



Poudre School District



**Student Teacher Process
Roles and Responsibilities**

Educate. . . Every Child, Every Day



Poudre School District Mission Statement Educate...Every Child, Every Day

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Dear Student Teacher,

Welcome to Poudre School District (PSD)!

As a student teacher assigned to a school in PSD, you are about to begin an exciting phase of your career preparation. The student teaching experience is designed to provide a structured, supportive environment that will allow you to transition from the pedagogical study of the academic setting to the practical application of real world experiences. Assisting you along the way, will be PSD educators whom we consider the best in their respective fields.

Our goal is to ensure that you are afforded every opportunity to learn, grow, and develop as a teacher. We encourage you to observe, ask questions, and get involved.

Congratulations on your efforts thus far! We thank you for accepting the challenge, and hope that your student teaching experience will provide you with professional growth and personal satisfaction. The rewards are numerous, but will depend on what you are willing to put into the experience. We extend our best to you in all your future professional endeavors.

Sincerely,

PSD Human Resources



Poudre School District Profile

PSD covers more than 1,800 square miles in northern Colorado. The District offers a wide spectrum of programs including early childhood and school offerings like International Baccalaureate, Core Knowledge, Bilingual/Dual Language Immersion, Hybrid/Online, Expeditionary Learning, STEM and more! PSD students consistently perform higher than students statewide on standardized tests and frequently attend prestigious universities and colleges. PSD continues to focus on student achievement, excellent instructional practices, safe and engaging learning environments, sustainability and wellness.

Our Schools

- 31 elementary schools
- 10 middle schools
- 4 comprehensive high schools
- 6 option (100% choice) schools
- 3 alternative high schools
- 4 charter schools
- 1 online school

Our Students

Student Enrollment: 29,053

- Asian: 3.00%
- Black/African American: 1.16%
- Hispanic/Latino: 18.09%
- Native American: 0.52%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.14%
- White: 73.79%
- Two or More: 3.41%

Our Staff

- Total Staff: 3652
- Certified: 1969
- Classified: 1540
- Administrators: 143
- Total teachers: 1716
- Average teaching experience in PSD: 12 years



Assumptions of the Student Teaching Experience

Now that you have successfully completed a major portion of your teacher preparation program, you are ready to begin your field experience through your student teaching assignment. You will find this phase of your program both challenging and rewarding since you will experience first-hand your role as a developing professional in the educational process. Your most important assignments, roles and responsibilities require your active involvement, professionalism, genuine enthusiasm and eager participation.

The following operating assumptions underlie your student teaching experience in the Poudre School District:

- You are a guest in the classroom, seeking to learn and grow
- You have a genuine interest and motivation to work with diverse learners
- You are not merely meeting a requirement by doing student teaching
- You are willing to collaborate with others to learn
- You are taking charge of your own learning through commitment
- You possess effective interpersonal communication skills
- You are receptive to constructive criticism and willing to use feedback and input

This is your opportunity to enrich your educational experience. As such, this experience requires: effective language skills; positive attitude; and high levels of professionalism including dress, critical thinking, creativity, self-analysis, commitment, motivation and enthusiasm.



PSD Expectations for Student Teachers

The primary opportunity for the development and refinement of teaching skills is the student teaching assignment. Student teaching is a full-time placement that involves working with a cooperating teacher who provides guidance about instruction, assessment, classroom management, administrative tasks, and other education-related responsibilities. A college/university supervisor also provides feedback and formal evaluation. Student teaching must be done at the grade level(s) and in the content area for which certification is being sought. The student teacher is expected to actively participate in all facets of classroom and school life including activities such as lunch/recess duties, parent conferences, and teacher meetings.

The length of the student teaching assignment is determined by the college, university, or program. Typically, student teaching is for an entire semester. Sometimes the student teaching assignment is divided between two schools (elementary and secondary), or grade levels (kindergarten and fourth grade). Other placements may be in one grade level or school for the duration of the assignment. Poudre School District does not pay student teachers during their assigned student teaching duties.

The following points will help clarify the expectations that PSD has for all student teachers assigned in the district:

- **Know and maintain the policies, practices, and procedures of Poudre School District and the cooperating school.** You are responsible for becoming familiar with district and school policies and practices and work in a manner consistent with them. You are expected to become thoroughly acquainted with classroom facilities and learn the procedures used by the cooperating teacher.
- **Become familiar with instructional materials.** You are responsible for knowing and implementing approved district and school curriculum during your student teaching experience. In addition, you are expected to return any school materials including textbooks, resource materials, and student records on or before the last day of student teaching. Student teachers are permitted to use PSD online resources under the direct supervision of their cooperating teacher.
- **Identify as a professional educator.** Assume the role of a teacher in relationships with the students and in all areas of conduct both at school and in the community. You are expected to observe confidentiality with regards to student files and information.
- **Dress appropriately.** You are expected to look and behave like a teacher. It is important to be well groomed and dressed in a manner that would be appropriate for a teacher in the assigned school and subject area. Clothes that are sloppy, overly casual, or inappropriate can distract students and result in negative attitudes. A good rule is to wear clothes considered “business casual.”



- **Observe schedule of cooperating school.** You are expected to maintain the same working hours and holiday schedule as your cooperating teacher. You are expected to inform the school and your cooperating teacher, in advance, of anticipated absences, or as early as possible on the day that an emergency arises. The same consideration applies to unavoidable tardiness. In most cases, your college/university supervisor will decide as to whether any absences will need to be made up later.
- **Become familiar with the school and community.** If you are not familiar with the school and community, you need to become acquainted. In addition, you should avoid unfavorable criticism of the school, the cooperating teacher, the students, and the community.
- **Use observation time wisely.** Understanding how time is allocated and utilized is an important part of the student teaching experience. Study your cooperating teacher's techniques of classroom management to note how the presentation of new material is paced and to become acquainted with students. You are also encouraged to visit other classrooms to observe other teachers during your first few weeks of student teaching. Your cooperating teacher should assist you with making arrangements to observe other teachers.
- **Seek the advice and counsel of the professional team.** All student teachers have questions and experience some challenges. The first step in answering your questions or resolving a concern is to have open dialogue with your cooperating teacher or university/program supervisor. You are expected to make time available for conferences with your cooperating teacher and university/program supervisor to not only discuss questions or concerns, but also to evaluate your professional and personal growth as an educator.
- **Improve your teaching performance.** Diligent preparation and reflective evaluation are keys to improving your teaching performance. Beginning teachers need to plan carefully and specifically to have successful lessons. Your lesson plans should be in writing and approved by your cooperating teacher. Analyze each lesson taught to determine how it might be improved and seek suggestions for improvement from your cooperating teacher.
- **Respect the differences between the roles of the student teacher and the cooperating teacher.** The cooperating teacher is ultimately responsible for the welfare of students. When there is a difference of opinion as to how something should be done, you should comply with the wishes of your cooperating teacher.
- **Volunteer assistance.** Simply doing what is asked is not enough for a successful student teaching experience. You should volunteer to assist with any task being done by your cooperating teacher, or to help individual students when involved with only part of the class.



- **Assist with non-teaching duties.** A teacher's role extends beyond the classroom. It is expected that you will assist with, or in some instances assume, any duties assigned to your cooperating teacher. You should attend all faculty meetings, in-service workshops, grade level or departmental planning sessions and parent-teacher conferences.
- **Clear non-routine class activities.** The principal should approve, well in advance, any activities which are not routine, such as field trips, outside speakers, parties, etc. This approval should be obtained through your cooperating teacher.
- **Assume legal responsibility.** Student teachers in PSD are subject to the same legal processes in cases of negligence or misconduct as are regular teachers. If the student teacher demonstrates unethical or unprofessional behavior or fails to meet the pre-established requirements, student teaching can be terminated. A representative from the cooperating school, the program supervisor, and PSD Human Resources will make this decision. The termination of student teaching can be requested by the cooperating school, the college/university/program, or PSD Human Resources.
- **Student Teacher Seminar.** You are expected to attend any student teaching meetings or seminars hosted by PSD as well as those scheduled by your college/university or teacher preparation program.



PSD Expectations for Cooperating Teachers

The cooperating teacher has the most direct and immediate influence on the quality of the student teaching experience. Cooperating teachers provide formal and informal guidance in all the areas related to education, as well as assist the student teacher in acclimating to the school. Cooperating teachers should be competent in all areas related to instruction and be willing to encourage, guide, and assess the student teacher in positive ways. Since cooperating teachers are also responsible for completing evaluation forms, colleges/universities/programs should clearly communicate all their expectations and deadlines.

To make the student teaching experience valuable and rewarding for all concerned, the cooperating teacher should:

- Orient the student teacher to building and district policies and practices
- Prepare learners to accept the student teacher as a professional colleague
- Inform parents and other staff members of the arrival of your student teacher
- Get to know the student teacher professionally and personally
- Help the student teacher establish realistic professional goals and assist the student teacher in achieving a life-work balance
- Establish a supportive and safe learning environment for the student teacher
- Clarify areas of shared responsibility and decision making
- Present to the student teacher an outline of long-range goals and the organization of the grade and course
- A tentative assignment should be made which indicates the teaching responsibilities the student teacher will have, in what areas, and when they begin
- Demonstrate effective instructional strategies and model valid assessment procedures
- Identify and demonstrate ways to meet the needs of diverse learners and students with special needs.
- Collaborate with the student teacher to develop and prepare lesson plans and other class activities
- Share resources and materials with the student teacher to enhance professional learning and growth
- Share authority of the classroom to allow the student teacher to function as leader and director of the classroom
- Co-teach with the student teacher when appropriate
- Provide regular and consistent feedback to the student teacher and the college/university supervisor
- Clarify instructional practices to increase teaching efficacy
- Monitor the classroom teaching experience of the student teacher by staying with the class, sharing in the experience, and providing continual reinforcement and



supervision

- Guide the student teacher on reflection of their professional practice
- Confer with the college/university supervisor regarding progress and problems and initiate conference with college/ university supervisors as needed
- Cooperate with the college/ university student teacher evaluation procedures as required through the student teaching experience
- Participate in in-service training programs to improve supervision competencies
- Evaluate the performance of the student teacher in a clear, concise, and objective manner

Guidelines for Selection of Cooperating Teachers

Because of the importance of the cooperating teacher, Poudre School District has established guidelines for their selection. These guidelines grow out of the general policies of the District and the cooperating schools, and are similar to those used by teacher education institutions across Colorado and the nation.

The PSD Cooperating Teacher:

- Is on a continuing teaching contract or has completed a minimum of four years of successful teaching experience, with the most recent two years being in Poudre School District
- Has a most recent final summative evaluation rating of “Highly Effective” or “Effective”
- Has a valid Colorado teaching certificate
- Is properly endorsed to teach in the current content area or teaching assignment
- Consistently demonstrates high quality teaching
- Demonstrates desirable personal and professional attitudes
- Demonstrates evidence of continuous professional growth
- Participates in the program voluntarily
- Looks upon supervising the growth of student teachers as an honor and a contribution to his/her profession
- Is recommended by his/her administrator
- Has effective communication skills and can provide constructive feedback to a student teacher
- Student teacher/cooperating teacher relationship does not violate the District’s Conflict of Interest Policy



Student Teacher Experience Phases

The student teacher experience can be divided into four (4) phases. The time that each student teacher spends at each phase should be determined collaboratively and should meet the requirements of the college or university that the student teacher is attending.

Orientation Phase

The orientation phase is the period during which the student teacher gets to know the students, establishes a professional bond with the cooperating teacher, and learns about the classroom environment and curriculum materials. At the end of this phase, the student teacher should be aware of the daily routine of the classroom and understand the expectations that the cooperating teacher has for his or her students. In addition, it is helpful for the student teacher and cooperating teacher to have developed a general plan for involving the student teacher in the work of the classroom. This plan should be flexible and fit the style of the cooperating teacher within the context of the classroom as well as the needs of the student teacher.

Shared Responsibility Phase

After the orientation phase is the shared responsibility phase. During this phase, the cooperating teacher and student teacher are engaged in collaborative lesson planning, team teaching and assessment of student work. The student teacher might begin this phase by following the cooperating teacher's plan or assisting in instruction. However, a major goal of this phase is to assist student teachers in developing skills necessary for planning. To achieve this, the following is recommended: team planning and teaching with cooperating teacher, developing lesson plans to be reviewed by the cooperating teacher before implementation, studying curriculum materials, and observing other teachers (including teachers in other content areas) to learn pacing, transitions and a variety of methods and strategies. The format of the planning is flexible and should be agreed upon by the cooperating teacher and student teacher.

Major Responsibility Phase

The third phase of the student teacher experience is referred to as the major responsibility phase. In this phase, the student teacher may be evolving into extensive planning and instructional roles during his or her full-time teaching experience. There will likely be variation among student teachers as to the best time to move into this phase. However, no matter when the student teacher assumes major responsibility, this is not to be interpreted as a time when the cooperating teacher must exit the classroom. This decision should be made jointly with the principal, program supervisor and cooperating teacher. While the student teacher might be in action much of the time, the cooperating teacher might function as a consultant or even continue as a team teacher. This is the time of the experience that a productive collaborative relationship develops between the cooperating teacher and student teacher. The amount of responsibility that the student teacher assumes is dependent upon the judgement of the cooperating teacher and principal.



Winding Down Phase

During the Winding Down Phase, the student teacher should be concluding major instructional responsibilities such as grading and assessment of student work. During this time the student teacher should be reflecting on what he or she has learned in the placement and establishing goals for continued professional growth. The student teacher should also have had a conference with the program supervisor and cooperating teacher.



Teaching and Learning Framework



*Adapted from the Center for Educational Leadership, University of Washington

Introduction

The Standards-Based Teaching and Learning Framework Task Force was inspired and motivated to establish a teaching and learning framework that serves all students. A priority was to create a common set of expectations explicitly identifying the roles of students, educators, administrators, and parents/guardians, knowing that the contributions from each of these groups would be integral to the future success of the framework. The Standards-Based Teaching and Learning Framework is the collective effort of multiple stakeholder groups who believe in the value of aligned expectations aiming for the highest levels of organizational success.

Design

The framework is designed around five primary dimensions: Purpose; Curriculum & Pedagogy; Assessment for Student Learning; Student Engagement; and Classroom Environment & Culture. While these dimensions are universal, the organization of the framework is directly influenced by the work of the Center for Educational Leadership at the University of Washington.

In each of the five dimensions, sub-dimension categories provide additional specificity and outline the key characteristics of the dimension. Expectations for students, educators, building administrators, central office support services and parents/guardians are identified within each of these sub-dimensions.

Resources to support a deeper understanding of each dimension are included in the Online Toolkit version of the framework, which is accessible to all stakeholders. These resources are designed to provide additional examples of the most successful practices and models from the field in each respective category. A process for maintaining these resources is in place to ensure that this component of the framework is appropriately updated.



Alignment

To support implementation, PSD educator evaluation documents will align and be organized to prioritize the expectations of the Standards-based Teaching and Learning Framework. Additionally, professional development opportunities and resources will also be aligned to the framework to provide teachers with focused support and growth opportunities



Appendix A

Parent Letter Sample

Dear Parents and/or Guardians:

Beginning in August 2017, a student teacher from XYZ University will begin her assignment with our class. I am looking forward to having Ms. Jane Doe with us. I have talked with the students at length about her time in our class and how we will treat Ms. Doe as a guest but also as an extension of me.

The student teacher plays a valuable role in the classroom. She will be observing and cooperating with me throughout the assignment. I will be present at all times to ensure your child's learning as well as to guide the student teacher as she is progressing. There will be many advantages of having Ms. Doe in the class. She will not only be providing me with an additional teacher to enhance instruction, but she will be bringing in new ideas to the class and will be providing me with an opportunity to team teach which only reinforces new and abstract concepts more concretely.

Also, your child will have more opportunities to meet one-on-one with a teacher to work on specific individual skills. In addition, there will be more times that we can work in small groups and develop areas of need with our students.

Please feel free to come by before or after school to introduce yourself and to get to know Ms. Doe. I hope you are as enthused as I am about having Ms. Doe with us.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at school or through e-mail.

Sincerely,

Ms. Teacher



Appendix B

Cooperating Teacher Orientation for Student Teacher

A. Preparing for the Student Teacher

- Become familiar with all of the available background information on student teacher.
- Communicate with students, parents, and school staff regarding the assignment of a student teacher.
- Arrange for a work area, computer access and other basic necessities for student teacher.
- Contact and share instructional information and materials with student teacher prior to arrival.
- Make tentative plans for student teacher's early observation of other teachers, initial teaching participatory experiences, and orientation to the school building.

B. Brief Student Teacher on school procedures

- Reporting teacher and student absences/tardiness.
- Fire, tornado, lock down drill and treat assessment procedures.
- Use of school property including instructional materials and electronics.
- Reporting of student injuries or illness.
- Recess and lunch duties and responsibilities.
- Process to release students early.
- Use of the Media Center.
- Specific roles of school staff including principal, assistant principal, school psychologist, counselors, teachers, instructional coaches, support staff, etc.
- Process to order supplies and support materials.
- Attendance at staff meetings, in-service/staff development trainings, collaboration days, parent-teacher conferences and other extended teacher responsibilities.

C. Brief Student Teacher on classroom environment procedures

- Discuss classroom management procedures including:
 - establish routines and daily schedules
 - distribution and collection of materials
 - seating plans and charts
 - progressive discipline process

D. Brief Student Teacher on classroom procedures for instruction

- Discuss communicating with students including:
 - providing directions and procedures
 - grade level indicators and benchmarks
 - district and state testing requirements
 - assessment of instruction and grading practices
 - use of computers, media and other technologies for instruction
 - use of instructional materials and resources to engage students in learning



- Review and discuss PSD's Standards-Based Teaching and Learning Framework.
- Discuss the development, format, and expectations of lesson plans and the use of approved district curriculum.

E. Brief Student Teacher on professional responsibilities

- Maintaining accurate student records on assessments, attendance, and behavior.
- Complying with state and federal programs such as Title I, Section 504, and IEP's.
- Regularly communicating with students' parents and guardians.