FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF FIELD EXPERIENCES
AND LICENSURE

Forward thinking. World ready.

Early (277) & Secondary (494)

Field Experiences

Information Packet

Office of Field Experiences and Licensure

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APPLICATION PROCESS

The Office of Field Experiences & Licensure has implemented a program called Sonia to manage student information and field experience placements. Candidates will be added to placement groups based on Workday rosters. This will send an email to field experience candidates to complete the application as soon as possible. Candidates need to log into Sonia and complete the application by **August 31, 2026.**

Early/Secondary School Field Experience Timeline

Date	Task
August 1, 2026	Students are added to placement groups (repeated weekly until last day to add classes)
August 31, 2026	Application due
September 30, 2026	First Round of Placement notifications and will be rolling after September 30, 2026 Checks due

To log in to your Sonia account:

1. To open Sonia, go to https://fhsu-coe.sonialive.com
2. Bookmark the Sonia website (you'll return to it often)
3. In the top left corner of the screen, check to make sure your Role shows as "Student"
4. Click the "University Sign In" button
5. Enter your FHSU Tiger ID and password information

Sonia Home Page:

On your "Home" tab, you'll see live links. The linked information provides helpful information on how to navigate Sonia, complete an application, update your profile, and complete checks.

Tips:

- Use the "Forms" tab to find the application
- Use the "Checks" tab to upload verifications or check to see if the verifications you've previously uploaded need to be updated
- Checks will remain "red" until they are approved. This could take 2-3 weeks as we are approving checks for many students simultaneously.
- Prepare the names of schools and district numbers before beginning

Documents

- Upload the cover letter and resume (in one document) in PDF format under the documents tab and check the box that gives permission for us to share it with contacts at the requested schools.
- **Cover Letter and Resume should be addressed to the future mentor teacher**

Checks: (more details are on the following page) they need to be completed by **September 25**, or placements will not be released until they are verified

- Negative TB Test Verification Requirement
- Complete Background Check Information OR
    - Upload KS emergency sub license or alternative background check in PDF format
    - **Prepare: Complete the background check prior to starting the form. It takes approximately 24-72 hours to return the results. https://www.fhsu.edu/cert/background-check/index**
- Purchase liability insurance from listed options and provide documentation as a PDF
    - **Prepare: Purchase liability insurance from the list provided**
- Complete waiver and release forms and indicate that they have been completed
- Complete the Bloodborne Pathogens Quiz
- Jason Flatt Act Compliance
- Checks will remain "red" until reviewed by the Checks Manager (they do not turn green after they are uploaded) for each placement group--up to 3 weeks for approval

REQUIRED CHECKS FOR FHSU FIELD EXPERIENCES

- ☐ National Background Check (more information on next page)
- ☐ Negative TB Test Verification
- ☐ Professional Liability Insurance
- ☐ Bloodborne Pathogens Training
- ☐ Jason Flatt Act–Bullying & Suicice Awareness

TUBERCULOSIS (TB) TEST VERIFICATION

Candidates are required to provide verification of having a negative TB skin result test no more than 6 months prior to completing Early Field Experience (for secondary majors) or applying for Teacher Education admission. Your TB verification will be considered valid for a period of 4 years.

Most TB skin tests take 3 days to complete. Most any health care facility can complete your TB skin test. There is not a specific TB result verification form that must be submitted. The result verification form the health care provider provides you will be sufficient as long as it includes all pertinent information. Your result verification will need to be uploaded into the TB Verification section of your Teacher Education Admission Application.

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

The College of Education requires all candidates to provide professional liability insurance coverage verification prior to beginning any type of field experience. A copy of the insurance card will need to be provided in the form.

- **Frequently Asked Questions**
- **Insurance Options**

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS TRAINING

The College of Education requires that candidates are properly trained in the safe handling of blood and bodily fluids. Please watch the two videos on and then complete the Bloodborne Pathogens Quiz. Once completed, candidates must upload a PDF or JPEG screenshot of the completed quiz with a score of 8/10 or higher that also includes documentation of your FHSU email address.

JASON FLATT ACT

In compliance with the Jason Flatt Act, Kansas requires teachers to train on bullying and suicide awareness. Candidates must register with the Jason Flatt Foundation and complete the "Bullying and Suicide" Module and the Youth Suicide: A Silent Epidemic" Module.

Once completed, candidates must upload a PDF or JPEG of their "Certificate of Completion" for the modules to Sonia checks to be validated by the Office of Field Experiences.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK INSTRUCTIONS

Go to the secure link: https://www.ejobapp-validityscreening.com/p/fhsuteacher1896

Please make sure you only select the package required, as there will be *NO REFUNDS*

1. Enter your email address and select **CONTINUE.** Enter your first and last name and select **REGISTER**
2. An authentication message will be dispatched to your email. Follow the link in the email to enter your basic information and select **CONTINUE.**
3. Select **START** to continue with the application
4. Complete information in the required sections of the application and click next to move through each section. Ensure all sections reflect complete in the review.
5. Read the **"notice**" and check the confirmation box; **NEXT** to continue.
6. Read the **"Summary**" of Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, and check the box; click **NEXT**.
7. Complete the Disclosure and enter your signature in the electronic signature box; click **NEXT**.
8. Complete the required fields on the Authorization and enter your signature in the electronic signature box; click **NEXT.**
9. Select **SUBMIT** to complete the application. ***Failure to click submit will delay the process of your screening.***

* Credit Card payment options: Discover, MasterCard, or Visa

***Cost is $39.00 plus a $2.00 administrative fee**

* Authorized pending payment receipt will be emailed upon submission to the email provided in your application.

Your results will not be released to your institution until you successfully submit your request and payment to Validity.

Results will be forwarded to **Fort Hays State University**. Instructions on how to access your completed report via your profile page will also be sent via email once your profile has been submitted.

Please contact Validity Screening Solutions with technical questions at 91-322-5927, toll-free at 866-920-5995, or via email at clientservices@validityscreening.com

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Students are responsible for any additional court-related Screening third-party fees over $10. Upon review of your address history, if applicable, a team member will reach out to collect the additional cost via a credit card authorization form.

**Please Note: New York criminal searches are an additional $95

Dear Early Field Experience Student,

Welcome to your 277 Early Field Experience class. The purpose of this experience is to assist you in reflecting about becoming a teacher by observing various aspects of the school and classroom environment such as classroom management, teaching styles, lesson presentation, learning styles, use of technology, physical environments, and student needs. This first experience, 277- Early Field, is an "observation only" 20-hour placement. Students will need to complete a **Log of Observations** form after each observation in timesheets stored in Sonia.

As a guest of the school and classroom and as a representative of FHSU, Field Experience students are to act professional at all times. This includes school and classroom codes of conduct, rules and procedures, and professional dress. Students should ***refrain from wearing jeans, t-shirts, hats and use of a mobile phone*** during the observation. Confidentiality and privacy are of the utmost importance. Do not ask to see confidential files, and do not mention names in your discussions or reflections.

Remember the connections you are making now will last into your teaching and professional career and the networking with administrators can certainly lead to employment opportunities for your future.

This is a pass/fail class. The components that lead to a passing grade are:

- Communicate schedule through the mentor teacher and/or follow pre-established protocol as communicated with the Office of Field Experiences and Licensure.
- Adhere to the codes of conduct of the school/classroom and district
- Dress professionally and refrain from use of mobile phone
- Follow the classroom rules and procedures
- Complete the Observation Form after each class period if required by your FHSU 277 instructor or by the mentor teacher
- It is recommended that you send a thank you letter to the mentor teacher after completion
- Submit your completed Observation Form to your 277 instructor
- Send the completed Early Field Final Evaluation to your instructor

Please direct any questions regarding your placement to the Office of Field Experiences. **All questions regarding grades and course requirements should be directed to the 277 Instructor**. I look forward to beginning this journey to becoming a teacher with you!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Rachel Wentling

Dear Secondary School Field Experience Student,

Welcome to your 494 Secondary Field Experience class. The purpose of this experience is to assist you in reflecting about becoming a teacher by working with students one-on-one may help with lesson plans and grading papers. Candidates may not take over the role of primary instructor with one exception, as you will teach one lesson in front of your University Instructor of this course. This Secondary experience, TESS 494 is a 40 hour placement. Students will need to complete **25 hours in your content area** and **15 hours in Special Education**. Students will need to complete a **Log of Observations** form after each observation. This is the responsibility of the Secondary Field Experience student, please do not ask the mentor teacher for assistance.

As a guest of the school and classroom and as a representative of FHSU, Secondary Field Experience students are to act professional at all times. This includes school and classroom codes of conduct, rules and procedures, and professional dress. Students should ***refrain from wearing jeans, t-shirts, hats and use of a mobile phone*** during the observation. Confidentiality and privacy are of the utmost importance. Do not ask to see confidential files, and do not mention names in your discussions or reflections.

Remember the connections you are making now will last into your teaching and professional career and the networking with administrators can certainly lead to employment opportunities for your future.

This is a pass/fail class. The components that lead to a passing grade are:

- Communicate schedule through the mentor teacher and/or follow pre-established protocol as communicated with the Office of Field Experiences and Licensure.
- Adhere to the codes of conduct of the school/classroom and district
- Dress professionally and refrain from use of mobile phone
- Follow the classroom rules and procedures
- Complete the Observation Form after each class period if required by your FHSU 494 instructor or by the mentor teacher
- It is recommended that you send a thank you letter to the mentor teacher after completion
- Submit your completed Observation Form to your 494 instructor
- Send the completed secondary Field Final Evaluation to your instructor

Please direct any questions regarding your placement to the Office of Field Experiences. **All questions regarding grades and course requirements should be directed to the 494 Instructor**. I look forward to beginning this journey to becoming a teacher with you!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Rachel Wentling

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Dear Early Field Experience Mentor Teacher,

Thank you for your willingness to share your experience and classroom with a Fort Hays State University Early Field Experience student. Our student will spend a minimum of 20 hours observing in your classroom. The purpose of Early Field Experience is for the student to view the school setting through the eyes of a teacher. The student will observe several facets of the school environment such as classroom management, teaching styles, lesson presentation, learning styles, technology integration, physical environments, and student behavior.

Your student observer should adhere to your code of conduct and is expected to act and dress professionally at all times. The student is a guest in your school and classroom and should follow all procedures and rules established in your classroom and school building.

This class is taken early in the college experience and may be their first exposure to the classroom since graduation from high school. Any help and guidance you provide is greatly appreciated. The student will have a log form for you to initial to verify the student's punctuality and attendance. An optional comment section is provided. We value your comments and also value your time.

Please send an email to me with a copy to the FHSU Instructor if you have any concerns about this placement. Examples may be that the student did not complete the hours, did not adhere to your code of conduct or expectations, or was less than courteous to anyone at your school. We anticipate that the student will be an excellent ambassador for other students from our University.

Sincerely,

Rachel Wentling

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Dear Secondary Field Experience Mentor Teacher,

Thank you for your willingness to share your experience and classroom with a Fort Hays State University Secondary Field Experience student. Our student will spend a minimum of 25 hours observing and participating in your classroom, and 15 hours in a Special Education. The purpose of the Secondary Field Experience is for the student to view the school setting through the eyes of a teacher. The student will observe several facets of the school environment such as classroom management, teaching styles, lesson presentation, learning styles, technology integration, physical environments, and student behavior.

For this placement our candidates will be able to help students one-one and may assist with lesson plan and grading papers or any other activity you feel would benefit your students and our candidates. For this specif field experience we do ask our candidate to be allowed to present one lesson and be evaluated by their course instructor from the university.

Your student observer should adhere to your code of conduct and is expected to act and dress professionally at all times. The student is a guest in your school and classroom and should follow all procedures and rules established in your classroom and school building.

The student will have a log form for you to initial to verify the student's punctuality and attendance. An optional comment section is provided. We value your comments and also value your time.

Please send an email to me with a copy to the FHSU Instructor if you have any concerns about this placement. Examples may be that the student did not complete the hours, did not adhere to your code of conduct or expectations, or was less than courteous to anyone at your school. We anticipate that the student will be an excellent ambassador for other students from our University.

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