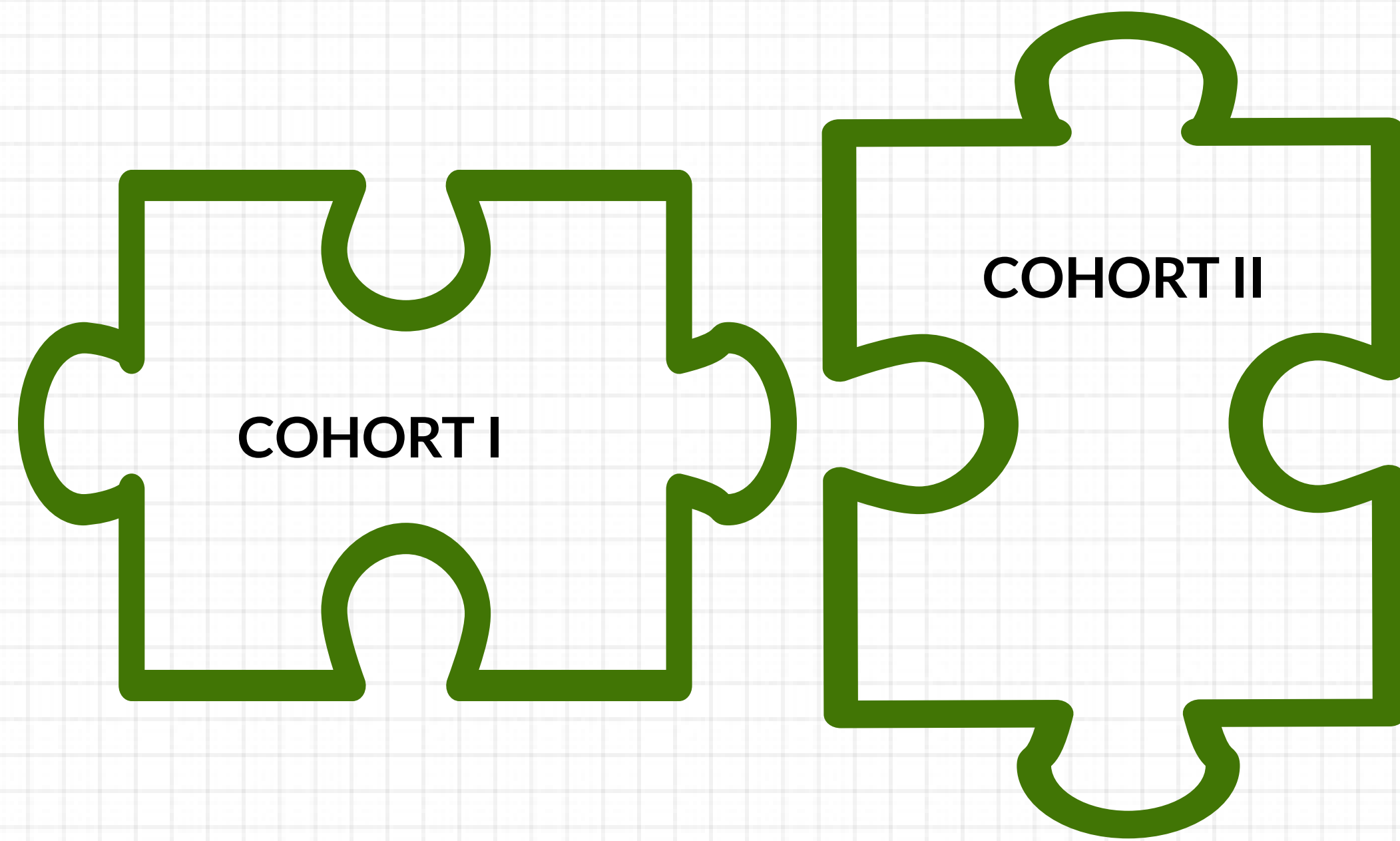


COHORT HANDBOOK

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
PLYMOUTH STATE UNIVERSITY



Questions?

Please contact Susan Sabella, Coordinator of Early Field Experiences
ssabella@plymouth.edu

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE COHORT MODEL	3
GENERAL INFORMATION	4
Required Hours	4
Transportation	4
Background Check	4
Name Tag	4
Attendance	5
Professionalism	5
Designing Instruction	6
Professional Learning	7
Professional Dispositions	7
COHORT I	8
Field Experience	9
Expectations Infographic	10
Mentor Teacher Information	11
COHORT II	12
Field Experience	13
Expectations Infographic	14
Mentor Teacher Information	15
Lesson Feedback	16
FINAL EVALUATION	17

THE COHORT MODEL

Elementary Education teacher candidates begin a prescribed series of academic courses and clinical experiences during the final three semesters of their Elementary Education undergraduate program. Most students complete all three semesters in sequence within a supportive cohort. Each candidate is expected to function as a collaborative member of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) as evidenced by high levels of participation towards productive outcomes, both in class and in the field.

COHORT I ELEMENTARY EDUCATION COURSES (13 credits)

ED 3050 Foundations of Teaching and Learning
ED 3051 Designing Positive Learning Communities
ED 3052 Assessing Children in Schools
RL 3050 Foundations of Reading and Language Arts
ED 3055 Foundations Teaching Practicum

COHORT II ELEMENTARY EDUCATION COURSES (16 credits)

ED 3060 Social Studies Curriculum and Instruction
ED 3090 Science Curriculum and Instruction
ED 3070 Knowing and Teaching Mathematics
RL 3070 Language Arts and Reading in the Elementary School
SE 3070 Classroom Applications in Inclusive Education
ED 3080 Teaching in the Content Areas Practicum

Cohort III Elementary Education Courses (13 credits)

ED 4400 Internship
ED 4500 Childhood Studies Teaching Seminar

GENERAL INFORMATION

REQUIRED HOURS

Clinical experiences provide multiple opportunities to apply educational theory in elementary classrooms with the support of a mentor teacher and boundary-spanning University faculty. Prior to student teaching, Elementary Education teacher candidates will be required to successfully complete 200 hours of clinical experience. During Cohort I, teacher candidates will complete 90 hours of clinical experience. During Cohort II, teacher candidates will complete 114 hours of clinical experience.

TRANSPORTATION

Placements at all sites will necessitate having transportation. Carpooling is feasible for Cohort I. Private transportation is needed for Cohort II and student teaching.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Background checks are specific to each school district and must be completed prior to entering your host school.

Cohort II teacher candidates will complete their background checks prior to the close of the semester that precedes the Cohort II Clinical Experience.

Cohort I teacher candidates will receive background check information during Cohort Orientation.

NAME TAG

PSU Elementary Education name tags will be worn at all times when in the host school. The name tag will be worn throughout the Cohort Practicums and the student teaching internship.

ATTENDANCE

Teacher candidates are expected to attend ALL scheduled field experience days as outlined in each Cohort calendar. If you are ill on a scheduled field experience day, you must call the host school that morning prior to the start of the school day. In addition to calling the host school, you must email the Coordinator of Field Experiences that morning, as well. Reliability is a professional disposition that will be monitored closely.

If you are a student athlete and have a conflict due to a sanctioned athletic event, the mentor teacher and the Coordinator of Field Experiences must be informed prior to any absence.

If an absence occurs, the teacher candidate must arrange a make-up day with the mentor teacher. Once this date is set, the teacher candidate will email this information to the Coordinator of Field Experiences.

PROFESSIONALISM

Teacher candidates are expected to arrive in host classrooms 15 minutes prior to the start of the school day. Reliability is a professional disposition that will be assessed by the mentor teacher.

Teacher candidates will share the Cohort expectations with mentor teachers and they will also seek constructive feedback. Feedback will be documented in the Field Journal.

Teacher candidates are expected to follow the dress code of the host school and to communicate professionally with school staff. Teacher candidates are also expected to keep cell phones off during the instructional day. Respect is a professional disposition that will be monitored closely through school-based feedback.

Teacher candidates will maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students and follow confidentiality procedures. Teacher candidates will not interact with students on social media.

DESIGNING INSTRUCTION

Teacher candidates will be using the *Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework* when designing learning experiences. During Cohort I, candidates will learn about the UDL Framework in ED3050 and will co-design instruction with boundary-spanning University faculty while in the field. During Cohort II methods courses, candidates will learn how to use the UDL Framework across content-areas and they will be expected to use this framework when planning their field lessons.

WHY USE UDL?

UDL recognizes that the way people learn is as unique as their fingerprints. Classrooms are highly diverse and curriculum needs to be designed to meet the needs of all learners from the very beginning. UDL minimizes barriers for students and maximizes learning. When teachers design learning for students who need supports or challenges, learning experiences are better for all students.

When planning instruction, teacher candidates will consider the following questions:

GOAL	What do I want students to learn? Unpack the standard, identify skills and concepts, and connect this goal to prior learning.
METHODS	How will I engage all learners in this learning experience? Identify the most appropriate teaching methods (from gradual release to open inquiry), instructional strategies, and incorporate a variety of group settings. Do barriers exist that might interfere with all students achieving this goal? Know your learners through formative assessment. Use the UDL Principles as a guide to minimize barriers.
MATERIALS	Which materials will I use to provide flexible paths for learning? Consider scaffolded support for vocabulary acquisition in all content areas.
ASSESSMENT	How will my students demonstrate understanding? Provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate understanding through action and expression. Provide clear models and targeted feedback to support progress toward the identified goal.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

In addition to collaborating during class and in the field, teacher candidates are also encouraged to expand their Personal Learning Community via Twitter and ASCD.



Education Twitter Chats Calendar

<https://sites.google.com/site/twittereducationchats/education-chat-calendar>

Our group hashtag is #PSUElemEd.

A
S
C
D

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) is a membership organization that develops programs, products, and services essential to the way educators learn, teach, and lead. Teacher candidates are strongly encouraged to get involved in our campus chapter.

Professional Dispositions

To be eligible to enter and remain in the field during Cohort I, II, and student teaching, all teacher candidates must meet the professional expectations outlined in the *Educator Disposition Assessment*.

Cohort students may be removed from a placement at the request of their host site or for other reasons involving unprofessional behavior. This may result in Cohort students not receiving credit for the Practicum. The Coordinator of Early Field Experiences, in consultation with Cohort faculty, will determine the appropriate next steps, including implementation of a Focus Plan, or a recommendation to discontinue in the Elementary Education licensure program.

COHORT I

What happens during the Cohort I Field Experience?

The Cohort I teacher candidate will actively participate in building a positive learning environment, support literacy development in the classroom, and develop ongoing reflective practices by participating in a co-teaching instructional planning cycle.

Build a Positive Learning Environment

Cohort I teacher candidates are encouraged to build positive relationships with students. They are expected to learn the names of the students and to actively participate in Morning Meeting and/or classroom discussions. Teacher candidates are expected to understand and reinforce classroom rules and expectations. Furthermore, teacher candidates will demonstrate a growth mindset when interacting with students and when communicating student progress.

Support Literacy Development

Cohort I teacher candidates are eased into an elementary classroom learning environment. They are expected to become familiar with the ELA (English language arts) grade-level expectations through the review of competencies, standards, and curriculum resources (digital and print), observe the mentor teacher in small group and large group settings, and analyze student work using local anchor papers, scoring rubrics and/or competency scales. Teacher candidates are expected to assist students with technology tools and applications in support of personalized learning. Teacher candidates are expected to preview three ELA lessons and assist the mentor teacher with an individual student and/or small group during each of the three lessons. With the support and guidance of boundary-spanning faculty, teacher candidates will also participate in the assessment and planning cycle using the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA-2).


Use Reflection as a Tool to Improve Teaching and Learning

Teacher candidates in Cohort I are required to create and maintain a **Field Journal** throughout the semester. Each teacher candidate will purchase a composition notebook to take to the practicum setting for each scheduled visit. The course syllabus will outline specific expectations related to the Field Journal.


Field Experience Expectations for Cohort I Elementary Education Teacher Candidates

Support a Positive Learning Community


The teacher candidate is expected to **recognize and explain the characteristics of a positive learning environment.** The teacher candidate will **build positive relationships with students.**



Become familiar with classroom rules and transition procedures.



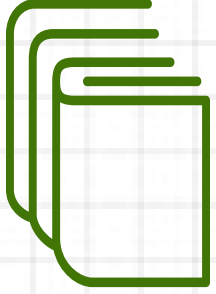
When writing in the classroom, write accurately and use correct letter formation.




Observe and reinforce proactive classroom management strategies. Personally greet each student by name.

Support the Development of a Literacy Skills and Strategies


The teacher candidate is expected to **observe and eventually assist with reading instruction.** Teacher candidates will **actively gather present levels of student performance.** With the support and guidance of University faculty, they will then **determine next steps for instruction, and choose appropriate scaffolds for instruction.**



Become familiar with the competencies in English language arts (ELA) through the unpacking of ELA Common Core State Standards, the use of the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), and the collaborative development of competency-based instruction through the use of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Guidelines.




Preview your mentor's lesson, **observe** your mentor teach the lesson, and then over time, **assist** with small and/or large group reading instruction.




Become familiar with classroom technology tools and digital media resources that can support readers and writers across content areas.

Use Reflection as a Tool to Improve Teaching and Learning


With the support and guidance of boundary-spanning faculty, the teacher candidate will begin to **develop the skills and dispositions of a reflective practitioner.**



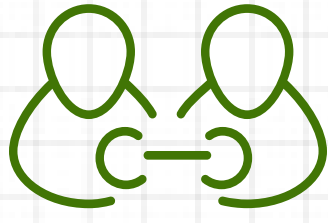
FIELD JOURNAL



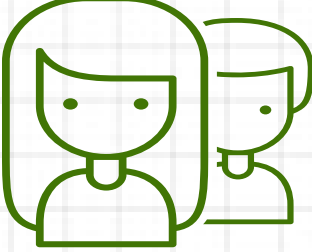
Using grade-band competencies as a guide, examine and compare DRA results for individual differences.



Observe and explain the purpose of formative assessments.



Observe and reflect on the difference between scaffolding and differentiation.



Collaborate with mentor teacher and University faculty to improve instruction.

How can mentor teachers support the development of Cohort I teacher candidates?

First of all, thank you for inviting our teacher candidate into your learning community! Your guidance is an invaluable part of our educator preparation program. At the completion of the Cohort I field experience, mentor teachers will receive a certificate that confirms 90 hours of professional development.

There are many things that you can do to ensure a comprehensive field experience:

- Please provide access to ELA grade-level/grade-band competencies, scoring rubrics, competency scales, anchor papers, etc.
- During reading instruction, feel free to treat the teacher candidate as a co-teacher; especially, when working with individual students and/or a small group. Allow the teacher candidate to preview an upcoming lesson, observe you teaching that lesson, and then invite the teacher candidate to assist you with that group.
- Include the teacher candidate in the review of running records and/or anecdotal notes in relation to the targeted competencies. Please share how you gather data/notes to help plan future instruction.
- Encourage the teacher candidate to observe and explore classroom technology. Discuss with the teacher candidate WHY technology is used in your classroom and HOW it enhances and/or personalizes learning.
- As the teacher candidate becomes more familiar with the ELA competencies, please feel free to share how these competencies can also be targeted in other content areas. For example, please share how speaking and listening skills can be supported during a Number Talk. Additionally, please share how reading skills can be applied during a collaborative science investigation.

COHORT II

What are teacher candidates expected to do during the Cohort II Clinical Experience?

The Cohort II teacher candidate will support student learning across all content areas through the use of effective instructional strategies and targeted feedback, actively reinforce the use of academic vocabulary, and refine reflective practices by closely analyzing student progress toward grade-level competencies.

Support Learning in all Content Areas

Cohort II teacher candidates are expected to become familiar with the grade-level expectations in all content areas through the review of competencies, standards, and curriculum resources (digital and print). **Teacher candidates will design and implement two integrated lessons.** These integrated lessons will be designed during integrated open labs as part of Cohort coursework. **The teacher candidates are also expected to implement two additional lessons using district curriculum resources that they would most likely be using as a student teacher.** These lessons should be selected in consultation with the mentor to ensure curriculum alignment with district goals for student learning. Teacher candidates are also expected to assist students with technology tools, applications, and digital media, in order to support personalized learning and to enhance conceptual understanding. Furthermore, teacher candidates will demonstrate a growth mindset when interacting with students and when communicating student progress.

Support the Use of Academic Vocabulary

While facilitating collaborative discussions and/or providing content-specific feedback to students, Cohort II teacher candidates are expected to reinforce the use of academic vocabulary. Teacher candidates will intentionally scaffold vocabulary development in support of content area instruction.

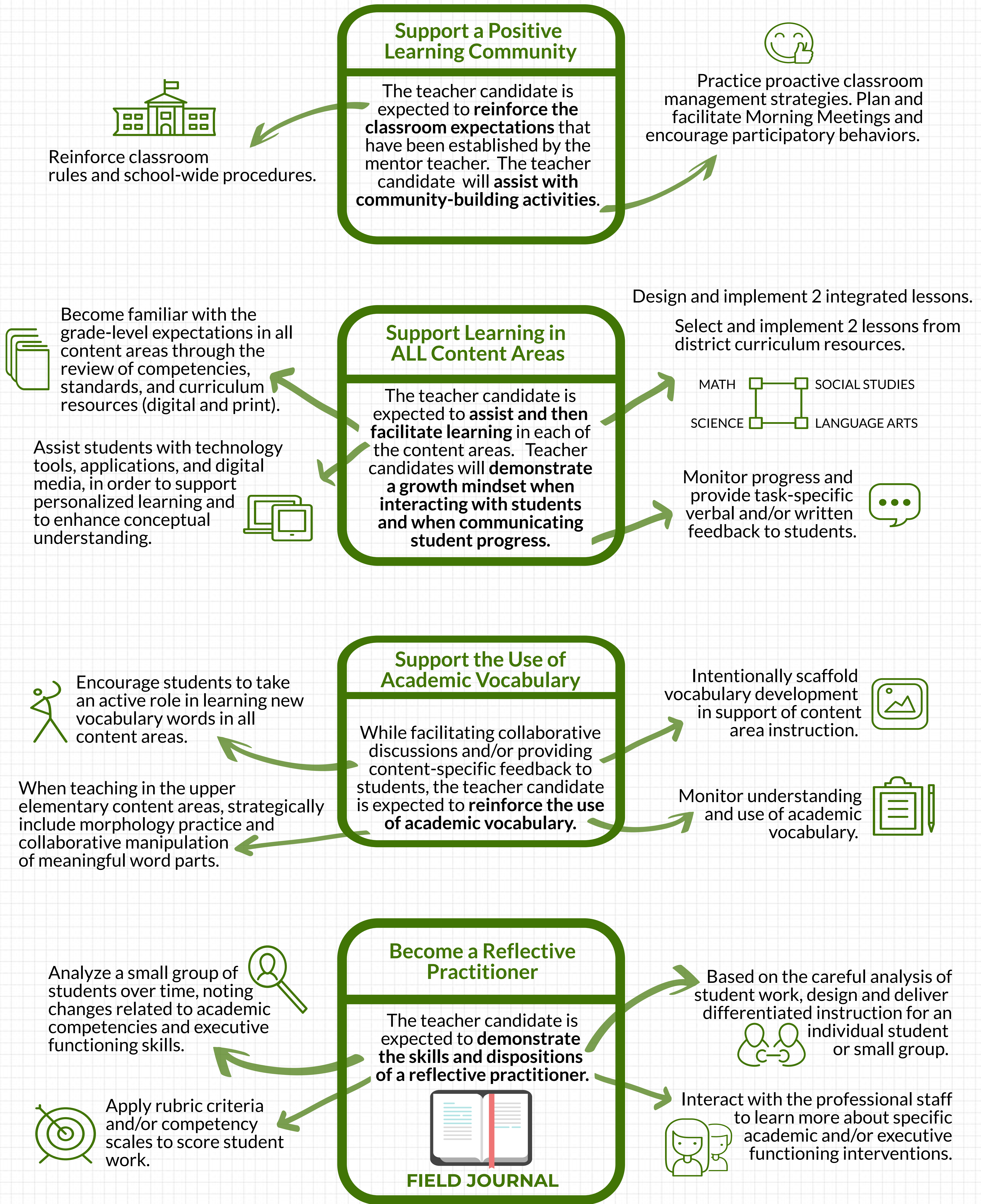
Become a Reflective Practitioner

Teacher candidates in Cohort II are required to create and maintain a Field Journal throughout the semester. Each teacher candidate will purchase a composition notebook to take to the practicum setting for each scheduled visit. Journal set-up will be shared at the Cohort II Orientation.

The Field Journal will contain the following:

- Self-paced documentation of progress related to the **Cohort II Field Experience Expectations**
- Mentor lesson observation feedback
- Teacher candidate lesson reflections
- Anecdotal notes, data collection, data analysis
- Specific field-based assignments connected to the Cohort II courses

Field Experience Expectations for Cohort II Elementary Education Teacher Candidates



How can mentor teachers support the development of Cohort II teacher candidates?

First of all, thank you for inviting our teacher candidate into your learning community! Your guidance is an invaluable part of our educator preparation program. At the completion of the Cohort II field experience, mentor teachers will receive a certificate that confirms 114 hours of professional development.

We would like our teacher candidates to experience the planning cycle as a reflective practitioner. There are many things that you can do to ensure a comprehensive field experience:

- Please provide access to grade-level/grade-band competencies, content-area standards, scoring rubrics, competency scales, anchor papers, etc.
- Feel free to treat the teacher candidate as a co-teacher; especially, when working with individual students and/or a small group. Allow the teacher candidate to preview an upcoming lesson, observe you teaching that lesson, and then invite the teacher candidate to assist you with that group. When the next group rotates to you, invite the teacher candidate to lead the learning under your close supervision.
- The teacher candidate is required to teach 4 lessons. Two of the lessons will be integrated and designed by the teacher candidate. The two additional lessons can be selected from district curriculum resources. As the teacher candidate leads the learning, please jot down lesson feedback in his/her Field Journal. If time allows, a verbal debriefing is strongly encouraged and appreciated.
- Include the teacher candidate in the review of student work in relation to the targeted competencies. Please share examples of verbal and written content-specific feedback and expect the teacher candidate to demonstrate a growth mindset when providing feedback to students. Encourage the teacher candidate to consider next steps for instruction.
- Encourage the teacher candidate to explore classroom technology and assist students with the tools and applications across all content areas. Discuss with the teacher candidate WHY technology is used in your classroom and HOW it enhances and/or personalizes learning.
- The next step in the teacher candidate's journey is full-time student teaching. Toward the end of this field experience, please feel free to have the teacher candidate plan and lead classroom routines. For example, teacher candidates can greet students at the door, lead Morning Meetings, facilitate lesson closure discussions, design a Number Talk, review classroom rules, post on the classroom blog, etc.

LESSON APPROVAL AND MENTOR FEEDBACK

LESSON APPROVAL PROCESS

Cohort II teacher candidates are required to design and teach four lessons during the field experience. All four content areas must be targeted by the completion of the field experience.

Integrated Lessons

Two integrated lessons will be designed on campus during integrated open lab workshops. The lessons will be submitted to Professor Sabella for approval 7 days prior to the scheduled teaching date in the field. If revisions are required, those revisions must be completed and resubmitted 3 days prior to teaching.

Additional Lessons

In consultation with the mentor teacher, a minimum of two additional lessons will be selected from district curriculum resources. Prior to teaching each lesson, the teacher candidate will add UDL considerations and planned feedback to each lesson.

MENTOR FEEDBACK

The mentor teacher will observe the teacher candidate during each of the four lessons and provide written feedback in the candidate's field journal. The mentor teacher is encouraged to provide general feedback and also feedback related to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) considerations.

GENERAL FEEDBACK

- Was the teacher candidate prepared to teach this lesson?
- What went well?
- What are some things to think about?

UDL CONSIDERATIONS

GOAL

- Did the teacher candidate share the learning goal with students?
- Did the teacher candidate connect this goal to prior learning?

METHODS

- Were the students engaged in this learning experience? Why?
- Were barriers to learning removed? How?

MATERIALS

- Did the selected materials support learners? How?
- Did intentional support exist to promote academic vocabulary acquisition?

ASSESSMENT

- Did the teacher candidate provide clear examples?
- Did the teacher candidate provide multiple avenues for students to demonstrate understanding?
- Did the teacher candidate provide targeted feedback?

**Plymouth State University
Elementary Education**

Cohort Field Experiences

Teacher Candidate: _____ Cohort 1 ____ Cohort II ____

Evaluator: _____ Role: _____

School: _____ Grade/Grade-Band: _____

Evaluators: If a teacher candidate **EXCEEDS** or **DOES NOT MEET** an expectation, please provide a comment that explains your rating. Your insights are used to inform University decisions.

Expectation	Exceeds	Meets	Approaching	Did Not Meet
1. Professionalism Consistently exhibits punctuality, attends all scheduled sessions, and follows the school's professional dress code.				
Comment:				
2. Preparedness Demonstrates an understanding of the grade level or grade band learning standards and competencies: Cohort I in ELA; Cohort II, in all content areas.				
Comment:				
3. Communication Demonstrates strong writing and oral communication skills. Consistently uses precise spelling and grammar with students, staff, and families.				
Comment:				

Expectation	Exceeds	Meets	Approaching	Did Not Meet
4. Attitude Demonstrates initiative through active participation in the learning community. Respects the diverse needs of all learners and promotes a growth mindset when providing student feedback and/or when discussing student performance.				
Comment:				
5. Reflective Practitioner Learns and adjusts from constructive feedback and reflection as evidenced by improvements in performance. Reviews student work to explore links between student performance and proficiency expectations.				
Comment:				

 Evaluator's Signature

Date: _____

 Teacher Candidate's Signature

Date: _____

Mentor Teacher's Comment:

Teacher Candidate's Comment (on back):