What is the Student Teaching Placement Process?

How an application goes from submission to confirmation.

Designed for Future Student Teachers @ Ball State
The Office of Teacher Education Services & Clinical Practice
2021-22
Congratulations! You are about to embark on the most important part of your academic career here at Ball State. Successful completion of student teaching is a significant and vital step to becoming a teacher. Therefore, the process and purpose behind every placement must be treated with the utmost diligent care to ensure a successful environment.

An overview of the process:
Once you submit your application to student teach, our office (OTES-CP) starts to work for you! We will send your application to schools within our Clinical Practice Network by hand-delivering them to Ball State faculty liaisons and school district contacts. They will preview each application and select those they believe are a good fit for their respective schools. Next, liaisons and district officials submit those applications to school administrators in person, and the interview/selection process continues to move forward. At this point, you may be contacted to schedule an interview with an administrator and other teachers from the school. A final decision is made, and the school contacts our office to let us know which applicants will be placed. Once we receive a signed contract from the school, your placement is considered official.

Where can I go?
We are pleased to offer our students SEVEN placement options.

- Central Indiana Partners
- Grow Your Own (GYO)
- Aldine, Texas Partners
- Ramstein, Germany - Department of Defense Schools*
- Quantico, Virginia - Department of Defense Schools
- The Urban Semester Collaboration (Open to ELED and EC majors ONLY)
- The IU Global Gateway Program (specified locations in the U.S. and around the world)*

Each choice is discussed and presented in great detail during every student teaching application meeting. *Because of the COVID-19 virus, these options may not be available in the 2021-22 academic year.

How is a school and teacher chosen if I want to student teach in central Indiana?
Our goal for any placement is for it to have purpose and intentionality. While many factors are key to success in student teaching, such as knowledge, dispositions, and previous performance, the mentor teacher is also a crucial factor. The mentor teacher is an essential component of the student teaching triad, assigned to guide, counsel, and help you make the transition from theory into practice. We work with schools and administrators to seek the best mentor teachers, and we provide specific training for them in order to help ensure a successful experience for each student teacher.

Ball State University’s standards for accreditation mandate that we work with schools to “co-select, prepare, evaluate, support, and retain high-quality clinical educators, both provider- and school-based, who demonstrate a positive impact on candidates’ development and P-12 student learning and development.” As a result, we have developed meaningful relationships with key schools to ensure this takes place. Referred to as Professional Development Schools and Partner Schools, these educational entities work with Ball State within a Clinical Practice Network to co-select those who will fill the important role of mentor teacher.
In light of this, all applications of students who wish to teach in Indiana are first sent to a PDS or Partner School. Please click [here](#) for more information. Should we be unable to secure a spot in a PDS or Partner School, we then seek out placements in which we have had previous successful experiences unless the student is interested in Grow Your Own (GYO). Mentor teachers must meet many requirements to be a partner in this endeavor.

**If I interview with a school, am I automatically placed with that school?**
An interview does not guarantee a placement. Student teaching is like any other employment opportunity, with many schools interviewing students prior to deciding on a placement. Ball State encourages school districts to complete an interview. It allows for a more intentional and purposeful placement.

**Can I student teach in my home school through the Grow Your Own (GYO) initiative?**
Yes, as long as you meet specific criteria. A program initiated by our Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), GYO has two main goals.

1. The IDOE will bolster the talent pipeline through targeted, strategic recruitment efforts that leverage all pathways into the profession.
2. The IDOE will support multiple avenues for schools to build a pipeline of educators in their local communities.

Grow Your Own Programs are partnerships between state education agencies, school districts, and teacher preparation programs to attract and retain individuals to teach in their communities.

- Strong partnerships help local schools fill positions.
- Strong partnerships help educator preparation programs (EPPs) recruit candidates.
- Program completers most often reflect the cultural diversity of their communities.

To engage, you must have been a student in the school of that community and indicate so on your student teaching application. For the 2021-22 academic year, Ball State University will be piloting a decision to remove our traditional 75 mile radius boundary around Muncie, IN. Prior to 2021-22, GYO was specific to 75 miles around Muncie, IN in order to accommodate onsite university supervision. While the 75 mile radius is still our boundary for onsite supervision, we are now extending GYO as a pilot beyond that radius. However, all university supervision beyond 75 miles will be conducted by virtual/remote operations. Our teacher preparation leadership will review this pilot at the end of spring 2022 to determine its future within our program. Remember, our goal for any placement is for it to have purpose and intentionality. Therefore, under GYO we rely on our students to help engage in this pathway. If you select this option, the OTES-CP office will contact you for a follow-up.

**How far might have I have to travel?**
In addition to our commitment to work at placing each student in a PDS or Partner school, we are committed to a placement within a reasonable driving distance (within 50 minutes) from your stated place of residence, unless you are in a content area for which is difficult to secure a placement. Suppose not all school districts have Latin Education? Therefore, you will be limited in what schools meet both the IDOE and Ball State criteria for mentorship. In addition, our supervisors cannot travel more than 75 miles outside of Muncie, Indiana. For example, if you are an Elementary Education major and were planning to live in Madison, Indiana, and are
not engaging under GYO, that is more than the 75 mile radius will allow. Another example, is if you were to live in Indianapolis and thus you are within the 75 mile radius, Ball State will work hard to place you at a school within 50 minutes of your residence. However, circumstances may make it necessary to expand that distance. Those distances guide our placement process, but they are not intended to be a barrier. As you complete your application for student teaching, you will provide us with a projected residency address or city. Once your application is submitted, we begin working to find a placement with that in mind. Multiple factors between Ball State and the school go into this decision making, and the closest may not always be the best for your growth as a pre-service teacher.

**Does BSU help me find housing?**
While many student teaching placements would be within a 50-minute drive of the university campus, we have worked with several apartment complexes and local community chambers of commerce, as well as teachers within the schools to provide resources for students as they look for housing options. The university does not provide housing during your student teaching experience. You are free to choose where to live, as you have been throughout your undergraduate years.

**What if I don’t hear back about my placement right away?**
While the process is relatively short for many students (one semester), it can take longer for some students to receive their placement. Therefore, we prioritize by sending placements scheduled for the next semester FIRST.

All fall placements are communicated to students near April 15th of each year. All spring placements are communicated to students near October 15th.

Our office sends applications to schools within our CPN first, allowing administrators and teachers to choose students through the application/interview process. Keep in mind that this process is a collaborative effort, and we are usually waiting on the school to verify a placement. If your application/residence doesn’t fit into one of our partner schools, we begin working to find a placement in one of the other schools with which we typically work. In addition to our network of partners, we have many other schools with whom we have a long-standing relationship who enjoy working with our students. Also, consider that your program may require that you be placed in a particular licensure area. Suppose there are limited numbers of veteran teachers who work in that licensure area in the state (for instance, a school district may not have a full-time teacher in Theatre Education who teaches between 4-7 periods a day, or there may be a part-time teacher who splits their time between two content areas)? In that case, it may be challenging to secure an appropriate placement inside of a small radius.

**DON’T PANIC!!** Keep in mind: We have NEVER failed to find a student teaching placement for a student!

**What if I change my plans after a student teaching assignment is made?**
Placement changes will only be made under extreme and/or unusual circumstances. Once a placement has been secured for you, the mentor teacher and principal will be expecting you (and may have turned down other placements), and you should make every effort to complete the assignment.
If an unavoidable and extreme situation arises concerning your placement (you become seriously ill, you are no longer eligible to student teach, etc.), it is your responsibility to contact the Director of Teacher Education Services and Clinical Practice to inform him about changes. Should you already have a placement confirmed, the decision to change your assignment goes to a joint faculty/staff committee. If a placement is NOT completed, you can submit your change without a committee decision given certain timeframe parameters.

**What if I don’t like my placement?**
Placements are an enormous undertaking by multiple educational entities, with YOUR SUCCESS as the ultimate goal. Whether you agree or disagree with a placement, this will be a learning opportunity. Student teaching placements are carefully crafted by experienced experts in the field. Policies, procedures, and standards are put in place to ensure that your classroom teacher has met specific criteria to become a good mentor teacher.

**What elements should be in my philosophy of education?**
Even though your experiences may be limited to date, indicate what type of early field experiences you have had and describe clearly what was involved during these placements, detailing your interactions with students in the schools/organizations where you were assigned. Below are some suggestions to help you think through components of your philosophy, experiences you’ve had and to help you get started:

- Explain how your early field experiences influenced your decision to continue in education and to apply for student teaching.
- What personal characteristics do you think are vital for an individual to become a successful teacher?
- Describe your perceptions of the relationship between creative lesson planning and the art of teaching.
- While maintaining an enthusiastic learning environment, what strategies might you employ for good classroom management and consistent discipline?
- During your preparation for teaching, you have been working toward proficiency with the InTASC standards for teacher education. Describe how your field experiences have helped you gain this experience.
- Describe any experiences you have had with teaching/tutoring via distance or hybrid modalities.