

**THE OPENING SCHOOL  
EXPERIENCE HANDBOOK**

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# INTRODUCTION

# INTRODUCTION

The Opening School Experience is designed to provide practical experiences in the school and classroom setting the week of pre-planning and the first week of school. Through this experience the candidates gain first-hand knowledge and understanding essential for beginning teachers. Candidates will learn effective procedures necessary for preparing the classroom at the beginning of school. While assisting in the classrooms, candidates will observe the skills and competencies of experienced professionals.

The handbook will facilitate the effectiveness of the Opening School Experience for candidates. The framework of this handbook will concentrate on eight major topics and their relevance to the beginning of school. These topics were selected on the basis of research studies regarding the concerns of pre-service and beginning teachers. The topics are:

- Organizational Structure
- Management Techniques
- Organization of the Classroom
- Classroom Instruction
- Student Population
- Assessment Procedures
- Parent Education and Involvement
- Professionalism

The program requirements and activities presented in the handbook provide important teacher considerations relative to these topics. These considerations should receive direct attention of teachers when preparing for the beginning of school. To provide the candidate with a positive Opening School Experience, the handbook presents the eight major topics of emphasis with supportive rationales, performance objectives and practical activities. As candidates apply their understanding of the rationale and complete the activities, they will achieve the objectives of the program. This accomplishment will accompany the recognition that the Opening School Experience is a valuable and important part of the candidate's professional preparation.

# **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

# **PROGRAM THEME GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**PROGRAM THEME:** The goals, objectives, content and organization of this program are intended to support the Department of Early Childhood program theme: **EDUCATOR AS FACILITATOR.**

**OVERALL GOAL:** To plan, implement, and evaluate an Opening School Experience for the teacher candidates of the Early Childhood Education Department of Georgia State University.

**OBJECTIVES:** Candidates will be able to:

## **Organizational Structure**

1. Identify and describe personnel categories of the school.

## **Management Techniques**

2. Identify and describe the school wide management philosophy (discipline procedures).
3. Determine how rules and guidelines are formulated and maintained in the classroom
4. Describe managerial techniques demonstrated in the classroom.
5. Describe the relationship between the organization of time, space, people, and management techniques.

## **Organization of the Classroom**

6. Describe the physical setting of the classroom.
7. Describe organizational procedures, transitions, and routines demonstrated in the classroom.
8. Describe the relationship between organization of time, space, people, and instructional techniques.

### **Classroom Instruction**

9. List the purposes of daily and weekly instructional planning.
10. Identify the curriculum areas of instruction of the grade level.
11. Identify methods of instruction used in the classroom.
12. Identify various instructional materials used in the classroom.
13. Identify instructional objectives that are apparent through observation.
14. Identify purposes for varying group sizes.
15. List instructional programs available for students with special needs.
16. Outline the process for referring students to receive assistance from special services.

### **Student Population**

17. Describe the characteristics and demographics of the student population. Include ethnicity, SES, sex, age distribution, family composition, number of students retained, number of students receiving support services, and the average number of students per class at each grade level.
18. Describe the procedures for school registration.

### **Assessment Procedures**

19. Describe the procedures of reporting students' progress to parents.
20. List the instruments for obtaining students' achievement levels, students' mental ability, and any other tests.

### **Parent Education and Involvement**

21. Describe parent education and involvement programs in the classroom.

## **Professionalism**

22. Describe hiring procedures.
23. Describe the school policies regarding dress, attendance, absences, salary schedules, tenure, teacher evaluation, and benefits of school personnel.
24. Identify the schedule for teachers' meetings: total instructional staff and grade level.
25. Describe the program for staff development and inservice training of the school system.
26. Describe teacher performance evaluation procedures for the school.
27. Identify the school wide and system wide committee opportunities available to the classroom teacher.
28. List the professional organizations to which the classroom teacher is a member and organizations with which the school is affiliated.
29. List the professional journals subscribed to by the school and available to the classroom teacher.

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The structure or development of most organizations provides a framework through which individuals identify their roles, status, value, purpose, and sense of belonging in the organization. The organizational structure of the elementary school may have numerous developmental patterns, but primarily classroom teachers compose the heart of the school's structure.

Organizational structure of the school presents hierarchical and unilateral relationships among school personnel. These two organizational patterns provide the teacher with systems of communication, accountability and support. Two-way communication within the organization of the school must flow back and forth among teachers and classified staff members as well as to and from principals and supervisors. The school administrator has been delegated by his/her position and responsibilities as the final authority in the local school. How this authority is shared and expressed will depend on the individual administrator. Because the school administrator has the responsibility of the total operation of the school, all staff members are accountable to the principal. At times assistant principals and supervisors share this responsibility, facilitating accessibility of authority figures for staff members. Teachers and staff members are accountable to those sharing administrative responsibilities. The support system available within the organizational structure of the school provides major advantages and benefits to the classroom teacher, especially a beginning teacher. This support system can generate a spirit and attitude of "teamwork" among teachers, staff members, and administrators and supervisors. Every individual in the organization becomes a resource to each other to the extent that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

Research studies across the nation provide evidence that meaningful organizational structures in schools facilitate specific concerns of beginning teachers:

1. How to work with other adults: parents, administrators, and aides.
2. How to work effectively with colleagues.
3. To be given a more realistic view of the teaching profession.
4. To be given a better, more complete educational philosophy from which to work.

**OBJECTIVE ONE:**

Identify the personnel categories of the school.

**DIRECTIONS:**

If the personnel position is available in your school, write an "X" in the first space below the position. Then in the second space write the number of persons that occupy that position. If the personnel position is not available in your school, write "N/A" in the first space below the position. Add other personnel positions not listed.

ADMINISTRATION/ SUPERVISION	CLERICAL PERSONNEL	PRE-K TEACHERS		TEACHING ASSISTANTS	SUPPORT PERSONNEL	SUPPORT PERSONNEL	CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL
Principal	Secretary	K	Art	PRE-K	Speech	Specific Learning Disabilities	Custodian
Assistant Principal	Clerk	1st	Music	1st	Vision/Hearing	Gifted	Dietician
ILT		2nd	P.E.	2nd	School Nurse	Intellectual Disability (Mild, Moderate, Severe, Profound)	
Counselor		3rd	Media Specialist	3rd	ESOL	Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	
		4th		4th	Title I Reading	Autism	
		5th		5th	Title I Math	Orthopedic Impairment	
					Visiting Teacher	Other Health Impairment (i.e., Asthma, ADD)	

# **MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES**

## **MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES**

Classroom management is described as a set of teacher behaviors and activities that are directed at promoting student involvement in classroom activities and preventing disruptions. Classroom management skills are usually regarded as an important basis for effective teaching and as central to the teacher's role. Their importance has been repeatedly emphasized in teacher effectiveness research. Classroom management is a learned skill. All effective teachers are good managers. All teachers, even the most popular and talented, need effective management skills.

Classroom management is not new. Ideas about ways to operate classrooms efficiently and effectively are as old as public education. The concept of classroom management is broader than the notion of student discipline. It includes the numerous functions teachers must perform to foster student involvement and cooperation in classroom activities and to establish a productive learning environment. Characteristics of a well-managed class that are supported by research findings include the following:

1. There are high levels of student involvement with learning.
2. Students know what is expected of them and generally experience success.
3. Confusion, disruption and wasted time are limited.
4. The climate of the room is task-oriented yet warm, relaxed, and pleasant.

Teachers are managers of time, space and people. Effective teachers establish a classroom climate conducive to learning. As managers of instruction, teachers develop guidelines, communicate expectations, establish procedures for transitions and routines as well as plan instruction according to students' needs.

A well managed classroom is a task-oriented, hands-on, active environment. Research has shown that in a class such as this, most of the students will make positive achievement gains.



**OBJECTIVE THREE:** Determine how rules and guidelines are formulated and enforced in the classroom.

**OBJECTIVE FOUR:** Describe managerial techniques demonstrated in the classroom.

**OBJECTIVE FIVE:** Describe the relationship between the organization of time, space, people and management techniques.

**DIRECTIONS:** List the rules of the classroom and how they were developed including consequences and rewards if applicable. Then in the table detail the procedures and how students were trained to follow each of the procedures. These procedures are typically taught some time during the first week of school

AREA OF MANAGEMENT	PROCEDURES	Were students formally trained, if so how.
1. RESTROOMS		
2. WATER FOUNTAIN		
3. LINING UP		
4. LEARNING CENTERS		
5. SHARING MATERIALS		
6. TEACHER'S DESK AND STORAGE		
7. SHARPENING PENCILS		
8. STUDENT ARRIVAL		
9. OUT-OF-SEAT		
10. LEAVING THE CLASSROOM		
11. HOUSEKEEPING		
12. STUDENT HELPERS		
13. FIRE DRILLS		
14. TORNADO DRILLS		
15. OFFICE AREA		
16. CLINIC		
17. MEDIA CENTER		
18. CAFETERIA		
19. HALLWAYS		

AREAS OF MANAGEMENT	PROCEDURES	Were students formally trained, if so how.
20. PLAYGROUND		
21. LOADING/UNLOADING BUSES		
22. STUDENT DISMISSAL		
23. LISTENING/TALKING OF STUDENTS		
24. STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN CLASSROOM DISCUSSION		
25. COMPLETION OF ASSIGNMENTS		
26. INCOMPLETE ASSIGNMENTS		
27. HOMEWORK		
28. MAKE-UP WORK		
29. CLASS PREPARATION		
30. CLASS MATERIALS		
31. ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES		
32. REMEDIAL ACTIVITIES		
33. SMALL GROUP PROCEDURES		
34. CARE/USE OF MATERIALS		
35. SMALL GROUP BEHAVIOR		
36. OTHER		

# **ORGANIZATION OF THE CLASSROOM**

## ORGANIZATION OF THE CLASSROOM

Research studies provide clear evidence that organizing the classroom for effective instruction and management is a "specific priority" for which wise teachers make definite plans. It is more comprehensive than arranging the furniture and preparing attractive bulletin boards. For short and long range effectiveness, classroom organization must encompass the efficient management of space, time and people. This extensive and continuous planning begins before the teacher returns to school for pre-planning. For this reason, the organized, well-planned teacher is "ready" to initiate and introduce his/her classroom system on the first day of school.

Being certain that your classroom space and materials are ready for the beginning of the school year is essential. Physical arrangement and organization of the classroom are paramount considerations because they provide the setting and atmosphere for learning activities. In many classrooms, space is not abundant, nor is furniture very flexible, so maximizing available space to provide an area and an environment conducive for particular activities is extremely important. The arrangement of furniture, room dividers, storage areas and learning centers should facilitate the ability of the teacher to monitor all students as well as allowing all students to view the teacher easily.

The amount of time available for learning is determined by the instructional and management skills of the teacher and the priorities set by the school administration. Research data indicates that the amount of time students are actively engaged in learning contributes strongly to their achievement. Teachers must not only know the subject content they teach, they must also be effective time managers in the classroom to avoid wasting valuable minutes on unimportant activities. Proper use of time involves keeping students continuously and actively engaged in appropriate learning experiences.

Good managers perform the following time-conserving functions:

- **Planning Class Work:** Selecting the content to be studied, scheduling time for presentation and study, choosing instructional activities best suited to learning the material.
- **Communicating Goals:** Conveying expectations so students know the standards for achieving success and the consequences of failure to follow the standards.
- **Regulating Learning Activities:** Sequencing course content so knowledge builds on itself, pacing instruction so students are prepared for the next step, monitoring success rates so all students stay productively engaged regardless of how quickly they learn, and maintaining an orderly, academically focused classroom that keeps wasted time and disruptions to a minimum.

Application of these functions will assist with the achievement of the following important goals:

- Capture students' attention.
- Make the best use of available learning time.
- Encourage academic achievement.

## Classroom Checklist

**OBJECTIVE SIX:** Describe the physical setting of the classroom. Describe resources available for teaching and learning.

**DIRECTIONS:** Check the items and materials available in the classroom. Add any others not listed. If not in the classroom, write where the materials can be found.

- \_\_\_ teacher's desk
- \_\_\_ children's desks or tables
- \_\_\_ bookcases
- \_\_\_ tables
- \_\_\_ chairs
- \_\_\_ child-sized furniture
- \_\_\_ filing cabinet
- \_\_\_ storage cabinets
- \_\_\_ chalkboards
- \_\_\_ bulletin boards
- \_\_\_ pencil sharpener
- \_\_\_ windows
- \_\_\_ sink
- \_\_\_ drinking fountain
- \_\_\_ restrooms
  
- \_\_\_ computers
- \_\_\_ television
- \_\_\_ VCR
- \_\_\_ overhead projector
- \_\_\_ projection screen
- \_\_\_ listening station
- \_\_\_ tape player
- \_\_\_ record player
  
- \_\_\_ books
- \_\_\_ sets of multiple copies of books
- \_\_\_ textbooks
- \_\_\_ workbooks
- \_\_\_ charts
- \_\_\_ globes
- \_\_\_ maps
- \_\_\_ kits
  
- \_\_\_ centers(list and describe)
- \_\_\_ puzzles
- \_\_\_ blocks
- \_\_\_ toys
- \_\_\_ pets

**DIRECTIONS:**

Investigate the various resources available within the school. Identify how many and identify the location of each of the following items, then record whether this items is available for classroom teachers to use.

**SCHOOL RESOURCE CHECKLIST**

ITEM	AMOUNT	LOCATION	AVAILABILITY
Computer Lab			
Portable Computer			
Lap Top Computer			
Computer Projection Devices (i.e., LCD Panel and InFocus)			
Digitizing Camera (i.e., Zap camera by Kodak)			
Scanner			
E-mail Access			
Limited Internet Access			
Full Internet Access			
Georgia Statewide Academic and Medical System (GSAMS) Access			
Satellite and Satellite Access			
Laser Disc Player			
VCR			
Video Camera			
Video Production Capabilities			
Overhead Projector			
Fax Machine			
Other			
Other			

**Personal Application:**

What did you learn from the physical arrangement of your assigned classroom and the accessibility of resources that you would like to remember when setting up your own classroom?

**OBJECTIVE SEVEN:** Describe organizational procedures for transitions and routines demonstrated in the classroom.

**OBJECTIVE EIGHT:** Describe the relationship between the organization of time, space, people, and instructional techniques.

**DIRECTIONS:** Outline the procedures for the transitions and routines that you observed in the classroom.

<b>TRANSITION/ROUTINES</b>	<b>Procedures Observed in Mentor Teachers Classroom</b>
Daily Attendance	
Lunch Count	
Collecting Lunch Money	
School Store Order	
Announcements	
Pledge to Flag	

TRANSITIONS/ROUTINES	PROCEDURES
Distributing Materials	
Collecting Materials	
To/From Small Groups	
Gaining Students' Attention	
Giving Directions	
Explaining Assignments	
Changing Content Areas	

0

TRANSITIONS/ROUTINES	PROCEDURES
Lunch	
Assignment of Bus Routes	
Dismissal	
Other	



# **CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION**

## **CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION**

The teacher is a significant, if not primary factor in the success of any program of instruction. Some studies have shown that first-year elementary teachers perceive themselves as least competent in the area of instruction.

Organization appears to be the key word because all facets of the instructional process must be carefully planned and arranged in order for diagnostic and prescriptive instruction to function smoothly. There are many different approaches to instruction. There is little evidence of one generic method best for all types of students and situations. Instead, what constitutes good teaching varies according to the developmental levels and other characteristics of students and according to group size, subject matter, and other situational or contextual factors. The teacher needs to be aware of the developmental differences in the students in order to design instructional activities which will challenge each student.

It is important to begin planning instruction by developing a set of objectives based on broad goals. Using the instructional objectives as a framework, it is possible to determine the sequence of the lesson, the most appropriate group size, the most effective methods and materials, and the best means of evaluation.

The student in early childhood needs to be an active, involved learner, with real experiences and many concrete materials available to explore and manipulate. The teacher must be able to match the difficulty level and interest value of the materials and assignments to the present skills and interests of the students. Teachers may have to supplement or even substitute for the curriculum in order to provide an appropriate match between materials and ability levels. The match between materials and ability levels is an important factor in student achievement.

Academic learning time has proven to be highly related to achievement. It has been estimated that in K-5 classrooms over 70 percent of the average student's day is spent not being directly taught by the teacher. The direct instruction referred to here may involve lectures, recitation, inquiry methods, teacher-led discussions, or any other techniques that teachers use to present information, ideas and concepts, or give direction.



**OBJECTIVE TEN:**

Identify the curriculum areas of instruction of the grade level. Attach the performance standards for language arts, math science and social studies of the grade level.

**DIRECTIONS:**

Check the curriculum areas and/or specific topics which will be taught at your grade level this year and identify the county adopted textbook/curriculum resource for each subject. Be sure to include publishers.

\_\_\_\_\_ English/grammar

\_\_\_\_\_ Creative Writing

\_\_\_\_\_ Handwriting

\_\_\_\_\_ Reading

\_\_\_\_\_ Spelling

\_\_\_\_\_ Math

\_\_\_\_\_ Science

\_\_\_\_\_ Social Studies

\_\_\_\_\_ Citizenship

\_\_\_\_\_ Manners

\_\_\_\_\_ School Rules

\_\_\_\_\_ Health and Safety

\_\_\_\_\_ Physical Education

\_\_\_\_\_ Art

\_\_\_\_\_ Music

\_\_\_\_\_ Other

**OBJECTIVE ELEVEN:** Identify methods of instruction used in the classroom.

**OBJECTIVE TWELVE:** Identify various instructional materials used in the classroom.

**OBJECTIVE THIRTEEN:** Identify instructional objectives that are apparent through observation.

**DIRECTIONS:** You will observe four instructional lessons. Attempt to vary the subject area for each observation. Mark an "X" for the method of instruction; list the materials used; and state the instructional objective. Give a brief description of the lesson you observed.

## INSTRUCTION IN THE CLASSROOM

METHOD	DESCRIBE LESSON ONE	DESCRIBE LESSON TWO	DESCRIBE LESSON THREE	DESCRIBE LESSON FOUR
LECTURE				
EXPERIMENT				
DEMONSTRATION				
DISPLAY				
EXHIBIT				
EXPLANATION				
QUESTIONING				
GUIDED DISCUSSION				
REVIEW / DRILL				
GAMES / CENTERS				
SIMULATION				
ROLE-PLAY				
DRAMATICS				
OTHER				
MATERIALS:				
OBJECTIVE:				

**OBJECTIVE FOURTEEN:** Identify purposes for varying group sizes.

**DIRECTIONS:** While observing instruction within the classroom, you should notice changes in the size of the group. State the purpose for varying the size of the group and describe the activity of the group. When possible, state how many students are in the group. Examples have been provided.

**PURPOSES FOR VARYING GROUP SIZE**

Small Group Instruction

Purpose	# STUDENTS	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
<u>Example:</u> Efficiency of Instruction.	8	Teacher administered pre-assessment Test for reading group.

Whole Group Instruction

PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
<u>Example:</u> All students receive the same information.	Using a poster and flip chart teacher discussed acceptable classroom behavior.

Individual Instruction

PURPOSE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
<u>Example:</u> Accommodate the learning need of an individual.	Using Math flash cards, students read problem and stated the fact to the teacher

**OBJECTIVE FIFTEEN:** List instructional programs available for students with special needs.

**DIRECTIONS:** A list of the following services for special needs students may be available within your school setting. Place a (1) if program is available within the classroom setting, (2) if program is available outside the classroom and (0) if program is not available.

<b>SERVICES AVAILABLE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>SERVICES AVAILABLE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
<b>Title I Math</b>		<b>Special Education Cont.</b>	
<b>Title I Reading</b>		Hearing Impairment	
<b>ESOL</b>		Intellectual Disability (Mild, Moderate, Severe, Profound)	
<b>Gifted</b>		Orthopedic Impairment	
<b>Reading Recovery</b>		Other Health Impairment	
<b>Section 5.04</b>		Significant Developmental Delay (3-5 year olds)	
<b>Student Instructional Assistance</b>		Speech and Language Impairment	
<b>Student Support Team</b>		Specific Learning Disabilities	
<b>Special Education</b>		Traumatic Brain Injury	
Autism		Visual Impairment	
Deaf /Blind		<b>Other</b>	
Emotional & Behavioral Disorders		<b>Other</b>	

**OBJECTIVE SIXTEEN:** Outline the process for referring students to receive assistance from special services.

**DIRECTIONS:** Obtain information from the classroom teacher or the school counselor which describes the process for psychological evaluation of students with special needs. (Most schools have a handout which outlines this process.)

# **STUDENT POPULATION**

## **STUDENT POPULATION**

It is important for the teacher to know the characteristics and demographics of the students in the classroom. Much of this information, such as ethnicity, sex, age, family composition, number of students retained and number of students receiving support services can be obtained from registration forms and prior records. This information is important, however, it is not sufficient in helping the teacher plan instruction. The child, the care giver, and the environment intertwine in the child-rearing process, making every child's experiences unique. The teacher must have some understanding of the children's backgrounds in order to plan activities of interest to them. This has become more important due to the number of single-parent families, poverty, and cultural diversity. The first and most important thing to remember when working with children is to avoid stereotyping. Children, like adults, want to feel good about themselves. Children are not born with adequate self-concepts. Self-worth is learned through interactions with others. Teachers can gain some understanding of their students' self-concepts and interests through student and parent questionnaires and student interviews. Having the information is not enough; the information must be utilized in planning developmentally appropriate lessons which meet the children's needs.

Teachers must be careful not to create extremely high or extremely low expectations of students based on background information. Teacher expectations can function as self-fulfilling prophecies. When teachers underestimate potential, lower achievement usually follows. Expectations about students can cause us to treat them in a way that makes them respond just as we thought they would.

In conclusion, during the first few weeks of the school year, become familiar with the children. This entails more than placing them in the correct reading group. Time spent determining experiences, interests and other background information is important. If the children feel that the teacher is genuinely interested in them beyond the confines of the classroom, it is likely that this will influence their motivation for achievement. Also, the teacher's increased understanding of the children in the classroom can increase the effectiveness of the teacher in addressing the abilities, interests, and needs of the children.

**OBJECTIVE SEVENTEEN:**

Describe the characteristics and demographics of the student population (ethnicity, SES, sex, age distribution, family composition, number of students retained, number of students receiving support services and average number of children per class) in the classroom.

**STUDENT POPULATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. The total number of students enrolled in the school is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The number of students in my classroom is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The ethnic composition of the students in my classroom is:  
White American: \_\_\_\_\_      Black American: \_\_\_\_\_  
Asian American: \_\_\_\_\_      Hispanic: \_\_\_\_\_      Other: \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_ students are repeating this grade.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ students have repeated a previous grade.
6. In my classroom students are reading at #\_\_\_\_\_ reading levels.
7. The number of students in my assigned classroom receiving services from supportive programs is:

<b>SERVICES AVAILABLE</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CHILDREN</b>	<b>SERVICES AVAILABLE</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CHILDREN</b>
<b>Title I Math</b>		<b>Special Education Cont.</b>	
<b>Title I Reading</b>		Hearing Impairment	
<b>ESOL</b>		Intellectual Disability (Mild, Moderate, Severe, Profound)	
<b>Gifted</b>		Orthopedic Impairment	

<b>Reading Recovery</b>		Other Health Impairment	
<b>Section 5.04</b>		Significant Developmental Delay (3-5 year olds)	
<b>Student Instructional Assistance</b>		Speech and Language Impairment	
<b>Student Support Team</b>		Specific Learning Disabilities	
<b>Special Education</b>		Traumatic Brain Injury	
Autism		Visual Impairment	
Deaf /Blind		<b>Other</b>	
Emotional & Behavioral Disorders		<b>Other</b>	

**OBJECTIVE EIGHTEEN/Directions:** Describe the procedures for school registration:

1. List the forms that are completed by parents during registration.
  
2. List written and oral information provided for students and parents during registration.
  
3. List the responsibilities of the teacher during registration.
  
4. List the benefits of registration for the student, parent and teacher.
  
5. On what basis are students assigned to classrooms? Who determines students' placement?
  
6. What are registration procedures for students new to the school and/or school system?

# **ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

## ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

Assessment is the process of identifying strengths, weaknesses, needs, knowledge, skills, progress, and attitudes of the individual and applying that information to current instruction. In order for the teacher to match instructional objectives with the children and to assure that children are being taught at the appropriate level, it is necessary that the learning status of children be assessed. Assessment not only helps the teacher evaluate the effectiveness and success of his/her teaching, it also facilitates reporting on the child's progress to parents and other teachers or specialists who work or will work with the child. Student progress may be determined by observation, informal techniques and formal tests. Most teachers use a combination of these methods in determining progress. Observing a student at work is a good way to find out how well the student is doing. Many situations present themselves for the observant teacher.

1. Does the student answer questions correctly?
2. Does the student follow directions or instructions?
3. Can the student use resource materials if needed?
4. Does the student appear to be enthusiastic about the subject?

It is often helpful to use anecdotal records or to devise a checklist or chart for denoting the results of student observations. This helps the teacher collect objective data and present it in a form that can be easily interpreted. The behaviors listed must be observable and specific. The recording of results should be in a format that permits anyone to ascertain immediately what was observed, who was observed, when, and the outcome of the observation.

Informal techniques for determining student progress include conferencing, checking student's work, and administering teacher-made tests. Samples of student's work such as writing samples, learning logs, and written class work can be kept in individual portfolios. Such materials can show patterns of strengths and weaknesses. Special projects done for a subject should be considered. A student-teacher conference to explore a student's understanding of a subject will provide valuable information. Teachers should prepare tests so that they assess the objectives that are taught. It is important to consider more than one means of assessment before determining a student's ability.

Formal or standardized tests may also be used for assessment. These tests are usually interpreted based on norms. Formal tests are administered in practically every grade in Georgia. The results of these tests are sent to teachers and should be shared with parents. Therefore, it is the teacher's responsibility to understand the test results and interpret them. It is very important

to remember that test scores also should never be accepted as a measure of academic potential. Also scores, or expectations based on scores, should not be considered static.

Assessment is an ongoing process. It is necessary if the teacher is going to be effective in meeting the needs of individuals. Assessment should not be viewed as separate from instruction, but as an integral part in assisting to make instruction more relevant and therefore more effective.

**OBJECTIVE NINETEEN:** Describe the procedures of reporting students' progress to parents.

**DIRECTIONS:** Indicate the procedures used to report students' progress to parents in the space provided. Note frequency when applicable.

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING	YES	NO	FREQUENCY
1. REPORT CARDS			
2. PROGRESS REPORTS			
3. PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES			
4. GENERAL COMMUNICATION			
A. Telephone Calls			
1. Reports students' acceptable behavior			
2. Reports students' unacceptable behavior			
3. Reports students' outstanding effort on assignments			
4. Reports students' lack of effort on assignments			
B. Written Notices			
1. Reports students' acceptable behavior			
2. Reports students' unacceptable behavior			
3. Reports students' outstanding effort on assignments			
4. Reports students' lack of effort on assignments			
5. OTHER			
6. OTHER			

**OBJECTIVE TWENTY:** List the instruments for obtaining students' achievement levels, students' mental ability, and any other tests.

**DIRECTIONS:** Check the instruments used in your school for obtaining achievement and ability levels. Write the grade to which the testing instrument is administered and the reason for administering it.

TESTING INSTRUMENTS	GRADE	REASON FOR USING TESTING INSTRUMENT
California Achievement Test		
Cognitive Abilities Test (COGAT)		
Dial		
Georgia Kindergarten Assessment Program (GKAP)		
Gessell		
Iowa Test of Basic Skills		
Placement Tests		
Math		
Reading		
Other		
Otis-Lennon Mental Ability Test		
Stanford-Binet Scholastic Aptitude		
Writing Assessment		
SAT-9		
Other		
Other		

**PARENT EDUCATION**

**AND**

**INVOLVEMENT**

## PARENT EDUCATION AND INVOLVEMENT

What works to educate children? "Parents are their children's first and most influential teachers. What parents do to help their children learn is more important to academic success than how well-off the family is" (U.S. Department of Education, 1986, p.7). What Works: Research About Teaching and Learning, a synthesis of research findings, published by the U.S. Department of Education, emphasized the importance of parents' involvement in their child's education. "Parental involvement helps children learn more effectively" (U.S. Department of Education, 1986, p. 19).

Most parents want to be involved with their children's schoolwork but are unsure of what to do or how to do it. Many say they would welcome more guidance and ideas from teachers. But it takes more than occasional parent-teacher conferences and school open houses to involve parents. Teachers who are successful at prompting parent involvement in the early grades use strategies similar to the following:

1. Some teachers ask parents to read aloud to their child, to listen to the child read, and to sign homework papers.
2. Others encourage parents to drill students on math and spelling and to help with homework assignments.
3. Teachers also encourage parents to discuss school activities with their children and suggest ways parents can help teach their children at home.
4. Teachers also send home suggestions for games or group activities related to the child's schoolwork that parent and child can play together.

The Association for Childhood Education International promoted the linkage among home, school, and community; "we believe that teachers and parents need to establish a stronger bond with one another" (Umansky, 1983, p. 263).

Closer contact between parents and teachers will give a more complete picture of the child's abilities and improve consistency in working toward desired goals. Most important, perhaps, the child will identify both the school and the home as places to learn, and parents and teachers as sources of learning (Umansky, 1983, p. 264).

Teachers who are successful at involving parents in their children's schoolwork are successful because they work at it.

**OBJECTIVE TWENTY-ONE:** Describe parent education and involvement programs in the classroom.

**DIRECTIONS:** Answer the following questions regarding parent education and involvement in the school and the classroom.

Programs/Activities	Yes	No	Description
Parent Education Workshops			
Home Visits			
Site Based Management			
Parent Volunteer Program			
Parent/Teacher Association			
Room Mother/Parent Program			

# **PROFESSIONALISM**

## **PROFESSIONALISM**

Professionalism relates to the personal behavior and attitudes of the teacher. The teacher's philosophy of education and perception of the role of a teacher will provide the foundation for his/her behavior and expectations. Individual philosophies and perceptions will grow and change, as a result of new experiences and reflections on these experiences.

Teaching is, by nature, an interactive field. While recognizing this, teachers sometimes feel that their only interactions are with the students in their classrooms. This can lead to a feeling of isolation. In some schools, new teachers may have difficulty getting settled or accepted into the existing school community.

The following suggestions are intended to ease that passage:

1. Initiate conversations and gradually get to know the people in your building.
2. Identify one or several members of your staff with whom you feel comfortable and capable of developing a close working relationship.
3. Make sincere efforts to share ideas and materials as a need arises.
4. Participate in school and social activities.
5. Be aware of co-workers' schedules, workloads and time demands. Do not be too demanding.
6. Use discretion in sharing information about yourself, your students, or your teaching. Avoid teacher lounge gossip!
7. Be a good listener.

Professionalism is also exhibited in the following ways:

1. Be aware of your appearance and language.
2. Be on time.
3. Be in the classroom with the students except in emergencies.
4. Turn in well-prepared plans and reports by deadlines.
5. Follow and support school rules and policies.
6. Register complaints or proposals for change with discretion and through proper channels.

Education is a constantly changing field. Be aware that current knowledge becomes obsolete quickly. This does not mean that teachers should be constantly jumping on "band wagons." This does refer to the need for educators to read professional journals, attend staff development and inservice training, and to make an attempt to remain current in knowledge of innovative educational strategies. Teachers should set short-range and long-range goals and develop plans for meeting their goals. In conclusion, teachers need to have high expectations of themselves, as well as their students.



**OBJECTIVE TWENTY-THREE:** Describe the school policies regarding dress, attendance, absences, salary schedules, tenure, teacher evaluation, and benefits of school personnel.

**DIRECTIONS:** Using the classroom teacher's school policy handbook, write a brief description of the policy for each area.

AREA	POLICY
Attendance	
Absences	
Leaves of Absences	
Dress Code	
Discipline	
Teacher Benefits	
Salary Schedule	
Tenure	
Teacher Assessment	
Classroom Parties	
Instructional Expenditures	
Field Trips	
Staff Development/In service	

**OBJECTIVE TWENTY-FOUR:** Identify the schedule for teachers' meetings: total instructional staff and grade level.

1. You should attend a total school staff meeting and/or a total instructional staff meeting.

Notes:

Date:

2. You should attend a grade level meeting.

Notes:

Date:

3. How often are total instructional staff meetings conducted?

4. How often are grade level meetings conducted?

**OBJECTIVE TWENTY-FIVE:** Describe the program for staff development and inservice training of the school system.

1. Is a staff development program provided by the school system? If so, write a brief description of the staff development program purposes.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Review a copy of the staff development courses available for fall semester.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Who is responsible for staff development programs in the school? Give name and title.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Is staff development mandatory or optional for the classroom teacher?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Is someone on staff to help support teachers during/after training?



**OBJECTIVE TWENTY-SEVEN:** Identify the school wide and system wide committee opportunities available to the classroom teacher.

**DIRECTIONS:** Place a check beside each of the committees available for participation by a classroom teacher.

Attendance Committee	
Discipline Committee	
Leadership Team	
Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)	
Social Committee	
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Committee (SACS)	
Staff Development Committee	
Student Support Team (SST)	
Teacher Advisory Committee	
Technology Advisory Committee	
Textbook Adoption Committees	
Others (Explain)	

**OBJECTIVE TWENTY EIGHT:** List the professional organizations to which the classroom teacher is a member and organizations with which the school is affiliated.

1. Check the professional organizations in which your classroom teacher is a member?

Organization	International	National	Regional	State	Local
American Educational Research Association (AERA)					
Association for Childhood Education International					
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)					
The Council for Exceptional Children					
Georgia Association of Educators					
Georgia Preschool Association					
International Reading Association (IRA)					
International Technology Association					
National Art Education Association					
National Association for Bilingual Education					
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)					
National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)					
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)					
National Education Association (NEA)					

National Head Start Association					
National Music Educators Association					
National Science Teachers Association (NCTA)					
National Montessori Teachers Association					
Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE)					
Other					
Other					
Other					

2. List the organizations with which the school is affiliated.

**OBJECTIVE TWENTY NINE:** List the professional journals subscribed to by the school and available to the classroom teacher.

1. List the professional journals subscribed to by the school and available to the classroom teacher.

TITLE
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

2. Is a professional library available in your school? If so, what types of materials are available?

# **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

## INSTRUCTIONS TO CLASSROOM TEACHER

The faculty of the Department of Early Childhood Education appreciates your participation in the Opening School program. We believe this experience is one of the most valuable learning opportunities our candidates have. Teachers who are willing to share their expertise with pre-service teachers make a vital contribution to teacher education programs.

In order to complete our records, we need for you to complete the three evaluation forms listed below by the end of the second week of school and return them to the supervising instructor on the first school visit in a sealed envelope. The three forms are:

1. Program Requirements Checklist
2. Classroom Teacher Program Evaluation
3. Classroom Teacher Evaluation of Candidate's Performance

1. Program Requirements Checklist

On the following 2 pages, circle "C" when the program requirement is complete. Circle "I" if the program requirement is incomplete at the conclusion of the two weeks.

2. Classroom Teacher Program Evaluation

Your feedback is very important to our program. We want our program to be effective and we need your input.

3. Classroom Teacher Evaluation of Candidate's Performance

The information on this form helps us determine how well we are preparing our candidates for school placements. Because you have had daily contact with the candidate, you are in a position to give feedback on the candidate's performance in your classroom.

Candidate's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **PROGRAM REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST**

### **WEEK ONE**

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	PAGE(S)	COMPLETE OR INCOMPLETE	
Personnel Categories	9	C	I
School Philosophy	12	C	I
Classroom Arrangement	19	C	I
School Resource Checklist	20	C	I
Instructional Planning	28	C	I
Curriculum Areas	29	C	I
Programs for Exceptionalities	33	C	I
Student Referral Process	34	C	I
Tests Checklist	44	C	I
Parent Education and Involvement	47	C	I
Hiring Procedures	51	C	I
Teacher Performance Evaluation	55	C	I
Professional Organizations	57 - 58	C	I
Professional Journals	59	C	I

Classroom Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# PROGRAM REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST

## WEEK TWO

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	PAGE(S)	COMPLETE OR INCOMPLETE	
Rules and Procedures	14 - 15	C	I
Transitions and Routines Chart	22 - 24	C	I
Instructional Observation Chart	31	C	I
Varying Group Sizes Chart	32	C	I
Student Population Questionnaire	37 - 38	C	I
Registration Procedures	39	C	I
Checklist for Reporting Progress	43	C	I
Teachers' Meetings	53	C	I
Staff Development Program	54	C	I
Committee Participation Checklist	56	C	I
School Policy Chart	52	C	I

Classroom Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## CLASSROOM TEACHER EVALUATION OF CANDIDATE'S PERFORMANCE

Opening School Experience:

NAME OF CANDIDATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

GRADE LEVEL ASSIGNMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF CLASSROOM TEACHER: \_\_\_\_\_

School Attendance:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
WEEK ONE					
WEEK TWO					

Indicate with a "X" the days the candidate attended the assigned school.

DIRECTIONS: Check the appropriate column.

I. PROFESSIONALISM	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
A. Personal Appearance			
B. Attitude			
C. Enthusiasm			
D. Communication Skills			
E. Dependability			
F. Overall Performance			

Comments:

Classroom Teacher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATE**

The Opening School Experience is a graduation requirement of the Early Childhood Education Department of Georgia State University. The candidate will be evaluated based on the following:

Completion of Opening School Experience Requirements

School Attendance

Professionalism

Orientation Attendance

The classroom teacher will complete the three evaluation forms and return them to the university supervisor in a sealed envelope.

The candidate will complete the program evaluation and return it to their university supervisor at the first scheduled observation.

For the candidate to achieve success in this program, all program requirements must be completed by the last day of the Opening School Experience. Any candidate who does not complete the Opening School Experience successfully must repeat the experience before graduation will be possible.



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## CANDIDATE PROGRAM EVALUATION

**DIRECTIONS:** Questions should be answered by circling the number following the question, 1 through 5, which corresponds as follows:  
5 = Excellent, 4 = Above Average, 3 = Average, 2 = Below Average, and 1 = Poor.

1. Name of School:

\_\_\_\_\_

On a scale of 1 through 5, rate your school as to its appropriateness for future programs.

1      2      3      4      5

Positive Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. On a scale of 1 through 5, rate the Opening School Experience Handbook.

1      2      3      4      5

Positive Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Negative Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. On a scale of 1 through 5, rate the Opening School Experience orientation.

1      2      3      4      5

Positive Comments:

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Negative Comments:

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