

Wyoming

School-University

Partnership

Wyoming School-University Partnership/College of Education Student Teaching Placement Policy October 2022

The collaborative nature of placement and supervision of College of Education student teachers is designed to provide benefits to not only the preservice teachers, but also to mentor teachers, K12 students, and the schools and communities in which this mentoring happens. By joining the WSUP, school districts commit to providing a school community that is striving towards awareness of the role of public schools in a democracy, providing a community of caring, operating with a relational approach to student teaching, providing a standard of excellence, and abiding by current student teaching policies. This aspect of quality control is critical for all taking part in the mentoring process, as it provides a sustained and collaborative process of simultaneous renewal. All members of the WSUP are engaged in the process, including the selection of mentor teachers, screening of potential preservice teachers, professional development for mentor teachers, support for student and mentor teachers, review of data and ongoing improvement, and layers of support offered by the University of Wyoming.

In 2017, the members of the WSUP Governing Board agreed that only Wyoming school districts that are members of the WSUP will be eligible to be chosen by College of Education preservice teachers as a placement site for student teaching. Annual membership by a school district in the WSUP qualifies a district to be included on the placement preference list for student teaching applications for the current fiscal year (assuming membership is paid by September). Through its membership in the WSUP, the district agrees to host student teachers during the semesters appropriate for any student teaching applications made during that year. Approval for individual student teachers to be placed in a particular district will always be a decision made by the district.

To satisfy concerns from school districts and stakeholders, and to support the recruitment needs for Wyoming school districts, this document proposes an alternative pathway for Wyoming school districts that are not WSUP institutional members to be considered as potential placement options for preservice teachers from the College of Education. If approved by the WSUP Governing Board and by College of Education administration, this policy will take effect as of the next round of placement applications for student teaching.

Policy Option:

In order to ensure a collaborative process that continually enhances the quality of the placement, supervision, and mentoring, the school district Superintendent and the College of Education Director of Student Teaching must review and sign an MOU that articulates, at a minimum, the following agreements. In addition, both the school district and the College of Education must meet those agreements consistently.

1. The school district Superintendent, HR director, and at least one principal will meet annually with the Director of Student Teaching, Placement Coordinator, WSUP Director, and Director of the School of Teacher Education. The goal of this annual meeting will be to gain clarity on process and timelines for hosting and mentoring College of Education student teachers and to review and reflect on the degree to which both school district and College of Education personnel are meeting their commitments.
2. Both the school district and the College of Education will follow student teaching policies and practices, as laid out in the Student Teaching Handbook and other policy documents.
3. The school district will ensure that an administration representative attends quarterly WSUP Governing Board meetings. As a non-member, this representative will not have voting privileges.
4. The school district will ensure that student teaching placements are appropriate for the program being completed by the preservice teacher in terms of both grade level and content area.
5. The school district will ensure that mentor teachers selected for preservice teachers have at least three years of teaching experience in the school district and at least one year of mentoring or coaching experience.
6. The College of Education will arrange for supervision for student teachers and support for mentor teachers in the district.
7. The College of Education will provide mentor teachers with stipends at the same level provided for those in WSUP-member districts, as supported by preservice teacher fees.
8. Mentor teachers must complete a series of free online mentoring modules; principals are also encouraged to complete these modules.

Additional requirements for both the school district and the College of Education may also be included in the MOU.