



BALL STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of Teacher Education
Services and Clinical Practice

2025-26 FIELD EXPERIENCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Welcome to the 2025-26 academic year. Please use the following guide to ensure proper procedures are followed when working with a school district and children. When choosing either onsite or online/virtual field experiences, the same procedures, care, and approvals are to take place prior to your start.

Process Summary

Step#1 – University faculty member submits two documents to OTES-CP. This first is an Excel document that outlines the experience. The second is a fillable Word document that summarizes the activities of our Ball State students and any requirements on the part of school collaborating mentor teachers. Submissions of both must be made together and at least 10 business days prior to the start of the field experience.

Step#2 – Participating teacher candidates complete the prerequisite requirements listed on page two, which include both a national background check and EduRisk training, at least 10 business days prior the start of the field experience.

Step#3 – OTES-CP ensures we have a current affiliation agreement with the school corporation/ community partner and sends the request.

Step#4 – The school corporation/community partner approves or denies the request, and OTES-CP notifies the faculty member.

Teacher Candidate Prerequisite Requirements for all Field Experiences

- Students involved in clinical experiences for an initial teaching licensing program must have a current national background check completed prior to entering into the field experience. Ball State University has contracted with a specific vendor (Castlebranch) to provide this type of check. Students who have completed a check through another vendor must complete a new one through Castlebranch. Background checks are only valid per academic year (fall through the last day of summer session II). Click on the link below to access the national criminal background check website and follow the directions.
 - a. Link: <https://portal.castlebranch.com/BM84>
- Students must complete the video training "Protecting Children: Identifying and Reporting Sexual Misconduct" before placement requests will be processed. This training is valid during the years a student is attending Ball State University.
 - a. The training can be accessed via myballstate.bsu.edu, then "General Tools," "Edurisk Training" and finally searching for "Protecting Children: Identifying and Reporting Sexual Misconduct."

For Onsite Field Experiences

As a faculty member, you need to ensure all safety and entry procedures implemented by the school are well understood by your teacher candidates prior to day one of your field experience. Every school is different and most are providing their teachers with extensive professional development on procedures. Contact your mentoring classroom teachers, inquire about proper procedures, training and materials, and make them available to your candidates. For example, a school may require the candidate to submit a state-approved identification card to initiate a guest pass while in the school, similar to a volunteer or parent. Ball State is a member of the educational community and is committed to protecting its members and keeping them safe.

Teacher Candidates and Faculty - Maintain CONFIDENTIALITY regarding your personal life. You should set restrictions on any Facebook, -X, Instagram, Tik Tok, and/or personal websites. DO NOT share personal information with students in practicum settings, including your cell phone number and social media account information. Do NOT follow children (including secondary students) on social media such as Snapchat, YouTube, or through email. If you wish to recognize the great work of your teacher candidates and their students, contact the principal about the most appropriate way to showcase their efforts.

Faculty FAQs for Onsite Field Experiences

1. **Will Teachers College allow me to conduct onsite field experiences?**
 - a. Yes, if the school or community partner allows you to enter the building, you may consider onsite field experiences.

2. Can I secure my own field experiences?

- a. Yes, as long as you discuss them in advance with the OTES-CP office and complete the necessary two submission documents at least 10 business days in advance of day one.
- b. Please note, that several other Ball State faculty members may be scheduling with the same teacher within the same building. Speaking with the classroom teacher and having their approval does not guarantee a placement. The principal may have approved that teacher for another field experience separate from your own. Be sure to stay in good communication with the OTES-CP office.

3. Can I consider field experiences that are out-of-state?

- a. Yes, as long as we have an affiliation agreement with the school or partner on file. Coordinating this may take up to one month for our contract office and their legal team to sign the agreement. Please proceed with that timeframe in mind prior to requesting such placements.

For Online/Virtual Field Experiences

Faculty - When assigning activities that involve interaction with children online, you must choose a virtual platform that allows you to monitor that interaction in real time. Instructors must be able, and are required to, observe teacher candidates.

IMPORTANT - Teacher Candidates and Faculty - Maintain CONFIDENTIALITY regarding your personal life. You should set restrictions on any Facebook, X, Instagram, Tik Tok, and/or other personal websites. DO NOT share personal information with students in practicum settings, including your cell phone number, and social media account information. Do NOT follow children (including secondary students) on social media such as Snapchat, YouTube, or through email. If you wish to recognize the great work of your teacher candidates and their students, contact the principal about the most appropriate way to showcase their efforts.

Faculty FAQs for Online/Virtual Field Experiences

1. Will Teachers College allow me to conduct Online/Virtual field experiences?

- a. Yes, if the school or community partner will allow you to engage, you may proceed. However, our preference is for onsite field experiences. Please reach out to the classroom teacher(s) you plan to partner with while simultaneously informing the OTES-CP office. A regular formal request must still be made through the OTES-CP office using the same approved documents.

2. Do my teacher candidates need to complete a background check and EduRisk check?

- a. Yes, both are the same for onsite and online/virtual experiences to ensure the safety of children.

3. Can I consider an online/virtual field experience that is out-of-state?

- a. Yes, as long as we have an affiliation agreement with the school or partner on file. This may take up to one month for our contract office and their legal team to sign the

agreement. Please proceed with that timeframe in mind prior to requesting such placements.

4. Am I responsible for the monitoring of teacher candidate/student interaction while online?

- a. Yes, it is important to know that you are required to monitor teacher candidate/student interaction while conducting an online/virtual field experience. Prior to deciding on a platform to use for online/virtual field experiences, consult with the school classroom teacher and principal about this requirement and their suggestions for a safe environment.

The Beneficence Pledge – For All Faculty and Teacher Candidates

All participating faculty and teacher candidates, both for onsite and online/virtual experiences must commit to the Beneficence Pledge. By agreeing, you recognize that you are part of a community that maintains high standards of scholarship and excellence, practices academic honesty, acts in a socially responsible way, and values the intrinsic worth of every member of the community.

Additionally, for teacher candidates and faculty, by agreeing, you also recognize the importance of social media professional boundaries between educators and children and pledge to not break that trust by following appropriate guidelines.

Teacher candidates who violate this pledge are subject to both the Disposition Alert Process and the Criminal Background Process, which may result in disciplinary action or expulsion from the teacher preparation program.

Submitting a Field Experience Request through CORE

For the Fall 2025, CORE (replacing Tk-20) will only accept individual field experience requests. Individual requests indicate that only one student is attending onsite within a school. There are two choices when submitting an individual field experience.

- ☐ Preferably, the faculty member submits a “group” request on behalf of all students if you are to engage in the same school and/or with the same teacher. This typically occurs within a practicum.
- ☐ A faculty member can submit an “individual” request on behalf of a single teacher candidate. This may occur if you have several students in different school districts.
- ☐ The teacher candidate can submit an “individual” request on behalf of themselves. This might occur if the candidate is completing one observation or single event type experiences.

1. Navigate to myballstate.bsu.edu.
 - a. Type in your Ball State University username and password.
 - b. Scroll down to “General Tools” and select “CORE ELMS.”
2. Click Student Teaching/Field Experience Request
 - a. Click Add new Student Teaching/Field Experience Request
 - b. On the “Rotation Date” drop down, select the current semester (e.g., Fall 2025)
 - c. On the “Rotation Type” drop down, select Field Experience
 - d. Click “Continue.”
3. If you are requesting an individual field experience within Muncie Community Schools or Burris, please copy and paste the URL at the top of the form into your web browser. This link will direct you to the available schedules. Use the schedules to choose your preferred teacher, school, and time before completing the form.
4. Fill out all the required information. (Please note - All of the information must be completed in order for you to submit the form.)
5. Click “Save” if you would like to come back to the application form and finish filling it out at a later date.
6. After the form is completed, click “Submit.” DO NOT CLICK “SAVE.”
 - a. Once submitted, you are not able to make changes to the application form.