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## Cooperating Teacher Responsibilities

Cooperating teachers have three primary responsibilities to their student teachers: (1) serve as role models/mentors, (2) share expertise and experience, and (3) encourage the developing professional to reflect on the educational process. We encourage you to support student teachers in exploring and applying a variety of instructional strategies as they develop their own teaching style. Student teachers should take initiative in planning and designing lessons, using the student teaching experience as a time for experimentation and growth. Your role in this process includes guiding them in this direction, offering and modeling alternative teaching techniques, and sharing ideas and resources—while allowing them the freedom to establish their unique instructional approach without imposing a single method.

Define the student teacher's role in terms of their duties and responsibilities. To accomplish this, the cooperating teacher should:

- o Provide opportunities for the student teacher to observe the kinds of methods that are appropriate to the teaching profession.
- o Ensure adequate instructional continuity, class contact, and supervision of the student teacher.
- o Create an accepting atmosphere of the student teacher among the students, staff and community.
- o Help the student teacher develop a professional attitude when in contact with the school and community.
- o Clarify the student teacher's responsibilities with respect to writing lesson plans, securing and organizing appropriate materials and other necessary activities. Provide guidance in the preparation of lesson plans and feedback after the plans are completed.
- o Become familiar with the Nebraska Department of Education's Clinical Practice Evaluation Rubric and Evidence Charts for student teachers.
- o Ensure that the student teachers transition into active teaching proceeds at an appropriate pace consistent with the Phase 1 suggestion. Student teachers should gradually assume responsibility of the entire teaching load for most of the student teaching semester, i.e. preparing and teaching lessons, grading, school-time duties, faculty meetings
- o Make certain that the student teacher has planned adequately before being permitted to teach.
- o Observe the student teacher's instruction on a regular basis and give specific feedback.
- o Conduct regularly scheduled conferences to keep the student teacher informed of their progress, make suggestions and provide constructive criticism as necessary. Encourage the student teacher to engage in self-reflection.
- o Allow the student teacher to use the teaching style that best fits his/her individual strengths and is consistent with the culture of the school environment and expectations of the school district.
- o Complete a formative evaluation (mid semester) of the student teacher, if asked by the university supervisor to do so.
- o Participate in a summative evaluation (final) of the student teacher in collaboration with the university supervisor. Discuss the evaluation as a student teaching team.
- o Ensure the student teacher understands the importance of confidentiality of records and student information.
- o Participate in open, honest communication with the student teacher and university supervisor.
- o Communicate immediately with the university supervisor and/or The Director of Field Experiences if there are serious concerns about the performance of the student teacher.