



POUDRE SCHOOL DISTRICT

# Student Teacher/Intern Handbook

Educate... Every Child, Every Day

Human Resources  
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*Poudre School District exists to support and inspire every child to think, to learn, to care, and to graduate prepared to be successful in a changing world.*



**Dear Student Teacher/Intern,**

Welcome to Poudre School District (PSD)!

Congratulations on your efforts thus far! As a student teacher/intern in PSD, you are about to begin an exciting phase of your career journey. The student teaching/internship 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.

We thank you for accepting the challenge, and hope that your student teaching/internship experience will provide you with professional growth and personal satisfaction. We extend our best to you in all your future professional endeavors.

Sincerely,  
PSD Human Resources

# Poudre School District Profile

## About Us

PSD covers more than 1,800 square miles in northern Colorado. The District offers a wide spectrum of programs including early childhood education, and school offerings such as 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
- 5 charter schools
- 1 online school

## Our Students

- Student Enrollment: 29,053
- Asian: 2.9%
- Black/African American: 1.2%
- Hispanic/Latino: 18.3%
- Native American: 0.5%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.14%
- White: 73.1%
- Two or More: 4%

## Our Staff

- Total Staff: 3784
- Certified: 2036
- Classified: 1598
- Administrators: 150
- Total teachers: 1525
- Average teaching experience in PSD: 12 years

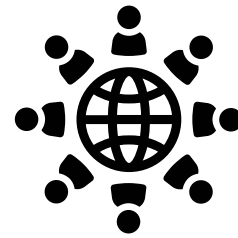
# Your Student Teaching/Intern Experience

Now that you have successfully completed a major portion of your educator preparation program, you are ready to begin your field experience through your student teaching/internship assignment. You will find this phase of your program both challenging and rewarding. 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.

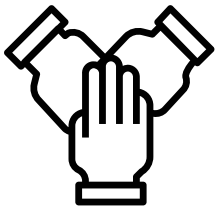
The following operating assumptions underlie your student teaching/internship experience in Poudre School District:



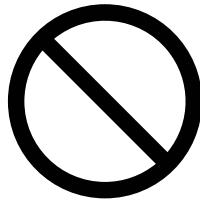
You are a collaborative partner in the classroom/school, seeking to learn and grow



You have a genuine interest and motivation to work with diverse learners



You are willing to collaborate with others to learn



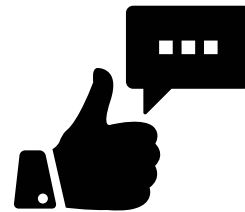
You are not merely meeting a requirement by doing student teaching/ an internship



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; a positive attitude; and high levels of professionalism including dress, critical thinking, creativity, self-analysis, commitment, motivation and enthusiasm.

# Expectations for Student Teachers/Interns



The primary opportunity for the development and refinement of teaching skills is the student teaching/internship assignment. Student teaching/interning is a full-time placement that involves working with a mentor teacher/site supervisor, who provides guidance about instruction, assessment, and other education-related responsibilities. A college/university supervisor also provides feedback and formal evaluation. Student teaching/interning should be done at the grade level(s) and in the content area for which certification is being sought. The student teaching/internship experience should provide a variety of opportunities that include leadership, student advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change.

The length of the student teaching/internship assignment is determined by the college, university, or program. Typically, student teaching/interning 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/interns during their assigned student teaching/internship duties.

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

### 1. Know and maintain the policies, practices, and procedures of Poudre School District.

You are responsible for learning and following district and school policies and practices consistently. You are expected to become thoroughly acquainted with classroom facilities, curriculum, and learn the procedures used by the mentor teacher/supervisor. Any school materials including textbooks, resource materials, and student records shall be returned on or before the last day of student teaching/interning. Student Teachers/Interns are permitted to use PSD online resources under the direct supervision of their mentor teacher/supervisor. *To view District Policies, visit: <https://www.psdschools.org/your-district/district-policies>.*

### 2. Identify as a professional educator.

Assume the role of an educator in relationships with 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. Student teachers/interns are expected to follow PSD's staff dress code where all employees project an image of professionalism to our students and community.

### 3. Observe schedule of cooperating school.

You are expected to maintain the same working hours (both in-person and remotely) and holiday schedule as your mentor teacher/supervisor. You are expected to inform the school and your mentor teacher/supervisor, 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.

### 4. Use observation time strategically.

Understanding how time is allocated and utilized is an important part of the student teaching/internship experience. Study your mentor teacher/supervisor's techniques of classroom/student 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 educators. Your mentor teacher/supervisor should assist you with making arrangements to observe other educators.

### 5. Seek the advice and counsel of the professional team.

All student teachers/interns have questions and experience challenges. The first step in answering your questions or resolving a concern is to have open dialogue with your mentor teacher/supervisor or university/program supervisor. Your mentor teacher/supervisor is ultimately responsible for the welfare of students. You are expected to make time available for conferences with your mentor teacher/supervisor and university/program supervisor to not only discuss questions or concerns, but also to evaluate your professional and personal growth as an educator.

### 6. Improve your professional performance.

Diligent preparation and reflective evaluation are keys to improving your professional performance. Beginning educators need to plan carefully and specifically to be successful. Your lesson plans should be in writing and approved by your mentor teacher/supervisor. Analyze each lesson taught to determine how it might be improved and seek suggestions for improvement from your mentor teacher/supervisor.

### 7. Assist by volunteering and with non-teaching/intern duties.

Volunteering is an excellent way to enhance your student teaching/internship experience. Consider volunteering to assist your mentor teacher/supervisor and cooperating school. An educator's role extends beyond the "classroom". It is expected that you will assist with, or in some instances assume, any duties assigned to your mentor teacher/supervisor. Any non-routine activities, such as field trips, outside speakers, parties, etc. should be approved by your mentor teacher/supervisor and administrator.

### 8. Substitute for your mentor teacher (student teachers only).

PSD permits student teachers to serve as a substitute teacher for the mentor teacher. PSD and the University may deny any student teacher from providing substitute services for any reason. Student teachers may not provide substitute services for any other building or classroom, other than their mentor teacher. Student teachers are responsible for obtaining and providing the District a valid substitute teacher authorization. Prior to subbing, student teachers must receive permission from PSD Human Resources and their University.

### 9. Assume legal responsibility.

Student teachers/interns in PSD are subject to the same legal processes in cases of negligence or misconduct as are regular educators. If the student teacher/intern demonstrates unethical or unprofessional behavior or fails to meet the pre-established requirements, student teaching/interning can be terminated. A representative from the cooperating school, the program supervisor, and PSD Human Resources will make this decision.

### 10. Attend all required meetings.

You are expected to attend any student teaching/internship meetings hosted by PSD as well as those scheduled by your college/university or teacher preparation program. Student teachers/interns and their mentor teacher/supervisor are required to attend an informational welcome meeting, which will occur at the beginning of each semester to review expectations. You should attend all faculty meetings, in-service workshops, grade level or departmental planning sessions and parent-teacher conferences.

# Expectations for Mentor Teachers/Supervisors

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

To make the student teaching/internship experience valuable and rewarding for all involved, the mentor teacher/supervisor should:

- Orient the student teacher/intern to building and district policies and practices
- Prepare learners to accept the student teacher/intern as a professional colleague
- Inform parents and other staff members of the arrival of your student teacher/intern
- Get to know the student teacher/intern professionally and personally
- Help the student teacher/intern establish realistic professional goals and assist the student teacher/intern in achieving a life-work balance
- Establish a supportive and safe learning environment for the student teacher/intern
- Clarify areas of shared responsibility and decision making
- Present to the student teacher/intern an outline of long-range goals and the organization of the grade and course
- A tentative assignment should be made which indicates the responsibilities the student teacher/intern 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/intern to develop and prepare lesson plans and other activities
- Share resources and materials with the student teacher/intern to enhance professional learning and growth
- Share authority of the classroom to allow the student teacher/intern to function as leader and director of the classroom
- Co-teach with the student teacher/intern when appropriate
- Provide regular and consistent feedback to the student teacher/intern and the college/university supervisor
- Clarify instructional practices to increase teaching efficacy
- Monitor the classroom teaching experience of the student teacher/intern by staying with the class, sharing in the experience, and providing continual reinforcement and supervision
- Guide the student teacher/intern 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/intern evaluation procedures as required though the student teaching/intern experience
- Participate in in-service training programs to improve supervision competencies
- Evaluate the performance of the student teacher/intern in a clear, concise, and objective manner

# Guidelines for Selection of Mentor Teachers/Supervisors

Because of the importance of the mentor teacher/supervisor, 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 Mentor Teacher/Supervisor:

- Is on a continuing licensed contract or has completed a minimum of four years of successful licensed 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/SSP certificate
- Is properly endorsed in the current content area or licensed assignment
- Consistently demonstrates high quality teaching/standards
- Demonstrates desirable personal and professional attitude
- Demonstrates evidence of continuous professional growth
- Participates in the program voluntarily
- Looks upon supervising the growth of student teachers/interns as an honor and a contribution to his/her/their profession
- Is recommended by his/her/their administrator
- Has effective communication skills and can provide constructive feedback to a student teacher/intern
- Student teacher/intern and mentor teacher/supervisor relationship does not violate the District’s Conflict of Interest Policy



# Student Teacher/Intern Experience Phases



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

### **Orientation Phase**

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

### **Shared Responsibility Phase**

After the orientation phase is the shared responsibility phase. During this phase, the mentor teacher/supervisor and student teacher/intern are engaged in collaborative lesson planning, team teaching and assessment of student work. The student teacher/intern might begin this phase by following the mentor teacher/supervisor's plan or assisting in instruction. However, a major goal of this phase is to assist student teachers/interns in developing skills necessary for planning. To achieve this, the following is recommended: team planning and teaching with mentor teacher/supervisor, developing lesson plans to be reviewed by the mentor teacher/supervisor before implementation, studying curriculum materials, and observing other educators (including educators 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 mentor teacher/supervisor and student teacher/intern.

### **Major Responsibility Phase**

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

### **Winding Down Phase**

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



## 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.

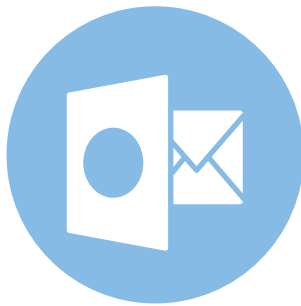
## Alignment

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

# Technology Access Information

Student Teachers/Interns

Poudre School District's software and technology access is provided to student teachers/interns on the first day of school of their student teaching/internship semester. Typically, student teachers/interns will receive email and Synergy access. The site administrator decides the appropriate level of access for the student teacher/intern.



**Email Access**

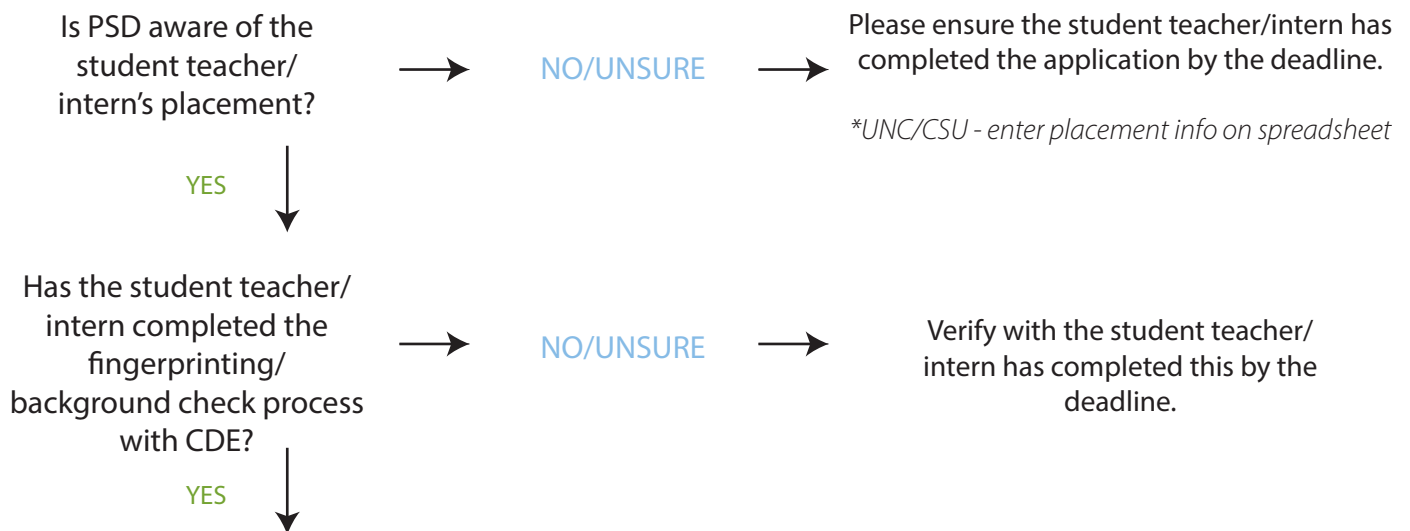
<https://outlook.office.com/mail/inbox>



**Synergy**

Student information system including gradebook, attendance reporting, discipline and health information.

## Why do I not have technology access?



Contact Laura Stamper in Human Resources at [lstamper@psdschools.org](mailto:lstamper@psdschools.org) or (970) 490-3439 for assistance, if it is **after** the start of the semester and the above steps have been completed.

Please do not contact the IT department directly with access questions.



## Appendix A

### Parent Letter Sample

Dear Parents and/or Guardians:

Starting on [Date], [student teacher first and last name], a student teacher from XYZ University will begin her/his/their assignment with our class. I am looking forward to having [Mx. Last Name] with us. I have talked with the students at length about her/his/their time in our class and how we will treat [Mx. Last Name] as a guest and also as an extension of me.

The student teacher plays a valuable role in our classroom. She/He/They 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/he/they is progressing. There will be many advantages of having Mx. [last name] in the class. She/he/they will not only be providing me with an additional teacher to enhance instruction, but she/he/they 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.

Your student 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.

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

Sincerely,

[Your signature]



## Appendix B

# Mentor Teacher/Supervisor Onboarding Checklist for Student Teacher/Intern

### Preparing for your Student Teacher/Intern

- Introduce yourself to your student teacher/intern - review background, strengths and skills.
- Communicate with students, families, and school staff regarding the assignment of a student teacher/intern.
- Arrange for a work area and other basic necessities. *Your Building IT Coordinator should have your student teacher/intern's technology credentials by the first day of school.*
- Contact and share instructional information and materials with student teacher/intern prior to arrival.
- Make tentative plans for student teacher/intern's early observation of other educators, initial participatory experiences, and orientation to the school building.

### Brief Student Teacher/Intern on school procedures

- Reporting educator and student absences/tardiness.
- Fire, tornado, lock down drill and threat 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.
- Covid-19 precautions and procedures, including phases of instruction, contact tracing, and PPE requirements

### Brief Student Teacher/Intern on classroom environment procedures

- Discuss classroom management procedures including, but not limited to:
  - o establish routines and daily schedules
  - o distribution and collection of materials
  - o seating plans and charts
  - o progressive discipline process

### Brief Student Teacher/Intern on classroom procedures for instruction

- Discuss communicating with students including, but not limited to:
  - o providing directions and procedures
  - o grade level indicators and benchmarks
  - o district and state testing requirements
  - o assessment of instruction and grading practices
  - o use of computers, media and other technologies for instruction
  - o 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.

### Brief Student Teacher/Intern 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.

**\*\* All student teachers/Interns must attend the District's Welcome Meeting at the beginning of their student teaching/internship semester. This is optional for mentors/supervisors to attend, but strongly encouraged.\*\***



# Thank you

*Connect with us!*

*We want to hear from you and how your student teaching/internship experience is going.  
Reach out to Deborah Meyer, Talent Acquisition & Retention Manager,  
at [demeyer@psdschools.com](mailto:demeyer@psdschools.com) for your next steps in Poudre School District.*