



**BALL STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

Office of Teacher Education  
Services and Clinical Practice

## The Student Teaching Placement Process Application Submission to Confirmation



**Designed for Future Student Teachers at Ball State**

The Office of Teacher Education Services and Clinical Practice

2025-26

# 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 exciting step in becoming a teacher. Therefore, the process and purpose behind every placement must be treated with the utmost care to ensure a successful environment for you.

## PROCESS OVERVIEW

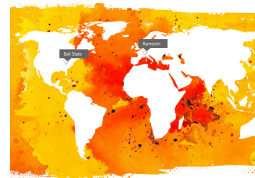
Once you submit your application to student teach, our office (OTES-CP) starts to work for you! We will send your application to approved schools through district approved pathways. This could be through a superintendent, HR director, or principal to name a few. They will preview each application and select those whom they believe are a good fit for their respective schools. 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 the following options:

- Indiana, including your home district
- Out-of-State to your home school district
- Aldine, Texas Partners
- Ramstein, Germany- Department of Defense Schools
- Quantico, Virginia - Department of Defense Schools
- The Teacher Residency (Open to ELED, ECYFS, and Dual SPCE Majors) – note this is a separate process from the student teaching application. Contact OTES-CP and your academic advisor for more information.
- In partnership with The IU Global Gateway Program



Each choice is discussed and presented in great detail during every student teaching application meeting.

## HOW IS A TEACHER AND SCHOOL CHOSEN?

Our goal for any placement is to ensure a positive, high-quality learning experience guided by an approved mentor teacher who welcomes teacher candidates into the profession with purpose and intentionality. While many factors contribute to a successful student teaching experience, including content knowledge, professional dispositions, and prior performance, the mentor teacher is a critical component of that success.

Mentor teachers are assigned to guide, counsel, and collaborate with student teachers as they develop their instructional skills, professional judgment, and reflective practice. To support this work, we partner closely with school administrators to identify strong mentor teachers and provide specific training for them to ensure a successful experience for each student teacher.



Mentor teachers who collaborate in the placement of student teachers or teacher residents must meet specific criteria. For placements in Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education, and Special Education, mentor teachers must be trained in the Science of Reading. P-12 principals are asked to confirm this training as part of the approval contract prior to placement.

In addition, mentor teachers must:

- Have a minimum of three (3) years of teaching experience; recommended by their school administration, evaluated as effective or highly effective or equivalent, be principal approved and confirmed as having the **Mentoring Mindset**.

### **The Mentoring Mindset**

Beyond formal qualifications, mentor teachers are selected based on their demonstration of a strong mentoring mindset.

- Demonstrate a positive impact on the student teacher's growth, development, and engagement.
- Ask thoughtful questions rather than making assumptions.
- Accept the challenge of mentorship by intentionally getting to know the student teacher.
- Share responsibility for planning, instruction, and assessment, gradually increasing the student teacher's role through a co-teaching model.
- Provide regular informal and formal feedback, including praise and constructive criticism, and submit required assessments in a timely manner.
- Allow student teachers to learn from mistakes and improve through reflection and support.
- Foster a classroom climate where student teachers feel safe taking instructional risks and thoughtfully applying theory to practice.
- Set aside consistent time for co-planning, evaluation, and conferencing.
- Maintain open communication with the university supervisor, sharing both successes and concerns.
- Exhibit a genuine love for the profession and a commitment to nurturing future educators.
- Engage with Ball State by providing feedback on university supervisors and teacher candidates.





Our own 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.”<sup>1</sup> As a result, we have developed important relationships with key schools to ensure this takes place.

**The Science of Reading:** Mentor classroom teachers, who collaborate on the placement of early field candidates, student teachers, or teacher residents, must be trained in the Science of Reading for Elementary, Early Childhood, and Special Education content areas. Ball State will ask P-12 principals to confirm science of reading training within the approval contract for each level of field experience prior to the onsite placement of our teacher candidates.

### **HOW IS A TEACHER AND SCHOOL CHOSEN IF I WANT TO GO OUT-OF-STATE?**

Our goal for any placement is for it to have purpose and intentionality, just as an in-state placement. Once your home district is contacted, we deploy the same process to secure a mentor teacher as though they are in Indiana.

As a reminder, any placement outside of 75 miles around Ball State is virtually supervised. There are no on-site visits made by the university supervisor.



### **What is the process to apply for an out-of-state home school site for student teaching?**

1. The student is required to provide OTES-CP with the specific school contact information to initiate the placement process and official approval (this is submitted in a completed student teaching application during the scheduled application window). Late applicants will not be considered for an out-of-state placement.
  - a. The scheduled open window occurs early in the fall semester (typically September and October)
2. OTES-CP will contact the school and district to verify eligibility.
  - a. In general, eligibility is defined as:
    - i. Accredited
    - ii. Meeting mentor teacher qualifications, including the science of reading for appropriate content areas.
    - iii. A signed affiliation agreement
3. Based on the school’s ability to meet the Indiana Department of Education statute, and Ball State guidelines, a decision will be made to process this request by OTES-CP, or seek another placement, if denied.
4. **OTES-CP reserves the right to determine the feasibility to continue out-of-state placements with an initial rejection of placement by the submitted school district. For example, if the submitted placement district denies a student application, it may be the case that the student needs to student teach in Indiana, due to the need to find a quick placement.**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://secure.caepnet.org/standards/2022-itp/standard-2>



### IF I INTERVIEW WITH A SCHOOL, AM I AUTOMATICALLY PLACED THERE?

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?

Yes!



### HOW FAR MIGHT I HAVE TO TRAVEL?

We are dedicated 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 it is difficult to secure a placement. For example, not all school districts have Latin Education. You will be limited in what schools meet both the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and Ball State criteria for mentorship. For example, if you were to live in Indianapolis, Ball State will work hard to place you at a school that is 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 BALL STATE HELP ME FIND HOUSING?

The university does not provide housing during your student teaching experience. You are free to make the choice on where to live, as you have done throughout your undergraduate years. Placements are made based on the living location submitted within the student teaching application. Please do not submit “not applicable, or multiple locations” when completing the location portion of the application.



### WHAT IF I DON'T HEAR BACK ABOUT MY PLACEMENT RIGHT AWAY?

This is normal, as all student teaching placements are communicated to all students at the same time. For the fall semester, placements are communicated to students near April 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. For spring semester, placements are communicated to students near October 15<sup>th</sup>. Updates are provided at orientation as necessary. Of course, if you are ever concerned, please reach out to our office, and we can do our best to directly communicate.

We highly encourage school districts to interview our students prior to agreeing to place a candidate. Keep in mind that this process is a collaborative effort, and we are usually waiting on the school to verify a placement. 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. If 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 4 periods a day, or there may be a part-time teacher who splits their time between two content areas), it may be difficult to secure an appropriate placement inside of a small radius.

DON'T PANIC! OTES-CP keeps in regular communication with school districts and candidates on the progress of their placement.

### **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 students), 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 Executive Director of The Office of Teacher Education Services and Clinical Practice (OTES-CP) 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 confirmed, then 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. 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 certain criteria to become a qualified and successful mentor teacher. If you have concerns, please set up an appointment with the Executive Director of OTES-CP to discuss your situation.



## 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.

