

## **THE ROLE OF THE COOPERATING TEACHER**

The cooperating teacher is an important contributor to the student teacher's growth and development as a beginning teacher. Cooperating teachers model good teaching; provide guidance; ensure that the student teacher receives extensive experience in planning instruction, teaching, assessment, communicating with colleagues, administrators and parents, and so on. The cooperating teacher provides targeted feedback and help assess whether the student teacher should be recommended for licensure.

### **WHO BECOMES A COOPERATING TEACHER?**

The Graduate School of Education's Field Placement Coordinator, in cooperation with school districts and cohort leaders, arranges placements for our candidates. Candidates' preferences as to grade level and geographic location are considered when making placements. Oregon requires (OAR 584-17-070 (2)) that cooperating teachers "have had two (2) years' experience in early childhood, or elementary, or middle or high school immediately prior to supervision or instruction and who hold a valid license for current assignments."

### **EXPECTATIONS FOR COOPERATING TEACHERS**

The relationship between the cooperating teacher and the student teachers is a complex one that takes different forms depending on the individuals, students, and schools involved. However, we expect that every cooperating teacher will:

- Make student teachers feel welcome through introductions to students and colleagues; provide a desk or other personal space; provide information about procedures and policies; and introduce the school's culture.
- Provide student teachers with varied opportunities to work with students as early as possible—beginning with routine activities with individuals and small groups and gradually increasing their responsibilities.
- Provide opportunities for student teachers to carry out activities (lessons, interviews, student shadows, etc.) required for their PSU classes for personal growth.
- Plan regular times to meet with student teachers for planning and feedback.
- Be available to meet with the students' university supervisors for scheduled conferences and occasional informal conversations.
- Guide student teachers in planning, teaching, and assessing the work sample, including providing signature on the Work Sample Evaluation form, as appropriate.
- Complete student teaching evaluation forms prior to 3-way evaluative conference.
- Write a letter of recommendation for students' placement files.
- Communicate any concerns to the university supervisor, cohort leader, or both.

### **A NOTE ON CURRICULUM, PLANNING, AND THE WORK SAMPLE**

Although student teachers are expected to follow the teacher's, school's, and district's curriculum plan, we also believe that student teachers must have the opportunity to do original planning. Curriculum planning is an important part of becoming a teacher, and is essential for the development of the work sample. Each work sample is intended to demonstrate the student teacher's ability to plan, instruct, assess, and reflect on a unit of study. Cooperating teachers need to provide some flexibility in the topic and contents of the curriculum that student teachers are responsible for developing. For instance, the cooperating teacher might feel that students need a lesson on some aspect of punctuation or division, but allow the student teacher latitude in *how* to achieve its goals and objectives. The work sample in particular is often an opportunity for student teachers to work in depth on a topic of interest and expertise.

### **REDUCED ENROLLMENT FEE PRIVILEGE**

In partial compensation for their work, cooperating teachers may take advantage of the Reduced Enrollment Fee Privilege for classes at institutions in the Oregon University System (e.g. Portland State University). School districts have developed their own policies to distribute the reduced enrollment privilege. Districts are encouraged to make these reduced enrollment privileges available to the cooperating teachers who provide service to student teachers. Additional information about compensation is provided to the cooperating teacher following official placement.