

Things You Should Pre-Think During the Summer

*A key step to making your first year at any new school successful and enjoyable is to prepare as early as you can. The two main areas you should pre-think and plan for are **curriculum** and **classroom management**. The better you prepare before school begins, the more you will enjoy your first year.*

Pre-Thinking Curriculum

1. Talk with your administrator to find out what your exact teaching assignment will be. (Master schedule included in this manual)

Get copies of textbooks, teacher manual, and any other instructional materials available. Read/study them during the summer. Most textbooks cover more than you will be able to actually teach during the year. Your instructional leader will be able to help you determine the most essential standards and objectives which students should learn to satisfy core requirements.

2. Get familiar with your classroom and the school.

Walk the school to get a feel where everything is located—the cafeteria, the media center, the counselors' offices, attendance office, copy center, gyms, auditorium, little theater, faculty room, etc.

Get your key from Liz Lloyd (financial secretary) as soon as possible. The sooner you can get settled in your classroom, the better.

3. Visit with your department leaders.

Your department has an Instructional Leader who will help you with curriculum and instruction, and an M&O Rep who will assist you regarding policy, procedure, budget, etc.

Ask your Instructional Leader to share the power standards, learning targets, and common assessments for the courses you will be teaching. The power standards have been developed collaboratively by your department team, and are the key, over-arching learning outcomes of the course. They describe the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that have endurance (should be remembered long-term), leverage (are transferable and valuable in other content areas), and are essential in preparing students to succeed at the next level in the same content area.

4. Outline a general unit scope and sequence learning plan for the entire year.

You obviously won't be able to plan all your lessons at once, but having a general map to follow will be key to your success. Hold yourself to it as much as possible--you will be surprised how much this will help. A district calendar is included in these materials. It has the dates and information you will need to organize your instructional year (term beginnings/endings, A/B day schedule, holidays, professional development days, etc.).

Pre-Thinking Classroom Management

If classroom rules and procedures are in place before school starts, then you will be well on your way to a great first year. Don't wait until problems arise to think about how you will handle them.

1. Get familiar with the student handbook.

The student handbook outlines important school policies and expectations for students. You should build your classroom policies and procedures around them. Remember that enforcing school-wide policies (attendance policy, electronics policy, dress standards, etc.) and general student behavior standards within your own classroom is not optional.

2. Set specific classroom procedures, and be prepared to teach them and rehearse them with students.

A smooth-running, efficient classroom is free of confusion and is an effective learning environment. A vast majority of the wasted time and behavior problems in the classroom are caused by the failure of students to follow established procedures and routines. Students cannot follow established procedures and routines if the teacher has not:

- a) Thought out how things should be done in the classroom
- b) Trained students to follow the procedures
- c) Rehearsed the procedures with the students until they become automatic

Harry Wong's book *The First Days of School* is an excellent resource for thinking about classroom procedures. Copies of this book are available for checkout in the Media Center. Any administrator can help you check out a copy during the summer.

3. Establish a routine for beginning and ending each class period.

Beginning class quickly and efficiently is vital because it sets the tone for the entire class period. Pre-think what you will do to start the class. Doing it the same way each day will make life much easier for you, and establish a consistency that builds your credibility in students' eyes.

For example....

- What are students expected to be doing when the bell rings?
- Exactly when is a student tardy?
- How will you handle tardies at the beginning of class?
- When/how will you take roll?
- When/how/where should students turn in homework due?
- How will you present the day's learning objectives, and put them in context with work accomplished previously?
- What should a student do when he/she has missed the previous class period?

How you end the class period is equally important as the way you begin it. The last 5 minutes can be precious time for reinforcing the learning which has just taken place, and preparing students for what is to come.

For example....

- How will you check for student understanding of the key learning objectives of the day?
- How much time do you need to allow for necessary clean up tasks?
- How/where/when will students turn in class work?
- How/where/when will you announce and post homework assignments?
- How will students know that they are dismissed?

4. Have a plan for classroom interruptions—students coming and going.

Students may need to leave class for a variety of reasons. Your job is to minimize, control, and monitor those reasons. Remember that during the time a student is assigned to your class, you are responsible (and may be legally liable) for what happens to him. In general, students' attitudes about leaving class will reflect the expectations you communicate. Amazingly, teachers who are tolerant of students leaving class have very high numbers of students with seemingly very small bladders. ☺ The harder you make it for students to leave class, the less you will have to deal with it. Establish expectations and policies for your classroom and communicate them to students early and often.

Pre-think the following...

- What are acceptable reasons to leave class?
- How can you monitor how many times students are leaving?
- How long can a student be gone?
- What is the consequence if he/she doesn't return by the expected time?
- Who will you allow to interrupt your teaching by coming to your door?
- Will students perceive that they are "missing anything" when they are out of class?

5. Have a plan for handling classroom materials and equipment.

You will have textbooks, equipment, supplies, etc. that need to be distributed, recorded, collected and stored. You will also be collecting, recording, and returning work to students. Pre-think a system to smoothly handle all the "stuff" that will be changing hands.

For example...

- Where are extra textbooks stored?
- Which storage areas can students access without your permission?
- How can a student check out a textbook or piece of equipment, etc?
- How/where/when will homework be collected and returned?

6. Establish a discipline plan to reinforce positive student behavior and eliminate negative student behavior.

While procedures concern how things are done, discipline concerns how students behave. Know what student behaviors you want and consider important. The more concretely you have defined them in your own mind, the better you will be able to clearly and confidently convey them to students. Communicate your expectations to students early and often. Which behaviors will you encourage, and which will you absolutely require? Keep your classroom “rules” simple, and then insist that they be followed.

The most powerful tool you have for encouraging appropriate student behavior in your class is a caring, respectful relationship. If students feel that you know, care for, and respect them, they will be unlikely to cause trouble for you. But of course, you may be challenged in the meantime. You need to have a plan in place to handle misbehavior. That plan should be fair and enforceable.

Sometimes new teachers feel that they are standing against the entire class when they have to confront a single, misbehaving student or a small group of students who are off-task. Remember this: if your rules are fair, and if you consistently apply them to all students in a way that does not demean or belittle them, then you will have 95% of your students standing with you. Your class wants and expects you to deal with students who are misbehaving. Recognizing the truth of this concept will empower you as you correct students who need it.

Humiliating students is not only inappropriate, but it is ineffective. Belittling one student undermines your relationship with all your students.

Make sure there is plenty of acknowledgement and reinforcement for what is going well in your class. Pat your students (and yourself) on the back for positive behavior and expectations met.

A list of Twenty-three Classroom Interventions follows this section. This “Love and Logic” list of possible actions, from very subtle to very direct, is a nice resource to have handy when you’re facing an immediate situation.

7. Establish a standard for student behavior during classroom instruction, during group work, and during individual seat work.

Expectations may be different during the different activities in your classroom. Communicate clearly to students how they should ask questions, participate during discussions, ask for help, etc. What process will you use to form groups? How long should that process take? How much would you like students to collaborate in their work? What behavior do you expect during tests? What should students do who are finished with their work or test? What will you do to keep students on task, facilitate group interaction, etc.?

8. Establish a routine for grading student work and updating Skyward.

Timely feedback is essential for student learning, and students and parents have a right to expect it. Your grades should be updated on a weekly basis, by 8:00AM on Mondays. Pre-think the best way/time for you to accomplish this professional responsibility.

9. Arrange/decorate your classroom.

What your room looks like communicates a great deal to students and parents about you and your class. So take time to send the message you want.

Consider the following:

- Desks are arranged so that you can see all students, and they can see you.
- There are clear and easy pathways through the room to facilitate student and teacher movement.
- Decorations and displays engage students in your subject.
- The room is clean, neat, and organized. Do you and your students know where things belong?
- Considering your teaching style, where is the best spot for your desk/computer?

10. Write a disclosure document for students and parents.

This document will need to be on file with your administrator. It should look professional and be free from errors. It should be fairly concise, and include the following:

- Name and description of the course
- Title and author of textbook
- List of any required materials
- Your name and contact information (phone extension, e-mail address, times you are available for parent appointments, etc.)
- Important policies (including that you will be following the school attendance and electronic device policies and dress code)
- Simple explanation of classroom rules and expectations
- Homework expectations (late work and make up policy, when students can expect assignments to be graded, etc.)
- Grading policies and standards, including grading scale, extra credit possibilities (if any), etc.
- Any other information you feel parents or students need to know up front (fixed due dates, large projects, field trip information, fees, etc.)
- Detachable sheet which parents and students sign stating that they have read and understood the disclosure document. This sheet should be returned to you for your files.
- On same detachable section, you might also request contact information for students and/or parents, and ask if there are any special requests or concerns of which you should be aware.

First Day Suggestions

Creating a comfortable learning atmosphere the first day is your best chance to make a good impression with your students. Here are a few ideas.

1. Greet each student at the door. Be cheerful and friendly. Look, dress, and act professionally. On this day, it is very important that you establish a presence for yourself.
2. On the first day, it may be easier to just invite students to take a seat and not deal with the hassle of a seating chart. Explain that next class period they will be arranged into a seating chart. You may decide to keep the students' self-selected arrangement, or you may choose the arrangement you think works best. Students should understand that where people sit in the classroom is up to you, and that it may be changed at any time for any reason.
3. Quickly take care of any administrative tasks you have to do (taking roll, filling out forms, etc.). If you aren't using the textbook depository, hold back assigning books just yet because there will be enrollment changes for a few days.
4. Introduce yourself by telling students your name, spelling it correctly for them, stating how you expect to be addressed, and telling them a little about yourself—educational experience, teaching experience, family, personal hobbies, why you became a teacher, etc.
5. Realize that most often, each student in your class will know less than a third of the other class members. Classes work best when students know and like each other, so you might want to have a “get acquainted” activity that involves all class members and helps them learn about each other. Design it so that even shy students can feel safe and comfortable participating.
6. Give an overview of the class—subject content, your hopes, expectations, possible highlights, daily class routines, etc.
7. Tell students why you love this subject. Tell them what learning about this subject will add to their lives. Tell them why they should care about what you have to teach them.
8. Some teachers review the disclosure document on the first day. Others prefer to begin with something more fun, and save the disclosure document for day two. Do what you think will work best for you and the tone you are trying to set for your class. While it is important to review the disclosure document and establish your classroom policies at the beginning of the term, remember that you will still need to communicate important items again and again as the term proceeds. Students are being bombarded with initial class information right now. Because they “heard it” once doesn't mean that they “got it”.

First Two Week Musts

“Well-managed classrooms provide an environment in which teaching and learning can flourish. But a well-managed classroom doesn’t just appear out of nowhere. It takes a good deal of effort to create—and the person who is most responsible for creating it is the teacher.”

--Robert Marzano, *Classroom Management that Works*

1. Explain your classroom management plan (classroom procedures and discipline) and then consistently work your plan.

Repeatedly verbalize your behavioral expectations for students. Establish and teach your procedures and classroom rules to students early to save lots of effort and frustration throughout the year. Remember that it is much easier to loosen up later than it is to tighten up later. Be consistent!

2. Discuss class expectations and your grading procedures in depth.

Though this information is included in your disclosure document, don’t assume that students remember it. During these first two weeks, take the time to walk students through your policies in a non-threatening way. The best way to avoid negative situations later is to make sure that students clearly understand what is expected. Coach them in what they are supposed to do by walking them through the processes and repeatedly verbalizing your academic expectations. Practice your procedures for turning in papers, and expect students to do it exactly as you have asked. Review rubrics, reiterate make-up policies, testing expectations, etc. Explain why you do things a certain way. The more clearly students understand the reasons for your requests, the better they will be able to meet your expectations, or accept the consequences when they don’t.

3. Learn student names as soon as possible.

There is power in knowing who your students are by name, face, friends, personality, and interests.

4. Use a class seating chart.

A seating chart is a largely under-rated management tool. It facilitates roll taking, and helps you learn names quickly. Once pictures are uploaded into Skyward, ask one of your colleagues to show you how to print a seating chart with photos. (This will be especially helpful to subs.) Determining who sits where is your role as a teacher. You can maximize student involvement and minimize behavior problems by strategically placing students in the classroom.

5. Help your students get to know you.

Reveal a bit of who you are, how you think, why you teach, what you hope for during this time. Show them that you have a personality. Establish yourself as a partner in their learning, not as an adversary. The most important thing to share with students is your love for your subject. As you open up with your students, remember

that you are their teacher, not their buddy. Be professional, and avoid undue familiarity. Setting a warm but professional tone in your classroom will help you for the rest of the year.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are my contract hours?

You are expected to be in the building from 7:15 to 2:45. As much as possible, be in your classroom before and after school so students who need help can get it.

Your prep period is not a time to take care of personal errands. It is intended to give you time to plan lessons, prepare instructional materials and arrange for labs and equipment, coordinate with other teachers, meet with parents, grade papers, etc. If you leave the building, it should only be for a purpose that is associated with teaching, and should be cleared with an administrator. You should sign out with the main office, so that the receptionist will be able to assist those who may be looking for you.

2. What is flex time, and what are my responsibilities?

Flex time is a 25-minute period on Tuesdays through Fridays (except on assembly days, etc.) where various opportunities for remediation and enrichment are available to students. Students who have a D, F, I, or NC grade are required to attend a flex session. Attending flex is optional for all other students. The goal of flex time is to provide extra time and support for struggling students, to provide something extra for students who are advanced, and to motivate all students to keep up on their schoolwork in order to qualify for the freedom to determine for themselves how best to use this time. The success of flex time is dependent on high expectations, and trusting relationships throughout the school.

Every faculty member will have a flex time assignment, either in their own classroom, or fulfilling another school-wide responsibility. Your department's specific schedule of offerings will be developed during your collaboration time.

During the first two to three weeks of each semester, orientation activities will be provided to all students during flex time, covering topics such as the attendance policy, extra-curricular activities available, school mission and vision, etc. Materials will be provided by the flex committee, and you will be responsible for delivering the orientation to your third period students.

3. Where/when does the faculty eat lunch?

The lunch period is approximately 30 minutes. Many faculty members eat in the faculty room, some departments eat together in one of their classrooms, and some teachers prefer to simply eat while they work in their own rooms. Do whatever you prefer, but realize that very little time exists for socializing with colleagues. Lunch is a prime time to build friendships, share stories, and find out that whatever is happening to you is completely normal!

The faculty room has a refrigerator and microwave for common use. If you buy lunch, it is easiest to establish an account in the cafeteria and charge against it. And don't wait in the lunch line! Teachers should go straight to the front.

4. How do I get classroom supplies?

Most classroom supplies like staplers, tape, white board markers, etc. will be given to you at the beginning of the school year. If you run out during the year, you can get more in the copy center, but may need to purchase supplies from departmental funds and/or your legislative money. Beginning teachers are given more legislative money to help them get started with classroom needs.

5. How can I schedule a computer lab for my class?

Labs are scheduled through Cathy or Cindy in the Media Center. You can check availability on the school website (<http://timpanogos.alpinedistrict.org/>). Click on the Lab Schedule link in the Teacher Resources section of the homepage. Once you see that the lab is available, call the Media Center and they will reserve it for you.

6. What instructional materials and media are available to me within my department?

Many departments and individual teachers have purchased DVDs, tapes, posters, etc. which are stored in individual teachers' rooms or a department storage room. Check with your Instructional Leader to become familiar with those resources. Talk with teachers who teach your same courses to find out what they have and how you can reserve it.

7. How do I check out materials and equipment from the THS Media Center?

The Media Center has a wonderful collection of books, periodicals, DVDs and videos, etc. for your use. Equipment such as projectors, video/DVD players, video cameras, etc. should be reserved through the media specialist. Because the equipment is in high demand, please schedule it only for the periods you will be using it. Cathy will give you any training you will need for using the equipment.

8. How do I order district media DVDs, videos, and equipment?

To order instructional media materials or equipment from Alpine School District, go to the district web page (www.alpine.k12.ut.us) click on Employees, and then on Alpine Instructional Media Center. You will find instructions and resources there.

9. How do I use purchase orders, use the school's credit card, or get reimbursed for money I spent on school materials?

The key idea here is PLAN AHEAD!! Spur of the moment purchases cause problems for you and Liz, the financial secretary. You need to get approval from your department M&O Rep and an administrator to spend school funds. Any purchase over \$1000 must go through a bidding process. Liz will walk you through the process, but remember-- plan ahead.

Using a school credit card is the best and easiest way to purchase items. You get the appropriate approvals, check out a card from Liz, buy what you need, and return the card and receipt to Liz as soon as possible.

Remember that school purchases are tax exempt. You will NOT be reimbursed for any tax charged on school purchases you make. Make sure you have the appropriate tax exempt information with you when you buy.

10. What is the policy for being in the building during non-school hours?

The custodians open the building by about 6:30 each morning, and lock up around 4:00 pm. You will have a key to your classroom, and one to the nearest outside door. Other areas of the building will be inaccessible to you. You are allowed to be in your classroom during non-school hours, but you are responsible for maintaining the security of the school. Make sure the door is locked behind you as you enter the building. Triple check that the door is locked as you leave the building.

11. What are the rules about decorating/hanging things in my classroom?

Use good judgment about decorating your room. You are a steward of a public building. Do not do anything that will permanently damage or harm the room, or that might compromise student safety. Certain color schemes have been approved for classrooms—please check with your administrator and the head custodian if you think your room needs painting.

12. What is the best and easiest way to acknowledge major personal events of colleagues?

THS has a Sunshine Fund, to which faculty and staff members each contribute \$2.00 per month. When a colleague has a new baby, wedding, major illness, family death, etc. a gift is purchased from all of us, using this fund. Please arrange with Carolyn Anderson to have \$2.00 automatically deducted from each check.

13. Where is a good place to look for information I need about curriculum, policies, calendaring, etc.?

Get familiar with these important websites:

Timpanogos High School <http://timpanogos.alpinedistrict.org>

Alpine School District <http://www.alpine.k12.ut.us>

Utah State Office of Education: <http://schools.utah.gov>

14. Can I check my e-mail from home?

Yes. Click on Groupwise on the top of the Timpanogos web site. You can login from there.

Questions For Your Department Leaders

Much of the information you need is specific to your department. Knowing the answers to these questions before you start your planning will be most helpful. Then after you get started, you may need to ask again. 😊

1. What are the state, district, and school core curriculum requirements for my subjects?
2. How does what I teach fit into the scope and sequence of learning for the entire department's curriculum?
3. What power standards, learning targets, and common assessments have already been developed by our team for the courses I am teaching?
4. What instructional media are available to me within the department?
5. What department funds, if any, do I have available for my use?
6. How do I go about requesting department funds?
7. Who else teaches what I teach?
8. When I have concerns and problems, to whom should I go for help, guidance, and feedback?
9. Where and when does our team meet for Monday collaboration?
10. How can I best contribute to our team's goals?
11. Who is the administrator over our department?

***While any of your team members will be happy to help you and answer your questions, the Instructional Leader is particularly able to assist you regarding curriculum and instruction, and the Management and Operations (M&O) Rep with issues related to policy, budgets, equipment, etc.*

Being Professional

The following are basic standards for professional behavior at Timpanogos High School.

1. Deal appropriately with students, parents, and faculty and staff members. Be honest, open, and considerate in your relationships.
2. Dress appropriately. Dress as a professional. Wear clothing that is clean, neat, not too tight, too loose, or too short. Women need to watch their necklines. You often will be bending over to help students and need to be aware of what can be seen. Wear appropriate foot wear (flip flops are not considered appropriate).
3. Use appropriate language in the classroom and in private conversations with students and parents. Profanity is not acceptable in the classroom. Respect the sensitivities of others.
4. Behave professionally in your relationships with students. You are a teacher with professional responsibility for the care of minor students. The differentiation of those roles is significant. There is a fine line between building a warm and caring relationship with students and becoming too personal with them. Be aware of that line and do not cross over into unprofessional behavior, e.g. spending private time with a student, exchanging personal text messages, or giving students access to your personal Facebook page or personal blog.
5. The intent of the electronics policy applies to teachers as well as students. Cell phones should not be used during class time, and computers are provided for the conducting of school, not personal, business.
6. Honor contract hours. Open your classroom on time, and be available to work with students and parents.
7. Update grades on Skyward weekly, by 8:00AM each Monday.
8. Secure your computer. Password protect important information. Do not allow students on Skyward—ever.
9. Be positive with colleagues. Recognize that all of us are doing our best to build our programs and to help individual students. Work with others, not against them. Speak positively of fellow faculty members to students and community members.
10. Attend your meetings. You are an important part of Team Timpanogos. Team unity requires that we all be where we are supposed to be, when we are supposed to be there, ready to contribute to the success of the team.

New Teacher Induction Committee

Chair—Diane Wanamaker
Co-Chair—Bonnie Jennings
Master Teacher Consultant— TBD

Our goal as a New Teacher Induction Committee, along with your departmental team, and indeed the entire school, is to help you to be the very best teacher you can be. The first few years of teaching can be very challenging. There is a huge learning curve. Mistakes and temporary failures are inevitable, and are powerful steps in the learning process. Know that you won't be alone. We want you to be successful, and we will be your partner and celebrate your progress with you all along the way.

You will receive the following support through the Timpanogos High School New Teacher Induction Program:

- Weekly collaboration with your departmental team
- Monthly New Teacher Meetings—to work together on common concerns and completion of EYE requirements
- Administrative walk-through visits
- Visits and feedback from an independent Master Teacher Consultant
- Survey to receive feedback from your students
- Available video-taped self-observation and analysis
- One day observation of another teacher(s) in his/her classroom

Entry Years Enhancement Program Requirements

Entry Years Enhancement (EYE) is a state-wide structured support and enhancement program for Level I (provisional) teachers in order to provide them with school, district, and state support for a three-year period. The goal of EYE is to encourage Level I teachers to develop successful teaching skills and strategies as described in the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC).

In order to facilitate your development as a professional educator, you will receive support and guidance in completing the following requirements during your first 3 years at Timpanogos High School:

1. Achieve a score of 160 or higher on the Praxis II—Principles of Learning and Teaching exam.
2. Complete a portfolio of artifacts and reflections regarding the Utah Professional Teacher Standards. (Don't stress, you will be helped all along the way.)

3. Successfully satisfy district evaluations each year.
4. Complete the Understanding by Design professional development course here at THS (offered every other year).

Upon completion of these requirements, the district will recommend you to the Utah State Board of Education for a five-year, Level 2 Utah Professional Educator License.

Praxis II Test

Praxis—Principles of Learning and Teaching is designed to assess a beginning teacher's pedagogical knowledge. It assesses a teacher's understanding of such areas as human growth and development, classroom management, instructional design and delivery techniques, and evaluation and assessment.

The test must be successfully taken within three years. Level I teachers register for the test through Educational Testing Service at www.ets.org.

The Praxis II Series Registration Bulletin is free online. The test is given on specified dates; the registration fee is \$35 and the cost of the test is \$80. ETS will forward scores to the Utah State Office of Education. Level I teachers who do not achieve a passing score of 160 may retake the test, but only once a year. Teachers may access test preparation materials through Alpine School District Media, or through the THS Media Center. The district also offers a professional development strand offering preparation helps.

Portfolio

An entry-level portfolio is required by the EYE program. It is a collection of the beginning teacher's teaching materials and activities and is submitted for approval to the building's principal during a Level I teacher's third year of teaching. It is to be submitted at the end of the teaching year in May. The portfolio should:

1. Be based upon INTASC principles (upon which the Utah Professional Teacher Standards are based).
2. Include teaching artifacts.
3. Include reflection, and explanation of artifacts.
4. Be a vehicle for collaboration with mentors.
5. Provide evidence of professional growth.
6. Provide evidence of content knowledge and of pedagogy.

Provisional teachers at Timpanogos High School are required to complete ten portfolio entries (two for each of the five standards). You will receive more materials and tools regarding portfolio development at the monthly new teacher meetings, but here is the basic format for each entry:

Part I. The What and Why

This section explains the problem, goal, and problem-solving plan.

Part II. Personal Reflections

Thoughts, ideas, and insights about what you learned by implementing the plan.

Part III. The Artifact

Briefly explain the artifact you have included.

Part IV. What's Next?

How will this experience continue to affect your teaching?

Understanding by Design

The Understanding by Design course, based on the work of authors Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe, is offered every other year to Timpanogos faculty members. The essence of the course is to answer the question: *How do we make it more likely—by our design—that more students really understand what they are asked to learn?* The principles taught in Understanding by Design are at the foundation of our conversations about, and efforts to achieve, quality teaching and learning in our school. The course is held in two summer days and several after-school sessions early in the year. You should plan to participate in this training in your second or third year at Timpanogos.

Teaching Standards