

Plan relentlessly.

Create back up plans and plans for teaching students of varying abilities.

Set high and consistent expectations.

Reinforce positive behavior and academic performance expectations constantly. Notice and say something when they meet your goals.

Respect.

Teach it and model it at all times in the classroom and outside of the classroom ... always.

Reach out for support early and all the time.

Don't wait for a problem to get out of hand. Communicate with parents early in the year or before it begins. Ask your local education association for help. Document everything and let administrators in the school know about problems before they get out hand.

Get involved in a school activity. Don't feel you have to do everything.

Participate in an extracurricular activity that strengthens your relationship with colleagues, parents and students and that you might enjoy. On the flip side, know when to say "no." You get to have a life outside of your career.

Support one another and seek wisdom from others.

Look for team teaching assignments and lots of chances to work with other first-year teachers so you can support one another. Also, find a mentor if you don't have one assigned to you. Mentors can be lifesavers. They can help you keep your perspective.

Roll with the punches.

Surprises can be fun. They can be enriching for you and you can feel good that you were flexible enough to meet the challenge.

Fight isolation in all aspects of your work.

Work closely with counselors and other school personnel who can respond to your students' social problems. You don't have to fix everything by yourself.

Take care of yourself.

Block off time in your calendar to take care of yourself physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Renew your energy. Cut yourself some slack. Treat yourself the way you treat your students: with patience, compassion and respect.

Love learning, love your students and love teaching!

But know that there are days when you won't.

These tips offered by both first-year and veteran teachers are taken from an article in What to Expect Your First Year of Teaching, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, US Department of Education.