



## A MESSAGE TO TEACHERS

The College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) requires applicants to acquire classroom experience before admission to our programs. These experiences may help prospective teachers understand the challenges of teaching in a public-school environment and how to become more comfortable interacting with a class.

CEHD requires the following amount of classroom-related experience:

- 100 hours for most master of education (M.Ed.)/initial licensure programs
- 70 hours for some bachelor of science (B.S.) programs

Program applicants are expected to complete the majority of the classroom experience in a public classroom within the two years immediately preceding application to the program. For more information, consult a program adviser at the college's office of Student & Professional Services (SPS); 612-625-6501; e-mail: [spsinfo@umn.edu](mailto:spsinfo@umn.edu); or consult program material at the CEHD Web site: [www.education.umn.edu](http://www.education.umn.edu).

Although some tutoring experience with public-school students can be valuable, prospective teachers will gain the most from work in a classroom as similar as possible to the subject area and grade level they want to teach. For example, volunteers interested in teaching elementary-school age children are encouraged to work with grades K-6. If interested in secondary science teaching, then experience in a 5-12 science classroom is preferred.

Other supplemental experiences are encouraged, including those in less structured learning environments. Examples are camp counselor, coach of a youth sport, nanny, recreational activity coordinator, or Big Brother/Big Sister volunteer.

## DIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

Because CEHD is committed to preparing teachers to work in urban and diverse schools, classroom experience must include working with a diverse student population. Applicants should work with students whose backgrounds are different from their own. Aspects of diversity include ethnicity, socio-economic status, special needs, and other factors.

## WHY IS CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE IMPORTANT?

Applicants who decide to volunteer in a school setting can observe and experience activities in the classroom in a real-world setting. Volunteers should reflect on these issues:

- How do teachers facilitate learning (small group, whole class, individual)?
- How do teachers adapt to the various learning styles of their students?
- How does a teacher utilize class time?
- How do teachers address differences in language usage and culture?
- How do teachers moderate discussion?

In addition to aiding teachers in the classroom, volunteers may also choose to help in a science or language lab, or on a field trip. Under the teacher's guidance, volunteers may lead a small-group discussion, or prepare and deliver a demonstration related to a lesson.

*The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer.  
The College of Education and Human Development is committed to recruiting, enrolling, and educating a diverse population of students who represent the overall composition of our society.  
For alternative formats of this publication, please contact Student & Professional Services, 612-625-6501.*

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Dear teacher:

The person who shares this letter with you has expressed an interest in becoming a licensed teacher. This potential future teacher has come to you seeking a volunteer classroom experience.

This is one of five admission criteria for teacher licensure programs at the College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota. This person is coming to you as an individual who is not yet admitted to one of our teacher preparation programs.

We have found that students with prior volunteer experience in the classroom come well-prepared to start our teacher preparation programs because they may be better able to:

- decide if teaching is a good career choice
- incorporate relevant, hands-on experiences into their content and pedagogy courses

Please allow this person some time to observe your classroom in order to gain exposure to the teaching profession. In addition, please engage this person in a variety of activities that you believe are mutually beneficial. Volunteers may:

- help individual students in your classroom
- facilitate small-group discussions
- help with test scoring and assignments
- accompany you and your students on a field trip

We appreciate your willingness to welcome this potential future teacher into your classroom. This volunteer opportunity will provide a valuable service to the individual and the teaching profession as a whole.

To learn more about teacher preparation and professional studies programs, visit our college Web site at [www.education.umn.edu](http://www.education.umn.edu) or contact us by e-mail: [spsinfo@umn.edu](mailto:spsinfo@umn.edu).

Sincerely,

Council on Teacher Education (CTE)  
College of Education and Human Development (CEHD)  
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities