Student Teaching Handbook

Department of Educational Studies

Swarthmore College

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Fall 2017
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy and other goals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEACHER CERTIFICATION</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STUDENT TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placements</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibilities/Requirements</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COOPERATING TEACHERS RESPONSIBILITIES</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COLLEGE SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EVALUATION OF STUDENT TEACHING</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CAREER RESOURCES/JOB HUNTING</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Services Office</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Educational Studies</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPENDICES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA STATEWIDE EVALUATION FORM</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND CONDUCT FOR EDUCATORS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STUDENT TEACHING HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

Student teaching at Swarthmore College involves close collaboration between the College and the school and among the student teacher, Cooperating Teacher, and College Supervisor. This Handbook aims to provide all those involved in the process with a common framework for the student teaching experience, one that allows for the most successful approach for each beginning teacher. The Handbook describes the program taken by students who pursue student teaching and the roles and responsibilities of student teachers, Cooperating Teachers, and College Supervisors. Each member of the student teaching team should read the Handbook as a way of understanding how the Department and the people in it work together to provide a strong foundation for new teachers.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

Philosophy and goals

The Department of Educational Studies at Swarthmore engages students in the investigation of educational theory, policy, research and practice from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. We prepare students to enter the teaching profession, to work in the areas of educational research or policy and/or to do graduate study in Education or a related field. The Department encourages undergraduates to think critically and creatively about the processes of teaching and learning and about the place of education in society. The Department is also committed to preparing undergraduates to meet the needs of all students in an era of rapidly increasing racial, ethnic and linguistic diversity and technological change and to develop students' abilities to participate fully in civic, cultural and economic arenas. Both introductory and upper level courses in the Department draw on theory and research in Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, Economics and History. Students interested in Education at Swarthmore may complete the requirements for teacher certification and/or design a Special Major in Education and another discipline in either the Course or Honors Program.

The main goals of the teacher certification program at Swarthmore College are to develop reflective teachers who can effectively plan engaging and challenging lessons for a range of students; manage a classroom in ways that promote individual and group learning for all students; assess student performance and provide feedback on student progress; and work professionally with colleagues and parents to create a positive learning environment.
TEACHER CERTIFICATION

Swarthmore offers a competency-based teacher preparation program for students who seek secondary certification from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Individual student programs are designed in conjunction with departmental representatives and members of the Educational Studies faculty. All students seeking certification must meet Swarthmore College's distribution requirements in the Humanities, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences and the requirements for a major or special major.

STUDENT TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

Student teaching at Swarthmore is a two-credit, fourteen-week experience that helps students integrate prior theoretical and practical work in Education and their discipline. It is an opportunity to work cooperatively with practitioners, to assume a range of teaching responsibilities in a classroom and school, and to reflect on processes involved in teaching, learning, and schooling.

Except in unusual circumstances, which require special approval, students practice teach in their Senior year or a 9th Semester. Student teachers must have the approval and recommendation of their major department, approval of all of the Education faculty with whom they have worked and positive recommendations from teachers in whose classrooms they have done field placements. All students who want to student teach interview with the Chair of the Department of Educational Studies, who, then approves them for student teaching and arranges the school placement for student teaching.

Student teaching is a demanding experience that requires a great deal of commitment and energy. We recommend whenever possible that students reduce or eliminate other responsibilities (course requirements, work, co-curricular commitments) during their student teaching semester. In no case are students permitted to take more than one additional course during the semester in which they practice teach.

Placements

Student teaching placements are determined the semester prior to practice teaching. Placements are made by the Chair of the Department of Educational Studies in consultation with the student teacher, Cooperating Teachers, and school administrative personnel in the public and private schools in which we place students. When possible, students are given placement options and the opportunity to observe before a placement decision is finalized. In all cases, students meet with their Cooperating Teacher(s) the semester before their placement begins. Within the first full week of the school placement, the College Supervisor, Cooperating Teacher and Student Teacher meet to discuss student teaching requirements and expectations and to review the schedule/procedures for the upcoming semester.

Occasionally, student teacher placements are changed during the student teaching semester as a result of a) request by the Cooperating Teacher or school to be relieved of the responsibility of the student teacher, b) recommendation by the College Supervisor that such a change is in the best interest of the student teacher, or c) unforeseen events
such as illness, strikes, etc. If such a change is necessary, it is done as early in the semester as possible and, when necessary, the student teacher teaches beyond the required fourteen weeks in order to demonstrate competency in the new school setting.

Responsibilities/Requirements

1. Student teachers will spend fourteen weeks full-time in the school. They will begin by observing their Cooperating Teacher and other teachers within and outside of their discipline and across grade levels. Secondary student teachers will usually assume responsibility for two classes by the end of their second week and will, under the direction of the Cooperating Teacher and College Supervisor, assume complete responsibility for at least three classes (or more if the situation permits) by the ninth week of practice teaching. In block scheduling, students start with one block and assume responsibility for a second over the course of the fourteen weeks. Elementary student teachers will, by the end of the second week, take responsibility for teaching a group or the whole class in a particular subject area. They will assume increasing responsibility in the classroom and at some point become the primary teacher in the class for two (not necessarily consecutive) weeks.

2. Student teachers will follow their school calendar, not the College calendar. They are expected to be in school every day during the hours when teachers must be in school unless they have arranged otherwise in consultation with their Cooperating Teacher, College Supervisor, and the Chair of the Department of Educational Studies.

3. Student teachers will prepare curriculum, lesson plans, tests, and other materials in consultation with their Cooperating Teacher and College Supervisor. Student teachers should submit these materials with enough time to allow comment by the Cooperating Teacher and College Supervisor. Student teachers will coordinate student assessment with their Cooperating Teachers and, when appropriate, communicate with parents about student progress.

4. Student teachers will confer regularly with their Cooperating Teacher on their progress and discuss ways to strengthen and improve their teaching. They will meet with the College Supervisor following each observational visit (at least weekly) and whenever else the need arises. Typically they will meet or talk by phone at least one additional time between observation visits. One goal of this process is for students to learn to reflect on their own progress and develop ways to facilitate it.

5. During their practice teaching, students should become familiar with their schools’ administrative, guidance and counseling personnel, as well as libraries and materials centers. They should also attend appropriate faculty meetings, departmental meetings, in service programs, and parent conferences as well as participate in special school events. When possible, students should take responsibility for other aspects of teaching and school life, such as homeroom, study hall, lunch duty, etc.

6. Students will participate in a formal three-way evaluation conference with their Cooperating Teacher and College Supervisor midway through the term and again
at the end of the term. In preparation for this meeting, students will complete the Student Teaching Classroom Competency Checklist.

7. Secondary student teachers must arrange to be observed by a member of their major department. They should schedule a pre-and post-conference with this faculty member. Departmental faculty will then write a letter to the Teacher Education Committee evaluating the student teacher’s performance in the classroom.

8. Student teachers must successfully complete the Curriculum and Methods seminar that accompanies student teaching. The seminar continues the theoretical exploration of teaching issues raised in other Education courses and provides practical guidance in teaching methods. At the conclusion of the seminar, students will take both an oral and written exam and prepare a web-based and/or hard copy of a portfolio of work from their student teaching.

9. Student teachers will also attend a series of Special Methods workshops in their field (e.g., English methods, Social Studies methods, Math methods, Elementary methods).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COOPERATING TEACHER

Cooperating Teachers play an extremely important role in the student teaching program, working closely with student teachers on a daily basis in the classroom and the school. The State of Pennsylvania requires that Cooperating Teachers have a minimum of three years of successful teaching experience, at least one of which is in the school in which they will supervise. Cooperating teachers must also be certified in the area in which the student is seeking certification. We look for teachers who are interested in working with a student teacher, who serve as models of successful teaching, and who will allow a student teacher to experiment with a range of methods and styles within the bounds of classroom and school requirements. Although we cannot reimburse Cooperating Teachers for the many hours they spend working with a student teacher, we do provide an honorarium that recognizes their contribution to the teaching profession.

Students come to the student teaching situation with strong preparation in the discipline in which they seek certification. This preparation may be fairly broad or it may be more concentrated in subfields of the discipline. In all cases the courses in their major meet the Pennsylvania specific content standards in their subject area. They have also taken a series of Education courses, most of which include a fieldwork component. Cooperating teachers may visit the Department’s website for a current description of the required courses for each area of certification.

In Education studies, all students have completed field observations, worked as tutors, and/or served as a teacher’s assistant or a student researcher. In many cases they also have extensive experience with elementary or secondary students outside of the classroom as camp counselors or volunteers in various social service capacities. For the most part, however, students have had limited experience in taking on complete responsibility for a classroom. Cooperating Teachers help guide students in developing competence in the process of planning, teaching, and assessing students in the classroom setting. Cooperating Teachers should expect to receive a copy of their Student Teacher’s Curriculum and Methods syllabus.
Responsibilities

1. The Cooperating Teacher will coordinate the student teacher’s work in the classroom, with the goal of giving increasing responsibility to the student teacher. By the end of the second week of practice teaching secondary student teachers should have primary responsibility for two classes or one block.

2. The Cooperating Teacher will orient the student teacher to school personnel, facilities, policies, schedules, and routines.

3. The Cooperating Teacher will work with the student teacher, as needed, to develop lesson plans, activities, and methods of student assessment.

4. The Cooperating Teacher will confer regularly with the student teacher on his or her progress and discuss ways to strengthen and improve his or her preparation and teaching. This will require in-class observations of the student teacher as well as work with the student teacher outside of classroom time.

5. The Cooperating Teacher will work with the College Supervisor to provide the student teacher with feedback and problem-solving strategies to enable the student teacher continue to develop throughout the semester.

6. Using a clinical model, Cooperating Teachers will discuss with the College Supervisor and/or Chair of the Department of Educational Studies the goals, strategies for supervision and student teacher development. The Cooperating Teacher will also provide feedback regarding the certification program to the College Supervisor and/or Department Chair. New Cooperating Teachers will receive individual and/or group orientation.

7. The Cooperating Teacher will complete the Student Teaching Classroom Competency checklist midway through the semester and again at the end of the semester as well as participate in three-way conferences based on these checklist evaluations. He or she will also write an evaluation of the student teacher’s performance at the end of the semester that will become a part of the student teacher’s file and will be reviewed by the Teacher Education Committee.

The Department of Educational Studies aims to work with Cooperating Teachers in other ways that contribute to the preparation of teachers and to the larger educational process.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COLLEGE SUPERVISOR**

The College Supervisor, in collaboration with the Chair of the Department of Educational Studies, is responsible for planning, coordinating, and overseeing the student teaching experience. The College Supervisor serves as the link between the Department of Educational Studies, the student teacher, the Cooperating Teacher and the school, once student teaching begins. The College Supervisor is either a regular member of the faculty of the Department or an adjunct faculty member who typically has a master’s degree or higher in Education and has had experience as a classroom teacher. Frequently College Supervisors are retired teachers or administrators. College supervisors remain in close contact with the Department Chair and with the faculty member teaching the Curriculum and Methods, conferring with either and/or both of these Education faculty members
several times during the semester regarding the development of the student teacher(s) with whom they are working. At least once during the semester, all faculty supervising student teachers that term also meet as a group with the faculty member teaching the Curriculum and Methods seminar to discuss areas of common concern or interest and to provide feedback regarding the student teaching progress and problems.

Responsibilities

1. The College Supervisor will meet with the student teacher and Cooperating Teacher during the first full week of the student teaching semester to discuss and coordinate responsibilities, roles, and requirements.

2. The College Supervisor (and in some cases the Department Chair) will provide individual orientation to the program for new Cooperating Teachers, regarding program goals, strategies for supervision and cycles of student teacher development. They will also explain the Student Teaching Classroom Competency checklist that will be the basis for the three-way conferences midway and at the end of student teaching.

3. The College Supervisor will use a clinical model of supervision and observe the student teacher in the classroom at least once a week. Each observation will be followed by a conference during which the student teacher and College Supervisor reflect on the observed class and make plans for future student work. The supervisor will also meet with the student teacher at other times, as needed, to work on planning, management, student assessment, etc. Typically they will confer at least once a week by phone or at the College in addition to the feedback conference after weekly observations.

4. The College Supervisor will confer with the Cooperating Teacher about the student teacher’s strengths and needs and work with the Cooperating Teacher and student to devise strategies for development and improvement.

5. The College Supervisor will make sure arrangements have been made to videotape the student teacher’s classes at least once over the course of the semester and provide the student with guidance in viewing and critiquing the tape.

6. The College Supervisor will complete the Student Teaching Classroom Competency checklist midway through the student teacher’s semester and again at the end of the semester and participate in two formal, three way conferences with the student teacher and Cooperating Teacher, based on the information from these checklists. He or she will also write an evaluation of the student teacher’s performance at the end of the practice teaching term that will become a part of the student teacher’s file and be reviewed by the Teacher Education Committee. In addition, the College Supervisor, in consultation with the Cooperating Teacher, will determine a grade for the student teacher’s work.

7. The College Supervisor will confer with the Chair of the Department of Educational Studies and the faculty member teaching the Curriculum and Methods seminar concerning the student teacher’s experience. During each semester, the College Supervisor and the faculty member teaching the Curriculum and Methods seminar will meet to discuss general concerns and achievements regarding the student(s) they are supervising.
8. The College supervisor will complete the state form, PDE430 (Appendix) midway through and at the end of the student teaching experience, discuss it with the student, and submit it for the student teacher's dossier.

The College Supervisor is, for the student, a critical source of information and support during the student teaching semester. All classroom lesson plans, assignments and assessments should be sent to both the cooperating teacher and the College Supervisor. He or she will frequently be in the classroom, assuring that the experience is working for the student and providing appropriate feedback and guidance. Student teachers who experience any difficulties in their school assignments or are facing other personal or academic problems that affect their ability to function effectively in the classroom should discuss these matters with their College Supervisors. The College Supervisor will function both as a facilitator and mediator to help student teacher development proceed in a safe and empowering environment.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT TEACHING

Midway through the semester and at the end of the semester, the student teacher, the Cooperating Teacher, and their College Supervisors fill out the Student Teaching Classroom Competency Form. This form becomes the basis of an evaluation conference which focuses on the student's development, areas of strength, and plans for continued work. Following the final conference, the Cooperating Teacher and College Supervisor write letters of evaluation that become a part of the student teacher’s file. The College Supervisor also completes (at midterm and at the end of student teaching) the state evaluation form, PDE 430 and reviews it with each student teacher. In addition, the College Supervisor assigns the student a grade that reflects his or her development in relation to the stated competencies. Students must receive at least a B- in student teaching in order to be recommended to the State for certification by Swarthmore College.

At the end of the academic year, the Teacher Education Committee meets to review student teachers’ files. The Teacher Education Committee consists of College faculty from departments involved in certification, Department of Educational Studies faculty, and local school personnel. Each student’s file consists of letters from the following: Cooperating Teacher, College Supervisor, Department Chair, the faculty member in their department who observed their teaching, and an additional faculty member from inside or outside of the student’s major department. The Committee also reviews the student’s transcript and PDE 430. After reviewing the student teaching dossier, The Teacher Education Committee determines whether the student should be recommended to the State for certification.

CAREER RESOURCES/JOB HUNTING

There are array of resources available to student teachers as they begin to look for teaching and teaching-related jobs. We recommend that students have a resume, portfolio, and letter ready to send out by March of the year in which they will be certified and that they gather letters of recommendation for Career Services from their Cooperating Teacher, their College Supervisor, an Education faculty member and a faculty member from their major department, as well as other faculty members or employers who can attest to their character or suitability for teaching.
Career Services Office

Career Services at Swarthmore College has job and internship listings, information and workshops on resume and letter writing, and application materials for placement agencies such as Independent Education Services and Education Resources Group. They also bring placement agencies and some school district personnel to campus to conduct interviews. They will read and review resumes and letters, conduct mock interviews, and discuss short and long term goals with students.

Career Services will also keep a dossier of a student’s letters of recommendation that students seeking teaching positions can ask them to send out to prospective employers.

Department of Educational Studies

In both the Spring and Fall Semesters, the Department of Educational Studies conducts a Job Search workshop that provides additional information on how to look for a teaching position. They discuss ways to identify schools with openings, writing a teaching resume and cover letter, interviewing strategies, and use of a portfolio in the job search process. Information about local job fairs, as well as job fairs in other areas of the country, job fairs for students of color, and job fairs for students hoping to teach abroad, is distributed at the Job Search workshop and posted on the Department website. Education faculty members also provide individual guidance about the job search process throughout the year and into the summer. Many students find jobs during the months of June, July and August, when the College is not in session, and students are encouraged to call for advice and help from Education faculty during this period.

The Department of Educational Studies receives a number of job listing bulletins and education newspapers that are kept in the Education Materials Center. Individual job listings sent to the Department are posted on the Department website. Because our graduates teach around the country, we often receive information about job possibilities in schools in which our graduates are teaching that we pass on to current students. Swarthmore students who are certified to teach also have access to a job placement website developed by the Consortium for Excellence in Teacher Education website (http://www.princeton.edu/teacher/cete/). (The Consortium for Excellence in Teacher Education is a group of eighteen private liberal arts colleges and universities in the Northeast that was formed in 1983 to support the efforts of teacher educators and students in the member institutions as well local school personnel with whom the faculty in the Cete institutions work.)

In addition, through both formal and informal programs, the Department of Educational Studies offers support to first year teachers and other teachers seeking additional professional development. Graduates are encouraged to contact the Department of Educational Studies for more information on regional resources.
APPENDIX A

PENNSYLVANIA STATEWIDE EVALUATION FORMS
FOR STUDENT PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE
AND PRACTICE
Pennsylvania Statewide Evaluation Form for Student Professional Knowledge and Practice

Student/Candidate’s Last Name          First          Middle          Grade Level

Subject(s) Taught
This form is to serve as a permanent record of a student teacher/candidate’s professional performance evaluation during a specific time period, based on specific criteria. This form must be used at least twice during the 12-week (minimum) student teaching experience.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Directions: Examine all sources of evidence provided by the student teacher/candidate and bear in mind the aspects of teaching for each of the four categories used in this form. Check the appropriate aspects of student teaching, and indicate the sources of evidence used to determine the evaluation of the results in each category. Assign an evaluation for each of the four categories and then assign an overall evaluation of performance. Sign the form and gain the signature of the student teacher.

Category I: Planning and Preparation — Student teacher/candidate demonstrates thorough knowledge of content and pedagogical skills in planning and preparation. Student teacher makes plans and sets goals based on the content to be taught/learned, knowledge of assigned students, and the instructional context.
Alignment: 354.33. (I)/(A), (B), (C), (G), (H)

Student Teacher/Candidate’s performance appropriately demonstrates:
- Knowledge of content
- Knowledge of pedagogy
- Knowledge of Pennsylvania’s K-12 Academic Standards
- Knowledge of students and how to use this knowledge to impart instruction
- Use of resources, materials, or technology available through the school or district
- Instructional goals that show a recognizable sequence with adaptations for individual student needs
- Assessments of student learning aligned to the instructional goals and adapted as required for student needs
- Use of educational psychological principles/theories in the construction of lesson plans and setting instructional goals

Sources of Evidence (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles and number)

☐ Lesson/Unit Plans  ☐ Student Teacher Interviews  ☐ Classroom Observations
☐ Resources/Materials/Technology ☐ Resource Documents
☐ Assessment Materials  ☐ Other
☐ Information About Students

Category: (Including IEP’s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Exemplary 3 Points</th>
<th>Superior 2 Points</th>
<th>Satisfactory 1 Point</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory 0 Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Criteria for Rating
- The candidate consistently and thoroughly demonstrates indicators of performance.
- The candidate usually and extensively demonstrates indicators of performance. The candidate sometimes and inadequately demonstrates indicators of performance.
- The candidate rarely or never and inadequately or superficially demonstrates indicators of performance.

Rating (Indicate X)

Justification for Evaluation
**Category II: Classroom Environment** — Student teacher/candidate establishes and maintains a purposeful and equitable environment for learning, in which students feel safe, valued, and respected, by instituting routines and setting clear expectations for student behavior.

**Alignment:** 354.33 (1)(b)(E), (B)

Student Teacher/Candidate’s performance appropriately demonstrates:

- Expectations for student achievement with value placed on the quality of student work
- Attention to equitable learning opportunities for students
- Appropriate interactions between teacher and students and among students
- Effective classroom routines and procedures resulting in little or no loss of instructional time
- Clear standards of conduct and effective management of student behavior
- Appropriate attention given to safety in the classroom to the extent that it is under the control of the student teacher
- Ability to establish and maintain rapport with students

**Sources of Evidence (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, and number)**

- [ ] Classroom Observations
- [ ] Informal Observations/Visits
- [ ] Student Teacher/Candidate Interviews
- [ ] Visual Technology
- [ ] Resources/Materials/Technology/Space
- [ ] Other

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category for Rating</th>
<th>Exemplary 3 Points</th>
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**Justification for Evaluation**
## Category III — Instructional Delivery

Student teacher/candidate, through knowledge of content, pedagogy and skill in delivering instruction, engages students in learning by using a variety of instructional strategies.

**Alignment:** 354.33, (1)(D), (P), (G)

### Student Teacher/candidate’s performance appropriately demonstrates:

- Use of knowledge of content and pedagogical theory through his/her instructional delivery
- Instructional goals reflecting Pennsylvania K-12 standards
- Communication of procedures and clear explanations of content
- Use of instructional goals that show a recognizable sequence, clear student expectations, and adaptations for individual student needs
- Use of questioning and discussion strategies that encourage many students to participate
- Engagement of students in learning and adequate pacing of instruction
- Feedback to students on their learning
- Use of informal and formal assessments to meet learning goals and to monitor student learning
- Flexibility and responsiveness in meeting the learning needs of students
- Integration of disciplines within the educational curriculum

### Sources of Evidence (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, or number)

- Classroom Observations
- Informal Observations/Visits
- Assessment Materials
- Student Teacher/Candidate Interviews
- Student Assignment Sheets
- Student Work
- Instructional Resources/Materials/Technology
- Other

### Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exemplary 3 Points</th>
<th>Superior 2 Points</th>
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### Rating (Indicate □)

### Justification for Evaluation
Category IV – Professionalism - Student teacher/candidate demonstrates qualities that characterize a professional person in aspects that occur in and beyond the classroom/building.

Alignment: 354.33. (1)(6)(b),(i)

Student Teacher/Candidate’s performance appropriately demonstrates:

- Knowledge of school and district procedures and regulations related to attendance, punctuality and the like
- Knowledge of school or district requirements for maintaining accurate records and communicating with families
- Knowledge of school and/or district events
- Knowledge of district or college’s professional growth and development opportunities
- Integrity and ethical behavior, professional conduct as stated in Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators; and local, state, and federal, laws and regulations
- Effective communication, both oral and written with students, colleagues, paraprofessionals, related service personnel, and administrators
- Ability to cultivate professional relationships with school colleagues
- Knowledge of Commonwealth requirements for continuing professional development and licensure

Sources of Evidence (Check all that apply and include dates, types/titles, or number)

- Classroom Observations
- Informal Observations/Visits
- Assessment Materials
- Student Teacher Interviews
- Written Documentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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Rating (Indicate)

Justification for Evaluation
Overall Rating

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Exemplary (Minimum of 12 Points)</th>
<th>Superior (Minimum of 8 Points)</th>
<th>Satisfactory (Minimum of 4 Points)</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory (0 Points)</th>
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<td>Rating (Indicate ✓)</td>
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Note: This assessment instrument must be used a minimum of two times. A satisfactory rating (1) in each of the 4 categories, resulting in a minimum total of at least (4) points, must be achieved on the final summative rating to favorably complete this assessment.

Justification for Overall Rating:


Student Teacher/Candidate's Last Name  First  Middle

District/IU  School  Interview/Conference Date

School Year:  Term:  

Required Signatures:
Supervisor/Evaluator:  Date:

Student/Teacher Candidate:  Date:

(Confidential Document)
APPENDIX B

CHAPTER 235
CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND CONDUCT FOR EDUCATORS
CHAPTER 235. CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND CONDUCT FOR EDUCATORS

Sec.

235.2. Introduction.
235.3. Purpose.
235.4. Practices.
235.5. Conduct.
235.6. Legal obligations.
235.7. Certification.
235.8. Civil rights.
235.9. Improper personal or financial gain.
235.10. Relationships with students.
235.11. Professional relationships.

Authority

The provisions of this Chapter 235 issued under section (5)(a)(10) of the act of December 12, 1973 (P. L. 397, No. 141) (24 P. S. § 12-1255(a)(10)), unless otherwise noted.

Source

The provisions of this Chapter 235 adopted June 26, 1992, effective November 1, 1992, 22 Pa. B. 3176, unless otherwise noted.


The Professional Standards and Practices Commission is committed to providing leadership for improving the quality of education in this Commonwealth by establishing high standards for preparation, certification, practice and ethical conduct in the teaching profession.

§ 235.2. Introduction

(a) Professional conduct defines interactions between the individual educator and students, the employing agencies and other professionals. Generally, the responsibility for professional conduct rests with the individual professional educator. However, in this Commonwealth, a Code of Professional Practice and Conduct (Code) for certificated educators is required by statute and violation of specified sections of the Code may constitute a basis for public or private reprimand. Violations of the Code may also be used as supporting evidence, though may not constitute an

(b) This chapter makes explicit the values of the education profession. When individuals become educators in this Commonwealth, they make a moral commitment to uphold these values.

§ 235.3. Purpose.

(a) Professional educators in this Commonwealth believe that the quality of their services directly influences the Nation and its citizens. Professional educators recognize their obligation to provide services and to conduct themselves in a manner which places the highest esteem on human rights and dignity. Professional educators seek to ensure that every student receives the highest quality of service and that every professional maintains a high level of competence from entry through ongoing professional development. Professional educators are responsible for the development of sound educational policy and obligated to implement that policy and its programs to the public.

(b) Professional educators recognize their primary responsibility to the student and the development of the student’s potential. Central to that development is the professional educator’s valuing the worth and dignity of every person, student and colleague alike; the pursuit of truth; devotion to excellence; acquisition of knowledge; and democratic principles. To those ends, the educator engages in continuing professional development and keeps current with research and technology. Educators encourage and support the use of resources that best serve the interests and needs of students. Within the context of professional excellence, the educator and student together explore the challenge and the dignity of the human experience.

§ 235.4. Practices.

(a) Professional practices are behaviors and attitudes that are based on a set of values that the professional education community believes and accepts. These values are evidenced by the professional educator’s conduct toward students and colleagues, and the educator’s employer and community. When teacher candidates become professional educators in this Commonwealth, they are expected to abide by this section.

(b) Professional educators are expected to abide by the following:

(1) Professional educators shall abide by the Public School Code of 1949 (24 P. S. §§ 1-101—27-2702), other school laws of the Commonwealth, sections 1201(a)(1), (2) and (4) and (b)(1), (2) and (4) of the Public Employee Relations Act (43 P. S. § 1101.1201(a)(1), (2) and (4) and (b)(1), (2) and (4)) and this chapter.

(2) Professional educators shall be prepared, and legally certified, in their areas of assignment. Educators may not be assigned or willingly accept assignments they are not certified to fulfill. Educators may be assigned to or accept assignments outside their certification area on a temporary, short-term, emergency basis. Examples: a teacher certified in English filling in a class period for a physical education teacher who has that day become ill; a substitute teacher certified in elementary education employed as a librarian for several days until the district can locate and employ a permanent substitute teacher certified in library science.

(3) Professional educators shall maintain high levels of competence throughout their careers.

(4) Professional educators shall exhibit consistent and equitable treatment of students, fellow educators and parents. They shall respect the civil rights of all and not discriminate on the basis of
race, national or ethnic origin, culture, religion, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, age, political beliefs, socioeconomic status, disabling condition or vocational interest. This list of bases or discrimination is not all-inclusive.

(5) Professional educators shall accept the value of diversity in educational practice. Diversity requires educators to have a range of methodologies and to request the necessary tools for effective teaching and learning.

(6) Professional educators shall impart to their students principles of good citizenship and societal responsibility.

(7) Professional educators shall exhibit acceptable and professional language and communication skills. Their verbal and written communications with parents, students and staff shall reflect sensitivity to the fundamental human rights of dignity, privacy and respect.

(8) Professional educators shall be open-minded, knowledgeable and use appropriate judgment and communication skills when responding to an issue within the educational environment.

(9) Professional educators shall keep in confidence information obtained in confidence in the course of professional service unless required to be disclosed by law or by clear and compelling professional necessity as determined by the professional educator.

(10) Professional educators shall exert reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions which interfere with learning or are harmful to the student’s health and safety.

§ 235.5. Conduct.

Individual professional conduct reflects upon the practices, values, integrity and reputation of the profession. Violation of §§ 235.6—235.11 may constitute an independent basis for private or public reprimand, and may be used as supporting evidence in cases of certification suspension and revocation.

§ 235.6. Legal obligations.

(a) The professional educator may not engage in conduct prohibited by the act of December 12, 1973 (P. L. 397, No. 141) (24 P. S. §§ 12-1251—12-1268), known as the Teacher Certification Law.

(b) The professional educator may not engage in conduct prohibited by:

1) The Public School Code of 1949 (24 P. S. §§ 1-101—27-2702) and other laws relating to the schools or the education of children.


(c) Violation of subsection (b) shall have been found to exist by an agency of proper jurisdiction to be considered an independent basis for discipline.

Cross References

This section cited in 22 Pa. Code § 235.5 (relating to conduct).
§ 235.7. Certification.

The professional educator may not:

(1) Accept employment, when not properly certificated, in a position for which certification is required.

(2) Assist entry into or continuance in the education profession of an unqualified person.

(3) Employ, or recommend for employment, a person who is not certificated appropriately for the position.

Cross References

This section cited in 22 Pa. Code § 235.5 (relating to conduct).

§ 235.8. Civil rights.

The professional educator may not:

(1) Discriminate on the basis of race, National or ethnic origin, culture, religion, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, age, political beliefs, socioeconomic status; disabling condition or vocational interest against a student or fellow professional. This list of bases of discrimination is not all-inclusive. This discrimination shall be found to exist by an agency of proper jurisdiction to be considered an independent basis for discipline.

(2) Interfere with a student’s or colleague’s exercise of political and civil rights and responsibilities.

Cross References

This section cited in 22 Pa. Code § 235.5 (relating to conduct).

§ 235.9. Improper personal or financial gain.

The professional educator may not:

(1) Accept gratuities, gifts or favors that might impair or appear to impair professional judgment.

(2) Exploit a professional relationship for personal gain or advantage.

Cross References

This section cited in 22 Pa. Code § 235.5 (relating to conduct).

§ 235.10. Relationships with students.

The professional educator may not:

(1) Knowingly and intentionally distort or misrepresent evaluations of students.

(2) Knowingly and intentionally misrepresent subject matter or curriculum.

(3) Sexually harass or engage in sexual relationships with students.
(4) Knowingly and intentionally withhold evidence from the proper authorities about violations of the legal obligations as defined within this section.

Cross References

This section cited in 22 Pa. Code § 235.5 (relating to conduct).

§ 235.11. Professional relationships.

The professional educator may not:

(1) Knowingly and intentionally deny or impede a colleague in the exercise or enjoyment of a professional right or privilege in being an educator.

(2) Knowingly and intentionally distort evaluations of colleagues.

(3) Sexually harass a fellow employee.

(4) Use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional decisions of colleagues.

(5) Threaten, coerce or discriminate against a colleague who in good faith reports or discloses to a governing agency actual or suspected violations of law, agency regulations or standards.

Cross References

This section cited in 22 Pa. Code § 235.5 (relating to conduct).