



**BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY**

**Office of Teacher Education
Services and Clinical Practice**

What is the Student Teaching Placement Process?

How an application goes from submission to
confirmation.

Designed for Future Student Teachers at Ball State

The Office of Teacher Education Services and Clinical Practice

2023-24

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 the process of 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.

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 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 Urban Semester Collaboration (Open to ELED and ECFYS majors ONLY)
- The IU Global Gateway Program Native American Navajo Reservation

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

How is a school and teacher chosen if I want to student teach in 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 important component of the student teaching triad, assigned to guide, counsel, and help you make the transition from theory to practice. We work with schools and administrators to seek the best mentor teachers, and we provide specific training for them to help ensure a successful experience for each student teacher.

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.” As a result, we have developed important 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. For a list, please visit the OTES-CP website.

How are a school and teacher chosen if I want to student teach out-of-state, not in an already approved district?

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 other than in the approved districts listed on page two?

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 affidavit during the scheduled application window). **Late applicants will not be considered for an out-of-state placement.**
 - a. Scheduled open windows occur early in each semester, typically August/September and January/February.
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
 - 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.**

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 district?

Yes!

How far might have I have to travel?

In addition to our commitment to work at placing students first in a PDS or Partner school, 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 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 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 15th of each year. For spring semester, placements are communicated to students near October 15th. 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 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. Whether you like or dislike a placement, this will be a learning opportunity for you. 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 good mentor teacher. If you have concerns, please set up an appointment with the 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.