COOPERATING TEACHER

The cooperating teacher is in a unique position to facilitate the professional growth of the teacher candidate through a successful and satisfying student teaching experience. The cooperating teacher can demonstrate in a practical way the many challenges of teaching, the responsibilities that must be assumed, and the magnitude of a career in teaching. Much of the success of the student teaching experience depends upon the development of a close relationship between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher.

The cooperating teacher also has the responsibility of communicating the progress of the student teacher to the university supervisor. The cooperating teacher and university supervisor must work effectively together to facilitate a successful student teaching experience.

The cooperating teacher must meet state guidelines for a cooperating teacher, and be recommended by the school administration.

A. Interpersonal Relationship with the Teacher Candidate

The orientation period affords the cooperating teacher an opportunity to dispel some of the anxieties that the student teacher may possess. The cooperating teacher should:

1. become acquainted with the student teacher’s personal and educational background.
2. accept the teacher candidate as a co-teacher, but recognize the leadership responsibilities required to be a cooperating teacher.
3. welcome and introduce the student teacher to student and staff.
4. provide information concerning school policies and regulations.
5. be available for support, suggestions, and conferences.
6. notify the university supervisor of progress or concerns.
7. help the teacher candidate with ideas for the Teaching for Learning Capstone (TLC) unit

B. Classroom Procedures and Techniques

The cooperating teacher serves as a model for the teacher candidate by developing insight into successful teaching styles, providing an understanding of the teaching-learning process, and enhancing understanding of teacher-pupil relationships. To introduce classroom procedures and techniques, the cooperating teacher can:

1. demonstrate successful planning and teaching styles.
2. point out variety in methods of presentation and be open to incorporating co-teaching strategies.
3. give support and recommend resources for creative planning on the part of the candidate.
4. exhibit skill in effective classroom management.
5. give suggestions in matters of motivation and classroom management.
6. stress the use of a variety of materials, including technology.
7. demonstrate and review effective evaluation techniques.
8. utilize and contribute to the reflective thinking process.
C. Guidance of Student Teaching

A cooperating teacher should provide an atmosphere which is conducive to personal exploration, allows freedom to experience trial and error, and furthers the discovery of effective teaching techniques. Careful planning is necessary to guide the teacher candidate in developing an effective and personalized teaching style. The cooperating teacher should:

1. acquaint the student teacher with routine matters.
2. share in planning, implementing, evaluating, and reflective strategies.
3. delegate teaching duties gradually.
4. encourage student teachers to develop and implement their own ideas.
5. provide continuous feedback.
6. cooperatively help set personal goals and formulate a philosophy of education.
7. exhibit professional attitudes.

D. Evaluation of the Student Teacher

Evaluation of the student teacher must be a continuous and on-going process throughout the student teaching experience. The main purpose of evaluation is to provide the teacher candidate with verbal and written feedback so he or she recognizes strengths and weaknesses and can set goals for improvement in areas of weakness. Cooperating teachers are urged to hold three way conference sessions with the student teacher and university supervisor to provide feedback and evaluation of performance. Cooperating teachers are asked to complete evaluation forms on the student teacher's performance (see appendix). These forms indicate and communicate areas of strength and weakness. The forms help the teacher candidate realize what progress has been made to that point, and what must be done to continue toward successful conclusion of student teaching.

Varied evaluative procedures are utilized by the cooperating teacher.

1. Informal evaluation assessments may include the following:
   a. daily exchange of teaching ideas and suggestions.
   b. written comments on the student teacher's lesson plans.
   c. brief conferences following teaching experiences.
   d. use of audio and video tapes.

2. Formal evaluation assessments should include the following:
   a. prearranged conferences to discuss the student teacher's progress.
   b. completion of the ongoing student teaching evaluation form (see appendix).
   c. completion of the final student teaching evaluation form for inclusion in the teacher candidate's file (see appendix). This form is completed by the cooperating teacher and returned to the Education Office. The cooperating teacher and university supervisor should confer as this step is completed.
UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR

The university supervisor is assigned by the Director of Field Experiences to serve as a coordinator between the university and the cooperating school. A basic responsibility of the university supervisor is to foster a friendly, cooperative, and effective working relationship. The university supervisor will review the supervisor's responsibilities, as stated in the Handbook for Student Teaching and complete the agreement to work for a successful student teaching experience.

It is important for the university supervisor to:

A. Communicate Student Teaching Objectives
   The university supervisor will communicate and promote the objectives of the student teaching experience to cooperating school personnel.

B. Serve as Liaison
   An important role of the university supervisor is to serve as a link between the university and the cooperating school, cooperating teacher, and student teacher. The visits of the supervisor help to maintain unity of action in the overall student teaching experience.

C. Assist Cooperating Teacher
   The university supervisor is in a position to assist the cooperating teacher in guiding the student teacher. The supervisor can help focus purposeful conferencing, assist in resolving problems that may develop in the program, and participate in three-way conferencing.

D. Act as Resource Person
   An area where the university supervisor can be of special service to the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate is in the role of resource person. The supervisor can:
   1. share innovative methods, procedures, and materials.
   2. share research findings and current trends.

E. Provide Guidance for Student Teacher (Teacher Candidate)
   Although the cooperating teacher carries the major responsibility for guiding the development of the student teacher, the university supervisor also plays an important role in providing guidance. The supervisor will:
   1. make regular classroom visits.
   2. minimum of four observations during 12-week student teaching assignment
   3. have a conference after each observation.
   4. complete written evaluation for each visit.
   5. offer praise and encouragement.
   6. offer tactful and constructive criticism.
   7. provide any assistance requested.
   8. inform a teacher candidate of personal habits or practices that may be interfering with successful student teaching.
9. provide support for TLC unit or refer TLC questions to Director of Field Experience.

F. Evaluation Performance of Student Teacher (Teacher Candidate)

The university supervisor and the cooperating teacher share the responsibility of evaluating the student teacher. The university supervisor will:

1. encourage triad conferences between the teacher candidate, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor.
2. confer with the cooperating teacher regarding the teacher candidate's progress.
3. be available for special consultation and additional observations, if needed.
4. work with the Director of Field Experiences for a reassignment of a teacher candidate if the need arises.
5. recommend removal of a teacher candidate that, for a variety of reasons, is not capable of handling the classes, is not prepared in a subject area, or has not the personal characteristics necessary to deal effectively with students. This decision will be made jointly with the cooperating school, the Director of Field Experiences, and the teacher candidate. Student teachers may appeal any decision in writing to the Teacher Education Committee. Candidates wishing to appeal any recommendation of the Teacher Education Committee or a decision of the Dean of Education should consult the Student Handbook, which details final appeals procedures under the University Hearings and Appeals Board.