Intern Teacher Responsibilities

Every teacher candidate is expected to abide by the policies and fulfill the responsibilities and obligations outlined in this section. In addition to the professionalism guidelines, the following responsibilities should guide candidates in working with students, school site faculty and staff, colleagues and peers, and university faculty and staff.

General Program Responsibilities:

1. Attend all mandatory courses, seminars, events, meetings, and conferences that are part of the credential program.

2. Maintain confidentiality of students, parents, and school site staff at all times.

3. Model professional and ethical behavior, including but not limited to punctuality, regular attendance, and appropriate dress. See Professionalism Policy.

4. Learn and abide by all applicable school site policies and regulations.

5. Become familiar with classroom strategies and procedures used by the cooperating teacher.

6. Become familiar with the California Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs).

Fresno State's Credential Programs, as well as all of our region's school districts, are committed to the principle of equal opportunity. The program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, and disabled veteran status.

If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Services for Students with Disabilities, Henry Madden Library Suite 1202, 5200 N. Barton Ave. Mail Stop ML125, 93740 (559-278-2811). If you already have a letter from SSD indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to your coursework instructor(s) and university coach so that we can arrange the accommodations you might need.

Responsibilities to Students

As a candidate you will be interacting with students in schools throughout your program. As you are learning to teach you will be exposed to information and situations in which there may be concern for the health, safety, privacy, or psychological well-being of students and/or families. Your responsibilities to all the students you encounter, whether they are in your direct charge or not, include the following:

Treat all students with dignity: All students must be treated with dignity and respect at all times regardless of their race; color; creed; gender; age; disability; sexual orientation; political or religious belief; or social, cultural, or linguistic status.

- Students, including those with disabilities, must be allowed to participate on an equal basis in any program or activity for which they are qualified.
- Students must be free from harassment by teachers or other students.
- Students must have physical privacy - including freedom from unwanted or punitive touching or physical restraint. If any student needs physical guidance or assistance in performing any activity, the assistance must be provided in the most dignified and private manner possible.
- Students and their families have the right to be referenced in respectful terminology when discussing race, religion, disability, or any other social or physical characteristics.
- Students should be corrected for academic or disciplinary problems in a respectful, non-punitive manner.
- Students should not be subjected to shame or humiliation in front of peers or staff.

Maintain privacy and confidentiality: All students and their families have the right to privacy and to confidentiality of both all verbal and written records and information from a third party. While you may need to know certain private information for the purpose of your own academic learning or preparation for appropriate instruction, this information is not to be shared with others outside the academic or school community except as required by law.

- When sharing information within the school community, make sure you are doing so with the ultimate benefit of the students in mind. Gossip is never appropriate.
- Written information should be shared only in the most limited distribution possible to attain your goal. Be especially cautious in using e-mail or social media to convey information about students. E-mail, Twitter, and Facebook are considered public media. Treat anything you write on e-mail and social media as though it were publicly available.
- Information shared with fellow Residents and faculty through papers and classroom documents or discussions should avoid personal identifiers that might enable someone to connect the information with a specific student, family, teacher, or school.

Safeguard the physical and emotional safety of students: Do not engage in any activity that could reasonably be thought to jeopardize the health, safety, or wellbeing of students. Check school policies on safety during field trips and investigations.

- If you have questions or concerns about a situation, ask your mentor teacher, school principal, university coach, or program coordinator. If you see or hear something that threatens the physical or emotional health or safety of a student OR if you witness an event that threatens the health or safety of a student, you must report this to the proper authorities at once. **In cases of imminent danger know and follow school emergency policies.** Know and follow your school's policy on the appropriate person to notify. Keep a record of when, how, and to whom you have talked about the situation. Examples of situations that may fall under this principle are the following:
    - Suspected child abuse
    - Weapons on campus
    - Physical or sexual contact among students or between students and adults
    - Drugs, alcohol, or tobacco being offered to students by adults or other juveniles or consumed by minors on school premises
    - Sexual harassment or harassment based on disability, sexual orientation, race, or religion
    - Derogatory name-calling or other verbal or physical humiliation
    - Students who threaten to do themselves or others bodily harm are always to be taken seriously and reported to the proper authorities immediately.

Where a student's health or safety is threatened, individual confidentiality cannot be respected: You are obligated by law to report these matters to the proper authorities. You should tell the student about your obligation if your knowledge of his/her situation has come about because he/she has confided in you.

Responsibilities to Faculty, Staff, and Fellow Candidates

Treat your course instructors, school faculty, and fellow candidates with respect: Be sensitive to your position as a learner as a teacher intern. While you may not agree with all the philosophies, policies, and practices you will encounter, refrain from public criticism of schools, personnel, or students. Discuss any concerns about situations in the schools with the appropriate program coordinator.

- Whenever disagreement occurs with course instructors, administrators, and/or staff members, approach the situation with respect. Be sure to understand and follow the norms of the school community in which you are working. In general, follow the Fresno State Student Conduct Code, which encourages the free expression of ideas AND also expects that candidates will conduct themselves as responsible and respectful members of the academic community. The Code further allows instructors to exclude from class anyone who is disorderly, disruptive, or dishonest. Plagiarism, in any form, is grounds for dismissal from the program.
- If you have a concern or issue with a given instructor, discuss the matter first with the instructor. If that is not possible, discuss the matter with the program coordinator. Refrain from spreading rumors or engaging in free-floating complaints either in conversation or via email.

Plan for instruction and observation in a timely manner: In order to help insure that students benefit from your instruction, lesson plans must be prepared for every lesson taught. Plans should always be complete enough that another teacher could step in and function as a substitute.

- Scheduled Clinical Observations - It is the candidate's responsibility to meet the minimum expectation of six formal observations by your coach, as well as any debrief or follow-up meeting requested by your University Coach and/or Cooperating Teacher. Please work with your coach to create a schedule to insure that you are able to complete this requirement. It is your responsibility to provide a copy of your teaching schedule to your coach and if there are scheduling challenges, it is important to discuss them immediately to determine an amicable solution.

Participate actively in community building: You are preparing to join a profession that depends on collaboration. That means everyone must work together, take leadership responsibilities, and contribute to the good of the group. Be ready to do your part.

- Attend school site events such as "Back to School Night" as required by your employment contract.
- Assist in preparations for school site events and parent conferences as needed.
- Get to know the other teachers, candidates, administrators, and staff at your school site.
- Whenever possible, get involved with extracurricular activities at your school site. However, be mindful of your role as a teacher intern and your need to get through credential coursework takes priority.