

Teacher Professional Growth Plan

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School: Our Lady of the Assumption

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Practicum Dates: January - April 2019

Professional Goals

1. To learn how to effectively and efficiently differentiate my lesson plans

Rationale: In PSI and PSII I learned about the importance of assessment and differentiation for each individual student. Differentiating students based on their abilities and interests will open up a pathway of success for them to connect with subject content at the level they can strive in. Learning how to differentiate my lesson plans will ensure that no student gets left behind and everyone has a fair opportunity to learn.

Strategies:

- I will continue to build relationships with each and every one of my students, to understand and connect with them at a deeper level
 - I will do this by talking with students not just about school, but about life experiences
- I will reach out to other teachers at the school to hear about their experiences and strategies for assessment and differentiation
- I will look for online or physical resources to learn more about differentiation strategies and the importance of differentiation

Indicators of Progress:

- Students are able to come to me for help, with school and personal-related issues
- I will apply what I have learned from the other teachers at the school to my lesson planning
- I will understand *why* I am differentiating the way I am when lesson planning, instead of just differentiating because I feel the need to.

Timeline for Completion: April 2019

Summary of Growth and Goals Achieved (Final plan only):

- At the beginning of the semester, I was giving away a lot of free time for students who finished early, as I was learning how fast each student worked or how they enjoyed their spare time. I started utilizing early finishers as extra helpers, being an assistant teacher to other students who needed one-on-one help. Other times I had them catch up on work in other classes, or do some extension practice so that they are able to become the “pros” of a concept and help their peers understand it in a different light.
- There are two students with special needs in my class, in which they require an Educational Assistant for at least half of the school day. They started off doing separate

activities in the classroom, and then they slowly joined the rest of the students with the content. I eventually started to modify the students' assignments to fit their level of learning.

- I have taken small steps in each subject to practice differentiation and gain insight into each one of my students. I have succeeded the most in differentiating Mathematics, as each student takes home practice work that is tailored to their areas of growth. I also tend to make a series of activities of varying levels to engage the group of students at that particular level. Each classroom activity or worksheet is almost personalized.

Reflections on Professional Growth (Final plan only):

- I have slowly progressed in my goal, taking small steps to incorporate differentiation more and more each day. I have had great help from the resources given to me, whether it be a previous unit plan or the experience of another teacher. I have learned to ask more in-depth questions, and have expanded my list of assessment strategies. Having to thoroughly go through the content and adapt it in more than one way really allows me to understand where my students struggle and personalize it to a way that they may be able to understand. I have also realized that using my more independent students to help me teach concepts to their peers in a different way allows me to spend more time on other students while encouraging cooperation and exercising responsibility.

2. To learn more about and apply inclusive education in my classroom

Rationale: I believe that each and every child in my classroom has the potential to excel and needs to be provided with an opportunity for equal education in order to do so. Diversity is a concept that I value highly and would want my students to feel the same way.

Strategies:

- I will develop individual relationships with each and every one of my students
- I will talk regularly with the parents, especially the ones who have children with special needs in my classroom
- I will incorporate my students' strengths and interests into my lessons to keep them engaged and show my compassion for them

Indicators of Progress:

- My classroom feels more like a community where my students feel safe and can express themselves
- My students are eager to learn and share what they know with me
- The parents of my students are communicating with me regularly about their child

Timeline for Completion: April 2019

Summary of Growth and Goals Achieved (Final plan only):

- From observing other teachers and online/ paper research, I had learned the importance and the effect of applying inclusive education in the classroom. Throughout my practicum, my focus on inclusivity has shifted from a general approach to focusing on promoting a safe and caring environment for my students. The past month I have placed emphasis on being kind, especially as the school is promoting acts of kindness during Lent. Some of the indicators in my classroom involve the creation of a kindness recognition box, where students secretly nominate someone in the class whom they see to do a kind act. Another indicator involves the implementation of “share and care” time for 10 minutes a day, where students lead a talking circle updating their peers on their lives.
- I have also been in contact with several parents, updating them on their child (at their request) in the classroom. I have found that maintaining a relationship with the students’ homes allows me to better understand my students and tailor a classroom to their needs and interests.

Reflections on Professional Growth (Final plan only):

- I believe that I can continually look for ways to incorporate inclusive education in my classroom. Besides fostering a safe and caring environment, I want to take it to the next level by promoting self-advocacy and autonomy in my students. I can do this by having students take pride in their work and displaying it for others to appreciate. I can also continually discuss the classroom culture we created and ways to better ourselves individually and as a whole. I noticed that the development of the sensory kit really brought students closer together, influencing positive vibes amongst the class.

TPGP Update: February 25 2019

1. *To learn how to effectively and efficiently differentiate my lesson plans*

- In general:
 - I have had interviews with different teachers at the school for their opinion and advice
 - Some teachers have recommended extra projects (which I have done)
 - I have observed different classes to see the assessment techniques applied
 - I am constantly formatively assessing my students - orally or visually (thumbs up/down, questions)
 - I am always asking for students to relate the content to their own lives
 - Has been proven that students retain 90% of information by creating experiences
 - I ensure to have the students moving and engaging the body

- Talking w/ the students on a regular basis or by observing their work, I am able to take note of how students do their work/ are engaged, then use the idea on my own time
- Creating a routine/ updating schedule for those students who need guidance
 - I have the schedule on the board, and have gone through my expectations for each class once a week.
- Brain breaks - just dance, go noodle - almost every transition
 - I also allow students to go for a quick walk/ stretch outside of the classroom if they don't want to dance
- Explaining content verbally, using videos and images, student examples
 - Students get a variety of ways to process and interpret information
- Math:
 - Using worksheets tailored for the students' needs - There are some students working on long division, some are still working on multiplication. There are two students who are advanced and are helping me teach some concepts to the other students
 - Daily math problem to drill basic math facts in the students' heads
 - Extension practice on the board for those who are done early
 - Alternate between worksheets, centres, math games to get students constantly practicing in a variety of ways
 - Writing out steps to the math equation and explaining what I am doing for those who need it
 - Students who are done early help other students
- Science
 - Science journals - gives the students a chance to write what they know, include pictures, etc.
 - I have been looking on pinterest/ other resources for a modified version of the content being learned for Megan and John. Sometimes I make my own resources
 - I have been incorporating technology, hoping that students will build on their tech skills. I also give students the option to write out their answers instead of handing it in on paper.
 - I have been trying to do one experiment a week for both classes - this allows students to connect with the content and be engaged.
- Gym
 - Always choosing teams for students to work together, give/ get support if needed
 - Incorporating a little bit of free time to encourage play and problem solving
 - Using my students who know the rules/ are ahead to help those who need it
 - Constantly asking oral review/ assessment questions
- French
 - Having students use their whiteboards - allows them to practice without the idea of permanence
 - Students have the option to work on paper/ work online
 - I always include "art" to my assignments - drawing, colouring
 - When teaching vocab words, I pronounce and write the word down, then use it in a sentence so students can see it in action
 - I encourage students to move around and do a "repeat after me" to reinforce the pronunciation in their heads

2. ***To learn more about and apply inclusive education in my classroom***

- In general:
 - I have been visiting other classrooms to get to know some of the kids in my school - Miss. Ingham, Mrs. Duke, Mrs. Clewes, Mrs. Roth, Mr. Tratch, Miss. Tarnava
 - Brain breaks/ stretches/ breathing for self-regulation
 - Talking with students about their lives everyday
 - 5 minutes of share/care time
 - Encouraging students to help each other to foster a community of caring
 - Reinforcing acts of kindness
 - Having students stay in the classroom, working on (mostly) the same thing (maybe modified)
 - Provide choice in the little (and some big) things, such as
 - What review activities to do
 - What music to listen to while working
 - What colour of marker to use while writing
 - Trying to move to a more facilitated type of instruction, to get students to realize what they want to learn and how they learn best
 - Provide ample class time to work on activities
 - Modifying the amount of content to teach in a day - this may help students with information overload
 - Created a classroom rules with the class and had everyone sign it
- Math
 - Math centres to engage all learners
 - Students are rarely doing the exact same work (minus daily math problem)
- Science
 - Jigsaw strategy: I teach a couple of students and give them resources to learn and teach others
 - Often have students learn about how to do an experiment after the demo
- Gym
 - Conversations with EA's about how some of the kids function and handle gym
 - I encourage students who are ahead or are advanced to help others

TPGP Update: March 15 2019

3. ***To learn how to effectively and efficiently differentiate my lesson plans***

- In general:
 - I have been having weekly conversations with my teacher mentor and the EA's in the classroom about how I have implemented my differentiation strategies. I am always asking for their advice and their suggestions
 - Now that I know which students need differentiation (are behind or ahead) I create separate learning objectives for them on my lesson plans. I also ensure that they have separate activities for when I am doing class instruction.
 - I have talked with the other teachers that deal with my class (Miss. Tarnava, Mrs. Roth) and compare resources to see what I can improve.

- I have been talking with the students after each assignment, asking what works for them and what I can improve. For some subjects, students find that supplementary videos and “cheat sheets” really help them.
- To ensure gifted students aren’t bored/ distracting, I make sure to utilize them as my helpers (handing out sheets, small-group instruction) which builds their responsibility skills. I often give them time to advance in other classes with supplementary material
- A lot of my students enjoy art - colouring, drawing, etc. I make sure to have worksheets with colouring activities, or drawings to supplement science/ math assignments.

4. ***To learn more about and apply inclusive education in my classroom***

- In general:
 - Speaking with parents who come in to drop off/ pick up their child about academics and behaviour. I often talk about the strengths of their child and ask how I can push them one step further.
 - Sending Remind messages to the parents, updating them on classroom activities
 - I display the grade 5 science experiments for the rest of the class to see. In grade 4 science, we are going to be presenting a play in front of the rest of the class. Showcasing their hard work throughout the unit promotes feelings of success and inclusion.
 - Updated classroom rules with the class
 - Students weren’t following it and so we felt the need to change things up a little bit
 - Star student(s) of the week:
 - I recognize good behaviour and kindness that my students show throughout the week
 - Doesn’t have to be perfect, but the student has to be continually trying to be better
 - I give them praise/ applause/ a piece of candy
 - When making seating charts - sometimes I let the kids choose, sometimes I pair them together, especially near the students they don’t usually interact with, to encourage friendships. I also ensure that students who I already know don’t get along don’t sit next to each other, to discourage fighting and resentment.