



Student Teaching Handbook

University Supervisor/ Mentor Teacher Guide

Fall 2023 – Spring 2024

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West Chester University of Pennsylvania
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<https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/clinicalExperiences.aspx>

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THE STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Thank you for your willingness to mentor a West Chester University teacher candidate this semester. Student teaching is the “capstone” event of each teacher candidate’s preparation. Our shared goal is to prepare each candidate to become a confident, caring and highly effective professional and to be a leader in the educational field. Your commitment and dedication to this mentoring process will help develop an emerging teacher who will collaboratively have an impact on generations of students to come. Through your guidance, the teacher candidate will begin the process of translating educational theory into classroom practices and instructional strategies which will impact each student’s achievement.

The time and dedication that you are devoting to successfully develop a new teacher is evidence of your willingness to help mold the next generation of teachers. We trust that your participation as a mentor teacher will be a professionally enriching experience for you.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Regulations

Rules and regulations set forth by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania establish the framework for West Chester University's Teacher Education Program. The University has been given program approval by the Commonwealth for the certification of teachers. Through periodic review by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the University maintains program approval leading to certification of teachers.

Preparation and Assignment of Student Teacher Candidates

The primary purpose of the student teaching experience is to provide an opportunity for the acquisition and demonstration of instructional competence by the teacher candidate. Mentor teacher assignments for student teaching are made by the Executive Director of the Office of Clinical Experiences and Candidate Services. Teacher candidates are assigned to specific mentor teachers, not to a school or school district. All student teaching assignments are full-day, full-time experiences for which students receive 12 semester hours of credit.

GENERAL RULES AND POLICIES FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES

TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES

The first obligation of the teacher candidate is to fulfill as effectively as possible every role of the teacher. The teacher candidate is urged to participate as fully as possible in the activities of the host school. Student teaching is the culminating activity of the Teacher Education Program and is a full-time responsibility. The teacher candidate’s actions have an impact, not only upon the teacher candidate, but also upon the P-12 students, the mentor teacher, the hosting school, and West Chester University. Therefore, the student teaching experience must take precedence over all other commitments.

ATTENDANCE WITHIN PLACEMENT

The teacher candidate is responsible for attending school the full teaching day. The teacher candidate reports to the assigned school at the same time the mentor teacher is required to report and is to remain until the end of the scheduled day (following the same schedule as the mentor teacher). Teacher candidates are expected to observe the same rules and punctuality which apply to the mentor teacher. Teacher candidates follow the calendar of their assigned school/district.

Because of the value of this professional experience, teacher candidates are expected to participate in all aspects of teaching including, but not limited to attending parent-teacher conferences, workshops, faculty meetings, and other professional activities if permitted by the building administration.

SEMINAR ATTENDANCE

In addition, each teacher candidate is required to attend a professional seminar which is conducted concurrently with student teaching. The seminar is conducted by the university supervisor and is designed to consider practical problems encountered while teaching and to develop a functional understanding of Pennsylvania School Law. Attendance and participation in the seminar are factored into the teacher candidate's final grade for student teaching.

ABSENCES

Teacher candidates are permitted **five** days of absence for the entire semester. These absences may be used for illness, emergencies, conferences, or interviews. Absences for conferences and interviews should be cleared with the mentor teacher and the university supervisor at least two days in advance. ***In the case of an absence, teacher candidates must notify their mentor teacher and the university supervisor of the impending absence as soon as it becomes apparent that an absence will be necessary.*** The university supervisor and mentor teacher will keep a record of the date and the reason for each absence.

All absences from student teaching in excess of five days must be made up by the teacher candidate. Arrangements for such make-up days must be made with the university supervisor and the mentor teacher. Student teaching grades and credits will be withheld until the make-up arrangement is fulfilled.

FORMAL EVALUATION of STUDENT TEACHING

Student Teacher Candidates are evaluated using the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)-430 evaluation form and West Chester University's Danielson evaluation. The Danielson evaluation is completed by the Student Teacher Candidate, University Supervisor, and Mentor Teacher twice during the semester.

For more information about and to view the evaluation forms, please access the Professional Education Unit's assessment website: <https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/assessmentAccreditation/assessmentResources.aspx>

STUDENT TEACHING GRADE

The final grade for student teaching is determined by completion of all assignments and after consultation between Teacher Candidate, Mentor Teacher, and University Supervisor regarding classroom performance on the Danielson Rubric.

The Danielson evaluation and the dispositions are completed in the Professional Education Unit's online assessment system called Anthology Portfolio. For more information about and to view the evaluation forms, please access the Professional Education Unit's tab on the Assessment and Accreditation webpage, <https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/assessmentAccreditation/assessmentResources.aspx>.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The extra-curricular program at each school site offers an excellent opportunity for a teacher candidate to gain needed professional experience in planning and directing an extra-curricular program. Teacher candidates are encouraged to assist with coaching, clubs, and other extra-curricular programs as long as the activities do not interfere with teacher candidate's teaching responsibilities.

TRANSPORTATION

Teacher candidates are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from their assigned school. Teacher candidates must not transport school students in any vehicle. This stipulation includes field trips and other activities.

USE OF TEACHERS' ROOMS AND OTHER FACILITIES

Each principal and/or mentor teacher is requested to instruct teacher candidates regarding the use of teacher's lounge and other facilities.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Mentor teachers and principals who believe a teacher candidate has behaved in an inappropriate manner should contact the university supervisor immediately. The Unit Restorative Action Plan and Areas of Concern will be utilized to address the concern. The supervisor will assist the mentor teacher and principal in addressing the matter and will coordinate any disciplinary action which is taken against the teacher candidate either by university or school district officials.

WCU UNIT RESTORATIVE ACTION PLAN AND AREAS OF CONCERN

West Chester University's Educator Preparation Programs value professional dispositions and requirements. These are essential for candidates and critical for professional educators. Candidates have opportunities to demonstrate professional dispositions and requirements in courses, their interactions with others, and school settings.

If a concern occurs, the process for handling basic concerns (Level 1 and Level 2 Concerns) is restorative and reflects the PA Code of Ethics for educators (https://www.nasdtec.net/page/MCEE_DOC). Areas of significant concern (level 3 concerns) can arise at any time during a teacher Candidate's preparation program: courses, clinical experiences, or student teaching. There are three ways a concern can be labeled a significant concern. First, a Faculty member, Department Chair, or Associate Dean can submit a significant concern form if there is a violation of the Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice or Conduct for Educators (Code Chapter 235) and/or the Professional Educator Discipline Act (Code Chapter 237). A second way concerns become a Significant Concern (Level 3) is when a school (mentor teacher, school administrator, or school human resources representative) dismisses a Candidate from their placement. The Candidate must leave the school and immediately report to their University Supervisor that they have been asked not to return. WCU's EPPs also have the right to remove a Candidate from their assigned placement if there is a violation of Chapter 235 or Chapter 237. If an area of concern (by either the school district or university personnel) results in removal of the Candidate from the placement, including student teaching, the Candidate shall not return to their placement nor shall the Candidate be assigned to another placement, until the EPP Review Board's investigative process is completed. A third way a concern can become significant is when a Candidate has multiple Level 1 or 2 concerns or if restorative practices in Level 2 have been unsuccessful.

Significant concerns require a hearing with the EPP Review Board and can lead to denial of recommendation for certification and/or dismissal from the program. Pertinent information may be found here: Restorative Action Plan and Areas of Concern Guidelines https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/documents/Handbook_EPP_Restorative_Action_Plan_and_Areas_of_Concern.pdf

PA Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators
<https://www.pspc.education.pa.gov/Statutes-Regulations-Policies-Forms/Code-of-Professional-Practice-Conduct/Pages/default.aspx>

Professional Standards and Practices Commission Actionable Misconduct
<https://www.pspc.education.pa.gov/Educator-Discipline-System-and-Reporting/Overview-Discipline-System/Pages/Actionable-Misconduct.aspx>

WCU Academic Integrity
<https://www.wcupa.edu/viceProvost/academicIntegrity.aspx>

WCU Student Code of Conduct
<https://www.wcupa.edu/policies/documents/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf>

STATE LAWS CONCERNING LIABILITY

Teachers and teacher candidates have been held legally liable by the Pennsylvania courts for the behavior of students under their direction. If a student is injured because of the negligence of either a teacher or teacher candidate, both the teacher and teacher candidate can be held legally responsible. For this reason, it is highly advisable for the teacher candidate to be protected by liability insurance. Such insurance is highly recommended and typically available through membership in the Student Pennsylvania Education Association (PSEA)/National Education Association (NEA) or through an insurance company.

INJURIES INCURRED WHILE STUDENT TEACHING

Teacher candidates are encouraged to maintain a health insurance program in case of an injury suffered while participating in the student teaching experience. Student insurance plans are available through

the Student Health Services. Information regarding the insurance program may be obtained from the Student Health Services, Ground Floor, Commonwealth Hall, telephone: (610) 436-2509.

If a teacher candidate incurs an injury while performing the duties of a teacher candidate, West Chester University will not accept responsibility for the medical care required to treat the injury. The school district to which the teacher candidate is assigned may or may not accept responsibility.

WCU SUBSTITUTE TEACHING WHILE STUDENT TEACHING POLICY

WCU's College of Education and Social Work policy, **relative to student teachers**, regarding Act 86 of 2016/Act 91 of 2021 permitting prospective teachers to act as substitute teachers are outlined in the following document. The policy applies to West Chester University student teachers during their assigned student teaching placement.

****The Substitute Teaching Permit for Prospective Educators* (The policy is on hold until final approval by PA state legislature)

NOTE: All decisions relating to student teacher readiness and responsibilities will be determined by the mentor teacher, university supervisor and student teacher.

EXPECTATIONS, GOALS, AND OUTCOMES

All public school districts utilized for student teaching experiences have been approved by West Chester University. Each department continuously evaluates each student teaching assignment and investigates new situations in order to provide optimum and diverse opportunities for each teacher candidate.

The successful outcome of the experience is dependent upon the positive relationships between the teacher candidate, the mentor teacher, and the university supervisor.

The basic roles and responsibilities are as follows:

MENTOR TEACHER:

- Provides opportunities for the student to observe effective teaching styles, processes, and procedures through the use of current materials and strategies.
- Assists the teacher candidate in assimilating experiences into appropriately structured teaching/learning strategies and procedures, i.e., long/short range planning and subsequent instruction.
- Evaluates student teaching experiences at the end of each day and provides pertinent feedback which will promote continuing improvement.
- Develops within the teacher candidate an awareness of classroom management skills, professional responsibilities, and faculty/administration rapport.
- Completes a recommendation for each teacher candidate to be submitted to the university supervisor within one week after the close of each assignment.
- Evaluates the teacher candidate on the four domains of Danielson, including the sub-domains, and provides written feedback related to the candidate's progress in each domain.

UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR:

- Observes each teacher candidate a minimum of six times per semester or three times per 7.5 week assignment.
- Evaluates each observation and confers with the teacher candidate and the mentor teacher.
- Assigns the final grade in consultation with the mentor teacher.
- Completes a recommendation for each teacher candidate.
- Schedules, plans, and conducts seminars for teacher candidates.
- Evaluates the teacher candidate on the four domains of Danielson, including the sub-domains, and provides written feedback related to the candidate's progress in each domain.

TEACHER CANDIDATE:

- Observes classroom teaching strategies, techniques, procedures, student behavior, and classroom management techniques of the mentor teacher and other faculty members within the school.
- Presents an appropriate lesson plan for each assigned teaching situation **two days prior to the actual instructional period.**
- Evaluates student responses to the above activities.
- Evaluates himself/herself on the four domains of Danielson, including each sub-domain.
- Complies with the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy established by the school district.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TEACHER CANDIDATE

The mentor teacher and university supervisor should plan together to establish specific requirements for the teacher candidate. Teacher candidates should be responsible for the following:

- Assuming full responsibility for the class/schedule for a period of time to which the mentor teacher and university supervisor agree; the decision concerning how and when to increase a teacher candidate's classroom responsibilities should be a joint decision, involving all three key participants – the mentor teacher, the teacher candidate, and the university supervisor.
- Observing at least four other teachers during the semester; these teachers should represent a variety of curricular areas and styles of teaching.
- Writing daily lesson plans for all lessons taught.
- Attending all seminars required by the university supervisors.
- Maintaining a three-ringed notebook or electronic file for organizational purposes; this file should include lesson plans and other student materials; the notebook or e-file should also contain teaching ideas and materials accumulated during student teaching.
- Developing and implementing at least one complete instructional thematic/interdisciplinary unit during the student teaching semester; the unit must include a student evaluation component.
- Creating two visual displays (e.g., bulletin boards, showcases, and learning center) in a classroom or elsewhere in the school; these displays should be instructional in nature or a display of the students' projects, etc., and must be approved by the mentor teacher.
- Using educational technology either alone or in conjunction with the mentor teacher.
- Creating and critiquing a video of a lesson taught by the teacher candidate (the video must comply with the school district's privacy policy).

ASSUMPTION OF TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES BY THE TEACHER CANDIDATE

The teacher candidate should assume a series of gradually more challenging tasks. The teacher candidate should:

- Begin with observations.
- Continue with assisting the mentor teacher or department/grade level members with small tasks such as tutoring or teaching small groups.
- Progress to responsibility for instructing one or more subjects/classes.
- Proceed to full responsibility for instructing the class/schedule (if appropriate).

Progress in the assignment of new tasks will depend upon the readiness of the teacher candidate and the needs of the students. The mentor teacher should give consideration to the teacher candidate's satisfactory completion of tasks at each stage. The teacher candidate is expected to participate in all aspects of teaching, including but not limited to attending faculty meetings and parent conferences, reviewing homework, and administering assessments.

SUGGESTIONS TO ASSIST IN PLANNING FOR THE STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND FOR WORKING WITH A TEACHER CANDIDATE

Before the teacher candidate arrives:

- Inform the students and parents.
- Introduce the teacher candidate as a member of the teaching team/faculty.
- Collect materials and textbooks for the teacher candidate to use; please feel free to give the teacher candidate materials to prepare for the assignment.
- Set aside and dedicate desk and workspace for the teacher candidate.
- Specify certain basic teaching responsibilities for the teacher candidate.
- Make a copy of the class schedule for the teacher candidate.
- Verify the candidate's arrival with the principal.
- Duplicate copies of class lists, seating charts, and the school calendar.

During the first week:

- Orient the teacher candidate to the school, appropriate school and district personnel, support services, students, and community.
- Arrange a meeting with the principal and the teacher candidate.
- Share school rules, regulations, policies, the faculty handbook, and calendar.
- Discuss expectations for the teacher candidate regarding:
 - confidentiality
 - working hours
 - reporting times
 - procedures to follow in case of illness
 - personal property
 - procurement of supplies
 - other general responsibilities

- Explain your method of classroom or laboratory management and discipline.
- Review the school district's discipline policy.
- Assist the teacher candidate in preparing and distributing a letter of introduction.
- Assist in arranging opportunities for the teacher candidate to observe other teachers.
- Give the teacher candidate informal opportunities to adjust to being in front of the class.
- Explain your methods of assessment, record keeping, and communication with parents.
- Help the teacher candidate become familiar with the location, operation, and procedures or using various pieces of instructional equipment.
- Provide opportunities for the teacher candidate to work with individual students.
- Share curriculum and review educational goals.
- Provide daily feedback regarding the teacher candidate's performance.
- Check lesson plans at least two days in advance of the teacher candidate teaching the lesson. (Initial them to show your approval).
- Confer with the teacher candidate daily.

During the second week:

- Discuss the developmental characteristics of the age group currently being served.
- Discuss unique individual student characteristics which directly affect student learning.
- Permit the teacher candidate to accept more teaching responsibilities.
- Check lesson plans prior to utilization.
- Provide the teacher candidate with opportunities to observe and to be involved in parent conferences.
- Alert the principal and the university supervisor immediately if significant problem areas emerge.
- Provide frequent written and oral feedback to the teacher candidate.
- Confer with the teacher candidate daily.

Beginning the third week to end of experience:

- Promote self-evaluation of lessons by the teacher candidate thereby helping him/her to develop a perception of his/her own strengths and weaknesses.
- Give the teacher candidate an opportunity to accept full responsibility for the class/schedule.
- Encourage increasingly independent lesson plan development.
- Continue informal daily evaluations which commend strengths.
- Assist the teacher candidate in developing the skills to analyze his/her own teaching.
- Permit the teacher candidate the freedom to try his/her own ideas and techniques; reassure the teacher candidate that if a technique fails, it is not necessarily due to poor judgment or the appropriateness of the strategy.
- Demonstrate techniques to help the teacher candidate remediate weaknesses.
- Confer with the teacher candidate daily.
- Submit a final evaluation to the university supervisor.
- Schedule and hold a mid and end of assignment joint conference with the teacher candidate and the university supervisor for the purpose of completing the Danielson Framework.
- Confer with the university supervisor before completing the final teacher candidate evaluation (Danielson).

GUIDELINES FOR UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS

Coordinate each phase of the student teaching experience through the department coordinator of student teaching by maintaining and filing accurate and correct materials for:

- Student teaching placements (including any mid experience changes)
- Individual student records
- Travel forms (completed monthly)
- Observation forms
- SLO and Danielson and appropriate assessment documents
- Assignment of academic grades

Develop and maintain a working relationship between mentor teachers, school administrators, and teacher candidate as follows:

- Schedule an initial conference with each mentor teacher to discuss the expectations of the teacher candidate experience.
- Schedule a mid-assignment conference with the mentor teacher and teacher candidate to discuss the progress of the teacher candidate and to complete the Danielson and other appropriate assessment documents.
- Conduct an end-of-assignment conference with the mentor teacher and the teacher candidate for the purpose of completing the overall evaluation of the teacher candidate and completing the Danielson and other appropriate assessment documents.
- Confer with school administrators to discuss issues concerning the student teaching program and/or particular teacher candidates.
- Serve as a liaison between teacher candidates and the building and district personnel.

Work with mentor teachers in the planning of observations and evaluation of teacher candidates as follows:

- Review the manner and logistics of observations and conferences.
- Review the type, level, and intensity of experiences which contribute to the growth of teacher candidates.
- Provide guidance and information to aid the mentor teacher in preparing an evaluation of the teacher candidate's performance.
- Observe the teacher candidate's teaching and provide guidance to make his/her teaching more effective and efficient.

Perform Observations and Critique Performance

- **Six on-site observations are required. If the teacher candidate has two assignments, three are required for each assignment.**
- An observation may be announced or unannounced. In order to gather sufficient information and to provide effective feedback, an observation should include a complete lesson. During the observation, the teacher candidate's lesson plan as well as the implementation of the plan should be considered by the supervisor.

- Each observation should be immediately followed by a conference with the teacher candidate.
- The observation must be recorded on an approved observation form.
- Data gathered from observations will be utilized in the preparation of performance ratings for the teacher candidate.
- Determination of the teacher candidate's grade should be made by the university supervisor after conferring with the mentor teacher and completing other appropriate assessment documents on Tk20. The appropriate assessment documents must be delivered to the program coordinator who will forward them to the appropriate individuals within the university.
- Final academic grades for teacher candidates must be assigned and submitted to the Office of the Registrar.

Conduct Conferences

- A conference should have five components:
 1. The student's self-evaluation.
 2. A review of the student's performance
 3. A statement of the areas, instructional strategies, and/or activities which were effective
 4. A statement of areas for improvement
 5. Specific recommendations regarding how to improve

Assist teacher candidates with problems which may arise during the student teaching experience.

- The university supervisor should serve as a liaison between the teacher candidate and the school. The university supervisor should make every reasonable effort to assist the teacher candidate in making the adjustment to the professional world. This may entail more than the minimum number of observations, more frequent conferences, three-way conferences, etc. The university supervisor is also responsible for enlisting the aid of the department student teaching coordinator to utilize other university services including the Units' **dispositional expectations** for candidates.

Conduct a professional practicum course (seminar)

- Seminars shall be held on campus unless other arrangements have been made with the department coordinator. Teacher candidates may leave their schools before the end of the school day in order to arrive at the seminar in a timely fashion.
- Each university supervisor shall submit to the department and to the students a syllabus of course topics and assignments that include the core requirements and additional assignments that contribute to the development of the teacher candidate.
- The course topics will be designed to help teacher candidates interpret their experience more fully and promote professional growth.

GUIDELINES FOR MENTOR TEACHERS

The student teaching experience is the most strategic and important aspect of the teacher candidate's education program. Mentor teachers determine the direction and outcome of each student's experience as a teacher candidate.

Qualifications

A mentor teacher must be an experienced teacher with the following specific qualifications:

- Be willing to serve as a mentor teacher and to provide the necessary time to plan and evaluate the teacher candidate's performance.
- Hold a Pennsylvania Instructional Certificate in the same field as the one for which the teacher candidate is seeking certification.
- Have a minimum of three years of successful teaching experience in public schools, with at least one year in the current school district.
- Have a regular, full time teaching schedule.
- Be recommended by the district/school administration.

Role and Responsibilities

- The role of mentor teachers is critical in the professional growth of teacher candidates. The mentor teachers become mentors who guide the growth and transition of teacher candidates from student to professional. As such, mentor teachers act as a trusted guide, teacher, sponsor, host, counselor, supporter, advisor, coach, encourager, and consultant.

Assigned Duties of the Teacher Candidates

- Delegate certain routine but essential responsibilities to the teacher candidate at the onset of the experience. Assign additional instructional and teaching assignments/classes as are appropriate in accordance with the readiness of the teacher candidate.

Instructional Planning by Teacher Candidates

- Effective teaching necessitates good planning. West Chester University prepares all teacher candidates to create lesson plans utilizing a lesson plan rubric contained in the Candidate Assessment Resources webpage <https://www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/assessmentAccreditation/assessmentResources.aspx>
- Review the teacher candidate's lesson plan for each lesson before it is taught so that suggestions may be made and incorporated. No lesson should be taught until a complete lesson plan is presented.
- The importance of thinking and planning in terms of the individual students in each class, the students' needs, students' interests, etc. is stressed throughout the College of Education Teacher Preparation.

Classroom Teaching by Teacher Candidates

- Assign a major responsibility for one or two lessons, for a unit, or for a period of time. As the teacher candidate demonstrates his/her readiness, you may assign additional lessons.
- Provide experiences with groups which include students with varying abilities.
- Make clear to the teacher candidate, and indirectly to the students, the level of authority and responsibility which is being assigned to the teacher candidate.
- Provide the teacher candidate experiences for measuring and evaluating student growth and development; the teacher candidate should prepare a variety of tests, assessment tools, and evaluation situations.
- Inform the students that the teacher candidate is “in charge” when teaching.
- Help the teacher candidate realize that without proper classroom management nothing worthwhile can be accomplished and that good planning and instruction will do much to minimize the need for extreme disciplinary measures.

Welfare of Students

Mentor teachers have the ultimate responsibility for the growth and development of the students in their class; therefore, the mentor teacher should:

- Intervene in the middle of a class period **ONLY** when he/she is certain of irreparable damage to the students. Like everyone else, teacher candidates can learn from mistakes. If the mentor teacher must take over, it should be done with tact and finesse.
- Schedule a conference with the teacher candidate, as soon as possible after the conclusion of the lesson, to help him/her determine why the situation developed and what measures could be taken to deal with a similar situation in the future.
- Confer with the university supervisor if the teacher candidate cannot be permitted normal responsibility without jeopardizing the best interest of the students. **If dispositional expectations are not met, changes to the placement may result.**
- Along with the principal, address parental concerns regarding their son or daughter being taught by a teacher candidate.

Professional Growth and Development

The mentor teacher should:

- Advise and guide the teacher candidate in proper interpretation and involvement in faculty room experiences and discussions.
- Encourage planned professional reading.
- Promote development of a carefully planned library of teaching aids.
- Prepare the teacher candidate for interactions with parents or other teachers.
- Help the teacher candidate to become conscious of the application of professional ethics to the many and varied situations which arise such as a request by a parent that the teacher candidate tutor a student.

Evaluation of Growth and Development

The evaluation by the mentor teacher is of enormous importance to the growth of the teacher candidate; therefore, the mentor teacher should:

- Make evaluation a continuous process taking place before and after every lesson which is taught by the teacher candidate.
- Schedule conferences with the university supervisor.
 - The initial conference should concern expectations.
 - The mid-assignment conference should concentrate on growth and development.
 - The end-of-assignment conference should focus on overall level of performance.

These conferences, as well as others, may be informal, but they will provide the university supervisor with valuable input relative to the PDE 430 evaluation report and the other appropriate documents.

- Guide the teacher candidate's self-evaluation at the midpoint and at the close of the assignment.
- Report the status of professional growth and development of the teacher candidate to the university supervisor.

The evaluation should be done in such a way as to provide school officials with a thorough, reliable basis for selecting teachers. Your remarks on evaluation letters will provide school districts with valuable insights during the hiring process.

Guidelines for Providing Feedback to the Teacher Candidate

“Feedback” is a way of helping another person to consider changing his/her behavior. It is a form of communication which gives the individual information about how he/she impacts others.

Some criteria for useful feedback are:

- It is **descriptive** rather than evaluative. By describing one's own reaction, it leaves others free to use it or not to use it as the individual sees fit. Avoiding evaluative language reduces the need for the individual to react defensively.
- It is **specific** rather than general (To be told that one is “dominating” will not be as useful as to be told that “just now when we were deciding the issue, you did not listen to what others said and I felt forced to accept your arguments”).
- It takes into account the needs of both the receiver and giver of feedback. Feedback can be destructive when it serves only the provider's own needs and fails to consider the needs of the person who receives the feedback.
- It is directed toward behavior which the receiver can rectify. Frustration is only increased when people are reminded of short-comings over which they have no control.
- It is **solicited**, rather than imposed. Feedback is most useful when the receiver has formulated the kind of question which those observing can answer.
- It is **well timed**. In general, feedback is most useful when given at the earliest opportunity after the observed behavior, when consideration is given to the person's readiness to hear it, and when support is available from others.
- Negative feedback is most effective when given in a relaxed manner. It is not necessary to severely criticize an individual in order to obtain results. Before offering suggestions for the solution of a professional problem, provide the teacher candidate an opportunity to reflect and provide his/her suggestions to resolve the situation.

- Feedback should provide clear communication. The recipient should rephrase the feedback received to confirm that the recipient’s understanding corresponds to what the sender intended.
- The feedback conference should close with three things:
 1. A summary of findings, conclusions, and decisions.
 2. A specific course of action.
 3. A closing which encourages and leaves the teacher candidate with the confidence that the discussion held within the conference and the resulting decisions will ensure the growth and development of her/his ability.

MENTOR TEACHER HONORARIUM

An honorarium is provided to mentor teachers by West Chester University as set forth by the State System of Higher Education:

Teachers who have mentored West Chester University teacher candidates for ***less than two full or less than four half semesters receive:***

Rates as of August, 2023

- \$141.00 for one half semester
- \$282.00 for one full semester

Teachers who have mentored WCU teacher candidates for ***more than two full or more than four half semesters receive:***

Rates as of August, 2023

- \$282.50 for one half semester
- \$565.00 for one full semester

You can access the form by clicking on the following link: [Mentor Teacher Honorarium](#). Once completed, email the form to Susan O’Doherty, so’doherty@wcupa.edu or send it by mail: West Chester University, Office of Clinical Experiences, Wayne Hall, Suite 107, 125 West Rosedale Avenue, West Chester, PA 19383. In order to process the honorarium, it needs to be completed with all information. If you prefer to provide sensitive information over the phone, call 610-436-3425. Payment will be processed at the end of the West Chester University semester.

Approval for Act 48 Hours for Mentor Teachers

The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education recently approved Act 48 credits for cooperating/mentor teachers.

Here are the requirements for awarding Act 48 credits for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) or Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs):

- Mentors of first-year teachers and student teachers (does not include pre-student teachers) may earn Act 48 credit if the LEA approves the professional development hours starting the 2022-2023 school year.
- Student Teacher Mentors may receive up to 15 hours per inductee or student teacher totaling no more than 45 hours in a compliance period.
- Student Teacher Mentors may receive 15 hours per inductee regardless of the length of the student teaching experience.
- Student Teacher Mentors may receive both a stipend/honorarium and Act 48 hours.

CHECKLIST FOR MENTOR TEACHERS

The following checklist provides suggestions for use by mentor teachers

Before the teacher candidate arrives:

- | | |
|--|---|
| _____ Inform the students and parents, when possible | _____ Explain your method of classroom or laboratory management and discipline, and review the district's policy and philosophy about these items |
| _____ Collect materials for the teacher candidate to use | |
| _____ Set aside desk and workspace for the teacher candidate | _____ Assist in arranging observations of other teachers |
| _____ Outline basic teaching responsibilities for the teacher candidate | _____ Give the teacher candidate informal opportunities to adjust to being in front of the class |
| _____ Have a copy of the class schedule for the teacher candidate | _____ Explain your methods of testing and grading, recordkeeping, and reporting to parents |
| _____ Review teacher candidate's background information | _____ Help the teacher candidate become familiar with the location and the operation of equipment |
| _____ Verify teacher candidate's arrival with principal | _____ Provide the opportunity for the teacher candidate to work with individual students |
| _____ Duplicate class lists and seating charts | _____ Share curriculum and review educational goals |
| _____ List days of special schedules and days on which school will be closed | |

During the first week:

- _____ Orient the teacher candidate to the school, school personnel, support services, students, and community
- _____ Arrange a meeting with the principal and the teacher candidate
- _____ Share school rules, regulations, policies (give the teacher candidate the teacher handbook and calendar)
- _____ Discuss expectations for the teacher candidate with respect to:
 - _____ Confidentiality
 - _____ Working hours
 - _____ Procedures to follow in case of illness
 - _____ Personal property
 - _____ Procurement of supplies
 - _____ Other general responsibilities

- _____ Confer with the teacher candidate daily
- _____ Provide daily feedback on the teacher candidate's performance
- _____ Check and initial the teacher candidate's lesson plans at least two days in advance of their use

During the second week:

- _____ Explain developmental characteristics of the age group
- _____ Explain unique characteristics of individual students and how these characteristics directly affect their learning
- _____ Permit the teacher candidate to accept more and more teaching responsibilities
- _____ Check and initial the teacher candidate's plans before the lessons are presented
- _____ Provide the teacher candidate with opportunities to observe and assist in parent conferences
- _____ Demonstrate a variety of teaching techniques
- _____ Alert the principal and the university supervisor of significant problem areas which the teacher candidate is experiencing
- _____ Provide both written and oral feedback to the teacher candidate frequently
- _____ Confer with the teacher candidate daily
- _____ Assist the teacher candidate in fulfilling the practicum requirement

During the remainder of the experience:

- _____ Demonstrate a variety of teaching techniques
- _____ Promote self-evaluation of lessons by the teacher candidate (This reflection will help him/her to develop a perception of his/her strengths and weaknesses)
- _____ Give the teacher candidate an opportunity to accept full responsibility for the class/schedule
- _____ Encourage increasingly independent lesson plan development by the teacher candidate
- _____ Continue informal daily evaluations noting the teacher candidate's strengths and weaknesses
- _____ Assist the teacher candidate in developing skills to analyze his/her teaching performance, techniques and strategies
- _____ Commend the teacher candidate for his/her strengths
- _____ Permit the teacher candidate freedom to try his/her own ideas and techniques; reassure the teacher candidate that just because a technique failed, it was not necessarily due to poor judgment or an inadequate instructional strategy or technique
- _____ Demonstrate techniques which will help the teacher candidate remediate weaknesses
- _____ Confer with university supervisor throughout the term and in preparing the final teacher candidate evaluation
- _____ Complete and share your final evaluation with teacher candidate and university supervisor

CHECKLIST FOR UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS

The university supervisor serves as a liaison between West Chester University and the mentor teacher participating in the student teaching program. The supervisor's responsibilities include:

Information and orientation

- _____ Explaining the goals, philosophy, and organization of the teacher-preparation program
- _____ Conferring about the experiences and responsibilities the teacher candidate should have under the direction of the mentor teacher
- _____ Explaining procedures used to evaluate the teacher candidate
- _____ Serving as a resource person for the mentor teacher and school district
- _____ Assisting the mentor teacher in completing the official paperwork required for the program

Evaluations

- _____ Evaluating in written and oral form the performance of the teacher candidate in the classroom or laboratory
- _____ Conferring with the mentor teacher following each classroom or laboratory observation
- _____ Discussing the final evaluation of the teacher candidate with the mentor teacher prior to awarding the final grade(s)
- _____ Retaining all written evaluations and observations for one year after the assignment is complete

Observations, classroom visits, and practicum

- _____ Contacting the mentor teacher and teacher candidate within the first week
- _____ Observing the teacher candidate for a full period during each of the required **SIX** visits
- _____ Consulting regularly with the mentor teacher on the performance of the teacher candidate
- _____ Discussing with the mentor teacher possible techniques and methods for use by the teacher candidate
- _____ Inviting the mentor teacher's suggestions and recommendations for enhancing the teacher candidate's experience
- _____ Planning and conducting professional seminars