EFFECTIVE PLANNING

“An effective teacher plans, organizes, and keeps one step ahead.”
Adams and Johnson

“Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher.”
Parker J. Palmer “The Courage to Teach”

The more prepared you are to provide prime learning opportunities for your students, the more confident you will feel in the classroom. Effective planning will assist you to reach this goal. Effective planning is completed using the following three methods:

1. Long Term Planning
2. Short Term Planning
3. Daily Planning

The Planning Process

**Beginning the planning process**

Working together with mentors, teacher colleagues, resource teachers and the teacher-librarian enriches the planning process through the sharing of ideas, strategies and resources. Ask specific questions to help you begin the process of planning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESTABLISH THE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS</th>
<th>DECIDING HOW TO TEACH THE EXPECTATIONS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● What documents will guide you in setting the expectations?</td>
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<tr>
<td>● What do your students need to learn?</td>
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<tr>
<td>● What do your students know already?</td>
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<td>● Who could help you set the expectations?</td>
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<tr>
<td>● How can you modify the expectations for special needs students?</td>
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<td>● What are the best strategies to teach the expectations (e.g., co-operative group, thinking skills, multiple intelligences, field trips, and computer &amp; information technology)?</td>
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<td>● How could you vary the strategies to motivate student learning?</td>
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<td>● How can you build on previous knowledge?</td>
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<td>● What ways could you modify the strategies for the exceptional learners?</td>
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<td>● What resources are available to support learning?</td>
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<td>● What technology might be used?</td>
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</table>
Beginning the planning process ... continued

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PLANNING HOW TO ASSESS THE LEARNING</th>
<th>EVALUATING THE PROGRESS OF STUDENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How will you know if students have met the learning expectations?</td>
<td>• What methods can you use to evaluate student learning (e.g., rubrics,</td>
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<td>• What tool might you use?</td>
<td>performance assessment, portfolios, journals, projects, tests)?</td>
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<td>• How will students demonstrate what they have learned?</td>
<td>• How will you share the evaluation with students?</td>
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1. Long Term Planning

- One of the responsibilities of a teacher is to complete a long term plan each year. Long term planning assists teachers in preparing for the needs of their students. It enables teachers to ensure that the curriculum for their grade/subject is covered and assists the principal to monitor classroom activities.

- Long term planning can be completed by term/semester or for the whole school year. It can be written by the individual teacher, by team, by department level or by grade level. There is no prescriptive format to follow when creating your long term plan. Feel free to be creative and use whatever format that works best.

- A long term plan should include the following details:
  - Teacher’s name, grade, time frames used i.e., term/semester, etc.
  - expectations/strands covered in that time frame (Ontario curriculum documents)
  - specific topics used to teach the expectations/outcomes
  - what the students will be doing. (demonstrations, performances, products)
  - how student learning will be assessed. (assessment tools)
  - teaching strategies used to help students achieve the expectations
2. Short Term Planning

Once a long term plan has been established, it is important to plan each topic/unit in detail. This is referred to as short term planning. Unit planning should include the content of the lessons in detail and the process that will be used to teach the lessons. Remember to plan lessons by building onto the knowledge and skills that have been previously acquired.

Once again, the format is not prescriptive but should include the following details:

- topics for individual lessons
- classroom activities/strategies
  - teacher directed
  - small group
  - individual
- assessment/evaluation tools
- student demonstrations
  - performance
  - product/tasks/tests
  - collection
- resources required

Short term planning helps focus the teacher on the expectations that are to be taught and avoids repetition.

3. Daily Planning

A daily plan provides a brief summary of what is to be taught on a particular day. It is wise to have the current day plus two days in advance planned and written. The day book should be prepared before leaving at the end of the day and it should be kept where it can be easily located by an occasional teacher or colleague. A daily plan should include the following:

- times of each class, break, lunch, etc.
- lesson plans and room locations
- daily routines - attendance, duties
- resources needed
- reminders for the day
- refer to appendix for sponge activities
Occasional Teacher

The occasional teacher plays a very important role in our education system. To ensure that your educational program continues when you are absent, it is important that an information folder be prepared in advance stating specific details and guidelines. This folder should include the following details:

- information on students with medical or special needs
- school hours - beginning of the day, recess, lunch dismissal, etc.
- classroom rules and consequences - expectations and responsibilities of the students
- seating plan - if necessary
- day book - with specific lesson plans
- timetable - including times for each period and location of each of your classes
- duty schedule - your duties should be highlighted
- map of school - showing washrooms, office, staff room, supply room, etc.
- photocopy access number
- fire drill - procedure and classroom exits
- class lists
- location of resources - pencils, pens, audio visual equipment, textbooks, etc.
- classroom policies and routines - attendance, illness, homework, etc.
- names of students and colleagues who may be able to assist should a question arise
- list of students who may leave for resource on a regular basis
- list of volunteers who assist in the classroom

When an occasional teacher has detailed instructions to follow, their day should run smoothly and you should return to an organized classroom.