergarten and kindergarten.
3. Maintaining a healthy physical, emotional and social learning environment.
4. Communicating with families.
5. Performing all duties assigned to them by the principal with respect to junior kindergarten and kindergarten. 2010, c. 10, s. 16.

### **Duties of teachers not limited**

(3) Nothing in this section limits any duties of teachers under this Act, including duties related to report cards, instruction, training and evaluation of the progress of pupils in junior kindergarten and kindergarten, the management of junior kindergarten and kindergarten classes, and the preparation of teaching plans. 2010, c. 10, s. 16.

## **ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TEACHERS ACT**

### **Regulation 437 – Professional Misconduct**

The following activities are defined by the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*, Regulation 437/97 as professional misconduct:

1. Providing false information or documents to the College or any other person with respect to the member's professional qualifications.
2. Inappropriately using a term, title or designation indicating a specialization in the profession which is not specified on the member's certificate of qualification and registration.
3. Permitting, counselling or assisting any person who is not a member to represent himself or herself as a member of the College.
4. Using a name other than the member's name, as set out in the register, in the course of his or her professional duties.
5. Failing to maintain the standards of the profession.
6. Releasing or disclosing information about a student to a person other than the student or, if the student is a minor, the student's parent or guardian.  
The release or disclosure of information is not an act of professional misconduct if,
  - (i) the student (or if the student is a minor, the student's parent or guardian) consents to the release or disclosure, or
  - (ii) if the release or disclosure is required or allowed by law.
7. Abusing a student physically, sexually, verbally, psychologically or emotionally.
8. Practicing or purporting to practice the profession while under the influence of any substance or while adversely affected by any dysfunction,
  - (i) which the member knows or ought to know impairs the member's ability to practice, and
  - (ii) in respect of which treatment has previously been recommended, ordered or prescribed but the member has failed to follow the treatment.

9. Contravening a term, condition or limitation imposed on the member's certificate of qualification and registration.
10. Failing to keep records as required by his or her professional duties.
11. Failing to supervise adequately a person who is under the professional supervision of the member.
12. Signing or issuing, in the member's professional capacity, a document that the member knows or ought to know contains a false, improper or misleading statement.
13. Falsifying a record relating to the member's professional responsibilities.
14. Failing to comply with the *Education Act* or the regulations or the by-laws.
15. Failing to comply with the *Education Act* or the regulations made under that Act, if the member is subject to that Act.
16. Contravening a law if the contravention is relevant to the member's suitability to hold a certificate of qualification and registration.
17. Contravening a law if the contravention has caused or may cause a student who is under the member's professional supervision to be put at or to remain at risk.
18. An act or omission that, having regard to all the circumstances, would reasonably be regarded by members as disgraceful, dishonourable or unprofessional.
19. Conduct unbecoming a member.
20. Failing to appear before a panel of the Investigation Committee to be cautioned or admonished, if the Investigation Committee has required the member to appear under clause 26(5)(c) of the act.
21. Failing to comply with an order of a panel of the Discipline Committee or an order of a panel of the Fitness to Practice Committee.
22. Failing to co-operate in a College investigation.
23. Failing to take reasonable steps to ensure that the requested information is provided in a complete and accurate manner if the member is required to provide information to the College under the Act and the regulations.
24. Failure to abide by a written undertaking given by the member of the College or an agreement entered into by the member with the College.
25. Failing to respond adequately or within a reasonable time to a written inquiry from the College.
26. Practicing the profession while the member is in a conflict of interest.
27. Failing to comply with the member's duties under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

**Note:** A person who has had a certificate revoked or suspended as a result of a proceeding before the Discipline Committee may apply in writing to the Registrar to have a new certificate issued or the suspension removed.

### **Qualifications**

For the in-depth information on qualifications or additional qualifications see *Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996, Part II*.

**Note:** Teachers are generally able to take Additional Qualification courses as follows: Part I following graduation from a teacher training centre, i.e. OISE/UT; Part II following completion of one year of successful teaching; and, Part III after two years of successful teaching. Successful teaching must be certified by the appropriate supervisory officer.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Teachers and teacher candidates, like other workers, have the right to safe and healthy workplaces. If a teacher candidate feels the conditions in the workplace are not healthy or are unsafe, the Associate Teacher should be informed and the supervisor, who will be an administrator at the school, must be informed. The Associate Teacher should contact the Unit's Health and Safety Officer who is a representative of the workers to assist the teacher candidate. If the supervisor, the principal or vice-principal, is unwilling to correct the situation then the worker has the right to refuse unsafe work and be relocated to a safe and healthy worksite. The worker requests that the concerns be investigated in the presence of the workers' health and safety representative. If following this inspection, the worker feels the situation is still unsafe or unhealthy, ask the Health and Safety worker representative to request a representative of the Ministry of Labour attend the worksite.

**Note:** Teachers/Workers/teacher candidates cannot be disciplined or threatened for exercising their rights under applicable legislation

## **LIABILITY/INSURANCE COVERAGE**

Teacher candidates working in a classroom and other approved educational settings are under the direction/authority of the Faculty of Education and are provided with insurance coverage through their university. The Ministry of Education and Training provides coverage under the *Workplace Safety Insurance Act* for teacher candidates working in a classroom or similar setting as part of their practicum experience.

### **Liability**

- Teacher candidates can assist the Associate Teacher in performing additional duties beyond the classroom. (yard duty, field trips, after school activities), but the school board through the Associate Teacher is ultimately responsible for any liability;
- Under no circumstance should a teacher candidate drive pupils in any vehicle;
- If a teacher candidate witnesses an accident or is personally injured, the candidate is to follow proper school procedures – i.e., ensure immediate first aid is given by a qualified adult, assist the Associate Teacher in completing an accident report, and report personal injuries;
- A teacher candidate shall never act as an Occasional Teacher in the event of an Associate Teacher's absence or any other teacher absence;
- A teacher candidate shall never be left alone in a classroom, gymnasium, playground or other assigned teaching venue.

### **Reducing Liability – The Duty of Care and Regulation 298**

When planning programs and activities for students, Associate Teachers and teacher candidates must consider what needs to be done to reduce risks of liability. Teachers must make every effort to address such crucial issues as the degree of supervision required, the instruction and training needed to permit the students to function properly, and the condition of the equipment to be used. In planning any activity the teacher candidate should clear it with the Associate Teacher.



Parents expect their children to be educated in safe and caring environments. When you plan, ask yourself, "If the students were my children, what would I, as a careful or prudent parent, do to fulfill my duty of care?"

Ontario law requires teachers, Associate Teachers and teacher candidates to perform various duties as if they were "a kind and judicious parent". Under the common law, teachers have a duty of care to protect their students from all reasonable foreseeable risks of injury or harm. The standard of care is that of the careful or prudent parent.

The application of this standard of care varies from activity to activity and depends on several factors, including the nature of the activity, the number of students being supervised, their age, and the degree of skill or training that the students have received in connection with the activity. This is the reason that all activities organized by a teacher candidate are verified and agreed to by the Associate Teacher.

The concept of "foreseeable" is central to providing proper and sufficient care. To foresee is to plan ahead, to anticipate potential risks and to take the necessary steps to address them. The test for a "foreseeable" injury or harm is what is possible rather than what is probable.

Proof of negligence is based on proof that the harm was reasonably foreseeable. Teachers, Associate Teachers and teacher candidates are unlikely to be held liable if the incident was not reasonably foreseeable. However, a court will likely find the teacher negligent if there is evidence that the student under the teacher's care has been injured or harmed, that a breach of duty has occurred, and that a casual connection exists between the breach of duty and the injury or harm. This is the reason that all activities created or coordinated by the teacher candidate are approved by the Associate Teacher.

A teacher's duty of care also relates to the quality of instruction or training provided to the students. Regulation 298 requires teachers to "be responsible for effective instruction, training and evaluation of the progress of pupils in the subjects assigned to the teacher." Ineffective instruction and training can cause serious harm to students, especially to those participating in activities that have the potential to place them at risk.

Regulation 298 under the *Education Act* states that it is the duty of a teacher to "carry out the supervisory duties and instructional program assigned to the teacher by the principal." Teachers must "ensure that all reasonable safety procedures are carried out in courses and activities for which the teacher is responsible." Therefore it is the Associate Teacher who determines the extent of the program, accepts the delivery vehicle of the curriculum created by the teacher candidate and is ultimately responsible under Regulation 298.

The *Education Act* and associated Regulations do not specify the degree of supervision is required for any activity. Such decisions are made by principals, teachers and boards. Although it is not the duty of school authorities to keep students under supervision during every moment, common sense must prevail. However the Collective Agreement

determines supervision duty minute limits per week for lunch duty, yard duty, recess, before and after the instructional day bus duty, it is typically 80 minutes per week or less.

Regulation 298 also requires teachers to "be responsible for effective instruction, training and evaluation of the progress of pupils in the subjects assigned to the teacher."

### **EDUCATIONAL MALPRACTICE**

Educational malpractice has been defined as:

"institutional or educator incompetence which results in non-physical harm such as student failure to attain that level of learning he or she would probably have attained if he or she had received a reasonable, competent education; had not been misinformed as to the level of his or her abilities or achievements; had been properly diagnosed and informed of his or her special educational needs."

Up to this point in time Canadian courts have not imposed liability on teachers for malpractice.

However, the United Kingdom, courts have recognized that, in special education settings, educators may be liable for educational malpractice. In 1995, one court said, when talking about the duty of care to be exercised by principals:

"(A) school which accepts a pupil assumes responsibility not only for his physical well being but also for his educational needs. The education of a pupil is the very purpose for which the child goes to the school. The head teacher being responsible for the school himself comes under a duty of care to exercise the reasonable skills of a headmaster in relation to such education needs. If it comes to the attention of the headmaster that a pupil is underperforming, he owes a duty of care to take such steps as a reasonable teacher would consider appropriate to try and deal with such underperformance."

In a different case in 1994, another court found that the failure to deal properly with a student's disability may constitute malpractice. The court stated:

"The failure to treat the delayed treatment of dyslexia does arguably give rise to a form of injury which can support a claim for damages for negligence in tort. It follows from this that the school teacher's duty to exercise reasonable skill and care to safeguard the pupil from injury includes a duty to be aware of symptoms which a reasonable careful parent or a reasonable skilled and careful teacher would regard as a symptom either of dyslexia or, more generally, of a need for specialist advice."

### **CANADA'S COPYRIGHT ACT**

Teachers often have questions related to copyright legislation – questions concerning the use of the Internet and videos. Teachers should be familiar with existing board policies covering copyright issues and the Associate Teacher could educate the teacher candidate on the appropriate board policies.

Under Canada's *Copyright Act*, most published works are protected by copyright. The right to copy, which includes the right to photocopy, belongs to the creator or publisher. To provide the access to published works that today's teachers need while still protecting the property of creators and publishers, the Minister of Education and Training and the your school board have signed a license with CANCOPY. The license permits teachers to make legal copies as long as the number of copies stays within the parameters of the license.

This license provides access, but does not replace the purchase of books or other published material. For this reason, there are copying limits. If a book contains a single work, that is, not a collection of short stories or plays etc., the limit is 10 per cent of the book or 75 per cent of a chapter, whichever is less. Otherwise, teachers may copy up to 10 per cent of a publication or an entire item, whichever is greater. For example, from a 300 page anthology, a teacher may copy the entire 40 pages of a short story (i.e., the entire item rather than the 10 per cent limit). This is a cumulative limit and nothing more may be copied from this book during the year.

A teacher can make a class set plus two teacher copies and as many copies needed for library and administrative purposes, including communications to parents.

However, collecting copies from different sources into a binder or any other binding is prohibited.

The Canadian Teachers' Federation publication entitled *Copyright Matters* contains a number of key questions and answers for teachers about basic copyright rules such as copying from the Internet. [www.ctf-fce.ca/en/issues/copyrightmatters.pdf](http://www.ctf-fce.ca/en/issues/copyrightmatters.pdf)

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RELATED TO LEGAL ISSUES AND ASSOCIATE TEACHERS

1. *What could happen to a teacher who forgot his/her scheduled supervision duty on the stairs and in his/her absence, a student was tripped, fell and broke his front teeth?*

The standard of care principle imposed upon a teacher has come to be known as the "careful parent doctrine." The principle has two (2) concepts: nonfeasance – omitting to do what a reasonable person would do, and misfeasance – intentionally not doing what should be done.

Generally, if a teacher misses his/her scheduled duty and has not been directed to perform another task by an administrator and no injury results then there is no negligence. However, the language of the collective agreement related to supervision may subject the teacher to discipline. It is for this reason that it is recommended that teacher candidates not replace Associate Teachers for scheduled duties or voluntary activities arranged by the Associate Teacher.

On the other hand, the mere presence of the teacher is not deemed to be conclusive evidence that supervision was either adequately or responsibly carried out.

Supervision is defined as "critical watching and directing of activities." For example, the school board and its' managers are responsible for ensuring that the school premises are safe. This also includes people who come onto the premises as visitors.

Additionally, in this case any attempt by parents to cover the cost of related medical or dental expenses would fall within the jurisdiction of the board's insurance carrier.

2. *Would an Associate Teacher be held responsible or be open to discipline if a student sustains an injury in the classroom while a teacher candidate is teaching?*

**Yes.** The Associate Teacher is ultimately responsible for the students in the class and under his/her care even if the teacher candidate is acting as the class "teacher". This is the reason that OECTA strongly recommends that the Associate Teacher always be present in the class or activity while the teacher candidate is delivering program. If the Associate Teacher is present in the classroom, has reviewed the activity or program developed by the teacher candidate and therefore taken all reasonable precautions, he/she should not be held responsible nor subject to possible discipline.

**3. May an Associate Teacher I leave a teacher candidate alone in a classroom while she/he delivers program?**

**No.** In order to avoid possible discipline from the board or a possible complaint to the College of Teachers, the Associate Teacher should never leave a teacher candidate alone with a class. As a teacher, assigned by the board to a classroom, you are mandated by the *Education Act* and Regulations to provide an appropriate teaching and learning environment. (Guideline – Ontario Schools Code of Conduct)

**4. What should a teacher candidate do if asked by an administrator to cover another class or perform an On-call while the Associate Teacher is delivering curriculum to a class?**

Firstly, the teacher candidate should not be asked to cover another class or perform an On-call because the teacher candidate is in violation of a Bargaining Unit's collective agreement and the *Ontario Labour Act*.

Additionally, the teacher candidate may be subject to discipline by the local OECTA Bargaining Units, and/or the College of Teachers, and/or the board and is working as an uncertified teacher in violation of the *Education Act* as well as being uninsured by the board.

However, if the administrator directs the teacher candidate to cover a class or perform an On-call, the teacher candidate should do so under protest and immediately inform the Associate Teacher so he/she can contact the local OECTA representative and the teacher candidate must, at his/her earliest convenience, contact the Faculty of Education.

If the administrator informs the teacher candidate that the assignment of the coverage or On-call is because of an emergency situation, the administrator and therefore the board assumes full responsibility for any difficulties or discipline that may arise from the assignment. Again, the Associate Teacher should be informed so he/she can contact the local OECTA representative and the teacher candidate must, at his/her earliest convenience, contact the Faculty of Education.

**5. May an Associate Teacher let a teacher candidate read a student's Ontario Student Record (OSR)?**

**No,** according to Ontario Student Record Guideline, 2000, section 4.3 access is limited as follows;

**“4.3 Educational Personnel**

Under the *Education Act*, only supervisory officers and the principal and teachers and designated Early Childhood Educators of the school have access to the OSR for the purpose of improving the instruction of the student. As noted above, additional access may be permitted under municipal and provincial freedom of information legislation, under specified and limited circumstances. “

**6. *May an Associate Teacher let a teacher candidate perform his/her assigned supervision duties?***

**No.** An Associate Teacher may encourage the teacher candidate to gain experience in all aspects of a teacher's daily routine, including supervision, by allowing the teacher candidate to observe or join the Associate Teacher in carrying out the assigned duties of supervision, but teacher candidate should never perform supervision in place of any teacher.

**7. *A teacher candidate volunteers as an assistant with an Associate Teacher to the cross-country team. During a training run, a student falls and twists her ankle badly. Who is responsible and what action should be taken?***

The Associate Teacher is the responsible party. The Associate Teacher should remain with the student athlete and administer any first aid. The Associate Teacher should be sent to get help (ice, call 911 if necessary). The teacher candidate should not be left alone with the student as the prime care giver.

**8. *A teacher candidate, with expertise in rugby, volunteers to coach the school team. If there is no teacher coach present during a practice, should the teacher candidate be allowed to take charge of the practice?***

Generally, schools and boards have policies and procedures regarding the roles and responsibilities of coaches who are not certified teachers. The teacher candidate should contact the principle of the school to verify applicable policies and procedures. In any event a certified teacher should always be designated as the 'head coach' and should be present for all practices and games.

# CHAPTER 3

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## PROFESSIONAL ISSUES RELATED TO ASSOCIATE TEACHERS

### STANDARDS OF PRACTICE/ETHICAL STANDARDS

Teacher candidates must be aware of the College of Teachers' Standards of Practice and Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession. Teacher candidates are considered as staff and are associate members of the Ontario Teachers Federation (OTF). Although teacher candidates are not yet members of OTF, they are expected to adhere to standards of the College of Teachers.

Teacher candidates are evaluated on their demonstration of professionalism during their practicum. The various criteria used by education faculties include:

- Appropriate dress and personal grooming
- Punctuality and dependability
- Completion of assigned duties
- Respectful, appropriate interaction with school staff
- Initiative and preparedness
- Positive response to feedback and suggestions from Associate Teacher
- Self-reflection
- Professional judgment and discretion

Expertise in many aspects of the profession, such as classroom instruction and management, grows with time and experience.

### CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

Associate Teachers deal with confidential issues on a daily basis as they interact with students, parents and administrators. It is essential that Associate Teachers model the importance of privacy and confidentiality to teacher candidates.

#### Students

References to student evaluation and achievement must be confidential between a teacher candidate, the Associate Teacher and a student.

A teacher candidate should never make a reference to or share with another student confidential and private information about a student.

A student's work may not be shared without the student's permission.

The confidentiality of information must be maintained at all times in secure documents such as report cards, IEPs and other documents in OSRs.

## **Parents**

Teacher candidates must be aware of the student information that can be shared with whom, especially in the case of estranged parents.

Students over the age of eighteen are legally adults. No information can be shared even with their parents without written consent of the student. Teacher candidate  
Any conferences about a teacher candidate's performance must be held in private.

## **RELATIONSHIPS**

Interpersonal relationships are an integral part of a teacher's daily routine. The learning community consists of interdependent relationships among administrators, support staff, teachers, parents and students. Teacher candidate's assessments include the ability to develop appropriate relationships within a school setting.

### **Teacher candidate and Associate Teacher**

It is imperative that an Associate Teacher maintains at all times a professional relationship with the teacher candidate. Professionals treat one another with dignity and respect. The role of the Associate Teacher is to model good teaching practice and lead the teacher candidate.

If teacher candidates are to have a successful teaching practicum, they should feel that they are a valued and respected member of the learning community. This principle should be reflected in the relationship between the teacher candidate and the Associate Teacher.

Teacher candidates are teachers in training. They are not personal slaves nor "gophers." The atmosphere of this professional relationship should be collegial and informative. The relationship should be based on the concepts of formation, information and finally transformation into a complete professional teacher.

### **Teacher candidate and students**

Candidates are expected to act as professionals in the classroom. They should also be treated as professionals. Failure to do so leads to a lack of credibility with the students, which undermines the practicum experience. During parent teacher interviews, teacher candidates may be given an opportunity to deal directly with parents. The teacher candidate should be briefed on what is appropriate during parent interviews. The Associate Teacher is ultimately responsible for the content and delivery of the parent interview. The experience of a parent teacher interview or communications with parents or guardians is an invaluable growth opportunity for the teacher candidate.



## **Teacher candidate and Teacher Colleagues**

The teacher candidate should be encouraged to develop professional relationships with the staff. Sometimes, due to workload or sprawling buildings, teacher candidates may not have opportunity to form relationships. Interaction may need to be prompted or facilitated by the Associate Teacher who might encourage lunch in the staff room or a visit to another teacher's classroom. Collegial relationships are an integral part of the teaching culture; they should to be cultivated. The Associate Teacher should assist the teacher candidate in developing and nurturing these vital professional relationships.

## **SURVIVAL SKILLS**

Remember that teacher candidates are still learning. They will experience obstacles and challenges. Coping mechanisms are invaluable not only during their practicum but throughout their teaching careers. One of the roles of the Associate Teacher is to suggest various "survival skills" to the teacher candidate to allow them to overcome some of the pressures of the profession. Some of these might include:

- Balancing their professional and personal lives
- Rest and relaxation techniques
- Prioritization of tasks
- Time management
- Effective use of support systems

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON PROFESSIONAL ISSUES RELATED TO ASSOCIATE TEACHERS

1. *What should be done if a personal conflict arises between an Associate Teacher and a teacher candidate?*

We all know that we do not necessarily like every individual with whom we work. As with any professional setting, we continue to do our jobs in a professional manner. It is incumbent upon the Associate Teacher to ignore his/her personal feelings and make every effort to be fair and tolerant. It is diversity in personalities which flavours the working environment.

2. *What should an Associate Teacher do if the teacher candidate makes an obvious error in the delivery of the program. Should the Associate Teacher intervene?*

This is a judgment call which must be weighed carefully. If you can avoid the public correction of the error, do so in order to preserve the confidence level of the candidate and the professional relationship between the two people. Allow the teacher candidate to correct the error in the next lesson in a way which is mutually agreed upon. If you feel that you must correct the error immediately, do so discreetly. In doing this, we are modeling a low risk classroom environment where it is acceptable for both students and teachers to err and then correct and grow. Teacher candidates must learn to correct errors in their own classrooms. Barring perfection, it is a skill that all teachers must master.

3. *How should an Associate Teacher help a teacher candidate who reacts defensively to constructive criticism?*

Ensure any criticism is constructive, it should always have a positive end. The approach should always be reassuring. Have open and honest discussion in a low risk atmosphere. The Associate Teacher may want to access the faculty of education supervisor to assist you as she/he is likely to have some insights regarding the teacher candidate.

4. *What should the Associate Teacher do if the teacher candidate seems not to have the appropriate level of knowledge to deliver the course/lesson/unit/ curriculum?*

Discuss the observation with the teacher candidate and explain that it is essential to be well prepared prior to beginning to teach a lesson/unit. Reinforce the need for preparation. Perhaps the teacher candidate needs assistance to locate resources. As an Associate Teacher, suggest ways that might enhance the delivery of the curriculum. This suggestion will, in turn, promote increased student learning. It will also increase the confidence of the teacher candidate in the classroom.

5. ***The teacher candidate arrives 10 minutes prior to the start of the instructional day and leaves 10 minutes after the end of the instructional day. Should I address this issue?***

**Yes.** The faculties of education are clear in their instructions to the teacher candidate regarding arrival and departure. Remind the teacher candidate of the importance of punctuality and make them aware of the mandates of the *Education Act* and the agreement reached at the Provincial Discussion Table (PDT) in 2008.

6. ***The teacher candidate and the Associate Teacher are in the staff room for lunch. During a conversation between the teacher candidate and the Associate Teacher makes inappropriate comments about students and teachers.***

Strongly caution the teacher candidate to avoid such conversations because unfavourable remarks about a colleague are not only inappropriate but a violation of the *Teaching Profession Act*. Additionally, violating the confidentiality of student information by publicly making comment violates some precepts of the College of Teachers.

7. ***During the course of a parent-teacher interview, parents question the competence of the teacher candidate.***

Intervene by explaining to parents that the Associate Teacher is in the classroom at all times and the teacher candidate is being monitored closely to ensure effective delivery of curriculum to the students. Advise the parents to tell their son or daughter to approach their regular teacher with any concerns they might have. Inform the teacher candidate of the concern and create methods of overcoming the perception.

8. ***The class is getting "out of control." The teacher candidate is having great difficulty managing the class and the delivery of the program is being affected.***

It may be necessary for the Associate Teacher to intervene in the class. The decision to intervene should be based on a balance between the importance of curriculum delivery and a teachable moment. Intervene with the utmost care and have a follow up discussion about coping skills and strategies to be used in similar situation. At all times minimum intervention should be used. Do not stress a teacher candidate's inability to handle a situation at its occurrence, rather debrief at a natural break in the instructional day. Classroom management can be difficult but should improve with experience.

- 9. *The teacher candidate is invited to a graduation party at a student's home. Should he/she attend?***

This is a prime opportunity for an Associate Teacher to warn the teacher candidate about the risks involved in student and teacher interaction outside of the professional realm. The teacher candidate should be advised NOT to attend the party.

- 10. *A group of senior students approaches the teacher candidate about supervising a midnight grad trip to Canada's Wonderland. The trip is being organized by this year's graduating students but the trip is not school sanctioned. Should the teacher candidate agree to supervise the trip?***

The teacher candidate should NOT volunteer to supervise the trip. No teacher should supervise any trips that are not school sponsored or sanctioned.

# CHAPTER 4

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## ACADEMIC ISSUES RELATED TO ASSOCIATE TEACHERS

The practicum experience is an opportunity for teacher candidates to develop curriculum delivery strategies, lesson planning, classroom management skills and assessment strategies. As mentors to the teacher candidates, Associate Teachers help guide the candidates' professional formation and prepare them to become qualified certified teachers.

### PLANNING

As the practicum is the "hands on" portion of teacher education, teacher candidates should take responsibility for planning and the delivering lessons, with input from the Associate Teacher. The Associate Teacher should offer practical guidance in terms of the timing of activities, lesson sequencing and evaluation strategies. Teacher candidates need to be made aware of individual student needs, IEPs, so the needs can be addressed in the lesson plan. Associate Teachers should preview and approve the lesson prior to delivery. The teacher candidates should use Associate Teachers as a sounding board for the implementation of teaching strategies. The following suggestions and information may be helpful in ensuring a positive outcome in the practicum.

- Ideally, teacher candidates should make contact/meet with Associate Teachers prior to the first day of the practicum experience. Both teacher candidates and Associate Teachers should leave the meeting feeling enthusiastic and part of a team. Expectations of both parties should be clearly stated. The teacher candidates should be made aware of school/board/departmental resources.
- The planning of the practicum should be cooperative. It is assumed that both individuals will offer input as to how the lesson/unit will be planned and taught. It should not be a situation where teacher candidates are handed lesson plans and told to teach them, nor should Associate Teachers be given a topic with little or no direction.
- Teacher candidates must know the curriculum expectations for the material to be covered. The Associate Teacher should provide the teacher candidate with Ministry of Education documents related to the curriculum or ensure the candidate knows where to find information.
- Teacher candidates should know how their lessons fit into the Associate Teacher's long-range plans. Teacher candidates often arrive in a classroom when a unit is already underway and therefore must be given access to a course binder to have an overview of the curriculum.

- The Associate Teacher and teacher candidate must set aside uninterrupted time during the instructional day for effective cooperative planning.
- Ongoing feedback is essential for growth and is a key component of cooperative planning. It helps to build confidence and prevent small problems from becoming big problems.
- Some faculties require teacher candidates to use a standard lesson plan format. Typically they include the following sub-headings: curriculum expectations, instructional strategies, evaluation and self-reflection.

## **FLEXIBILITY IN INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

The practicum is a chance to put learning theory to work. Legislation requires teachers to follow the Ontario curriculum. Teaching styles vary, but the curriculum outcomes are to be met. Teacher candidates should already be aware of Ministry of Education curriculum guidelines prior to the practicum. As well, Associate Teachers should have the Catholic Course Profiles and Elementary Curriculum Units produced by the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) available to teacher candidates.

Helpful hints to enhance the practicum experience:

- Associate Teachers should spend a few days modeling various instructional strategies and discussing the benefits and drawbacks with teacher candidates. They should help to identify the learning styles within the classroom and demonstrate how lessons can be designed to reflect the various learning styles such as, active, visual, auditory and intuitive.
- Teacher candidates should have a sense of their dominant teaching style and be prepared to alter approaches to accommodate different student learning styles.
- The current curriculum is quite demanding. There is little time to address topics not specified. Lessons should be designed with curriculum expectations in mind.

## **ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF STUDENTS**

Since the practicum experience is meant to reflect a realistic teaching situation, teacher candidates should have opportunities to create assignments, questionnaires and other evaluative/assessment strategies. Collaborative marking is an excellent strategy for supporting the candidate. Concepts to keep in mind:

- Associate Teachers must inform the teacher candidates of the school's or department's evaluation policy. In addition teacher candidates should become familiar with the Ministry of Education's achievement charts, exemplars and rubric samples. Teacher candidates should also be able to access Marks Manager or other grading software, course outlines and school resources as applicable.
- Students should be informed and be made to understand that work, projects, and tests, assigned by the teacher candidates are important because they will make up part of the student's final grade. The Associate Teacher will verify and have final jurisdiction over marks.

- Associate Teachers should encourage teacher candidates to use a variety of assessment and evaluation methods for a variety of purposes (diagnostic, formative, summative). Associate Teachers should guide the assessment practices of the teacher candidates to ensure they target expectations and address achievement chart categories.
- Evaluation strategies developed by the teacher candidates should be consistent with approaches used by Associate Teachers. They should be reviewed by the Associate Teacher to ensure ongoing fairness and balance. Students who wish to appeal or discuss their marks should first approach the teacher candidate.
- Teacher candidates should be encouraged to use self-reflection about evaluation/assessment processes. They should be clear about what they are looking for when evaluating students and be able to explain it to the students.
- Associate Teachers must ensure that teacher candidates are aware of students with special needs and IEP accommodations in both assessment and instruction.

### **MODELING REFLECTION**

Associate Teachers are committed to helping the next generation of teachers enter the profession. Associate Teachers volunteer to share teaching expertise, classrooms, and ensure that the practicum experience is realistic and positive. Teacher candidates look to Associate Teachers as role models, so it is important for Associate Teachers to model reflective practices. The Practicum is a collegial relationship in which professionals share expertise and skills for the benefit of students.

Associate Teachers should not expect teacher candidates to begin teaching immediately upon arriving in the classroom because they need time to acquaint themselves with the students, classroom routines and the school. Teacher candidates accomplish this mainly through observations.

It is important for teacher candidates to observe how Associate Teachers handle classroom management, disturbances and unplanned hindrances to curriculum delivery. Reflection on practice is an important skill that Associate Teachers should model for teacher candidates. Teacher candidates need to be able to recognize why some ideas work and others do not.

Teacher candidates performing a practicum at the secondary level may have more than one section of the same course. This provides an opportunity for teacher candidates to modify lessons.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RELATED TO ACADEMIC ISSUES AND ASSOCIATE TEACHERS

1. ***What should the Associate Teacher do if the teacher candidate has no lesson plans prepared and wants to try to "wing it"?***

Discuss with the teacher candidate the importance of the essential nature of preparation and planning in the delivery of program. Establish an expectation that the delivery of curriculum will always be preceded by preparation and planning.

2. ***What should the Associate Teacher do if the teacher candidate has prepared a unit test without any modifications for special needs student?***

Remind the teacher candidate of the legal obligation to provide test accommodations. Suggest some ways this is to be done.

3. ***How should an Associate Teacher contribute when a lesson is not working for the students?***

The action that might be taken depends on many variables such as how much time is remaining in class or class behaviour. It might be necessary to team teach with the teacher candidate, or in some cases it may be more appropriate to wait until the class ends and then debrief the candidate on the lesson and make suggestions for improvement.

4. ***How should the Associate Teacher respond if the teacher candidate continues to seek advice during a lesson?***

The Associate Teacher should assist as requested but not more. Later, during the debriefing session, counsel the teacher candidate that greater preparation for the lesson as well as reflection on possible questions to be discussed with the Associate Teacher will not only aid the teacher candidate but increase the teacher candidate's confidence.

5. ***The teacher candidate has not been developing lesson plans but rather is depending on lessons from the Associate Teacher's course binder. Should the Associate Teacher remove the course binder?***

Explain to the teacher candidate the importance of creating their own lesson plans and its important part in the practicum experience. The binder is a resource only and not a substitute for creative and original plans, but it should not be removed. Remind the teacher candidate that part of their evaluation by the faculty of education includes the development of lessons plans.



- 6. *A student complains to the Associate Teacher about the mark received from the teacher candidate. The student is concerned that it might affect her mid-term grade which will be included on her university application. How should the Associate Teacher respond?***

Advise the student to speak to the teacher candidate, because it is important not to undermine the academic decisions of the teacher candidate. The teacher candidate should be informed of the problem. A meeting should take place with the student, teacher candidate and the Associate Teacher so that the teacher candidate can explain the marking scheme and the result. The Associate Teacher may ask the teacher candidate to review the evaluation. If the mark is justified, suggest that the student prepare more thoroughly for the next test. Ultimately the Associate Teacher is responsible for the grade and therefore the decision to alter it or not.

- 7. *Should the Associate Teacher allow teacher candidate to do a "fun lesson" unrelated to the curriculum?***

The Associate Teacher might suggest ways to adapt the lesson to the current curriculum and remind the teacher candidate that curriculum is demanding allowing for little room for additional material. However, such an initiative by a teacher candidate may prove to be an excellent learning opportunity as well as a confidence boost.



# CHAPTER 5

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## PRACTICUM MODELS AND THE ASSOCIATE TEACHER

Because the same legislative framework governs all Ontario faculties of education, there are many similarities in the ways faculties organize the practice teaching components of their programs. However, there are also many differences. This section identifies some of the variations among faculties and boards concerning practice teaching arrangements, payment, scheduling and other options.

### KEY RESOURCES

Prior to a teacher agreeing to volunteer to become an Associate Teacher, he/she should investigate the current versions of the following resources that will give you up-to-date, detailed information about volunteering as an Associate Teacher for a particular faculty:

#### **Faculty of Education Course Calendars and Practicum Handbooks**

Faculties of Education provide detailed information for teacher candidates on the practice teaching component of the program in the course calendars and practicum handbooks. It is essential that Associate Teachers familiarize themselves with this material prior to volunteering. Faculty of education course calendars can be found online, or can be obtained from the faculty of education's practice teaching coordinator.

#### **Board Policies**

Many school boards have policies and procedures governing Associative Teachers and their use in the system. Policies and procedures vary from board to board, even school to school. Prospective Associate Teachers should check their board policy manual (usually online) prior to volunteering. For example, a board may allow only teacher candidates from certain faculties of education to practice in the board schools. The board may even have an exclusive contract with a faculty of education and require Associate Teachers to give preference to those candidates. When in doubt contact the school administrator for clarification.

#### **Federation Policies**

The Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) and all affiliates including the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) issue policies and advisories that affect Associate Teachers. For example, in 2004-05, OTF recommended that members give preference to teacher candidates from Ontario's publicly funded faculties of education. Advisories are issued when federations conduct work sanctions, work-to-rule or strike, or a school board

that locks-out teachers. Associate Teachers can find current advisories by visiting OTF, [www.otffeo.on.ca](http://www.otffeo.on.ca) and OECTA, [www.oecta.on.ca](http://www.oecta.on.ca) websites. The current policies are as follows:

OTF Policy VIII Teacher Education, E. Practicum Revised January 2006

1. That it be the professional responsibility of members to provide associate teaching services within the practicum and that associate teaching services provided by OTF members be volunteered.
2. That OTF members who serve as Associate Teachers should give priority to teacher candidates enrolled in teacher education programs at publicly funded, Ontario universities. (WB05)
3. That there be an open and transparent process for the application/selection of Associate Teachers, with the criteria for application/selection clearly specified in advance.

That the criteria for selecting Associate Teachers require that Associate Teachers:

- have completed at least two years of successful teaching;
- have at least one year of experience in the subject(s) and grade level(s) for which they are serving as an Associate Teacher; and
- be in good standing with the Affiliates and OTF.

That Associate Teachers receive appropriate remuneration in recognition of the time and expertise they provide, and that such remuneration be given directly to the Associate Teacher.

That OTF be directly involved in the regular review at each teacher education institution of selection processes and compensation/acknowledgement packages for Associate Teachers.

That it be the responsibility of the teacher education institution to establish communications related to the operation between the faculty and the field, and to provide:

- information with respect to the roles of faculty staff, Associate Teachers, and teacher candidates in the practicum;
- clear understandings of evaluation practices and responsibilities;
- contact sessions involving faculty staff and Associate Teachers in relation to the practicum;
- training that includes exposure to the content of the teacher education program; and
- an opportunity for feedback about the program by the Associate Teacher (e.g.: timing of the practicum each year, suggestions to improve preparedness of students, critique of the evaluation form, etc.).

That each teacher candidate be assigned to at least two Associate Teachers in different teaching contexts over the course of the practicum.

That one Associate Teacher be responsible for one teacher candidate per placement.

That at no time should a teacher candidate be unsupervised in the classroom.

That time should be allotted to the Associate Teacher during the instructional day for planning with, supervising and evaluating the teacher candidate.

That OTF be directly involved with the teacher education institutions in the development of consistent standards and fair and equitable practices for the evaluation of teacher candidates.

That there be direct supervision and evaluation of teacher candidates by Faculty members during the practicum.

That Associate Teachers be involved in both the formative and summative evaluation of teacher candidates.

That teacher education institutions provide opportunities for counselling services and guidance to all student teachers.

## **PRACTICE TEACHING ARRANGEMENTS**

There are many routes to becoming an Associate Teacher:

- Boards or faculties of education may advertise or put out a call for volunteers in board newsletters or bulletin boards.
- A principal, board or school practicum coordinator, department head or divisional leader may seek volunteers to act as Associate Teacher.
- A teacher candidate may approach a prospective Associate Teacher directly.

### **Remember, this is a voluntary activity**

Associate Teachers are volunteers, and do this in addition to their regular teaching responsibility. No teacher is required to volunteer, or allow themselves to be pressured into volunteering.

Teachers should get the approval of their immediate supervisor – usually their principal – before volunteering to be an Associate Teacher.

Even if teacher candidates approach an Associate Teacher directly, the teacher candidate must go through the faculty of education and the board to make the arrangements official before he/she can enter the school and participate in a practicum.

## REMUNERATION

Most faculties pay Associate Teachers an honorarium per teacher candidate per session. The honorarium will range from one to three hundred dollars per session. Depending on the faculty of education and the board, the honorarium may be paid in any of the following ways:

- Directly to the Associate Teacher for his or her private and personal use.
- To the board and relayed to the Associate Teacher for her or his private and personal use either as a separate honorarium or rolled into payroll.
- To the board and relayed to the Associate Teacher as a credit to be used either for classroom supplies or for professional development opportunities at the faculty.
- Be sure to ask in advance whether you are to be paid, how and when, whether there are any conditions attached to payment and how much discretion you have as to how remuneration is spent.

## PAIRING AND SHARING

Some faculties and boards allow for "pairing and sharing" arrangements:

- Pairing refers to one Associate Teacher hosting two teacher candidates at the same time. There are many advantages to pairing arrangements. Teacher candidates can teach both individually and as a team, gain another perspective on their teaching besides the Associate Teacher's, observe each other and help each other review and reflect on their work. Generally, the educational conversation grows richer with each participant.
- Sharing refers to two or more Associate Teachers hosting a single teacher candidate. Often sharing arrangements involve the teachers in a department in a secondary school or the teachers in a division in an elementary school. There can also be cross-department sharing arrangements in secondary schools that allow teacher candidates to gain experience in both of their teachable subjects. There are advantages to sharing arrangements for both teacher candidates and Associate Teachers. Teacher candidates get to observe and practice in more classrooms and Associate Teachers do not have to shoulder the entire responsibility of hosting a candidate.

**Note:** Everyone involved must work out pairing and sharing schedules carefully in advance: determining which teacher candidate will do what, where, when and in which classroom. The Associate Teachers and teacher candidates should meet before the practicum starts, to coordinate the observation and practice teaching assignments.

It must be established in advance which teacher in the school, department or division will be the main contact for the faculty of education and who will take responsibility for completing all the paper work – especially the teacher candidate evaluations. Where two Associate Teachers share in the evaluation, they must meet and agree upon a final evaluation of their teacher candidate.

## **PRACTICUM SESSIONS**

Not all practicum sessions focus on practice teaching. Many faculties of education offer teacher candidates an opportunity to try other kinds of field experiences in addition to practice teaching in a class. Such experiences could involve performing the out-of-class administrative work associated with teaching, conducting tutoring sessions with individual or a small group of students, or participating in a variety of joint faculty and school special projects.

Associate Teachers need to know in advance the focus of the practicum session established by the faculty of education, the type of experience the faculty of education expects the teacher candidate to gain and the work the teacher candidate is expected to do while in the field.

The practice teaching sessions could vary when geared to ensure the teacher candidate gains experience in the major or minor teachable subject.

### **Points to Remember**

Associate Teachers should check the faculty of education practicum handbook and discuss expectations for any given session with both the faculty contact and the teacher candidate.

## **SCHEDULING**

The practice teaching component varies from 40 to 60 days in consecutive programs (one-year programs taken after a bachelor or professional degree program) and may last three times longer in concurrent programs (4-year programs taken at the same time as a degree program).

The component is usually parceled into two or three sessions or blocks. All faculties have precise purposes and schedules for their practicum sessions:

- exact dates teacher candidates will be in the classrooms
- focus for the session or block
- types of experience the candidates need to have
- responsibilities teacher candidates can be expected to assume

In practice teaching sessions, the responsibilities the teacher candidates assume in the classroom gradually increase over time in each session. Teacher candidates progress from observing and/or assisting individual students in the class to conducting a limited number of lessons or activities to assuming increasing percentages of responsibility – usually from 25 to 50 to 100 per cent responsibility for classroom instruction and management. As noted before, even when teacher candidates assume 100 per cent responsibility for the class and delivery of program, they can never be left alone with students in classrooms or in any other school setting such as gyms, playgrounds, libraries, cafeterias, etc.

**Note:** Associate Teachers must determine in advance the focus of the session or block for which they are volunteering, the exact dates teacher candidates will be in the classroom and the responsibilities the teacher candidates may assume on those dates.

## **EVALUATION**

One of the key responsibilities of Associate Teachers is to complete formative and summative assessments of teacher candidates' teaching practice. The assessments and evaluations are crucial to the teacher candidate's success. There are usually university appeal procedures for unsatisfactory ratings and therefore any evaluation must be supported by evidence and documentation.

All the faculties of education have procedures and forms outlining how and when Associate Teachers need to conduct the assessments and evaluations. Each faculty's procedures and forms are slightly different. Associate Teachers cannot assume that familiarity with the forms and procedures of one faculty prepares them for those of another. Some faculties require written records of almost all debriefing conferences between teacher candidates and Associate Teachers. Other faculties of education want written records of a final summative evaluation only, while others expect something in between. Some use checklists or rating scales while others require detailed anecdotal information. Therefore, become aware of the evaluation method for the faculty of education in which the teacher candidate is enrolled .

The Associate Teachers should find out in advance the number and types of assessments they need to conduct. Associate Teachers should review all evaluation forms in advance so they know the judgments they are expected to make and the evidence they are required to collect. They can collect information as they go along rather than trying to reconstruct it all at the end of the session.



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RELATED TO PRACTICUM MODELS AND THE ASSOCIATE TEACHER.

1. *What should a teacher do if the principal tells me that I must take a teacher candidate because “it is my turn”. I do not feel comfortable taking one but I do not feel comfortable saying "no"?*

You do not have to serve as an Associate Teacher. Associate teaching is a voluntary activity, beyond the legislated duties of a teacher. It is never a teacher’s turn unless the teacher volunteers to do it.

A teacher should be diplomatic but direct in stating that he/she cannot volunteer at this particular time. If the principal still directs a teacher to become an Associate Teacher, the teacher must contact the local OECTA unit president for assistance.

2. *Should a teacher have a minimum number of years of experience to take on the role of an Associate Teacher?*

Most “new” teachers do not feel they have the time or confidence to assume the additional responsibility of being an Associate Teacher when they are just starting out in the profession. Additionally teachers in their first two years are taking part in the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) and Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA). In fact the Ministry of Education considers a teacher to be a “new teacher” until they have completed five (5) years of work. Indeed experienced teachers who are teaching a grade or course for the first time should not volunteer until they are familiar with the new assignment.

3. *Teachers in the neighbouring board have initiated a work-to-rule campaign and the faculty of education wants to move the teacher candidates into this school. Should a teacher agree to serve as an Associate Teacher by accepting a teacher candidate from a board that is on strike?*

No. Such an action could be considered strike-breaking and at a minimum certainly not be an act of solidarity with fellow teachers. OTF and all affiliates have agreed not to violate or interfere with the job sanctions of other teacher groups. Some day it could be your job that is being protected.

4. *Two Associate Teachers share a teacher candidate, but are unable to agree on the final evaluation of a teacher candidate. One Associate Teacher has concluded that the final evaluation will be negative while the other Associate Teacher has concluded that the final evaluation will be positive. How should consensus on the evaluation be reached?*

The Associate Teachers should hold a "collaborative marking" or "moderation" discussion. Together the Associate Teachers need to figure out how and why the candidate’s performance was so different in the two settings, and write a single

evaluation that captures both the candidate's strengths and areas that need improvement. Use specific examples, share observations and the rationale for the judgments. Describe the good work the candidate did in the class.

- 5. *A teacher would like to volunteer to be an Associate Teacher but has never been given the opportunity. In the school, the principal approaches teachers to volunteer and then always chooses the teachers with previous experience as Associates Teachers. How can the volunteer aspect of the role of Associate Teacher be expanded?***

Approach the principal at the beginning of the school year and announce that you would like to volunteer as an Associate Teacher. Ask for assistance in finding a suitable teacher candidate and for approval to contact the faculty of education directly to see whether teacher candidates are available for a practicum at the school. Put your request in writing and keep a copy for your files.

# CHAPTER 6

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## GETTING STARTED

Should you decide to take on the role of an Associate Teacher, here are some items to help you get started.

### ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

#### Classroom

- Associate Teacher Schedule
- Long Term Plans
- Classroom Rules
- Student Lists
- Seating Plans (Photographs if available)
- Student IEP needs (as required for planning)
- Attendance Sheets
- Evaluation Sheets
- Access to Teacher Manuals and Student Texts
- Work Space and Chair

#### School

- School History
- School Mission Statement, Motto, Prayer
- School Building Plans (indicating Room numbers and general areas)
- School Tour including Teacher Lunchroom, Teacher Washrooms, Teacher Workrooms, Cafeteria, Chapel, Library, Gymnasium, Computer Labs, etc.
- Introductions: Administrators, Teachers, OECTA Rep, Support Staff, Other Teacher Candidates, etc.
- Staff List: Names and Assignments – Photographs if available
- School Agenda (containing School Calendar, Rules, Dress Code and more)
- Dates of Staff Meetings and Special Events
- Invitation to Staff Socials (If one isn't scheduled, consider planning one.)

#### School Board

- Board History
- Board Mission Statement
- Map of schools: Where, Population, Principal
- Board Staff List: Names and Assignments
- Website address to access Documents/Resources

## **Ministry of Education**

Website address to access Ministry Documents, Exemplars, Resources, etc.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ASSOCIATE TEACHER**

The role of the Associate Teacher is critical to the education and success of teacher candidates. Below is a checklist which outlines the key roles of the Associate Teacher during the practicum experience:

#### **Classroom**

- Supervise lessons and provide ongoing feedback based on active observation.
- Be supportive and assist the teacher candidate if necessary.
- Allow the teacher candidate to experience all aspects of teaching including administrative duties
- Ensure any criticism is constructive and is accompanied by suggestions for improvement.

#### **Preparation and Planning**

- Guide the teacher candidate's planning; do not dominate.
- Suggest possible timelines, strategies and resources to assist preparation.
- Embrace creativity and new approaches suggested by the teacher candidate.
- Allow workload and planning responsibilities to increase gradually.
- Encourage increased independence in planning as practicum progresses.
- Ensure teacher candidate plans for the success of all students and is aware of any special needs.
- Review lesson plans prior to delivery so appropriate changes may be made if necessary.

#### **Administration**

- Orient the teacher candidate to the physical surroundings and school routines.
- Make appropriate introductions – i.e. principal, vice-principal
- Familiarize self with the policies of the faculty of education regarding practicum format and requirements as these can differ dramatically between institutions.
- Complete the required forms from the faculty and submit in a timely manner.
- Communicate the progress of the teacher candidate to the faculty supervisor.

#### **Professionalism**

- Embody the servant leader.
- Share the gifts of your experience.
- Model key elements
- Encourage the teacher candidate to form professional relationships in the learning community.
- Maintain open communication – be approachable.
- Make your expectations clear to the teacher candidate.

# PARENT LETTER

Date

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I would like you to be aware that I have agreed to be an Associate Teacher for a teacher candidate from \_\_\_\_\_ University. This is an opportunity for the Teacher candidate to teach under my supervision. My goal is to make this a rewarding experience for both the students and for myself.

The working partnership between the Faculty of Education, the \_\_\_\_\_ School Board and the Associate Teacher is significant and influential. Research supports the viewpoint the Practicum Experience is highly valued by students. In addition, research indicates that the Associate Teacher has a fundamental influence on the way teacher candidates will conduct their future classrooms.

My role as Associate Teacher, is to provide \_\_\_\_\_ with the necessary observation time, guidance, cooperative planning and implementation and feedback, which will benefit his/her growth and development. There are also benefits to having a second professional in the classroom.

Sincerely,

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