Master of Teaching Year 1, Practicum 1: Inquiry, Observation, Active Engagement & a Gradual Release of Responsibility

Practicum #1 provides

experience in the context of a practicum as a TC. This document is intended to provide some suggestions on what TCs might do in the early part of their first evaluated MT practicum.

Practicum #1 includes the following:

- 1. Practicum Preparation Days (PPDs), and
- Practicum

Both #1 and #2 above involve TCs being full-time in the placement setting, and the <u>week-by-week expectations chart</u> outlines the guidelines for the PPDs and the practicum.

Acknowledging Year 1 Practicum 1 is the first experience in an MT practicum, TCs and Associate Teachers (ATs) are invited to plan scaffolded learning opportunities for the TC that support the gradual release of responsibility towards teaching whole groups.

and school as they relate to:

- School and classroom schedules.
- Transition times entering school, entering and leaving the classroom, hallway time, moving to other classrooms, recess, snack/nut break, lunch, and various classroom transitions (e.g., from whole group teaching to groups, or individual work, from a shared carpet space back to tables/desks, activity centers, beginning and ending lab work, etc.)
- Class and student materials: How are supplies and materials organized? Distributed? Shared?
- What are the expectations of students related to using and taking care of supplies, materials, notebooks, textbooks, pens, pencils, computers, pencil sharpeners, etc?
- Expectations and/or routines related to washroom, hand washing, storage of personal items in lockers, cubbies and desks.
- Procedures related to fire drills, lock downs, assemblies, etc.
- Extra-curricular activities: What is happening in the school? What is the process to begin a new activity?
- What are the policies and procedures guiding extra-curricular activities in this board? This school? From the
- Staff communications, meetings, announcements, union communications.

2. Getting to Know Students

Understanding the students in your classroom is a key foundation to planning and teaching them effectively.

Although getting to know students should continue every day in a classroom, the following ideas might help focus a the early parts of Year 1, Practicum 1:

- Take a community walk to explore the neighbourhood in which the school is located.
- Gosely observe individual students for extended periods of time. What are their interests, strengths, tendencies, behaviours, etc.?
- Find natural opportunities to talk with students to further get to know them.
- Consider sharing something about yourself with the class as a way to build student-teacher relationships, and invite the students to share their interests with you.
- After taking some time to observe individual students, observe the class as a whole. What are the patterns you notice related to their interests, attention span, behaviours, attitudes, etc.

3. Classroom Community, Expectations and Management

- Setting up a classroom community, communicating expectations, and establishing routines are all part of managing a classroom.
- Investing in preventative management strategies contributes to fewer classroom management challenges. The following questions are intended to help a TCidentify the range of both preventative and responsive classroom management strategies in your practicum classroom.
- What has contributed to the establishment of a classroom community? (e.g., expectations, norms, routines, etc.)
- What preventative strategies does the teacher employ to develop a positive dimate of learning in the classroom?
- How are expectations about behaviour communicated?

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4. Planning, Instruction and Assessment

Learning to teach is a complex, developmental process that involves knowing which pieces of the puzzle are to be put on the table (and considered), and then knowing how to put the various pieces of the puzzle together. This process pulls on many different bodies of knowledge, including knowledge of human development and pedagogical content knowledge. The following ideas and guiding questions are intended to support a Teacher planning, teaching and assessing during the first steps of their

practicum journey in the MT program.

- Observe your AT teach, and if possible observe other teachers in the department or school. Make note of the various components of each lesson, e.g., How is the lesson started? What instructional strategies are
 - Make note of the timing of each part of the lesson. What sorts of groupings (whole class, small group, pairs, individual) are used, and consider why? How does the teacher close or consolidate the lesson?
- What types of questions does the teacher ask? Write down and then analyze the exact words of key questions asked in the lesson.
- Write down the questions the students ask. Analyze what their questions communicate to the teacher.
- What learning skills are being developed in the lesson?
- How are resources, technology, materials and/or manipulatives effectively used in the lesson?
- Identify ways the teacher product, learning environment).
- Observe students with a very keen and detailed eye during independent work. What patterns to you see? What kind of work engages students, keeps their interest? What strategies are employed to support students during independent work?
- Make note of the various forms and strategies of assessment that takes place during a lesson, e.g., diagnostic, formative, summative, and as/for/of learning.
- Following the observation of a lesson, review the relevant Ministry curriculum document and situate the
 various elements of the lesson within the curriculum document. Note what was evident in your
 observation, and identify what aspects of the curriculum document you will explore in follow-up
 observations.

Active Engagement

The Practicum Preparation Days and Week 1 of Practicum 1 are intended to provide each TC with a rich, full and active learning opportunity. Although TCs may not be teaching whole class lessons, there are a variety of ways for