



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Boise State University Teacher Education Mentor Handbook

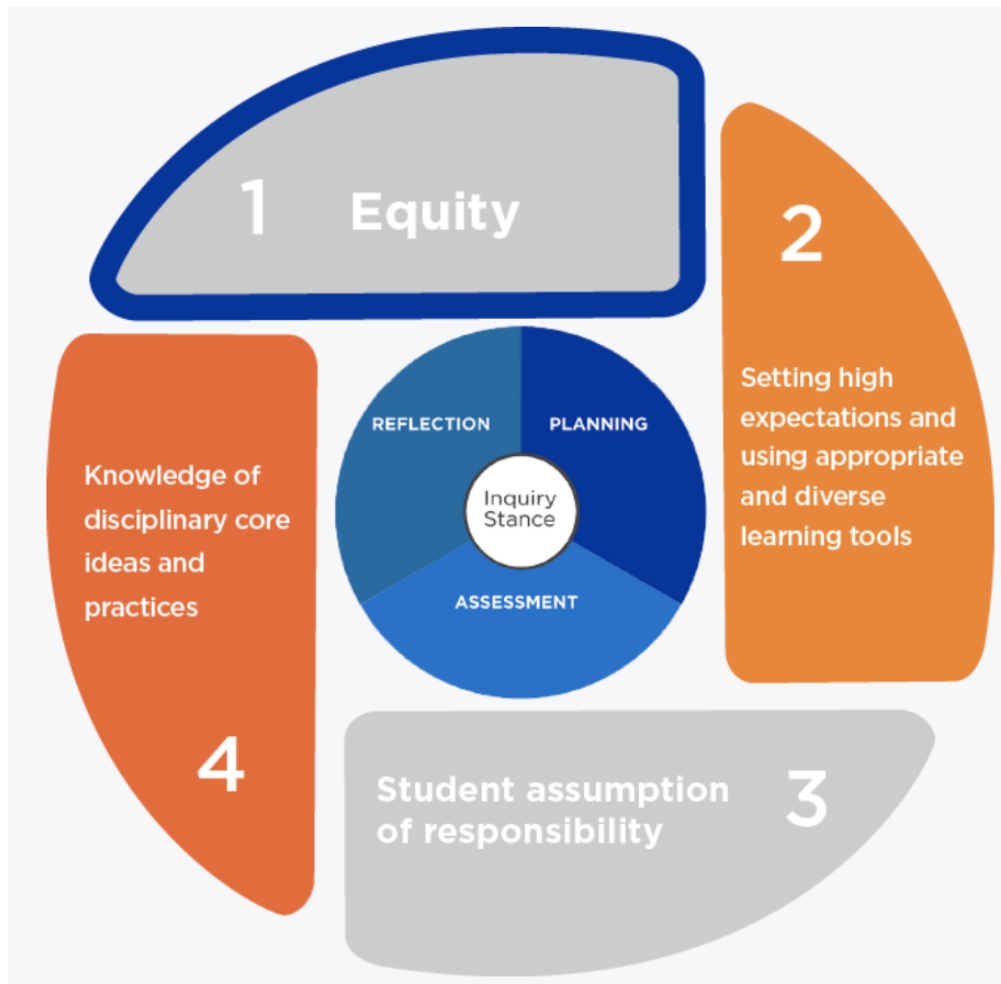


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Welcome to being a mentor!

WHAT IS A MENTOR?

A mentor is a Pre-K-12 teacher who accepts the responsibility to help prepare Boise State students in Pre-K-12 settings to become certificated teachers. A mentor serves as a trusted advisor and teacher. As a mentor you will advise the Boise State student in your classroom in their apprenticeship into the teaching profession. This is an awesome task, one from which both parties in the relationship benefit.

[This video provides an Introduction to Mentoring.](#)

DEFINITIONS:

Liaison: A university faculty member who is not only a supervisor but also accepts the responsibility to develop an extensive, collaborative partnership with a particular educational institution, to coordinate the activities between the mentor(s) and the candidate(s) and to assess the candidate based upon the Idaho Professional Teacher Standards and the Danielson (2013) *Framework for Teaching*.

Candidate: A university student who has been accepted into a Boise State teacher education program.

Professional Year: The two semesters in which candidates spend a major portion of their time in a Pre-K-12 setting. This includes the internship and student teaching semesters.

Intern: A teacher candidate who works in a Pre-K-12 educational institution prior to the student teaching semester as a part of their preparation to become a certified teacher. This candidate works in the partner school approximately one to four days a week, depending on the program. Candidates are also enrolled in university coursework. They should be approximating practice, leading small-group and whole-group lessons and co-planning and teaching with mentor feedback and guidance.

Student Teacher: A candidate who is in the final semester of their program. This candidate is at the partner school full time, M-F. During the student teaching semester, the candidate is expected to ease into the teaching role, eventually taking over, full time in the classroom, for 6-10 weeks. Student teachers complete a Standard Performance Assessment where they plan and implement instruction and conduct analyses of student work in order to gain insights into the complexity of teaching and responding to student needs in real time.

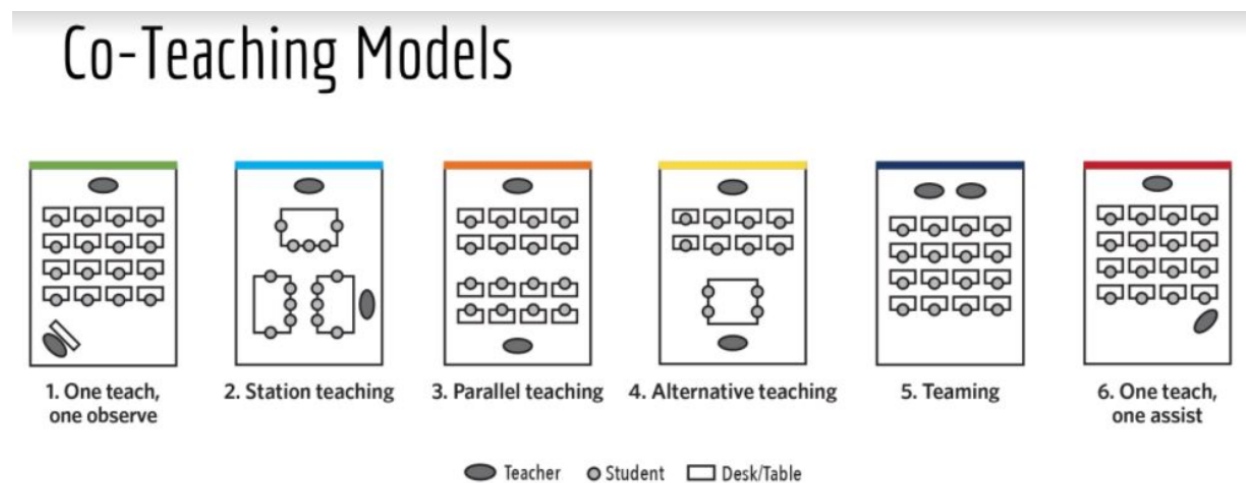
***Elementary candidates split their time between two classrooms (primary and intermediate classrooms), switching at the quarter or at mid-year. They also may need a content area placement for their selected middle level endorsement.**

Danielson Framework for Teaching: A framework for quality teaching and the assessment model adopted by the state of Idaho. All teacher candidates in the state are assessed via a common summative assessment (see Field Guide).

Co-Teaching Model: A model where two professionals share space and work collaboratively to best meet Pre-K-12 student needs while both grow and develop in their professional practice.

WHAT is Co-Teaching?

Unlike traditional models of student teaching, those involving mentors require a different vision of teacher candidates in the classroom. Instead of the student intern/teacher stepping into the classroom while the teacher leaves, mentors maintain a visible role for the duration of the student intern/teacher's experience. Co-teaching is two teachers working together with groups of students and sharing the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction and physical space (St. Cloud State University, 2003). Co-teaching includes **Team Teaching**, **Parallel teaching** and **Alternative** or **Supplemental teaching**.



Team Teaching: The rationale behind this practice is that it provides an opportunity for the teacher candidate to learn and become adept at the use of instructional routines and practices a mentor may use. This approach should be employed during the first semester of the Professional Year and in any/all of the classroom placements. In this approach, mentors and teacher candidates share in the planning process with mentors taking the “lead” to demonstrate how plans are determined, tasks are selected, groups are formed, etc. Mentors and candidates teach the same thing at the same time; there should be opportunities for the candidate to observe instructional practices used and how they are implemented, and there should be opportunities for the candidate to attempt to implement a variety of instructional strategies. Again, this is a time of apprenticeship into routine, practice of instructional strategies and techniques, and observation so that candidates will be able to assume these activities more independently during their student teaching semester.

Parallel Teaching: Parallel teaching is when the class is split and educators instruct different groups. Examples of Parallel Teaching include:

- “one teach, one observe” where one teacher teaches while the other collects purposeful data.
- “one teach, one assist” where one teacher provides assistance to individual students.
- “station teaching” where educators teach in different small groups.

Alternative or Supplemental Teaching: Alternative teaching is when one teacher

works with students while other teachers work with those who need a different pace or approach. Supplemental teaching includes “alternative/differentiated teaching” where a small number of students are selected for intense instruction by one educator and “team teaching” where both educators instruct the class together.

Alternative teaching can be effective for differentiating instruction: The arrangement of classrooms should be such that the needs of Pre-K-12 students requiring additional support are being best met. This potentially means that those individuals within the classroom requiring the most support are receiving intervention (tier 2) instruction from the mentor in a small group or individually, while candidates assume responsibility for teaching the majority of the class (i.e., mentors provide the intervention for Pre-K-12 students in most need).

EXPECTATIONS OF A MENTOR

In addition to acting as a resource for planning and lesson ideas, a guide for classroom management and routines, and a general sounding board, as a mentor you have five (5) major responsibilities:

1. **Creating a Dialogue.** Perhaps the easiest and most efficient way to do this is through the use of dialogue journals (i.e., physical or digital written communication). Candidates will be encouraged to create such with each mentor teacher. It is recommended that candidates and mentor teachers correspond in the journal 2-3 times per week. Candidates and mentors can use this to communicate about students, lessons observed, questions and other needs. Consistent verbal and written feedback are encouraged at regular intervals.
2. **Observation of Instruction.** Each week mentors should observe candidates at least once in each of the content areas for which they have assumed some responsibilities (i.e., initially this may be only one content area but will progress to include all endorsement areas) and provide informal feedback.
3. **Formal Evaluations of Instruction.** At least twice each semester, the liaison and mentor will take part in a formative observation of candidate instruction. These observations include planning, observation and post-conferences. A formal midterm and final observation assessment conference are also required each semester.
4. **Mentor Meetings.** Periodically, meetings may be held after school or before school for mentors and/or candidates. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss progress, share participant needs and clarify expectations. Meetings will vary from semester to semester and with each school.
5. **Professional Year Assessment.** Mentors will be asked to complete, either online or in hard copy, an evaluation of the candidate according to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Candidates will be asked to self-assess using the same forms, and mentors will be asked to share and discuss these with candidates.

Additionally, liaisons will visit schools on a weekly to bi-weekly basis to provide support to both mentors and candidates. Feel free to contact your liaison at any time via email or phone. They are there to support you.

If you have questions or concerns about the program please contact the Assistant/ Associate Dean of Teacher Education, Dr. Sherry Dismuke at cheryledismuke@boisestate.edu.

A calendar of activities and meetings for candidates is developed for each semester. This calendar should serve as a guide for what mentors may choose to have candidates do in the classroom.

There will be monthly in-person seminars with the candidates on campus. Candidates will be excused from their placements on these days. Mentors are always welcome to attend, to suggest topics, etc.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Conceptual Framework

Boise State University's conceptual framework, "The Professional Educator," establishes a shared vision in preparing educators to work effectively in Pre-K-12 schools. It provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, scholarship, service and accountability.

The Professional Educator

Boise State University strives to develop knowledgeable educators who integrate complex roles and dispositions in the service of diverse communities of learners. Believing that all children, adolescents, and adults can learn, educators dedicate themselves to supporting that learning. Using effective approaches that promote high levels of student achievement, educators create environments that prepare learners to be citizens who contribute to a complex world. Educators serve learners as reflective practitioners, scholars and artists, problem solvers and partners.

Idaho Core Teaching Standards

The foundation of Boise State Teacher Education programs is Idaho's Core Teacher Standards that describe the expectations for initial preparation of teachers and are based on national standards for the preparation of teachers. We adhere to these standards in the design and delivery of teacher education programs that will prepare highly effective teachers.

The assessment of student performance and program effectiveness is based on The Idaho Core Teacher Standards and their associated indicators of accomplishment. The "Idaho Core Teacher Standards" apply to **ALL** teacher certification areas. These are the 10 basic standards all teachers must know and be able to do, regardless of their specific content areas. The standards are:

Standard #1: Learner Development. The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

Standard #2: Learning Differences. The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

Standard #3: Learning Environments. The teacher works with others to create

environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

Standard #4: Content Knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) they teach, and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

Standard #5: Application of Content. The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

Standard #6: Assessment. The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

Standard #7: Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

Standard #8: Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate their practice, particularly the effects of their choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

EXPECTATIONS OF TEACHER CANDIDATES

INTERNS

Interns are required to work one to four days a week in schools. **They will follow the School District calendar** until the winter or summer break. Interns will complete all university requirements and should have a wide range of experiences. These should include:

- Teaching lessons in small and large group settings
- Observations
- One-on-one instruction
- Attending parent meetings
- Attending faculty, administrative team, and other meetings
- Planning daily activities
- Communicating with parents, students, and other faculty members
- SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS (see [Field Guide](#)):
 - Expectations Continuum (Appendix A, Mentor completes also)
 - Four Observation Cycles (Appendix B, Mentor Involved)

- Video and Video Reflection
- Professional Year Assessment (Appendix E, Mentor Involved TWICE per semester, at midterm and semester's end)
- Individual Professional Learning Plan (Appendix F, Candidates will need guidance) TWICE per semester

STUDENT TEACHERS

Student Teachers are required to work full time, five days a week, in schools. They will follow the school district calendar until formal graduation from Boise State University. Along with regular classroom teaching expectations **and those listed above**, those requirements include:

- Attendance at workshops, inservices, and professional development
- Preparation for and participation in Parent Teacher Conferences
- Observations of other classes/schools
- Participation in extracurricular activities
- SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS (as per the *Field Guide*):
 - Expectations Continuum (Appendix A, Mentor Involved)
 - Four Observation Cycles (Appendix B, Mentor Involved)
 - Video and Video Reflection
 - S-PAT
 - Professional Year Assessment (Appendix E, Mentor Involved TWICE per semester, at midterm and semester's end)
 - Individual Professional Learning Plan (Appendix F, Candidates will need guidance) TWICE per semester

EXPECTATIONS/ACTIVITIES FOR COLLABORATIVE TEACHING

(This list is suggestive, not exhaustive, nor required.)

FIRST SEMESTER PROFESSIONAL YEAR (*Internship*)

First Month:

- Getting to know students' names
- Send a letter home to parents introducing yourself
- Observation of opening and closing of day
- Observation of the establishment of routines and classroom community
- Participate in planning/collaboration
- Observation of classroom management techniques
- Observation of the subtleties of lesson "delivery"
 - What are the learning outcomes?
 - How are they met?
 - How are they assessed?
- Lead some small groups
- Take on (some) transitions (to specials, lunch, recess, etc. in elementary)
- Develop an inquiry question
- Follow a lesson plan developed by your mentor teacher
- Learn to use different technology in the classroom
- Co-planning and co-teaching (including micro-teaching)
- First formal observation

Second Month:

(everything from last month, and. . .)

- Assume some consistent roles in the classroom (opening, closing, small group, etc.)
- Second formal observation
- Expand experience in content areas or class periods to include more than one or two area/periods
- Observe more closely how your mentor and the school communicate with parents
- Engage in inquiry
- Begin to develop your own lesson plans
- Collaborative assessment of student learning
- Mid-term Conference

Third Month:

(everything from previous months, and. . .)

- Gain experience working with students in all content areas/class periods
- Assume more consistent roles in classroom
- Focus on assessment and play a more active role in student assessment
- Third formal observation
- Engage in inquiry

Fourth Month: *(everything from previous months, and. . .)*

- Develop your own lesson plans
- Wrap up inquiry project
- Fourth formal observation
- Final Professional Year Assessment Conference (including support of IPLP)

Fifth Month: (STUDENT TEACHING SEMESTER BEGINS) *(everything from previous months, and. . .)*

- Get to know students' names (if in new classroom)
- Send a letter home to parents introducing yourself (if in new classroom)
- Observation of opening and closing of day (if in new classroom)
- Observation of reestablishment of routines and procedures
- Assume some consistent roles in the classroom (opening, closing, small group, etc.)
- First formal observation
- Begin to develop your own lesson and unit plans
- Observe and participate in grading and report card process
- Discuss unit topic for S-PAT

Sixth Month:

(everything from previous months, and. . .)

- Focus on differentiating instruction and planning for such
- Begin to take the lead on planning and instruction in some content areas/class periods (remembering that you are co-teaching)
- Assume more consistent roles in classroom
- Second formal observation
- Submit S-PAT unit template to liaison/Begin teaching, if applicable

Seventh Month:

(everything from previous months, and. . .)

- Increase the content areas/periods that you are leading planning and instruction
- Third formal observation
- Teach S-PAT

- Work on resume
- Refocus on your role in assessment and communication of assessment

Eighth Month:

(everything from previous months, and. . .)

- Take lead in most areas of classroom instruction and management
- Implement S-PAT, if you didn't in the 6th or 7th month!
- Final formal observation
- Begin to transition lead back to mentor teacher

Ninth Month:

(everything from previous months, and. . .)

- Final Professional Year Assessment Conference (including support of IPLP)
- Prepare to Graduate

**Thanks for agreeing to be a
mentor teacher!**