SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

STUDENT TEACHING HANDBOOK
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Student teaching has long been the capstone experience of teacher education programs. This experience is viewed as a transition period, during which the pre-service student teacher moves from the role of “student” to the role of “teacher.” Student teachers are in the process of becoming teachers as they analyze teaching, develop a personal philosophy of teaching, and put into practice the methods, techniques, and concepts related to teaching.

University of Minnesota’s Special Education program places students in valuable classroom settings in partnership school districts where they can demonstrate the use of evidence-based and/or promising practices. During this time, those involved in the student teaching process have asked questions concerning the tasks and responsibilities which insure the successful completion of this cooperative undertaking. This handbook—while not comprehensive in answering all possible questions or concerns—is intended to be of service to all parties involved: the student teacher, the cooperating teacher (CT), and the university supervisor (US).
Description

The transfer of theoretical knowledge to practical application learned throughout the student teacher’s program will be examined. Understanding and effectively implementing the role and responsibilities of the special education teacher in a variety of settings with students of early childhood (starting at birth), elementary, and secondary, and transition age (i.e., adults) is essential. Evidence based instructional strategies and use of data-based decision making will model those that the student teacher is expected to use in the student teaching experience. Some of these strategies include cooperative groups, problem solving discussion groups, video-based observations, reflective evaluations, and presentations of data.

This course is intended to teach culturally relevant critical thinking skills that can be applied to new research findings and interventions as they develop over the course of the student teacher’s career. Special Education teachers lead their schools in identifying and discussing critical issues in research and service delivery with parents, regular education teachers, administrators and other professionals.

Goals

During student teaching, student teachers will document their competencies by developing products and completing requirements required of special education teachers seeking their license. Student teachers will demonstrate effective teaching skills as documented through student academic, behavioral and functional skills progress and professional dispositions. By completing the requirements listed below, student teachers will present the skills necessary to become leaders in the field of education.
OVERVIEW OF REQUIREMENTS, OUTCOMES, & STANDARDS

Requirements

- Goal work & Student Teaching Checklist
- Formative Self-Assessment & Corresponding Goals (included in goal work packet)
- Three (a minimum of) Observations & Post-Observation Dialogues
- Midterm & Final Evaluation and Disposition Assessments
- Classroom Experience Attendance & Participation
- Seminar Attendance and Participation (included in checklist)

Completion of Student Teaching Requirements

- Confer with your University supervisor regarding plans and process to ensure completion of requirements. Student teachers are encouraged to clarify their understanding of requirements expected in the initial two weeks of the semester in order to avoid unnecessary problems.
- Discuss the requirements with the cooperating teachers during the first two weeks of student teaching and determine whether any undue difficulties in implementing the competencies are expected. If a problem is identified, notify the University supervisor no later than the first observation, so that an alternative plan can be arranged.
- All requirements must be completed over the course of the semester. Deadlines and details are noted in the syllabus, the student teaching handbook, and on Canvas.

Note: The U of M has engaged in preliminary discussion with each of the cooperating teachers to share the UMN’s Special Education Licensure priorities associated with student teaching, specifically the requirements outlined in both the Student Teaching syllabus and handbook. These requirements are aligned with evidence-based and/or promising practices. If the school or teacher is unable to support the completion of any of the requirements or disagrees with the implementation process, it is the student teacher’s responsibility to contact their University supervisor to discuss concerns and engage in the problem-solving process to identify potential solutions.

Outcomes & Standards

<table>
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<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Student teachers will work within the IDEAL problem-solving model. Specifically, student teachers will:</th>
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<td>Can identify, define, and solve problems</td>
<td>• Identify referral, assessment, planning, and placement procedures specific to teaching students with disabilities.</td>
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<td>• Identify a problem within their assigned setting.</td>
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<td>Can locate and critically evaluate information</td>
<td>• Demonstrate skills in planning, developing, and evaluating Individualized Educational Programs (IEP) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) based on the information gathered through various diagnostic and formative assessment procedures.</td>
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| Have mastered a body of knowledge and a mode of inquiry | Define the problem using data gathered from multiple assessments (formal and informal).  
Look at the effects of the solution by utilizing progress monitoring tools. |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Understand diverse philosophies and cultures within and across societies | Design individual educational programs (IEPs) and use developmentally appropriate and promising instructional practices for students with disabilities.  
Explore alternative, appropriate solutions, drawing upon existing knowledge regarding evidence-based instructional practices. |
| Can communicate effectively | Apply the standards of effective practice in teaching students with disabilities across a range of service delivery models, grades levels, and culturally diverse settings.  
Apply a solution within their assigned setting. |
| Understand the role of creativity, innovation, discovery and expression across disciplines | Convey pre-referral & due process procedures to the university instructor & supervisor.  
Communicate evaluation results to students, families, teachers, and other related service providers.  
Discuss their reasoning throughout application of the IDEAL process. This reasoning should reflect educational theories, evidence-based interventions, and principles of instruction |
| Have acquired skills for effective citizenship and life-long learning | Adapt state standards and modify instruction from general education curricula to meet the needs of students at risk as well as those students with disabilities.  
Communicate and interact with parents and other professionals effectively to support students’ academic and social progress. |
| **State Licensing Standards and Ethics** | **Self-evaluate skills and reflect upon experience.** |

All teacher candidates are required to meet all Minnesota state licensing standards, [Pre-12 Teacher Education Standards—State of Minnesota](https://www.mde.k12.mn.us/teacher-licensing/standards/pre-12-stds.html), and adhere to Minnesota’s [Code of Ethics](https://www.mde.k12.mn.us/teacher-licensing/code-of-ethics).
GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Special Education Program Vision and Problem-Solving Model

Vision of U of M Special Education Teacher Candidate Program: Graduates of the University of Minnesota learn through the Special Education Teacher licensure program that instructors are student-centered, collaborative professionals who deliver robust, high-quality, and specialized educational services, adding value to the learning and development of infants, children, and adults with disabilities from diverse cultural backgrounds. Our graduates are knowledgeable in the following areas:

- Engaging in collaborative problem solving with families and professionals to meet the academic, social, behavioral, and life skill needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Implementing and supporting others’ implementation of evidence-based instruction and intervention with fidelity to improve student outcomes.
- Using reliable and valid assessment data to make individualized educational decisions.
- Systematically selecting and adapting instructional supports to meet individual needs, based on data and knowledge of individual learning, developmental, cultural differences.
- Maximizing expectations and learning opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the Least Restrictive Environment using the full continuum of services.
- Upholding principles of professionalism and ethics in their practice.

To fulfill this vision, U of M Special Education Student Teachers use the IDEAL Problem-Solving Model to:
- Identify the problem
- Define the problem
- Explore alternative solutions
- Apply solutions
- Look at the effects of solutions

The Special Education Program is part of the Department of Educational Psychology within the College of Education and Human Development.

College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) Mission

The mission of the University of Minnesota College of Education and Human Development is to contribute to a just and sustainable future through engagement with the local and global communities to enhance human learning and development at all stages of the life span.

Summary: Conceptual Framework for Professional Education in CEHD (April 2012)

The mission of CEHD professional education programs is to provide leadership for:
- Promoting inquiry, research, and reflection;
- Honoring the diversity of our communities and learners; and
- Fostering a commitment to lifelong learning and professional development.
Department of Educational Psychology (EPSY) Mission

Educational psychology involves the study of cognitive, emotional, and social learning processes that underlie education and human development across the lifespan. Research in educational psychology advances scientific knowledge of those processes and their application in diverse educational and community settings. The department provides training in the psychological foundations of education, research methods, and the practice and science of counseling psychology, school psychology, and special education. Faculty and students provide leadership and consultation to the state, the nation, and the international community in each area of educational psychology. The department’s scholarship and teaching enhance professional practice in schools and universities, community mental health agencies, business and industrial organizations, early childhood programs, and government agencies.

Special Education Licensure and Degree Programs

Undergraduate Degrees

**Bachelor of Science (BS) with Academic Behavioral Strategist (ABS) licensure**

**Bachelor of Science (BS) for foundations of special education for schools and society**

Graduate Degree

**Master of Education/licensure (MEd)**  
NOTE: Applicants can choose: Initial Licensure MEd, MEd only, Additional Licensure only or MEd with Additional Licensure.

Teaching Licenses

Students are eligible for a [MN Tier 3 license](#) in one of the areas listed below):

**Academic Behavioral Strategist (ABS)**

**Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)**

**Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD)**

**Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)**
Professional Certificates

Autism spectrum disorder certificate
This program is available at the undergrad and post-bac level. It does not lead to licensure.

Special Education Program People

Ed Psych Administrative Staff (for Special Education)

Alicia Vegell, special education & school psychology program assistant

Special Education Program Faculty & Instructors

M.Y. Savana Bak
Janet Caven
Debbie Golos
Robert Henery
LeAnne Johnson, special education program coordinator
Michelle Marchant-Wood, licensure program coordinator
Jennifer McComas
Scott McConnell
Kristen McMaster, department chair
Charissa O’Neill, field placement coordinator
Brenna Rudolph
Kathy Seifert, director of undergraduate studies
Frank Symons, associate dean for research
Jason Wolff

Special Education Program Advisors

Laura Paczkowski, special education academic advisor

Common Acronyms

CEHD – College of Education and Human Development
PELSB – Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board
CORE – course within the program taken by most student teachers/central content to program
SEP – Standard(s) of Effective Practice
TC – Teacher Candidate, a University student in a teacher licensure program
CT – Cooperating Teacher
US – University Supervisor
OTE – Office of Teacher Education
ILP – Initial Licensure Program
APLUS – Academic Partnership Lead Us to Success
APAS – Academic Progress Audit System
GPAS – Graduate Progress Audit System
CEHD Teacher Candidate Handbook

The CEHD Handbook is available online. It contains policies and codes, assessment information, licensure information, university policies, clinical information, and other details. The Special Education Student Teaching Handbook is a compliment to the CEHD Teacher Candidate Handbook; it does not replace that handbook. All teacher candidates need to be familiar with the policies, responsibilities, and expectations included in both.

Code of Conduct

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

Students are expected to adhere to Board of Regents Policy: Student Conduct Code.

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

There may be occasions when a student believes their academic work or conduct has been unfairly or inadequately evaluated by the faculty. Usually such differences of opinion can be amicably resolved informally between the student and teacher. If not, there are procedures established to encourage a satisfactory resolution of academic grievances by a formal procedure. Please review information regarding the academic student grievance policy:

Grades

Successful demonstration of competencies as specified in state and national standards is essential for effective teaching. As such, the Special Education teacher licensure programs are designed on a competency-based model. To assist in determination that student teachers have sufficient knowledge and skills for student teaching, student teachers must meet minimum performance standards in licensure coursework. A student/teacher candidate must (a) attain a B (3.0) average across all licensure coursework completed prior to the semester of student teaching and (b) attain a minimum grade of B- in each of these individual courses.
Disability Accommodations

The University of Minnesota views disability as an important aspect of diversity, and is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

- If a student has, or thinks they have, a disability in any area such as, mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical, please advise them to contact the DRC office on campus (UM Twin Cities - 612.626.1333) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.
- Students with short-term disabilities, such as a broken arm, can often work with instructors to minimize classroom barriers. In situations where additional assistance is needed, students should contact the DRC as noted above.
- If a student is registered with the DRC and has a disability accommodation letter dated for the current semester or year, they are expected to contact you (the instructor) early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in your course.

Additional information is available on the DRC website or e-mail drc@umn.edu with questions.

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action

The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

FERPA

The United States Congress passed the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in 1974 to afford certain rights to students concerning their educational records. The primary rights afforded to students who attend a postsecondary school such as Brigham Young University are the right to inspect and review their education records, the right to seek to have their records amended and the right to have some control over the disclosure of information from the records. Records containing a student's name, identification number, or other personally identifiable information, in whatever medium, are covered by FERPA unless identified in one of the act's excluded categories.
Mental Health and Stress Management

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to their learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, and feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce their ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist them. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website.

Scholastic Dishonesty

Students are expected to do their own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code.). If it is determined that a student has cheated, the student may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University, per the UMN policy.

The Office for Community Standards has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty. If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class—e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

Sexual Harassment

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy on Sexual Harassment.

Sexual Assault and Higher Education: Training Modules and Information

The Department of Educational Psychology supports the efforts of the University of Minnesota towards prevention of sexual assault. We encourage all students to participate in the free online training that has been established for undergraduate students and graduate students. The training
highlights pertinent issues regarding sexual assault, including, but not limited to: defining healthy relationships, consent, bystander intervention, and gender roles. The guide for the training is available in your My Training page. Additionally, to learn more about how you can help reduce sexual assault at the University of Minnesota, please visit the Aurora Center.

School Counseling Services (SCS)

These services are located on both the Minneapolis and St. Paul campuses. The purpose of these services is to promote student success by helping with (a) mental health and life concerns, (b) learning and academic skills challenges, (c) career uncertainty, and (d) faculty/staff—student communication. Link here for additional information related to the SCS.

CEHD Student Services

CEHD Student Services includes several support resources that help you meet undergraduate students’ academic and career goals.

- Academic advising
- CEHD Career Services
- Scholarships for current students

CEHD Student Services partners with TRIO educational opportunity programs to support undergraduate students from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds in the pursuit of a college degree.

University Center for Writing

Free face-to-face and online writing support consultations for all University of Minnesota students—graduate and undergraduate—at all stages of the writing process are found via University’s Center for Writing.

CEHD Enrollment Policies and Codes

- Undergraduate Enrollment Policies
- Graduate Enrollment Policies
Pre-Student Teaching Progress Review

CEHD’s policy for pre-student teaching progress review can be found in the CEHD teaching handbook. This policy states that records for each teacher candidate will be reviewed prior to approval being given for a candidate to begin their final student teaching placement. This record review examines course progress, GPA, dispositions assessment, and field experience hours, scope, and diversity thresholds.

Coursework

A student/teacher candidate must (a) attain a B (3.0) average across all licensure coursework completed in the semester prior to the semester of student teaching and (b) attain a minimum grade of B- in each of these individual courses.

To ensure that all program requirements have been met, Special Education teacher candidates are required to review their program with the program advisor prior to applying for a student teaching placement. Teacher candidates are also required to complete all coursework prior to the semester of their student teaching experience. The only exception is for program plans created for a specific area of licensure that have identified a specific course that may be taken with student teaching (e.g., students enrolled in the EBD cohort or EPSY 5605 for ABS). During the semester when a candidate is enrolled in student teaching, the teacher candidate is also required to attend the Student Teaching Seminar and be enrolled in the Experimental Teaching Seminar or Masters Final Paper/Project (if applicable). Additional courses are not permitted during a candidate’s “student teaching” semester. Any requests for exemptions to this policy must be discussed with the program advisor well in advance of a candidate requesting a placement for student teaching. Requests for exemptions will follow a formal program review process and are provided on a very limited case-by-case basis.

Professional Disposition Assessment

CEHD requires that the disposition assessment be completed a minimum of two times. At least once prior to student teaching and during student teaching. The Special Education program completes a disposition assessment each semester for all teacher candidates. Each semester, the CEHD Disposition Assessment is completed and teacher candidates are assessed for the presence of multiple specific concerns in any given semester, repeated concerns over time, and/or extreme concerns that violate other CEHD or University policies.
Individual Development Plans

Consistent with the CEHD policy for the pre-student teaching review, if a teacher candidate does not meet the performance expectations related to their coursework or their professional disposition, an Individual Development Plan (IDP) may be required. An IDP will be developed with the teacher candidate, the licensure area LPL, and the program advisor to address specific competencies that must be demonstrated prior to approval being given for a student to be placed for student teaching. An IDP may require, but is not limited to, additional coursework, independent study, or field experiences. Specific expectations with criteria for satisfactory performance will be established for each IDP. In many cases, the requirement of an IDP will extend a candidate’s time in the program and delay access to a final student teaching experience. If satisfactory performance is demonstrated, the candidate will be placed for student teaching the following semester. If satisfactory performance is not demonstrated, the candidate may be exited from the teacher licensure program.

Placements

Student teachers are matched to sites through an iterative process that may consider the following information:

- perceived fit
- the student teacher’s areas of interest
- the student teacher’s identified goals
- site availability
- the site’s available training and educational experiences, specifically, the use of evidenced-based/promising practices for teaching, management, and service delivery

The Field Placement Coordinator will send a survey to all teacher candidates prior to making student teaching placements. It is the responsibility of the teacher candidate to respond to that survey by any stated deadlines to provide the needed information. If a teacher candidate does not respond or requests a change after the deadline has passed, placement may not be made for the expected semester or a placement may be made based on licensing requirements and availability rather than any student preferences. Preferences are not guaranteed. Based on the available information, the Field Placement Coordinator strives to make the location as convenient as possible for the student teachers. Student teachers are not permitted to arrange their own student teaching placements. Sites are evaluated by the licensure team based on feedback collected from student teachers enrolled in the SpEd program. In addition, sites are monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis by University supervisors and the Field Placement Coordinator.

While the Field Placement Coordinator is making placements, or after a placement has been made, if a teacher candidate needs to request any type of modifications or accommodations, it is the responsibility of the teacher candidate to initiate a discussion with the Field Placement Coordinator. This will include completion of the placement modification request form that will be used to guide the discussion and decision making of the licensure team as to whether or not the requested modifications or accommodations are allowable.
On-the-Job Placements

Off-the-job (not as teacher of record) is preferred for all student teaching placements. If you have extenuating circumstances, hold a bachelor’s degree and a current Minnesota teaching license, and have not received any dispositional letters during your program, you may contact your adviser about the possibility of student teaching on-the-job.

Classroom Experience Attendance and Participation

As a student teacher, you must complete the contracted hours at your placement site(s). In accordance with each state approved licensure program, all student teaching experiences require full-time participation for a continuous number of weeks. Typically, student teaching experiences require full-time participation during the school day for several weeks. The number of weeks will vary depending on the specific requirements of the licensure program.

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Regular attendance and participation in the assigned classroom, meetings with the University supervisor and/or cooperating teacher are required. While student teaching, teacher candidates are required to document dates and reasons for both absences and tardies. **Up to three absences from the classroom experience will be considered. Absences beyond three days in the classroom will be discussed and may result in failure of the student teaching experience or expectation to repeat or extend the experience.** Repeated late arrival or early leaving based on agreed to reporting times are also cause for discussion and may result in failure of the student teaching experience or need to repeat or extend the experience. Therefore, teacher candidates are encouraged to carefully consider their program plan and readiness to fully engage in the student teaching experience during the semester that student teaching is expected to take place.

Student Teaching Seminar Attendance and Participation

The student teaching seminar accompanies your enrollment in student teaching. It is NOT a separate course for which candidates are required to enroll, but it is a required component of the overall student teaching experience. All student teachers, from all SpEd licensure programs, are expected to participate together and learn from each other’s varied experiences. Seminars typically take place in the evenings. They do not take place every week, 3-6 meetings typically that are distributed across the semester. Attendance and participation is mandatory for all student teachers.
Preparation for Performing Essential Functions of a Special Education Teacher

Just as the U of MN is committed to facilitating the success of adults with disabilities who are pursuing a special education teaching license, we are equally committed to ensuring the preparation of licensure candidates to perform the essential functions of being a teacher of students with disabilities. This includes open and clear dialogue about the types of things often considered by schools to be essential functions of special education teachers and reflection on how performance of those functions align with each individual’s priorities for employment. As an example, students are encouraged to consider a recent position description for a special education teacher in one of Minnesota’s largest school districts. This position description lists a number of essential functions that are consistent with the performance expectations included in coursework and field experiences that teacher candidates participate in throughout their enrollment in one of our teacher licensure programs. Given that it is a goal of our work to ensure that students with disabilities who are receiving services through IDEA receive high quality services that meet their needs, performance expectations throughout the program reflect the needs of the students being served as the first and most important priority. Teacher candidates will have opportunities to learn more about these essential functions, practice and demonstrate skills related to each function, and reflect on the available opportunities to learn and develop any needed skills prior to approval for placement in a student teaching experience.
Placement

By the time student teaching experiences begin, the U of M will have engaged in preliminary discussion with each of the cooperating teachers to share the UMN’s Special Education Licensure priorities associated with student teaching, specifically the requirements outlined in both the Student Teaching syllabus and this handbook. These requirements are aligned with evidence-based and/or promising practices. Periodically, as student teaching experiences get started, a school administrator or teacher may decide they are unable to support completion of the student teaching requirements or certain aspects there in, or disagree with the implementation process. If that becomes the case, it is the teacher candidate’s responsibility to contact their University supervisor to discuss concerns and engage in the problem-solving process to identify potential solutions.

Required Weeks & Hours of Student Teaching and Seminar

Classroom Experience Attendance and Participation

As a student teacher, you must complete the contracted hours at your placement site(s). This requirement is not just a matter of meeting state licensing requirements, but also a matter of demonstrating the professional responsibilities of being a license teacher. Consistent and timely attendance and participation are considered essential functions of employment as a special educator and thus, are essential for demonstrating satisfactory performance while student teaching. Regular attendance, on time reporting, and participation in the assigned classroom, meetings with the field supervisor and/or cooperating teacher are required.

While student teaching, you are committed to work the schedule and calendar of your placement school (note the UMN calendar). Please keep this in mind if you are planning vacations, events or otherwise. Report to the assigned classroom on the agreed upon start date according to the information shared with you by the UMN field placement coordinator. The last day of the assigned experience will be the last day of instruction based again on what was provided by the field placement coordinator and agreed to by the cooperating teacher.

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During the first weeks of student teaching, student teachers develop a tentative plan/schedule for fulfilling classroom responsibilities and completing student teaching requirements in consultation with cooperating teacher (CT) and University field supervisor (US). The plan should reflect increasing classroom duties and responsibilities. Student teachers are encouraged to use the Schedule for Teacher Candidates form when creating this schedule. For a period of time, determined and agreed to by both the US and CT, the student teacher will assume full responsibility for planning and delivering class-wide instruction as part of this experience. (See SpEd Student Teaching Handbook for recommended timeline). You are responsible for discussing all absences and late arrivals with both your CT and US. You are required to document dates and reasons for both absences and tardies on the Student Teaching Checklist. **Up to three absences from the classroom experience will be considered. Absences beyond three days in the classroom will be discussed by the CT, US and student teaching instructor and may result in failure of the student teaching experience or expectation to repeat or extend the experience.** Repeated late arrival or early leaving based on agreed to reporting times are also cause for discussion and may result in failure of the student teaching experience or need to repeat or extend the experience.

**Student Teaching Seminar Attendance and Participation**

The student teaching seminar accompanies your enrollment in student teaching. It is NOT a separate course for which you are required to enroll, but it is a required component of your overall student teaching experience. Attendance at all five seminars is mandatory. All student teachers, from all SpEd licensure programs, are expected to participate together and learn from each other’s’ varied experiences. Topics are broadly applicable to all special education licensure candidates to support success during student teaching, completing the licensure application process, finding a job that is the right fit, and building a professional network of support for the future.

NOTE: EPSY 5699, the course designed to support edTPA work, is a course separate from the Student Teaching course numbers noted above.

**Additional Policies Related to Student Teaching**

Teacher candidates are expected to know and adhere to the policies described in the CEHD Teaching Handbook related to student teaching placements:

- Use of Student Teachers as Substitutes
- Withdrawal or Removal of TC from Placement
- Professional Progress Review Process
- Liability Coverage during Student Teaching
- Teacher Strikes

**Professional Conduct**

At all times, student teachers and supervisor shall act in a manner consistent with the Code of Conduct, as well as other state and federal legal requirements. The University of Minnesota provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs, facilities, and employment without
regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Just as University teacher candidates and supervisors are expected to demonstrate professional conduct that is aligned with these policies, we strive to select student teaching sites that promote and enforce similar professional conduct. Any concerns should be immediately be discussed with the University Supervisor, Student Teaching Lead, and/or the Licensure Program Coordinator.

Informing Parents, Informed Consent, and Protecting Privacy

Student teachers have assignments that may intrude on the privacy of early childhood to transition age students/individuals and their families. These assignments include observations of student behavior in a variety of educational environments, studies of learning for individual students, video and audio recording of the candidate’s teaching, interviews (with students, family members, and staff), and reviews of academic records including Individual Education Plans (IEP) and Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). In every case, it is the candidate’s responsibility to review the assignment with their cooperating teacher to ascertain who else must be informed about the assignment and to ensure that appropriate consent has been collected if needed. The candidate is responsible for following all district and University policies regarding informed consent and data privacy. Candidates will have access to standard consent templates, prepared by the University, to use in situations when University forms are preferable to district forms and processes.

Specific actions teacher candidates should be aware of include, but are not limited to, the following:

● At a minimum, teacher candidates are responsible for working with their cooperating teacher to send an information letter home to all families to let them know that their child’s/student’s teacher will be mentoring a student teacher who may be working directly with their child/student.

● Teacher candidates should be involved in observing the evaluation process and may shadow the administration of assessments. Depending on the level of involvement, the candidate may be included in prior written notice and consent for evaluation, but any data gathered by the teacher candidate of development of instructional plans should never be included in an educational file.

● Teacher candidates need to remove and/or change the names of any students that are included in any activity or assignment shared with the University Supervisor or anyone outside of the student teaching setting.

● When discussing assignments or experiences with others, teacher candidates must never use names of students or staff and should be aware of the need to limit specific identifying details.

● Any use of video recording or photographs involving children/students must be discussed with the cooperating teacher to ensure shared understanding of existing or needed consent as well as acceptable procedures for gathering and using video or photographs.
Hierarchy of Support

Given the hierarchical nature of supervision and support, it is important to have a sound understanding of the support available and appropriate problem-solving avenues if any concerns or questions arise. All student teachers have multiple supervisors and mentors, including:

- **Student Teaching Lead**: one individual at the University that oversees the student teaching seminar, expectations, University supervisors, and coordination of expectations between University supervisors and cooperating teachers,
- **Field Placement Coordinator**: one individual at the University that oversees all field placement assignments, including student teaching,
- **Cooperating Teacher**: on-site person who supports and mentors student teacher in all student teaching expectations
- **University Supervisor**: person who facilitates student teaching observations, goal work, and other expectations.
- **Program Advisor**: support person for various aspects of program including transition into applying for licensure

Roles and responsibilities of the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor are further defined and described below.

Student Teacher

Introduction

As the student teacher, you will begin as a participating observer. Cooperating teachers should share objectives, lesson planning, evaluation procedures, and they should discuss individual strengths, challenges and goals for students.

As you demonstrate the ability to assume teaching responsibilities, you will receive more assignments for designing and directing learning activities. It is recommended that you observe lessons taught in each area of the curriculum before you teach that topic independently. This transfer of teaching should be scheduled so you are lead teaching with full responsibility for the instruction your cooperating teacher would typically deliver for 3-6 weeks during your placement. The actual amount of expected time varies by licensure area and will be established with you, your cooperating teacher, and your university supervisor at the beginning of your experience.

Focus on Self-Reflection and Continual Improvement

Student teaching includes on-going opportunities for students to self-reflect through informal consideration of what went well and what didn’t on any given day as well as formal feedback through observations from others and required assessments. Learning to become a more effective
teacher and a more collaborative colleague on the special education teams you will be a part of, require student teachers to openly reflect on their performance, consider why certain changes may need to be made, and work with others to take action. This reflection is supported by each of the following ideas:

1. Stay aware of the importance of your work.
2. Engage in a problem-solving process, both for yourself and your students.
3. Select one or two areas at a time for self-improvement.
4. Focus on the things that you can control.
5. Ask questions.

**Focus on Student Teaching**

The obligation to the education of students with disabilities cannot be taken lightly. Therefore, responsibilities other than teaching should be kept to a minimum. Per program policy, student teachers are required to complete all coursework prior to the semester of their student teaching experience. Student teachers are cautioned not to overload themselves with additional responsibilities, such as outside work, during the student teaching experience. The amount of other work you undertake during your student teaching experience has a direct relationship on your effectiveness as a teacher. Your teaching work is a responsibility that must come first.

**Responsibilities**

The student teaching experience is an opportunity for you to develop and demonstrate teaching, management, due process and other professional competencies acquired during your teacher preparation program. You are expected to demonstrate these competencies in daily work in the assigned school. These responsibilities reflect many of the essential functions that special education teachers must be able to demonstrate.

1. According to the specific aspects of the assignment, the student teacher will be available, when appropriate, to assist the cooperating teacher in the following duties. These duties, while not comprehensive, are representative of being a solid, lead teacher:
   a. Teaching under the supervision of the cooperating teacher. The student teacher may occasionally teach when the cooperating teacher is temporarily away from the classroom, but may not serve as a substitute teacher or a paraprofessional.
   b. Managing due process requirements, grading papers and keeping records.
   c. Supervising playground, lunchroom, and bus loading/unloading.
   d. Tutoring students who need extra help.
   e. Conferring with individual students and their parents under the supervision of your cooperating teacher.
   f. Conducting home visits with your cooperating teacher.
   g. Attending professional meetings.
   h. Collaborating with paraeducators, other adults in the classroom, peer tutors, and so forth.
   i. Performing other work in the school building as assigned.
   j. Scheduling
   k. Leading team meetings
   l. Communicating with parents
m. Communicating/collaborating with general education teachers, administrators, related service personnel and so forth.

2. When possible, the student teacher will observe other classes and participate in teaching activities with other student teachers in the same building or district.

3. Responsibilities of the student teacher to the school system are as follows:
   a. To comply with the regulations of the building to which they are assigned.
   b. To advise the principal of their presence in the building or their absence from assigned responsibility.
   c. To follow the school system calendar within any given semester.
   d. To follow the cooperating teacher’s regular schedule.
   e. To keep confidences and respect the rights of others at all times.
   f. To secure information pertaining to legal responsibilities for the classroom.
   g. To maintain a positive attitude and develop a positive learning environment for the children within the classroom and school setting.
   h. To be responsible, courteous, and dependable.
   i. To dress professionally and maintain a neat, clean, and appropriate appearance.
   j. Use good judgment and act professionally when working with school personnel and parents.

4. The student teacher will become thoroughly acquainted with this SpEd Student Teaching Handbook and the Student Teaching Syllabus (EPSY 5741, 5742, 5751, 5755, 5756, 5761, 5762, 5706, 5707, 5708) which are located on Canvas and in the SpEd Google Drive folder.

5. Complete all requirements noted in the handbook and syllabus. Specifically:
   a. Goal work & Student Teaching Checklist
   b. Formative Self-Assessment & Corresponding Goals (included in goal work packet)
   c. Three (a minimum of) Observations & Post-Observation Dialogues
   d. Midterm & Final Evaluation and Disposition Assessments
   e. Classroom Experience Attendance & Participation
   f. Seminar Attendance and Participation (included in checklist)

6. Completion of Goal work and the Student Teaching Checklist during student teaching is not the same as completion of required assignments during coursework leading up to your student teaching experience. Since student teaching is the final opportunity to demonstrate proficiency with licensing standards and professional conduct prior to being endorsed by the University of Minnesota for a teaching license, performance expectations are higher. It is your responsibility to thoroughly understand the expectations stated in the student teaching syllabus. The basis for all expectations and performance standards include the following:
   a. You are expected to be able to complete all goal work with only minimal support. This reflects this stage of your professional development when in the next stage,
you will be employed by a school district to work independently and be accountable to the students and families you serve.

b. You are expected to be able to complete all goal work on the identified timelines. This reflects the importance of you being able to comply with state and federal rules that mandate the completion of specific activities on specific timelines as part of the delivery of special education services.

c. You are expected to be able to complete all goal work at the expected level of quality. This reflects the importance of you being able to be an effective special education teacher who is responsible for meeting the needs of vulnerable children and their families.

7. Please refer to additional responsibilities and dispositions expected of student teachers in the CEHD Teaching Handbook.

8. Applying for SpEd Minnesota teaching license
   a. Refer to the CEHD Teacher Licensure Process webpage
   b. Attend and participate in the licensure workshop that is typically held during your Student Teaching Seminar

9. Access CEHD Career Services support, specifically: Teacher Job Search Resources. On this webpage you will find resources, such as: job search information, resume writing, interview supports, alternative careers in education, job search sites and logistics, career events, and more.

**Stages of Student Teaching**

**Stage 1: Observation**
The student teacher observes the cooperating teacher modeling effective teaching practices. The student teacher should be able to clearly reflect understanding of the skills demonstrated before moving to the next stage. At the same time, the student teacher should be anticipating and preparing for Stage 2.

**Stage 2: Teaming**
The student teacher and the cooperating teacher plan and teach lessons cooperatively. The team-teaching experience should provide opportunities for the student teacher to ask questions and for the cooperating teacher to demonstrate specific techniques.

**Stage 3: Independent Teaching with Observation**
The student teacher teaches independently with the cooperating teacher reviewing plans, observing the student teacher’s instruction, and meeting after each lesson. This stage is important for the student teacher to gain independence and confidence. The classroom students learn to depend on the student teacher rather than on the cooperating teacher during this stage. Many opportunities to exercise judgment and learn from experience occur during independent teaching.
Stage 4: Student Teacher as Critical Observer

If the schedule permits, the student teacher may again become the observer, now from the vantage point of more knowledge, or may be invited to observe in other classrooms. The cooperating teacher begins to assume more responsibility for the classroom as the student teacher’s responsibilities shift.

Initiating Contact with your Cooperating Teacher

You are required to contact your cooperating teacher as soon as you learn of your placement. You are also encouraged to visit the school to meet the principal and obtain any pertinent materials to help you understand specific school policies and procedures. Prior to student teaching commencing, you and your University supervisor will schedule a triad (cooperating teacher, supervisor, and teacher candidate) meeting to discuss requirements and expectations.

The First Day

Arrive early. Although your actual teaching responsibilities will begin gradually during the first few weeks of the semester, it is extremely important to begin interacting with the students on the first day in the classroom. Ideally the students should not perceive you as a person who sits in the back of the room observing, but as one who takes an active role in the classroom, even on the first day. You should take the initiative to ask the cooperating teacher how to participate and/or suggest responsibilities to be undertaken immediately. Listed below are responsibilities you could assume from the first day:

1. Greeting students
2. Engaging in conversations with students
3. Reading announcements.
4. Supporting individual students with assignments and/or daily routines as needed.
5. Escorting children to the lunchroom, playground, restroom, or other areas in the school.
6. Writing necessary material on the chalkboard.
7. Preparing computer assignments and activities.
8. Assisting in data collection, such as anecdotal observations or simple checklists

You will be expected to observe the cooperating teacher, as well as other teachers in the building. The purpose of observing, however, is not to learn how to do a teaching skill or curriculum, but rather to have some material upon which to reflect. This means a critical part of observation is its subsequent analysis. Each time you observe a teacher, be sure to take notes, recording ideas and questions.

Suggested Semester Sequence & Schedule

When you begin teaching, you are required to submit written lesson plans and/or unit plans to be pre-approved by your cooperating teacher.

NOTE: The following sequence/schedule is a recommendation and is based on a 15-week student teaching experience. The items included are in no way an exhaustive/complete list, merely suggestions. The sequence/schedule can be modified in communication between the student teacher, CT, and US according to varying classroom, program, and/or district timeframes.
and individual needs. You are expected to outline a week-by-week plan/schedule for your student teaching experience. The Schedule for Teacher Candidate form is provided to support you with this requirement.

**Weeks 1-2:**
1. Participate in an initial 3-way communication with your cooperating teacher and university supervisor.
2. Write and send out a letter of introduction to students and families.
3. Continue with activities suggested for the first day.
4. Become familiar with building staff and resources.
5. Learn school policies and procedures as stated in the school handbook.
6. Obtain subjects/themes course of study for subjects taught in your class and become familiar with the objectives for the curriculum.
7. Observe your cooperating teacher and others in the building.
8. Become familiar with your CT’s data collection strategies and techniques.
9. Schedule a daily time when you can evaluate the events of the day and plan with the cooperating teacher.
10. Make a list of questions for your cooperating teacher and university supervisor.
11. Plan to incorporate available instructional technology into your plans for teaching.
12. Develop a long-range plan for your gradual increase of teaching responsibilities.
13. Create a written schedule for completion of goal work and other student teaching requirements, including your Formative Self-Assessment and corresponding goals.
14. Complete the Co-Teaching online Pairs training with your cooperating teacher.
15. Supervisors & Cooperating Teachers: If you have not experienced the Co-Teaching Foundations training, please be sure to go through the co-teaching foundations module.

**Weeks 3-5:**
1. Continue daily debriefing and planning sessions with your cooperating teacher.
2. Engage in data collection efforts to support your CT.
3. Begin leading one to two classroom lessons OR class periods which might include particular subject, class period, and/or classroom activity or periods as directed by your cooperating teacher.
4. Evaluate each lesson you lead, preferably in writing, and discuss your self-evaluations with your cooperating teacher and supervisor.
5. Assume more administrative and classroom maintenance responsibilities.
6. First observation by University supervisor and post-observation meeting is completed.
7. Make progress on identified goal work and other student teaching requirements, per written schedule.

**Weeks 6-13:**
1. Continue regular dialogues/meetings with your cooperating teacher.
2. Increase your teaching responsibilities to full days for 3 to 6 weeks.
3. Second and third observations and post-observation meeting by University supervisor are completed.
4. Continue evaluating and analyzing your teaching.
5. Reflect on your Formative Self-Assessment goals (at mid-term). Dialogue with your CT regarding your progress with respect to your goals and both the Final Evaluation and Disposition Assessments.
6. Make progress on identified goal work and other student teaching requirements, per written schedule.

**Weeks 14 & 15:**
1. Complete a final reflection on your Formative Self-Assessment goals. Dialogue with your CT regarding your progress with respect to your goals and both the Final Evaluation and Disposition Assessments
2. Complete identified goal work and other student teaching requirements, per written schedule. Submit to your University supervisor

**Cooperating Teacher**

Cooperating teachers who supervise student teaching experiences shall hold at least a full professional Minnesota license in the field and at the license level for which they mentor student teachers. The role of the cooperating teacher is to provide leadership, mentoring, and modeling to the student teacher in all aspects of the student teaching goal work and other expectations. The cooperating teacher regularly observes the student teacher’s instruction, management, and other efforts, providing feedback to the student teacher and university supervisor. The cooperating teacher is vital to the success of field-related experiences for pre-service teachers; therefore, it is critical that the cooperating teacher offer the student teacher full opportunities to experience the teacher’s role in both the classroom and the community. In addition, the university is relying on the cooperating teacher to give thorough and timely feedback to the University supervisor regarding the student teacher’s progress so that, if/when needed, extra support can be offered.

**Qualifications**

To be a cooperating teacher, a teacher must have the following qualifications, as per Minnesota State requirements and CEHD/University requirements:

Additional qualifications, per the University Special Education program, include:
1. Knowledgeable in and capable of providing support regarding due process procedures
2. Be on-site and available to be responsive to the student teacher, daily.

**Responsibilities**

1. Refer to and review the CEHD’s outlined Responsibilities of Cooperating Teachers.
2. Complete honorarium information.
3. Read the Student Teacher Handbook and Student Teaching Syllabus (EPSY 5741, 5742, 5751, 5755, 5756, 5761, 5762, 5706, 5707, 5708) and refer to them regularly throughout the semester. These are available on Canvas and in the google drive folder titled: Student Teaching UMN SpEd Programs.
4. Meet with the University supervisor and student teacher in 1 triad meeting, as well as 3 post-observation dialogues. Prior to the semester/assignment commencing, meet
with the student teacher and the university supervisor, either in person or remotely, to discuss requirements and expectations. This meeting is designed to enhance the professional development of the cooperating teacher in the supervisory role. At the end of the semester, the cooperating teacher should schedule a dialogue with the student teacher regarding their progress with respect to their goals and both the Final Evaluation and Disposition Assessments. This dialogue provides closure regarding the SpEd student teaching program requirements and corresponding evaluations.

5. **Help student teacher become a part of the school/program community.** Prepare your students and their parents for the anticipated arrival of the student teacher. Introduce the student teacher to the class and other staff members. Provide a desk or workspace for the student teacher, and share all bulletins and announcements pertaining to faculty meetings, school policies and procedures, and other school or district information. Discuss with the student teacher the extent of authority and scope of responsibility involved in student teaching. Help the student teacher become familiar with the curriculum and with the individual needs of the students and their families. At open houses, parent conferences, and due process meetings introduce the student teacher to the parents and allow the student teacher to take an active role in these events.

6. **Schedule a time for regular dialogues/meetings.** Keeping in close communication with the student teacher is important for purposes of planning lessons, modeling effective teaching, and evaluating the student teacher’s progress. Guidance in helping the student teacher make defensible decisions about teaching is critical. Holding regular dialogues/meetings is the best way to develop mutual understanding and foster a sense of trust between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. These dialogues/meetings are a time to approve written lessons or unit plans that the student teacher is preparing to teach.

7. **Provide opportunities for student teacher to observe.** The most critical part of student teaching is the opportunity to observe an exemplary teacher in action. Please allow the student teacher to observe your teaching on a frequent basis. During your regular dialogues/meetings discuss what the student teacher has observed. Although a large part of the student teacher’s responsibility is to teach students with disabilities, blocks of time should be left for observing the cooperating teacher and other teachers in the building.

8. **Allow student teacher to fulfill student teaching requirements.** At the beginning of the semester, the University supervisor will discuss with the cooperating teacher the specific student teaching requirements which the student teacher must complete to earn a “Pass” grade and demonstrate competency in order to be recommended for licensure. Please plan with the student teacher cooperatively to ensure the opportunity to fulfill all of these requirements. Please allow the student teacher to experiment with effective teaching methods. Before any lesson is taught, however, the student teacher should submit a written lesson plan for approval. If the lesson is well conceived and the objectives clear, allow the student teacher to try various methods. While student teaching is a time to practice what they have learned in their university courses and field experiences, it is also a learning experience where student teachers experiment to find methods and strategies that work best for their students to obtain the skills being taught.

9. **Allow student teacher to assume full-time teaching.** Student teachers should assume total responsibility for planning, teaching, and evaluating student progress for 3-6 weeks
of the semester. The student teacher will follow the course of study that the cooperating
teacher would normally follow during this period. The cooperating teacher may
occasionally leave the room for certain periods to allow the student teacher to be totally
in charge of the classroom. However, it makes good instructional sense for the
cooperating teacher to remain in the classroom and work with individuals or small
groups. The student teacher is considered to be teaching full-time even if the cooperating
teacher remains in the classroom.

10. **Observe and provide feedback to student teacher.** The cooperating teacher’s main
role is not an evaluator, but their feedback is used in final (summative) evaluations that
are completed by the university supervisor for the student teacher’s grade and
recommendation for licensure. A cooperating teacher’s comments and observations
about the student teacher’s performance are extremely important. Written comments
noted while the student is teaching will serve as the basis for the later
dialogues/meetings. Although you may leave the classroom occasionally when the
student teacher is in charge of teaching, the cooperating teacher should remain in the
classroom to observe the student teaching the majority of the time. It is recommended
that at least one observation be co-observed with the university supervisor in the early
stages of student teaching.

11. **Communicate with the University Supervisor.** The cooperating teacher should find
time to talk with the university supervisor at each visit to discuss the student teacher’s
progress. As noted above, it is recommended that the cooperating teacher complete one
joint observation (with the university supervisor) during the course of the student
teaching experience. In addition, there will be 1 triad meeting and 3 post-observation
dialogues with the cooperating teacher, university supervisor and student teacher. Please
allow for adequate time for these discussions. The university supervisor will make every
effort to schedule the dialogues at a time compatible with the cooperating teacher’s
schedule. University supervisors will provide cooperating teachers with their phone
numbers and e-mail addresses. Student teachers and cooperating teachers should not
hesitate to call the supervisor should a problem arise. It is better to solve a small concern
early than to allow it to grow into a major problem. The following steps should be
followed when addressing concerns.

**Addressing Concerns**
1. If progress is not satisfactory, discuss the specifics of the concern with the student
teacher as soon as the situation becomes apparent; document all discussions.
2. Work together to develop strategies to overcome the problem, preferably using the
problem-solving model included in this handbook.
3. Notify the University supervisor and schedule a triad meeting, if needed.
4. In consultation with the student teacher and University supervisor, decide on a
course of action, using the problem-solving model.
5. If a problem exists that is not being successfully solved by the University
supervisor, the cooperating teacher may contact the UMN Special Education
Student Teaching Lead.

12. **Complete and submit student teacher assessments.** Cooperating teachers and
University supervisors will independently complete both the midterm and final. While
the CT is involved in providing information for the Evaluation and Disposition Assessments, the University supervisor will make the final determination about the student teacher’s performance on both assessments for both midterm and final submissions.

a. **Student Teachers:** As part of the process, student teachers are expected to reflect on their Formative Self-Assessment goals and participate in a dialogue with the CT regarding their progress with respect to their goals as well as both the Evaluation and Disposition Assessments.

b. **Cooperating Teachers:** For both midterm and final assessments, CTs submit completed STOT Evaluation and Disposition assessments directly to their assigned University supervisor by the midpoint of the semester, and then again by one week before the end of the experience. Cooperating teachers are asked to have a dialogue with the student teacher about their midterm and final evaluations and provide the student teacher with a copy of each. The university supervisor does not need to be included in that dialogue, but if preferred, the cooperating teacher should invite the university supervisor to participate.

c. **University Supervisors:**
   i. **Disposition assessments:** For both the midterm and final Disposition, the University supervisor submits the Disposition assessment directly to CEHD (link will be provided). **Please download a copy of these assessments and forward them to the Student Teaching Lead.**
   ii. **STOT Evaluation assessments:** For both the midterm and final STOT Evaluation assessments, the University supervisor submits directly to CEHD (link will be provided). **Please download a copy of these assessments and forward them to the Student Teaching Lead.**

There is probably no task that is faced by cooperating teachers with more apprehension than writing of evaluations. “Am I being fair?” or “Will the reader understand what I mean?” are typical concerns. Remember that student teaching is just one phase in the professional growth of the teacher and that this phase is focused on helping the student teacher move in the direction of professional maturity.

The following suggestions may be helpful in completing evaluations/assessments:

a. Provide not only ratings, but written comments as well. The written recommendations may be used to elaborate on or supplement the ratings. Very high and very low ratings should be explained with written comments.

b. Provide evaluations which are honest and frank, particularly in regard to student teachers who may need intense mentoring as a first-year teacher or who have not demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be an effective special educator. Two common questions are often asked by cooperating teachers; “If I had a child with special needs, would I want this student teacher to be his/her teacher?” and “Would I willingly co-teach with this student teacher as employees in the same school?”

c. Provide comments that are objective and as informative as possible. Generalities, inferences, and hidden meanings are pitfalls to clarity and objectivity.
d. Keep all records of observations, anecdotal notes, and other written documentation of student teachers. Complete all written documentation objectively and honestly regarding the student teacher’s performance. Communicate concerns to the student teacher and University supervisor as soon as they arise. If the student teacher’s performance does not improve, call a triad meeting to develop a remediation plan. On rare occasions, if the student teacher is not able to manage the classroom or provide sufficient instruction, even with intense mentoring by the cooperating teacher and university supervisor, the teacher or building principal may recommend that the student teacher be removed from the assignment. (See CEHD Teaching Handbook’s Withdrawal or Removal of a Teacher Candidate from a Placement.)

Dialogues/Meetings with Student Teacher

Regular dialogues/meetings. Regular discussions between you and the student teacher are essential to a successful student teaching experience. A number of factors may make effective communication difficult: daily schedules may leave no time for conversations; the student teacher, cooperating teacher, or both may feel insecure in their roles; the cooperating teacher may be overly concerned about hurting the student teacher’s feelings; the student teacher may be defensive; and/or finding a place to talk in private may be difficult. Good communication will only occur when both the cooperating teacher and student teacher work hard to overcome such obstacles. **Effective communication is so important that it cannot be left to chance.**

Discussions are an important opportunity to develop and enhance effective communication. Planned, regularly scheduled dialogues/meetings are the basis for good communication. It is in the discussion that the student teacher may become consciously aware of his/her instructional behavior as observed by the cooperating teacher. Student teachers may begin to analyze their students’ academic and social progress. The foundations of professional self-evaluation/reflection are laid out during these conversations. Thus, it is imperative that both the immediate and long-term goals of dialogues/meetings be kept in mind.

Short conversations/dialogues between student teacher and cooperating teacher will give attention to matters of immediate consequence: adjusting plans, coordinating work schedules, identifying and solving daily problems, providing “boost in morale,” and keeping things functioning smoothly, in general. The timing of such conversations/meetings may vary from day to day, but the flexibility of the times should not deemphasize the importance of these interactions.

Lengthier meetings between student teacher and cooperating teacher should also be scheduled. It is recommended to reserve about one hour for this purpose at least once a week. These meetings may be used for long-term planning, discussions about due process issues and goal work, cooperative evaluation of the student teacher’s competence, analysis of the cooperating teacher’s teaching procedures, development of in-depth understanding of student behavior, consideration of collaboration with staff and faculty, and so forth.

The following guidelines are offered for the consideration of cooperating teachers:
a. The time and place of the dialogue/meeting should be planned in advance. It should be canceled or postponed only when essential. The setting should be informal, at a place where few interruptions are likely to occur. Regularly scheduled dialogue/meetings will prevent the student teacher from thinking that dialogue/meetings are called only when there are criticisms to be offered.

b. A free exchange of ideas should occur during the dialogues/meetings. It is helpful if many of the topics involve a process of seeking answers to methodological or curriculum problems. Alternative solutions should be analyzed with both you and the student teacher offering ideas.

c. Analysis of the student teacher’s performance or personal qualities should be characterized by an appropriate balance between strengths and weaknesses. Criticisms should be constructive, but falsely optimistic praise may be as unproductive as overt negativism. It is interesting that some student teachers complain, “My cooperating teacher never tells me how I can improve,” while others state, “My cooperating teacher only mentions the things I do wrong.”

d. You should not hesitate to offer suggestions and teaching ideas. Student teachers are eager to learn “tricks of the trade” and sources of useful teaching materials. Be as specific as possible, to the extent of showing materials, modeling instructional and management techniques, and so forth.

e. The dialogue/meeting should encourage the student teacher to become increasingly self-directed and self-evaluative. Ultimately, teachers will be essentially on their own in classroom situations, and many of the qualities and practices that result in continued professional growth begin during the student teaching semester.

**Triad meetings** with the University supervisor may be centered on the overall evaluation of the student teacher’s performance. Here is a recommended sequence for using these evaluations:

i. An initial meeting to review all student teaching expectations and logistics, observation forms, and evaluation instruments.

ii. Post-observation communication (at least 3)

**Cooperating Teaching Honorarium**

Individuals who serve as cooperating teachers receive an honorarium. Please refer to the [CEHD Teaching Handbook](#) regarding payment of honoraria.

**University Supervisor**

**Qualifications**

To be a University supervisor, a teacher must have the following qualifications, as per [Minnesota State requirements](#) and CEHD/University requirements:
Responsibilities

1. **Refer to and review the CEHD’s outlined Dispositions and Responsibilities for University Supervisors.**

2. **Read the Student Teacher Handbook and Student Teaching Syllabus** (EPSY 5741, 5742, 5751, 5755, 5756, 5761, 5762, 5706, 5707, 5708) and refer to them regularly throughout the semester. These are available on Canvas and in the google drive folder, titled: **Student Teaching: UMN SpEd Programs.**

3. **Participate in SpEd University Supervisor training/orientation.**

4. **Participate in Student Teaching Seminars,** if possible, on dates invited by UMN SpEd Student Teaching Lead. Student teachers value your insights and support during the seminars. That being said, these are optional.

5. **Arrange and conduct a triad meeting with the cooperating teacher and student teacher.** Prior to the semester commencing, contact the CT and student teacher via email. A template/sample of an introductory email is provided for your use, if you find it helpful. Additionally, please meet with the student teacher and the cooperating teacher, either in person or through on-line technology, to discuss requirements and expectations. A recommended **Student Teacher Introductory Meeting agenda** is provided as jumping off point to help guide this discussion. This discussion is designed to enhance the professional development of the cooperating teacher in the supervisory role.

6. **Observe and provide feedback to student teacher in 3 observations and post-observation dialogues.** The University supervisor observes the student teacher a minimum of **three times** during the semester using the **SpEd Observation Form.** Student teachers are required to submit each lesson plan to their CT and University supervisor 24 hours prior to each scheduled observation. A post-observation dialogue will follow each observation, using the **Post Observation form** that includes the student teacher, US, and CT. University supervisors provide specific oral and written feedback to the student teacher regarding instructional, managerial, organizational, and professional behavior. If there are any concerns, additional observations and/or suggested interventions may be required. The instructor and supervisor reserve the right to observe student teachers at any time throughout the semester. **It is recommended that one observation be completed with the cooperating teacher.** Observations may be completed using a blend of “in person” and via technology.

7. **Communicate with the cooperating teacher.** The university supervisor should find a few minutes to talk with the cooperating teacher at each visit to discuss the student teacher’s progress. As noted above, the University supervisor is encouraged to have one joint observation (with the cooperating teacher) during the course of the student teaching experience. The university supervisor should make every effort to schedule discussions with the CT at a time compatible with the CT’s schedule. Additionally, please remind cooperating teacher of observations and due dates for assessments and other
requirements. University supervisors will provide cooperating teachers with their phone numbers and e-mail addresses. (Note: The Student Teacher Introductory Meeting agenda allows for such information to be shared.) Student teachers and cooperating teachers should not hesitate to call the supervisor should a problem arise. It is better to solve a small concern early than to allow it to grow into a major problem.

**Addressing Concerns**

a. Unsatisfactory progress may be identified by the cooperating teacher and/or the university supervisor. Since the cooperating teacher and university supervisor have different experiences with the student teacher and different perspectives they are drawing from, sometimes one expresses more concern than the other. Regardless, as soon as concerns arise, there should be a discussion about the specifics of the concern with the student teacher. All discussions should be documented and include specific requested changes and any needed supports.

b. We ask that everyone work together to develop strategies to overcome the problem, preferably using the problem solving model.

c. *If the problem continues:*
   i. A triad meeting should be arranged between the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and the university supervisor.
   ii. In consultation with the student teacher and the cooperating teacher, decide on a course of action using the problem solving model.
   iii. If a problem exists that is not being successfully resolved, the cooperating teacher or the university supervisor may contact the UMN Special Education Student Teaching Lead to discuss next steps.

8. **Consult with and support the student teacher’s progress** with student teaching goal work, including the checklist, as well as the student teacher’s self-identified goals developed from the Formative Self-Assessment. Examine, critique, and evaluate the student teacher’s goal work according to the agreed upon schedule using the rubrics.

**Note:** The goal work, student teaching checklist and other requirements (as noted above) must be submitted in their final form **one week prior to the last day of instruction for the semester, per the University calendar.** Goal work, expectations for independent performance, and timely completion based on established deadlines reflect a combination of state licensing standards and essential functions of special education teachers. With the completion deadline in mind, each student teacher is expected to create a written schedule for completion of their goal work and other requirements that is developed in coordination with their cooperating teacher (CT) by the **second week** of their student teaching experience. This written schedule will be shared with and approved by the University supervisor. It will guide expectations for submission of any work for feedback. While student teachers are strongly encouraged to adhere to this schedule, it goes without saying that the schedule is fluid due to variables that may arise within the classroom and school that are beyond the control of the CT or student teacher. The schedule exists so that the student teacher has the opportunity to submit their work to their University supervisor to receive feedback and continue to make revisions to their goal work and other requirements. Given the expectation that the student teacher is able
to demonstrate a high level of independent proficiency with their work, University supervisors will only offer feedback one time. If the student teacher does not adhere to the agreed upon schedule for completion of goal work and assignments, they will lose the opportunity to receive feedback on their work prior to the final deadline for submitting their work. Again, all final forms of all goal work and other requirements must be submitted one week prior to the final date of instruction and will be graded as is. Completion of each Goal Work competency at 80% or higher is the requirement for a teacher candidate to pass student teaching.

9. Complete and submit student teacher assessments. Cooperating teachers and University supervisors will independently complete both the midterm and final STOT Evaluation and Disposition assessments. The Evaluation and Disposition assessments reflect key behaviors and expectations that reflect state licensing standards as well as essential functions of special education teachers. While the CT is involved in providing information for the Evaluation and Disposition Assessments, the University supervisor will make the final determination about the student teacher's performance on both assessments for both midterm and final submissions. For final submissions of the student teaching evaluation and the disposition assessment, TC’s must demonstrate performance that earns ratings of “proficient” or “meets expectations” on all indicators (see Part C for more information). Therefore, timely completion of the midterm assessments offer important feedback and opportunities for further skill development before final assessments are completed. Copies of each assessment with feedback should be provided to and discussed with the TC.

a. Teacher Candidates (TC): As part of the process, student teachers are expected to reflect on their Formative Self-Assessment goals and participate in a dialogue with the CT regarding their progress with respect to their goals and both the Evaluation and Disposition Assessments.

b. Cooperating Teachers (CT): For both midterm and final assessments, CTs submit completed Evaluation and Disposition assessments directly to their assigned University supervisor by the midpoint of the semester, and then again by one week before the experience concludes. Feedback and ratings provided by CT’s offer a valuable perspective given the expanded time and interactions CTs have with TCs. Given the varying types of experiences and expectations associated with different CTs, ratings from CTs are informational only and do not directly influence final ratings of overall performance provided by the US and instructor.

c. University Supervisors (US):

i. Disposition assessments: For both the midterm and final Disposition, the University supervisor submits the Disposition assessment directly to CEHD (link will be provided). Please download a copy of these assessments and forward them to the Student Teaching Lead. These ratings should be informed by ratings and feedback from the CT, but the US final ratings should reflect performance expectations held by the University.

ii. STOT Evaluation assessments: For both the midterm and final STOT Evaluation assessments, the University supervisor submits
directly to CEHD (link will be provided). **Please download a copy of these assessments and forward them to the Student Teaching Lead.** These ratings should be informed by ratings and feedback from the CT, but the US final ratings should reflect performance expectations held by the University.

10. **Recommended meeting, observation and assessment schedule**
   a. Email student teacher and CT
   b. Initial triad meeting with student teacher and CT
   c. Student Teaching Observation #1 & post-observation dialogue
   d. Student Teaching Observation #2 & post-observation dialogue
   e. Mid-term CT and student teacher dialogue regarding goals and progress as per all requirements and assessments
   f. Mid-term Evaluation and Disposition Assessments completed by CTs and US: CTs submit completed assessments to the assigned University supervisor by midpoint of the semester. University supervisor submits Disposition assessment to Student Teaching Lead and the final Evaluation directly to CEHD (link will be provided).
   g. Student Teaching Observation #3 and post-observation dialogue
   h. Final CT and student teacher dialogue regarding goals and progress per all requirements and assessments.
   i. Final Evaluation and final Disposition Assessments completed by CTs and US: CTs submit completed assessments to the assigned University supervisor by one week before the experience concludes. University supervisor submits Disposition assessment and the final Evaluation directly to CEHD (link will be provided).

11. **Recommend a Pass/Fail grade** for student teaching and submit to Student Teaching Lead by finals week.

12. **Assess the environment and provide feedback** regarding the placement as appropriate for future student teachers.

**Mileage Reimbursement for University Supervisors**

Mileage reimbursement is available to those assigned as a University Student Teaching/Practicum Supervisor. Travel to and from school sites can be submitted through Chrome River. Reimbursement requests should be submitted once a month and no more than 30 days from the date of travel. The finance professional Juae Son son06206@umn.edu can assist you with Chrome River if you experience issues or have questions. If your submitted Chrome River expense report is returned by an approver, please work with the approver who returned it to ensure completion.
Chrome River Special Education Directions

1. **Chrome River Login**
2. Select < + New > and < New Expense Report > in the upper right corner
3. Fill in expense details in Expense Report and < Save >
   a. *Report Name:* Student Teaching Observation
   b. Affiliation: Faculty
   c. Trip Type: Minnesota
   d. *Trip/Expense Start:* First date of travel for the month
   e. *Trip/Expense End:* Last date of travel for the month
   f. *Destination:* Search for the city of the school
   g. *Business Purpose:* Justification for the travel
      
      *Example:* Supervisor observation of student teachers to review goals and objectives, set expectations, and observe their teaching to ensure alliance with program, state, and University expectations.

4. Create New Expenses > Ground Transportation > Mileage
   i. Enter date of supervision and skip to Miles > Calculate Mileage
      
      ![Miles](image)

   ii. In Calculate Mileage, you should enter your first address (e.g. home address) and search for the school by name.
      1. If the destination does not show the school name, specify the name in the “Additional Information” box.
   iii. Click Return to Start and < Save Trip >
   iv. Mileage Type: Local Travel
   v. *Allocation (chart string):* Enter “1000-11215-20031”
      Make sure the chart string matches exactly.
   vi. Click < Save > and repeat step 4 for each supervision date within the month.

5. Review the entered expenses for accuracy, then select < Submit > and click the final < Submit >
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A: Link to Goal Work Packets & Student Teaching Checklist

APPENDIX B: Link to Goal Work Templates

APPENDIX C: Link to Goal Work Rubrics

APPENDIX D: Link to Observation Materials

APPENDIX E: Link to Assessment Forms

APPENDIX F: Link to Introductory Meeting Resources

APPENDIX G: Links to Standards

Links to standards per the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) website:

- Minnesota Teachers of Special Education: Academic and Behavioral Strategist
- Minnesota Teachers of Special Education: Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Minnesota Teachers of Special Education: Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Minnesota Teachers of Special Education: Developmental Disabilities
- Minnesota Teachers of Special Education: Early Childhood
- Minnesota Teachers of Special Education: Emotional or Behavioral Disorders
- Minnesota Teachers of Special Education: Learning Disabilities