Responsibilities of Teacher Candidates, Mentor Teachers, and University Supervisors in Student Teaching

Following is a list of the responsibilities of the teacher candidate, mentor teacher, and university supervisor during a candidate’s student teaching assignment.

Responsibilities of the Teacher Candidate

Before the assignment begins:

Professionalism
- Consider student teaching assignment a full-time job, and plan accordingly.
- Be available for student teaching workshops and meetings, scheduled during the time period before student teaching begins or after it ends.
- Adhere to professional ethics (dress code, privileged communications).
- Become familiar with the public school protocol regarding student teaching.
- Be prepared to student teach according to the school site’s academic calendar, not the university calendar.
- Discuss with your mentor teacher the best method to inform him or her of any unforeseen absences from student teaching.
- Be available to conference with the mentor teacher before or after school, in response to the needs of the mentor teacher in preparation for the student teaching experience.
- Approach the assignment with a positive attitude, one that will allow necessary adjustment in teaching practices in order to improve.
- Notify the university supervisor and mentor teacher of all changes in address, phone, e-mail, etc.

Students/School/Community
- Familiarize yourself with students and their backgrounds and the culture of the school and the community.
- Become familiar with the community around the school and its resources.
- Find out procedures for using equipment and obtaining supplies from the media center, teachers’ workroom, and/or resource room. Assist in preparing material for handouts, teaching aids.
- Attend functions like “Back-to-School Night,” Open House, and PTA meetings with your mentor teacher (unless it interferes with a university course).
- Introduce yourself to the administrators, faculty, students, and staff.

Planning and Instruction
- During your observation/participation weeks, in advance of student teaching, set a regular planning time with your mentor teacher that you will commit to on a weekly basis.
• Determine with your mentor teacher the assessment tools and procedures that should be included in your lesson plans.
• Discuss with the mentor teacher school rules for managing discipline problems and the mentor teacher preferred techniques for classroom management.
• Obtain texts and teaching materials from the mentor teacher.
• Observe the mentor teacher in class; familiarize yourself with teaching of skill subjects, standards of behavior for different activities, class routines and procedures, and safety drills.
• Ask clarifying and probing questions about what you observe.

During the assignment:

Professionalism
• Approach each assignment with a positive attitude, one that will allow necessary adjustment in teaching practices in order to improve.
• Be punctual and attend daily. Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to class time.
• Keep an ongoing, reflective log of your experiences, challenges, concerns and satisfactions in a student teaching journal to be submitted to your university supervisor.
• Keep communication with the mentor teacher and university supervisor open, discussing problems or concerns as they arise.
• Take the initiative in asking questions and requesting materials. Attend staff meetings, professional conferences, and parents' meetings. Ask to sit in on one or more parent-teacher conferences.
• Learn to conduct parent conferences in an objective and professional manner.
• Become involved in classroom, playground and lunch activities; give help and assistance when needed.
• Follow through on the expectations for the classroom aide as established by the mentor teacher.
• Attend regularly scheduled student teaching seminars. Seminars provide teacher candidates and faculty an opportunity to articulate theory and practice and address issues that arise in candidates’ experiences in the classroom.
• Express appreciation at the conclusion of your assignment to all administrators, faculty, and staff who contributed to your learning experience.

Planning and Teaching
• Maintain a mutually satisfactory daily conference time with your mentor teacher. Make a sincere effort to keep communication open, discussing problems or concerns as they arise.
• Utilize the mentor teacher’s methods and materials while you begin to know the students, their learning styles, and motivational needs. If you then wish to adopt different methods and materials, discuss your ideas with your mentor teacher.
• Submit written lesson plans, following the program’s required format at least 24 hours in advance of the teaching period and retain these plans in a cumulative student teaching folder. The mentor teacher may require you to submit in writing your proposed sequence
of materials and activities for the following week on Fridays, with a copy to the
university supervisor.

- Evaluate lesson plans and the classroom implementation as objectively as possible and
  confer with the mentor teacher on a daily basis.
- Maintain a Student Teaching Binder which includes a planbook and lesson plans with all
  handouts for students. This binder must be readily accessible in the classroom for review
  at any time by the mentor teacher and the university supervisor.

Assessment and Grading

- Assess students’ content knowledge and skills and use results in planning for instruction.
- Keep a roll and gradebook and confer frequently with the mentor teacher on the number
  and types of entries.
Responsibilities of the Mentor Teacher

Before the assignment begins:

Professionalism
- Meet with the university supervisor to discuss the nature of the field experience and specific information regarding the candidate’s involvement in the classroom.
- Include the teacher candidate in school staff meetings, workshops, parent conferences, and other meetings, e.g., PTA.
- Acquaint the teacher candidate with professional organizations and encourage him/her to attend conferences.

Students/School/Community
- Inform your class, aides, volunteers, and parents that a teacher candidate will be joining you and what his/her role will be. Clarify how the teacher candidate will gradually assume full classroom responsibilities under your mentorship.
- Introduce your teacher candidate as an associate or junior colleague to your pupils, the faculty, administrators, community persons, parents, and staff.
- Discuss with your teacher candidate the expected arrival and departure times based on the policies of your particular administration and faculty.
- Inform the teacher candidate regarding school/district policies, coverage of district curriculum, appropriate lesson plans, appropriate grading procedures, and contacts with parents.
- Inform your teacher candidate about policies concerning school personnel and resources, including fire drills and other safety procedures.
- Familiarize your teacher candidate with specific health and equipment requirements of individual students.

Planning, Teaching, and Student Assessment
- Provide the teacher candidate with work space and materials.
- Establish a regular time each day to conference with the teacher candidate. Encourage self-evaluation on the part of the teacher candidate.
- Prepare a list of suggestions for directed observations, i.e., routine procedures, behavior management, special techniques for handling groups and special health needs.
- Discuss and plan the teacher candidate’s schedule for participation in classroom activities.
- Help the teacher candidate plan appropriate goals, content and seatwork.
- Inform your teacher candidate of the procedures and practices used by the school for managing disciplinary problems.
- Discuss your goals and procedures for classroom management.
- Train the teacher candidate in the official use of the roll and gradebook(s).
**Assessment of the Teacher Candidate**

- Take time to discuss your expectations for the teacher candidate in terms of responsibilities, contributions, performance level and how you will evaluate the teacher candidate.
- Discuss and agree upon the criteria for evaluating the teacher candidate’s lesson plans.

**During the assignment:**

**Professionalism**

- Include the teacher candidate in faculty and parent meetings, parent conferences, and professional workshops as scheduled.
- Acquaint the teacher candidate with professional organizations and encourage attendance at conferences.
- Meet with the teacher candidate and university supervisor during planned visit of the supervisor to the teacher’s classroom.

**Planning, Instruction, and Assessment**

- Share your planning with the teacher candidate.
- Review the teacher candidate’s daily lesson plans.
- Model effective teaching techniques and approaches for the teacher candidate.
- Be present in the room when the teacher candidate is teaching the class in order to give accurate feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of lessons.
- Demonstrate your classroom management procedures for the teacher candidate.
- Help students to adjust to the increasing role of the teacher candidate in the classroom.
- Unless you are team teaching with the teacher candidate, redirect students to the teacher candidate if they come to you for assistance.
- Assist in selection of pupil(s) for assessment and individualized instructional planning.
- Invite the teacher candidate to visit the classroom(s) of other teachers to learn different teaching techniques.
- Allow the teacher candidate to assume full responsibility for teaching in the area of emphases during the last week of student teaching during the first assignment OR during the last two weeks (10 consecutive days) of the second assignment.

**Troubleshooting**

- Inform the university supervisor immediately if the teacher candidate is having difficulties or is not demonstrating satisfactory progress in meeting the Teaching Performance Expectations.

**Assessment of the Teacher Candidate**

- Write out observation comments and evaluations for activities in which the candidate is engaged. Provide the teacher candidate with a copy and keep another copy on file.
- Conference with the teacher candidate at the time of midterm and final evaluation to explain the ratings, being careful to denote the teacher candidate’s strengths and areas for improvement.
• Complete and discuss the midterm and final evaluation forms with the teacher candidate and university supervisor.
Responsibilities of the University Supervisor

**Students/School/Community**
- Become familiar with school programs, schedules, and staff.
- Become familiar with the candidate’s previous teaching experiences.
- Inform yourself as to the school schedule for lunch, recess, and special events, so you can schedule your visits at opportune times. Observe school protocol during these visits.

**Visitations**
- Schedule at least six visits (not including initial “welcome” visit) to the classrooms of teacher candidates and be punctual for those visits.
- Plan to observe entire lessons and provide feedback to the candidates.
- Observe the teacher candidate in the classroom on a regular basis and complete an observation form for each visit. Schedule additional observations if you feel they are needed or if requested by the mentor teacher or teacher candidate.
- Schedule two and three-way conferences with the mentor teacher and/or the teacher candidate at regular intervals and at times that are mutually convenient, as appropriate. Provide the mentor teacher and teacher candidate with written summaries of the conference, including specific objectives for the teacher candidate.
- Provide resources for the mentor teacher and teacher candidate as requested or when appropriate.

**Troubleshooting**
- Be alert if interpersonal problems arise between the teacher candidate and mentor teacher and be receptive to the ideas and suggestions for change from both.
- Inform the Field Experience Director of concerns involving the teacher candidate.
- Discuss problems or concerns you may have with the teacher candidate’s skills, or the appropriateness of the setting with the mentor teacher and with the Field Experience Director.
- Work collaboratively to establish effective intervention strategies in support of the teacher candidate (e.g., reassignment, extension of assignment, or withdraw from the program, if necessary).

**Assessment of the Teacher Candidate**
- Discuss the content of feedback and criteria for evaluation with the mentor teacher and the teacher candidate. Complete and discuss mid-term and final evaluations with the mentor teacher and candidate.