

# **Becoming a Reflective Teacher**

## **Elementary Education**

**A Comprehensive Handbook for Teacher Candidates,  
Cooperating Teachers and University Supervisors  
St. Cloud State University**

**College of Education and Learning Design  
Department of Teacher Development**

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# Table of Contents

## Section I – Foundational Documents

Code of Ethics _____	4
MN Standards of Effective Practice _____	5

## Section II – Professional Responsibilities

Student Teaching Policies _____	7
Dispositions _____	7
Responsibilities of the Teacher Candidate _____	8
Block 3 Student Teaching Requirements _____	9
Block 4 Student Teaching Requirements _____	10

## Section III –Policies

Teacher Candidate Placement Policies _____	12
Withdrawal/Removal from Student Teaching _____	12
Action Plans _____	13
Student Teaching Calendar and Attendance _____	13
Teacher Candidate Files _____	14

## Section IV – Issues to Consider

Data Privacy _____	16
Boundary Issues _____	16
Child Abuse _____	17
Diversity _____	17
School Safety _____	18

## Section V – Guiding Materials

Teacher Candidate Reflections _____	20
Key Components of Lesson Plans _____	20
Checklist for Lesson Planning _____	21
Self-Managed Credentials _____	22
Teaching Portfolios _____	22

## Section VI – Forms

Observation and Evaluation Procedures _____	24
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# **Section I**

# **Foundational Documents**

- **Code of Ethics**
- **MN Standards of Effective Practice**

# Code of Ethics for Minnesota Teachers

Public Information. Minnesota Board of Teaching

## 8700.7500 Code of Ethics for Minnesota Teachers

**Subpart 1. Scope.** Each teacher, upon entering the teaching profession, assumes a number of obligations, one of which is to adhere to a set of principles which defines professional conduct. These principles are reflected in the following code of ethics, which sets forth to the education profession and the public it serves standards of professional conduct and procedures for implementation.

This code shall apply to all persons licensed according to rules established by the Minnesota board of teaching.

**Subpart 2. Standards of Professional Conduct.** The standards of professional conduct are as follows

- A teacher shall provide professional educational services in a nondiscriminatory manner.
- A teacher shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to health and safety.
- In accordance with state and federal laws, a teacher shall disclose confidential information about individuals only when a compelling professional purpose is served or when required by law.
- A teacher shall take reasonable disciplinary action in exercising the authority to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- A teacher shall not use professional relationships with students, parents, and colleagues to private advantage.
- A teacher shall delegate authority for teaching responsibilities only to licensed personnel.
- A teacher shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter.
- A teacher shall not knowingly falsify or misrepresent records or facts relating to that teacher's own qualifications or to other teachers' qualifications.
- A teacher shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students or colleagues.
- A teacher shall accept a contract for a teaching position that requires licensing only if properly or provisionally licensed for that position.

## Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice for Teachers

According to state law, any candidate for teacher licensure in Minnesota shall show verification of completing the following standards in a teacher preparation program. These 10 standards and their 120 specific competencies reflect the National INTASC standards, and are adopted permanent rules of the Minnesota Board of Teaching. Students in SCSU teacher education programs are expected to develop a pre-professional portfolio of class work, field work and life experiences demonstrating accomplishment of the standards.

**Standard One: Subject Matter** A teacher must understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline taught and be able to create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful to.

**Standard Two: Student Learning** A teacher must understand how students learn and develop and must provide learning opportunities that support a student's intellectual, social, and personal development.

**Standard Three: Diverse Learners** A teacher must understand how students differ in their approaches to learning and create instructional opportunities that are adapted to students with diverse backgrounds and exceptionalities.

**Standard Four: Instructional Strategies** A teacher must understand and use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage student development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

**Standard Five: Learning Environment** A teacher must be able to use an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

**Standard Six: Communication** A teacher must be able to use knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

**Standard Seven: Planning Instruction** A teacher must be able to plan and manage instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

**Standard Eight: Assessment** A teacher must understand and be able to use formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the students.

**Standard Nine: Reflection and Professional Development** A teacher must be a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of choices and actions on others, including students, parents, and other professionals in the community, and who actively seeks out opportunities for professional growth.

**Standard Ten: Collaboration, Ethics, and Relationships** A teacher must be able to communicate and interact with parents or guardians, families, school colleagues, and the community to support student learning and well-being.

The complete standards and competencies are available on the internet at  
[www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/arule/8710/2000.html](http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/arule/8710/2000.html).

# **Section II**

## **Professional Responsibilities**

- **Student Teaching Policies**
- **Dispositions**
- **Responsibilities of the Teacher Candidate**
- **Block 3 Student Teaching Requirements**
- **Block 4 Student Teaching Requirements**

## **Student Teaching Policies**

*You are responsible for the rules, assignments, forms, and other material included in this Handbook.*

- The Teacher Candidate must have a **minimum of \$25,000 liability insurance** before being accepted into any public school for student teaching.
- Teacher Candidates are held to the standards set forth in the *St Cloud State University Code of Conduct*.
- Each Teacher Candidate is required to attend the Student Teaching Orientation at the beginning of Block 3.
- Each Teacher Candidate is required to attend the “On Campus” Professional Development Day during Block Four.
- A Teacher Candidate may not be used as a substitute teacher and may not receive compensation for teaching responsibilities. The Teacher Candidate may teach in the absence of the Cooperating Teacher with a substitute teacher in the room.
- The demands of planning and preparation for teaching should be the first priority of all Teacher Candidates. Teacher Candidates in Elementary and Secondary (5-12/K-12) may not be registered for coaching practicum credits or academic credits during student teaching. No class, practicum, job or any other activity may interfere with contractual teaching days. Any extenuating circumstances must be negotiated between Teacher Candidate, University Supervisor, and the Cooperating Teacher.

## **Dispositions of a Teacher Candidate**

The characteristics listed below, based on the INTASC Standards, the MN Standards of Effective Practice for Teachers, and other resources on effective teaching, reflect the dispositions expected of graduates of the College of Education at St Cloud State University.

The Teacher Candidate will:

- Show willingness to understand different learning patterns.
- Demonstrate willingness to question existing educational practices that may not benefit all learners.
- Demonstrate willingness to question how diversity, equity and inclusion affect lessons, classrooms, and schools and be willing to work towards an environment that supports all learners.
- Value a wide diversity of backgrounds, ethnicities, experiences and abilities within the classroom.
- Value the connection between family and school.
- Use effective, professional, written and oral communication.
- Value children’s literature, authors, and personal response to literature.
- Show initiative.
- Demonstrate ability and willingness to team with others.
- Take on different roles when working on a team.

- Is reflective, capable of meta-analysis.
- Demonstrate positive and enthusiastic attitude toward learning new things.
- Is responsible with attendance.
- Arrives to class and student teaching on time and well prepared.
- View learning as a joyous experience rather than a set of odious tasks to be completed.
- Value and cultivates professional relationships with others in the school building

## **Responsibilities of a Teacher Candidate**

The Teacher Candidate will:

- bring to the teaching experience, adequate knowledge in the area of basic subject matter, human growth and development, and teaching strategies and procedures.
- display a highly professional attitude with respect to confidential information about children and youth, and with respect to relationships and practices with colleagues and the respective educational systems.
- develop an understanding of the role of administrators, teacher, lay people, support staff, and the Board of Teaching in determining school policies and in decision making.
- adhere to the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession.
- display enthusiasm and interest in all phases of the teaching experience.
- abide by patterns of conduct expected of professional personnel.
- be punctual; reporting on time for all school appointments including school meetings and functions required of other teachers and staff.
- read the school handbook to become familiar with essential information in order to comply with all school system and building regulations.
- strive to exemplify the attitudes and actions of a teacher rather than those of a student.
- demonstrate responsibility in accepting and completing assigned tasks.
- interact with non-teaching personnel (custodians, secretaries, nurses, cooks, etc.) and discover how all must relate effectively within the school setting.
- plan all work and submit lesson plans a minimum of two days in advance to the Cooperating Teacher and the University Supervisor prior to teaching a lesson.
- attempt a variety of teaching techniques in an effort to discover and develop a personal style of teaching. If necessary set short term goals for improvement (voice quality and projection, non-verbal skills, use of media, opening motivators and closure, etc.).



- accept constructive feedback and engage in regular self-appraisal
- experience the use of varied media in the instructional process.
- observe a variety of classes (unique programs, exemplary teachers, varied levels, etc.). Check with your Cooperating Teacher and/or the building principal as to who might be the best teachers to observe.
- contact the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor when ill.
- maintain a written reflective journal as requested.

## **Elementary Student Teaching Experience: Block 3 Requirements**

Student teaching in Block 3 is the first of two student teaching experiences. It is generally recommended that Teacher Candidates gradually assume responsibility in the room by observing, assisting, team teaching and eventually teaching on their own. The guidelines below are to help the participants plan the experience.

### **Before Block 3 Student Teaching:**

- Attend Student Teaching Orientation--Mandatory
- Attend specific orientations and seminars as directed
- Contact Cooperating Teacher as soon as contract is issued and again at least one week before starting date
- Meet all program requirements

### **Early in the Block 3 Student Teaching Experience**

- Observe, collaborate, assist, and teach small/large groups as directed by Cooperating Teacher & University Supervisor
- Acquaint yourself with school policies, procedures and culture
- Complete contact sheet found in Section VI.
- Study the mathematics, social studies, reading/language arts curriculum and be prepared to teach as directed
- Create an overall schedule/calendar for your student teaching experience in conjunction with your Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor

### **During the Block 3 Student Teaching Experience:**

- Prepare and write lesson plans in a format that is acceptable to both the Cooperating Teacher and the University Supervisor. See key components of lesson plans in Section V.
- Submit lesson plans to Cooperating Teacher at least two days prior to teaching a lesson. All lesson plans must be readily available for the University Supervisor.
- Observe in other classrooms, including special education, ELL music, art, PE and other specialized classes that are available at your school, at the discretion of the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor
- Participate in parent/teacher conferences, professional development opportunities, school board meetings and extra-curricular activities and other school activities
- Submit weekly teaching schedules to your University Supervisor as requested
- Submit weekly reflections to University Supervisor as requested
- Videotape the required three lessons for the edTPA, attend mandatory edTPA seminar days
- Review and sign all formative observation forms

### **Near the end of the Block 3 Student Teaching Experience:**

- Assume full planning, teaching, and assessing responsibilities for units of study in two or more content areas (math, social studies, and reading/language arts) for a minimum of five consecutive days
- Complete student teaching self-evaluation as directed by University Supervisor.
- Complete Feedback to University Supervisor form.
- Participate in a 3-way Midterm (End of Block 3) Student Teaching Assessment conference with Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor and sign Midterm (End of Block 3) Student Teaching Assessment form.

## **Elementary Student Teaching Experience: Block 4 Requirements**

This is the second student teaching experience. It is generally recommended that Teacher Candidates gradually assume full responsibility for the class by observing, assisting, team teaching and eventually teaching on their own. The guidelines below are to help the Teacher Candidates plan the experience

### **Early in the Block 4 Student Teaching Experience**

- Observe, assist, team and teach small/large groups as directed by Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor
- Study the entire curriculum and be prepared to teach as directed
- During your first week in Block 4, create an overall schedule for your student teaching experience in conjunction with the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor

### **During the Block 4 Student Teaching Experience**

- Teach in all subject areas of the curriculum including mathematics, science, social studies, reading/language arts
- Prepare and write lesson plans in a format that is acceptable to both the Cooperating Teacher and the University Supervisor. See key components of lesson plans in Section V.
- Submit lesson plans to Cooperating Teacher two days prior to teaching a lesson
- Participate in parent/teacher conferences, professional development opportunities, school board meetings and extra-curricular activities and other school activities
- Submit weekly teaching schedules to University Supervisor as required
- Submit weekly reflections to University Supervisor as requested
- Review and sign all formative observation forms
- Attend required On Campus Professional Development Conference

### **Near the end of the Block 4 Student Teaching Experience**

- Assume full teaching responsibilities for a minimum of ten consecutive days
- Complete student teaching self-evaluation as directed by University Supervisor.
- Complete Feedback to University Supervisor form.
- Participate in a 3-way final summative assessment conference with Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor and sign summative assessment form.
- Express appreciation to classroom students and Cooperating Teacher.

# **Section III**

## **Policies**

- **Teacher Candidate Placement Policies**
- **Withdrawal/Removal from Student Teaching**
- **Action Plans**
- **Student Teaching Calendar and Attendance**
- **Teacher Candidate Files**

## Teacher Candidate Placement Policies

### Assignment of Teacher Candidates

Teacher Candidates are not assigned to buildings in which they have been a student, are well-known by school personnel, have children in attendance, or have other relatives employed. Teacher Candidates are not assigned to a school where they would be coaching.

The student teaching placement may be changed or canceled at any time if the Building Principal, the Cooperating Teacher, the University Supervisor, and/or the Director of the Office of Clinical Experiences believe the change is beneficial to the student and/or the cooperating school.

### Withdrawal and Removal from Student Teaching

In cases where a student is removed from a student teaching placement for reasons unrelated to the student's dispositions or performance, all efforts will be made to secure a new placement as quickly as possible.

Students removed from student teaching for dispositional or performance reasons will be required to meet with their University Supervisor, a representative of the program, the Director of OCE, and if appropriate, their Cooperating Teacher to design and agree upon an action plan to remediate the concerns raised during the student teaching placement. The requirements of the remediation plan shall be successfully completed prior to the student being offered a new placement. Students removed from a placement for performance or dispositional reasons **will not** be offered a new placement during the semester in which they were removed.

A student who withdraws from a student teaching placement after the placement has begun without the consent of his/her University Supervisor will be required to meet with their University Supervisor, a representative of the program, the Director of OCE, and if appropriate, their Cooperating Teacher, to design and agree upon an appropriate remediation plan. The requirements of the plan shall be successfully completed prior to the student being offered a new placement. Students who withdraw from a placement for performance or dispositional reasons **will not** be offered a new placement during the semester in which they withdraw.

## Action Plans

At times, concerns arise regarding the Teacher Candidate's development of specific professional skills. The Action Plan format can then be used during a three-way conference with the Teacher Candidate, Cooperating Teacher, and University Supervisor and a representative from the program. Completing an Action Plan does not necessarily indicate unsatisfactory progress overall.

Action Plans are developed for the individual circumstance, to highlight and address areas of concern.

If a student teacher refuses to sign an action plan proposed by his/her University Supervisor, the student will be granted a maximum of ten (10) school days to resolve the concern through the department mediator prior to being removed from the placement.

If no resolution is achieved, the student will be removed from her/his placement following the 10<sup>th</sup> school day (inclusive of the day the plan is first discussed) after the initiation of the action by the University Supervisor. The Cooperating Teacher and the Director of OCE shall be notified of the potential for removal within 24 hours of the meeting with the student at which the action plan is discussed.

A student removed from a placement for failure to comply with an action plan will be given a new placement only when the action plan has been successfully completed. Students who are on an action plan must resolve all areas of the action plan before a new placement will be sought, or in some cases, in order for the existing placement to continue.

Action plans will lay out the terms needed to resolve the plan and, if successfully completed, to move forward in the program.

## Student Teaching Calendar

Teacher Candidates are expected to adhere to the school calendar of their cooperating school, fulfilling all attendance expectations of the Cooperating Teacher.

### Student Teaching Contract Days

In general, **once you begin full-time you will follow the calendar of your cooperating school, *not* the calendar of St Cloud State University. This includes taking breaks only when your cooperating school is on break.**

You must be present for the full contractual teaching day.

Inservice/Meetings: Attend all functions that your Cooperating Teacher indicates are appropriate, including meetings, inservice days, and/or conferences provided those activities do not interfere with SCSU classes.

## Attendance Expectations

### Student Teaching Attendance Expectations

Regular attendance at your student teaching assignment is a professional expectation. Be prompt at all times. Be there every day, all day, **following the schedule of your cooperating teacher**.

All absences (including partial day absences) **must be shared** with your University Supervisor as well as your Cooperating Teacher as soon as you know you will not be there.

Programs allow for 2 or 3 **excused** absences during your experience (see below). Check your program handbook for the number of days you can miss at <https://www.stcloudstate.edu/oce/teaching.aspx>.

The following are excused absences:

- Illness
- Medical appointments: These should be scheduled outside required school hours, if possible.
- Emergency/Bereavement
- Poor weather conditions: If your school does not cancel, but the schools near your residence cancel due to road conditions, use your best judgment as to whether it is safe to make the trip.
- Attendance at Career Fair or a Job Interview
- Representing the University at an event as an athlete, musician or other leadership role. Practices or rehearsals are not excused absences.
- Religious observances
- Military Obligation

More than the program limit of absences in a given semester will cause your student teaching assignment to be extended or canceled. Absences that fall outside of the list of excused absences above will be made up at the end of the semester. Failure to notify your University Supervisor of an absence will be considered an unexcused absence that must be made up at the end of the student teaching semester. Missing required on campus days without notification will be considered an unexcused absence and will need to be made up at the end of the semester.

NOTE: Students are required to attend the Student Teaching Orientation, On Campus Professional Development Conference and EdTPA Writing Days during their student teaching, which will not count as an absence from your placement.

# **Section IV**

## **Issues to Consider**

- **Data Privacy**
- **Boundary Issues**
- **Child Abuse**
- **Diversity**
- **School Safety**

## **Data Privacy--“Keep student information private”**

(Education Minnesota, Classroom Essentials 2007-08)

Much of the information you will deal with is private educational data on students and is protected by both state and federal privacy laws. Sharing information when there is no valid educational reason for doing so may subject you to discipline by the district and to civil liability. When discussing students with colleagues, ask yourself whether the discussion is really necessary to provide educational services to the student. **Do not discuss individual students outside the school setting. Be extremely careful what you say about students in the Teacher’s Lounge as not everyone in the room has a right to know private data—this includes other teachers in the building.** Be sure volunteers in your classroom know they must keep information on students private.

- Most student data is private and should not be released to anyone but the student, his or her parents, or staff with a legitimate educational interest.
- The statute covers all forms of data. **If you can’t release something in written form, you can’t release it orally.**
- Review your classroom practice to make sure you aren’t unnecessarily sharing information about students in class. Do not list the names of top scorers or students who need to turn in work. Be cautious about students grading each other’s work.
- Do not post students’ work on your class Web site unless you have their parents’ permission.
- Ask if your district allows you to display photos of students or send home videos of students. These items may be considered “directory information” that can be released unless parents request it be withheld, but check to be sure.
- If in doubt, when asked for information, withhold the requested information until you check with your principal to determine whether it can be released.
- If anyone questions you about a student, whether it be the media or a parent of another student, respond simply that the information is private student data and that you cannot discuss it.

## **Boundary Issues --“Don’t let allegations of inappropriate touch ruin your career”**

(Education Minnesota, Classroom Essentials 2007-08)

Touch is one of the most basic of human needs, but if you deliberately come into physical contact with your students – even in the most innocent of contexts--you put yourself, and your career, at risk. It’s sad but true. Every year a dozen or more Minnesota teachers on average are accused of inappropriate touch. Even when the charges are proven false, the impact on you personally, your career and your colleagues can be devastating. Be aware of, and sensitive to, physical and emotional boundaries. Remember, you are not your students’ friend—you are their teacher. Let professional counselors and psychologists assist them with emotional issues.

Here are some ways to reduce the risk of being accused:

- Avoid physical horseplay with students. Don’t let students sit on your lap.
- Do not meet with students alone in a closed setting. Music and physical education teachers, along with counselors, are especially vulnerable. If you’re giving an instrumental lesson, make sure you are within sight of the window. If your door does not have a window, leave the door open.
- If you are male, be especially careful. Regardless of gender, if you teach fifth grade or above, avoid touching any students unless absolutely necessary.
- Avoid personal notes to students unless they deal solely with educational matters. Be especially careful with e-mail, and instant Internet and text messages.
- Use extreme caution when meeting with students in non-school settings, especially when other adults are not present. You should always have parent and district approval.



- Never use physical force to punish a student. Although in some circumstances you may use reasonable force to restrain a student, use extreme caution in doing so.

## **Child Abuse--“Teachers must report suspected abuse”**

Teacher Candidates: Familiarize yourself with the district’s procedures/policies for reporting suspected abuse/neglect. Inform cooperating teacher and building administration. If you have concerns, contact your University Supervisor as soon as possible.

(Education Minnesota, Classroom Essentials 2007-08)

If you know or have reason to believe that one of your students has been the victim of child abuse or neglect, Minnesota law requires that you report it to the local social service agency, police or sheriff’s department, or the Minnesota Department of Education (if the suspected abuse occurred at school). **It is not sufficient to simply report it to the administration.** For the child’s protection – and yours – report any suspicion you have right away, even if you are unsure. The law requires a report be made within 24 hours of the time you have reason to believe there is abuse or neglect. The law also provides you with immunity for reports made in good faith. Do not take it upon yourself to investigate whether abuse occurred. If you are unsure, you should err on the side of reporting and leave the investigation to the proper authorities. **Before you file a report, you need to let your Cooperating Teacher and Principal know what you witnessed. Calling social services is very serious and these individuals must know what you plan to do. As social services often come to school to interview the child, it is critical that the CT and Principal can prepare for this.**

**One sign or symptom may not necessarily indicate child abuse or neglect, but some clues might lead you to suspect it:**

- A child who has a pattern of unexplained injuries or an inordinate number of “explained” ones.
- A child who comes to school inappropriately dressed for the season.
- A child who’s habitually late or often absent from school
- A child who arrives early and leaves late because he or she is reluctant to go home.
- A child who’s unusually fearful of adults or other children.
- A child who goes to the bathroom with difficulty or has trouble sitting.
- A child who is constantly tired or shows evidence of malnutrition.

## **Diversity -- "Bring balance to your classroom"**

(Education Minnesota, Classroom Essentials 2007-08)

Our students will live and work in an increasingly diverse society. Minority populations are increasing; immigration is bringing new languages and cultures; family structures are changing; and men and women continue to take on new roles in society. The challenge for educators is to meet students’ diverse educational needs while preparing all students to understand and appreciate differences in culture, learning style, interests and values.

Here are some suggestions:

- **Affirm and validate students’ ethnic experiences.** Include experiences of different cultural, religious and gender groups in the classroom through any display, materials used and projects and presentations.

- **Recognize and understand cultural differences.** Be aware of such cultural elements as clothing, time, space, gestures, ethics, values, religion, holidays, sex roles, rights and duties. Make an effort to learn more about your students' cultures by reading, taking classes and talking to people from the groups represented in your classroom.
- **Look beyond group stereotypes** and treat students as individuals. It's important to assess the needs of students individually so each can develop his or her potential.
- **Make sure your expectations are the same** for boys and girls. Both genders can succeed in math and reading. Challenge all your students, and make sure you interact equally with boys and girls.
- **Vary your teaching style.** Students bring different experiences and learning styles to your classroom, so use a variety of approaches to be sure everyone is successful.
- **Build on diversity in your everyday teaching.** Students' multicultural experiences are assets that can be used to help all students develop literary and critical thinking skills. Make connections through instructional themes relevant to many cultures, religions, and gender groups
- **Familiarize yourself with your district's harassment policies.** Every district is required to have policies on racial and sexual harassment.

## **School Safety--“Help provide a safe learning environment”**

(Education Minnesota, Classroom Essentials 2007-08)

Statistically, public schools are one of the safest places for children. But it is still essential to be prepared for the possibility of violence or other life-threatening emergencies. Where do you start?

- **Familiarize yourself** with your district's crisis management policy. Minnesota law requires all school districts to develop such a policy—in cooperation with staff, parents, law enforcement and others—to deal with a broad range of crises. The law spells out the minimum number of lock-down, fire and tornado drills to be included in the policy.
- **Make sure you receive training in crisis procedures**, including opportunities to practice the procedures with students present. Contact your union's building representative or local president if your district does not offer this.
- **Know your school building.** Make sure you get a map and a complete tour of your school. Know where designated safe areas are and how to get there. Familiarize yourself with evacuation routes and alternate routes if the main route is blocked.
- **Know the staff and other adults** authorized to be in your school. If you see someone you don't recognize, follow your school's policy for reporting an unauthorized visitor.
- **Pay attention to warning signs** that a student could become violent. These include preoccupation with weapons and death, cruelty to animals and expressions of anger or violence in writings or drawings. **Report such behaviors to your Cooperating Teacher.** Ask others at your school how to access resources for troubled youth.
- **Help foster a safe and respectful environment** in your classroom and school. Don't tolerate bullying, harassment or physical violence. **All of those behaviors are against the law and as such must be addressed by teachers.** Teach students how to resolve conflicts and manage anger, and help them practice these skills in everyday life. Work with others at your school to implement school-wide anti-bullying and school safety programs.
- **For additional assistance**, you can access Education Minnesota's Crisis Response Team through your building representative or local president. The team offers not only crisis assistance, but resources, training and preventative services.

# **Section V**

## **Guiding Materials**

- **Teacher Candidate Reflections**
- **Key Components of Lesson Plans**
- **Checklist for Lesson Planning**
- **Self-Managed Credentials**
- **Teaching Portfolios**

## Good Teachers Continually Reflect on their Teaching

As you embark on your student teaching experience, you are encouraged to reflect on what happens throughout your experience. In some cases, you will be required to share written reflections with your Cooperating Teacher or University Supervisor. If required, you need to consider these assignments and make sure you are completing them on time. It will take time, practice and an environment supportive of the process. Other questions or topics you may reflect on include:

- In general, how successful was the lesson? Did students learn what you intended them to learn?
- Were the lesson's goals and objectives appropriate for the students?
- Were your assessment strategies effective? Would you make changes?
- Classroom procedures – physical space, student conduct.
- What modifications or adjustments were necessary (if any)?
- Was your feedback accurate, substantive, constructive, specific, and/or timely? How might you respond differently?
- Discuss strategies, grouping, activities, materials & resources used.

## The Lesson Planning Cycle

Teaching involves a cycle of: Plan, Teach and Reflect. Reflection on previous lessons taught, through careful examination of student work and the impact of the teacher's instruction and classroom management will help you grow to become a stronger teacher. You and your Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor will agree on a lesson plan format that you will use. **Lesson plans may be written in various formats but must contain the following key components:**

### Key Components of a Lesson Plan

- Identifying items
  - Name, date taught, grade level, time needed
  - Subject area, topic
- Standard(s) Addressed
- Objective(s)/purpose
- Materials needed
- Introduction/connecting to the students
- Teaching/learning procedures
- Closure
- Assessment
- Management strategies for lesson/transition strategies
- Inclusion, cultural, diversity, and social justice considerations

- Adaptation to meet needs of all students (gifted/strugglers)

## **A Checklist for Lesson Planning**

NOTE: *Lesson plans must be approved by the Cooperating Teacher two days before the lesson is taught.*

1. Are the objectives stated clearly? What is the purpose of this lesson?
2. Is the lesson at the student's correct level of difficulty?
3. Are the instructions specific and meaningful?
4. Is this the best way of obtaining this particular understanding, attitude or skill? Have alternative methods been considered?
5. Are the plans flexible?
6. Are a variety of activities being provided?
7. Is the homework assignment necessary, realistic, and consistent with the lesson taught?
8. What is the justification for viewing this film, discussing this news article, or assigning this reading?
9. Do the projected plans relate to the interests and experiences of the students in this classroom?
10. Has the Cooperating Teacher(s) been consulted on the various methods or techniques of teaching?
11. Are all of the materials readily available?
12. Are these lesson plans consistent with the philosophy of the Cooperating Teacher, the school, and the program?
13. Was enough time allowed to complete the assignments?
14. Does the lesson flow from the objective/s?
15. Does the assessment match the objective/s?
16. Have multiple (racial, gender, class, etc.) perspectives on the content of the lesson been considered and included where appropriate?

## Self-Managed Credentials for Teacher Candidates

Self-managed credentials are the Teacher Candidate's job application materials. Teacher Candidates will coordinate the materials they will use in applying for teacher positions. Teacher Candidates will need to maintain original copies of their materials and send copies to the school districts for positions for which they are making formal application.

SCSU Teacher Candidates should begin preparing their job search application materials the semester before their student teaching. During the student teaching semester, students should complete their resume and reference list and register with Career Services through [www.scsucareers.com](http://www.scsucareers.com). This electronic resume posting system makes resumes available to school districts. Candidates should also visit *EdPost*, to review current education listings. This is also an important resource for candidates to use before they begin their job search process. You can review school district listings for job requirements as well as individual district application requirements.

*Credentials often include:*

- Letter of intent/application
- Resume
- List of references
- Three to five letters of recommendation (people who can comment on your ability to be an excellent employee, teacher, colleague; e.g., college professor, employer, colleague/teacher, organizational adviser, or principal)
- Teaching license
- Transcripts

## Teaching Portfolios (optional)

Teaching candidates should prepare a portfolio to have available to share with an interviewing team if requested. The portfolio should be of professional quality and presentation. A portfolio might include:

1. Table of contents
2. Profiles of your work
  - a. teaching philosophy
  - b. teaching responsibilities and objectives
  - c. strategies used in teaching (exams, computers)
  - d. syllabi and course descriptions
  - e. examples of special programs presented or projects for students
3. Efforts of achieving quality teaching
  - a. peer and student evaluations
  - b. letter from parent of student taught (unsolicited is great)
  - c. teaching workshop participation
  - d. awards received
  - e. achievements acknowledged
4. Goals
  - a. strategies to try next
  - b. studies outlined
5. Other
  - a. student outcomes (exams, tests and survey scores)
  - b. additional materials (letters from alumni, colleague observations)
  - c. photos of bulletin boards, classroom projects or experiences or special programs
  - d.** video tapes of classroom instruction or programs

# **Section VI**

## **Data Collection in the Field**

- **Observation and Evaluation Procedures**

## Observation and Evaluation Procedures

Evaluation of a Teacher Candidate has two major purposes:

1. Measure and encourage the Teacher Candidate's progress
2. Record for the university the level of competence attained by the Teacher Candidate during the student teaching experience

### Formative Observation Assessment

**A minimum of six observation forms** must be completed during the two semesters of student teaching experience by both the Cooperating Teacher and the University Supervisor. The forms are signed by both the Teacher Candidate and observer. Evaluation of teaching effectiveness is a daily process. The Cooperating Teacher is encouraged to discuss written observations on a continuous basis with the Teacher Candidate.

### Midterm (End of Block 3) Assessment of Student Teaching

The Midterm (End of Block 3) Assessment and Narrative of Student Teaching Forms are used by Cooperating Teachers and University Supervisors for evaluating the Teacher Candidate at the completion of Block 3 Student Teaching. These forms become a part of the Teacher Candidate's placement file.

### Summative Final Evaluation of Student Teaching

The Summative Assessment and Narrative of Student Teaching are used by Cooperating Teachers and University Supervisors for evaluating the Teacher Candidate at the completion of Block 4 Student Teaching. These final evaluations and narratives are sufficient documentation of the student teaching experience; therefore, additional letters of recommendation from Cooperating Teachers and University Supervisors are not required or expected. These forms become a part of the Teacher Candidate's placement file.

### Action Plan for Professional Growth

At times concerns arise regarding the Teacher Candidate's development of specific professional skills. The Action Plan format can then be used during a three-way conference with the Teacher Candidate, Cooperating Teacher, and University Supervisor. **Completing an Action Plan does not necessarily indicate unsatisfactory progress overall.**



## **Feedback to University Supervisor**

The Department of Teacher Development is constantly seeking input that will improve the educational experience of our students. Teacher Candidates are requested to submit anonymous feedback to their University Supervisor via regular mail at the completion of their Block 3 and Block 4 student teaching. A feedback form is included in this section of the handbook.

## **Teacher Candidate Self-Evaluation**

The Teacher Candidate is expected to gain competence in reflective teaching. To this end, the Teacher Candidate is required to complete a self-evaluation form at the end of first student teaching experience and again **at the end** of the final student teaching experience. The Teacher Candidate will share these self-evaluations with the Cooperating Teacher for comment and signature and will submit the completed form to the University Supervisor.