

I Have/I Am a Student Teacher; Now What

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NMEA 2023

EXPECTATIONS: Cooperating Teachers Perspective

Be a good model:

- Everything is watched and heard!
- Many CTs comment that having a student teacher has been very helpful.
- Chance to consider how they ran their program.

Schedules:

- When the CT is at school, the ST is at school.
- As soon as any staff are required to be in the building, ST should be there.
- Most universities require a document that describes the ST schedule/responsibilities.

As a CT, if you know that you are NOT going to allow a student teacher to conduct your ensembles on a concert, on tour, at contests, for festivals, etc., please DO NOT TAKE A STUDENT TEACHER! These opportunities are how the student teachers will learn.

Caring:

- CTs, You are the mentor!
- You'll see the student teacher every day.
- Help monitor their professional progress, to be sure...
- ALSO- how they balance their personal lives with professional.
- You don't have to become buddies.
- Don't have to pry if the ST doesn't want to share with you, but take time to SHOW that you care about them.

Patience:

- Remember to please be patient!
- The ST is coming from 3-4 years of professional, collegiate-level ensembles and classes.
- ST must remember what it is like to teach beginning students and
- May take time to adjust to grade-appropriate content.
- Know how to plan and strategize with your ST.
- Allow your ST to ask questions about whatever they want.
- If you don't have time to answer their questions right then, tell them.
"I'm sorry, I'm not able to answer this question right now since we're getting ready for music theory class, but let's talk during our planning period later today."
- Your ST WILL mess up. Be ready for this and consider how you will address them, or the situation, when mistakes happen. **BREATHE!!**

Extra-Curricular:

- Not technically required to attend rehearsals after the school day.
- They have a life and are broke!
- I strongly encourage student teachers to attend extracurricular rehearsals and events for their programs.
- So much of what we do as secondary music educators comes outside of the school day: musicals, jazz choirs, madrigal ensembles, All-State, Solo/Ensemble contest, honor choirs, etc.

EXPECTATIONS: Student Teachers Perspective

Be a sponge:

- One of the best things student teachers can do is take in everything that they experience and all advice that their CT provides.
- Just like there are great things to soak up, sometimes student teachers must wring out some of the bad water.
- There will be many things that may not work in their own programs for many reasons.

Schedules:

- The student teacher, cooperating teacher, and supervisor should be on the same page about when the ST will be required to be the head teacher.
- How long? What will they do? What WON'T they do? How will they return to observation status at the end of their experience?

Balance:

- Student teachers will be asked to do A LOT during this experience. Provide grace!
- ST must find a way to balance their personal lives and professional experiences.

Patience:

- Success will not happen immediately.
- There will probably be more frustration and failures than successes at first.
- Remember that you are NEW to this and it will take a while to find your rhythms.
- You WILL find your rhythm.

Extra-Curricular:

- This could easily go under "Balance," but it is important to decide how often you will attend extracurricular rehearsals and events.
- You may still have to work or have family obligations that take precedence over your student teaching duties.
- Be sure to know what is expected of you by your CT and supervisor. If you can't make every rehearsal, can you create a schedule that works to attend a portion of each type of rehearsal, so you get various experiences.
- Remember to be a sponge!

COMMUNICATION: Cooperating Teachers Perspective

Think Out Loud:

- When planning classroom curriculum, concerts, tours, uniforms, etc.
- Having a student teacher is a great opportunity to think out loud.
- Consider why you are doing things the way you do.
- What didn't you know when YOU were starting out. LITERAL BOOKS about this topic!

Anticipate:

- Situations where the ST is having difficulty:
- Issues with rehearsal pacing, planning rehearsals, or communicating clearly with the students.
- Please reach out to them early and often.

Know When to contact the supervisor about issues you may be experiencing with your student teacher. They are more than happy to help when they can, but please don't wait until halfway through the semester to communicate with the ST Supervisor that they don't know how to create a lesson plan.

Non-Classroom:

- This goes back to "Think Out Loud."
- Always...please ask yourself, "Is this something my student teacher should know how to do?"

COMMUNICATION: Student Teacher Perspective

WHY?

- I hope the ST will ask, "WHY?" about ALL topics! That's how we learn.

Know how to ask:

- Be polite when you ask, "WHY?"
- Don't second guess the CT. This is THEIR classroom. It's not WHAT you say but HOW you say it.
- What is best time is to ask these questions.
- You may not have an opportunity to ask about why or how your CT handled a specific situation in the moment, make a note for yourself to ask later when the right time arises.
- POST-IT Notes/ Google Keep/Write it down!

NO QUESTION TOO SMALL:

- It's okay to ask questions.
- You should respect your CT, but you should not FEAR them.
- They need to understand that you will have questions.
- You can always reach out to your supervisors as well.

PROFESSIONALISM: Both ST & CT Perspectives

DRESS:

- You are modeling behavior for your student teacher.
- Sweatpants and a basketball jersey (and yes, I have seen this) that is what the student teacher will assume is acceptable.
- Even if it is acceptable for the CT, it isn't for the ST!

Identities:

- ST will be establishing a new identity.
- They are no longer a student. They are the adult in charge now.
- For some STs, this takes MUCH longer than others and they may need help setting boundaries.
- Discuss your experiences as the CT and what YOU went through.

Social Media:

- Model appropriate use of social media for your program.
- Share your successes and struggles with social media for promotion or organization.
- What are your policies regarding being friends with students or parents on social media. Even what seems like common sense can use some reinforcement.

Shadows:

- The idea is: wherever you go, your student teacher will follow.
- If the ST is ALWAYS IN YOUR BUBBLE, politely tell them and schedule time for a chance to catch up.

EVALUATIONS: Both CT & ST Perspectives

Journals:

- Most universities do not require their student teachers to keep daily journals.
- I recommend this to all student teachers: Summary of what went well, what was a struggle, what they are thinking or feeling at the moment or after a particular lesson.

Videos:

- Not fun, but I recommend student teachers do this **every time** they are in front of the class.
- You can always delete it.
- These videos will help you see what you say and how you say it to your students.
- They will also serve as protection for you if something occurred in your classroom that you were not able to handle.
- There are many reasons for filming every class. Use an iPad, phone, GoPro, laptop, etc.

Debriefing:

- Daily debriefing sessions with your student teachers,
- ALSO- please allow your student teacher to have time to meet with their supervisor immediately after their evaluation.
- There were several times that the CT of my ST wasn't available immediately after my observations- it was never very meaningful.

Timing:

- Teaching segment that the supervisors observe doesn't always have to be the full class time.
- There were several times when ST thought they had to teach the entire time, so they tried to conduct a piece they weren't ready for or teach a topic they didn't prepare.
- Supervisors just want to see them interact with students.
- To start, observations can be a 5-minute warm up at the beginning!

RELATIONSHIPS: Cooperating Teacher Perspectives

Anticipate:

- You will learn to anticipate many issues that could arise with your student teacher based on the communication or LACK of communication they have with you **OR THE STUDENTS**
- Please keep communication open between the student teachers, their supervisors, and yourself.

Point Person:

- You are now that person.
- It's okay to ask your ST about how they are coming with planning future lessons, what they thought about how a lesson went that they taught or keeping them informed about student issues that they should know.
- I have seen many student teachers kept in the dark regarding IEPs and other pertinent student information. Please communicate about accommodations when appropriate.
- Remember that you are their mentor.
- You may form an amazing relationship with your student teacher. I hope you do!

Supervisor:

- I love it when CTs take the time to have conversations with me.
- I have created some great friendships myself with the CTs of my student teachers because we have shared experiences or because I was able to come back and clinic one of their groups.

Model:

- I can't stress enough the importance of being a good model of professionalism for your student teachers.
- They ARE listening, I promise.
- When you bad mouth your colleague, when you complain about the hours or low pay, when you talk negatively about your students, your ST WILL hear you.
- I know because most of that got back to ME!

Debriefing:

- Taking time to meet with your student teachers after they teach a class or even at the end of the day is so important.
- This may seem obvious; however, I have had many STs tell me that their CT only meets with them once a week. That is not enough!
- By then, issues have passed, details faded, and questions have been forgotten.

RELATIONSHIPS: Student Teacher Perspective**Look, Listen, and Learn:**

- You will pick up on many things from your CT.
- Not everything they say and do will be a gem of wisdom.
- Remember that they are people also with joys, concerns, struggles, and successes.
- It's okay that you are not a cookie cutter of them when you are finished.

Use your CT:

- If you trust your CT to open up to them, you may find that you start a wonderful professional or personal relationship.
- You can reach out to your former CTs when you start at your own program.
- You can also learn great things from other staff at your field experience school.
- Be the sponge!

Know the supervisor:

- It's possible, especially at bigger schools or if you have a special student teaching site, that you will NOT know your supervisor.
- They may be a retired Arts teacher/professor that your university hires as an adjunct professor.
- Take time to learn about your supervisor.
- It may be even more important to create an open relationship with your CT if your supervisor is not from your immediate area.
- My comment to my students and their CTs was always, "I don't necessarily speak the language of (band/orchestra), but I do speak music education."
- Be open and honest!

Boundaries:

- With students, it can be challenging to establish appropriate boundaries. You may not be that much older than your students.
- You may have many similarities with them.
- Being friendly and courteous with your students is acceptable, but you are NOT THEIR FRIEND.
- Student teachers must work extra hard at this, especially when you are alone with students outside of the classroom setting like before or after school, lunches, or evening rehearsals.
- Make sure you talk with your CT to discuss what is acceptable and what is not. Ask questions often!

Celebrate:

- Don't forget to celebrate your successes!
- If this means celebrating that you didn't cry that day, GREAT!!
- If this means that a student who never participates ask a question, AMAZING!
- Celebrate the small things during this experience.

SELF-CARE: Both CT & ST Perspectives

You may find that what works for your student teacher is something that you need to be reminded of. Cooperating teachers may have more experience finding ways to practice self-care during the school year. Keep this up! We all need to practice self-care.

Find your thing:

- It doesn't matter what your thing is but find a thing! It could be bingeing on Stranger Things, exercising, meeting friends for coffee, cuddling with your cats...all that is fine.
- It is important to have a way to disconnect with school once you go home.

Balance:

- Student teachers- you may still have evening jobs, weekend obligations for family or religion.
- You may have to report to your campuses for evening education classes.
- Find a healthy balance and respect your time.

Sleep:

- This may seem obvious, STs- you will be tired in ways that you may not have experienced.
- Establish healthy sleep habits early in the student teaching process.

Remove Negativity:

- This may be a hard thing to do.
- You may have friends from other classes/ areas/ jobs, etc.
- They may not always bring positivity into your lives.
- Sometimes, family can be the ones bringing negativity in your life.
- When at all possible, try to find a way to cut this negativity from your life.
- Know when to walk away, when NOT to engage in discussion, when NOT to comment or retaliate through social media. All these things can bring in negativity.
- Frankly, you don't have time for it and don't deserve it. Seek out positivity!

Celebrate:

- Like I said, find reasons to celebrate the small things.
- This can be for your other student teaching colleagues, not just for you.

Enjoy this experience!