

ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION



TEACHER CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

2025-2026

St. Thomas University is located on the traditional territory of the Wolastoqiyik, Wəlastəkewiyik / Maliseet, whose ancestors along with the Mi'Kmaq / Mi'kmaw and Passamaquoddy / Peskotomuhkati Tribes / Nations signed Peace and Friendship Treaties with the British Crown in the 1700s.

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INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the faculty and staff in the School of Education (SOE) at St. Thomas University, welcome to the Bachelor of Education program! Our goal is to provide a collaborative, cooperative, and authentic learning environment that will prepare you for the challenges of a career as an educator. As teachers, we are constantly called upon to demonstrate flexibility and adaptability as we seek creative and compassionate lessons for the multiple needs of learners in our care.

This Handbook describes the requirements and expectations of the STU Education Program. The SOE handbook is a supplement to the St. Thomas University Academic Calendar and contains academic procedures and regulations relevant to the Bachelor of Education and the New Brunswick Office of Teacher Certification.

The first expectation of the program is that you will familiarize yourself with all information, policies, procedures, and regulations listed in the St. Thomas University Calendar as well as those outlined in this Handbook so that we may work together effectively as you progress throughout the year. You are always welcome to contact me or the Administrative Coordinator should you have any questions.

In the School of Education, we are committed to preparing teacher candidates to enter the teaching profession. The program's standards are high to ensure that you meet the competencies of your chosen profession and are ready for a full-time teaching position. These standards are determined by the certification requirements of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Teacher Certification Branch.

As a professional program, our course requirements emphasize the essential knowledge and skills needed for teaching. These are interesting times for education, and teachers are facing new challenges and opportunities. Our dedicated team of educators is looking forward to the opportunity to participate in your journey to becoming a professional educator and certified teacher. We are all teachers here at the School of Education, and we love what we do at STU!

Dr. Grant Williams (he/him/his)
Associate Professor & Director
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School of Education, St. Thomas University

TERMINOLOGY

Coordinator of Field Placements – The person responsible for working with school districts to secure field placements and coordinating the practicum experience with a team of University Supervisors.

Field Placement: A public-school setting which provides teacher candidates the opportunity to integrate the knowledge learned in their course work and develop effective teaching skills.

Mentor Teacher: A public school teacher who voluntarily accepts a teacher candidate into their classroom.

Practicum: Time spent in a school setting during which a teacher candidate practices teaching skills that have been learned in their B.Ed. course work.

Teacher Candidate: St. Thomas University student enrolled in an education program leading to licensure as a teacher in New Brunswick.

Teacher Certification Branch: The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) branch that licenses and certifies teachers who successfully complete an education program in New Brunswick - http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/contacts/dept_renderer.151.2463.11563.html

University Supervisor: A member of the School of Education staff who supervises teacher candidates during their practicum under the direction of the Coordinator of Field Placements.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Although University faculty and staff are available for assistance, you are ultimately responsible for knowing and fulfilling the requirements for your degree and teacher certification, including the selection of appropriate courses and the maintaining of a minimum of 2.7 Grade Point Average.

While we will make every effort to provide both written information and assistance regarding your academic concerns, you must take an active part in planning your program and taking care of your academic responsibilities.

Here are a few helpful hints:

- Carefully read all information you have received since your admission to the School of Education. Study the contents of this handbook and keep it handy for quick reference throughout your program. When questions arise, review the appropriate section for instructions. If you have additional questions, please feel free to ask for clarification.
- You are responsible for completing the program outlined for you upon admission to the School of Education. Any course changes from the standard program, that are not requested through the SOE and authorized by the Director of the School of Education, will not be honored towards graduation or teacher certification. Therefore, it is important to follow the procedures and deadlines established for dropping and adding courses, as well as the submission of applications for field placement, graduation, and certification. See the section below on Course Change & Add and Drop Information
- Timely and courteous communication is a professional expectation. Keep up with your STU email concerning program changes and required activities. Ensure that your STU email inbox is regularly cleaned out so that you do not exceed your limit, which typically leads to emails bouncing back to the sender. Check your junk, trash, and other folders regularly to ensure you have not missed any correspondence. Communications may also be shared via Microsoft Teams and other digital platforms as the need arises. You are expected to respond promptly (within 24 hours) and professionally on all platforms.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

The St. Thomas University Education Program fulfills the requirements of the Certification Branch of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for the Province of New Brunswick. Those requirements are a 120-credit hour undergraduate degree, a Bachelor of Education program of 45 credit hours of courses and 15 weeks (15 credit hours) of teaching practicum experience.

On successful completion of the Bachelor of Education degree, all teacher candidates are eligible to apply for New Brunswick Teacher Certification. B.Ed. graduates with previous bachelor's degrees are eligible for Level V, and those with previous master's or doctoral degrees are eligible for Level VI certification. The New Brunswick Office of Teacher Certification determines your major and minor subject area(s) according to the provincially mandated teachable requirements (see St. Thomas website under [Education/Required Teachables](#)). In addition, teacher candidates who successfully complete the Elementary Education stream will be granted a major in this area. Everyone who successfully completes the program is eligible to apply for certification to teach K-12 in New Brunswick.

All New Brunswick's university education programs have a formal agreement with the provincial Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to prepare teachers for certification. Once certified in New Brunswick, you may apply for certification in other Canadian or international jurisdictions. While there is a pan-Canadian agreement on the transferability of teacher certification, each province or territory has slightly different requirements and processes for level of certification, so please check with the appropriate provincial certification branch for specifics as early as possible before selecting courses.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Goals & Principles

The St. Thomas University B.Ed. program places importance on the individual professional development of teacher candidates as reflective and responsive teaching professionals. The program is constructivist in nature, focusing on learning through experience, placing teacher candidates in a variety of teaching/learning scenarios in the classroom and beyond.

To fulfil its unique mission, the School has specific goals in addition to those of the university:

- to integrate theory and practice in all courses offered
- to create learning communities among colleagues and with faculty
- to prepare teacher candidates for their professional role in the classroom
- to encourage teacher candidates' development as reflective practitioners who recognize that not all learning happens in classrooms
- to actively engage in services outside the Bachelor of Education Program in research, program development, and outreach service to the community.

The primary principles governing the B.Ed. curriculum facilitate professional development of the teacher candidate by:

- developing a culture that promotes professional collaboration,
- encouraging reflection on and in practice,
- developing the leadership capacity necessary for public school life,
- developing current subject-based methods and strategies for instruction,
- encouraging cross-disciplinary approaches to teaching and learning,
- supporting teacher candidates in the development of inclusionary teaching approaches,
- supporting teacher candidates in the effective use of technology-based instruction and resources
- providing foundational courses to prepare teacher candidates for the profession,
- offering a variety of elective courses for teacher candidate specialization,
- providing teacher candidates with a minimum of 15-weeks of practicum, and
- including intensive supervisory support as a component of the practicum.

Program Description

The program provides the equivalent of two full academic years (60 credit hours) of courses and teaching practicum. With approval from the Director of the School of Education, in consultation with faculty, a candidate may request their course load be extended to 63 credit hours. The program is scheduled within an 11-month period (late August to early July), thus enabling teacher candidates to qualify for a New Brunswick teaching certificate within one year.

Term 1: September/October

The focus of the first academic term is to prepare you as a teacher candidate for your role as a public-school teacher. The course work consists of a) required core foundational courses whose content is applicable to all subject areas, b) methods courses introducing teaching theory and practice specific to academic disciplines, and c) elective courses. You are expected to establish professional working relationships with other teacher candidates as you collaborate on numerous projects and assignments in both large and small groups. Beginning in your first term, you are making the transition from student to teacher by adopting personal responsibility for full attendance, punctuality, professional interactions and attire, and high standards of work. To further your preparation for the practicum, you will practice your teaching skills in both large and small group settings. The highly collaborative nature of this work provides you with the opportunity for meaningful exchanges of ideas within the support of a cohesive learning community.

Field Placement 1: November/December

Direct responsibility for the field placements lies with the Coordinator of Field Placements. Each teacher candidate will be assigned a school and grade level for their practicum. You will begin by first observing your mentor teacher(s) at work; then, as the practicum progresses, you will assume more of the teaching responsibilities. The mentor teacher provides you with daily support, discussing teaching matters and providing feedback. The university supervisor will contact you every week to provide additional feedback and confer with the mentor teacher to support your professional growth. Both the mentor teacher and university supervisor provide midpoint and final assessments for the practicum.

Term 2: January/February

Teacher candidates return to coursework for a second term of core, methods, and elective courses to continue building upon the learning experiences afforded by the first field placement. Reflection *in* and *on* practice increases as you begin to plan for your second placement.

Field Placement 2: March-May

For the second field placement, teacher candidates are typically assigned to a different setting to provide a broader understanding of teaching within the public school system. Teaching in a different setting allows you to become familiar with more curricular content and broaden your

range of teaching strategies and skills. Subject to availability, teacher candidates will be placed in different grade levels for the second field placement. You are likely to assume full-time teaching responsibilities earlier in the second placement than you did in the first.

Term 3: May/June

The third academic term builds on both foundational and curricular courses, as well as practical experience. It offers you the opportunity to deepen your understanding of key areas in education while also exploring specialty topics that support your professional growth and enhance your future employability.

SECTION 1: ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS, PROCEDURES, AND POLICIES

Academic excellence is both expected and required in the School of Education. The requirements for the B.Ed. degree may be higher than the minimums required for continuation in other programs at the university, as teacher candidates must also meet the requirements for certification as a teacher in the province of New Brunswick.

The regulations listed in this Handbook will automatically supersede requirements listed in the St. Thomas University Academic Calendar.

REQUIREMENTS

Orientation

Full participation in both days of Orientation, in August, is mandatory. Orientation will take place on the last Wednesday and Thursday of August. These are the first official days of the program, and teacher candidates are expected to attend between the hours of **8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.** During Orientation teacher candidates will have an opportunity to get to know their colleagues and professors and become familiar with program requirements and expectations.

Vulnerable Sector/Criminal Record Check

Teacher candidates must provide their original Vulnerable Sector/Criminal Record Check to the Administrative Coordinator no later than the first day of Orientation. This document must be recent and valid for at least the full year of the program. Failure to do so may jeopardize their placement in the program.

Completion of a Vulnerable Sector/Criminal Record Check is mandatory for all teacher candidates. The Vulnerable Sector/Criminal Record Check is a requirement of all school districts prior to field placements and teaching practicums. **Teacher candidates are expected to keep a copy of this documentation. The School of Education must have the original Vulnerable Sector/Criminal Record Check on file.**

Program Material

As per the supplementary fees memo, teacher candidates may be required to cover additional costs for program material.

Teacher candidates will also receive information regarding technology requirements to support their progress in the program. Teacher candidates must have adequate computer/internet/webcam/mic access for the program. The School of Education and/or their field placement schools will not provide this equipment. Teacher candidates are expected to make their own arrangements according to the information sent to them.

French Second Language Stream

Teacher candidates accepted into the French stream of the Bachelor of Education program **must submit evidence of a New Brunswick French Proficiency Test taken within the last two years.** This is required for a field placement in a French language classroom. A French proficiency level of *Advanced* is required for a field placement in the Intensive French Program. For a field placement in French Immersion an *Advanced Plus* Level is required. Questions regarding French Proficiency can be directed to the Coordinator of Field Placements.

Professional Dress

It is expected that teacher candidates dress professionally for classes and field placement. This expectation remains consistent across all learning environments (including virtual events). **During academic terms, Monday is Professional Dress Day with the expectation for dress being increased to its highest standard.** Teacher candidates are required to dress as they would for an interview. This is the type of wardrobe required to satisfy the professional dress code in schools:

“Fashion and social acceptance of attire changes with generations, however, it is important that your attire be neat and clearly distinct from your students. This will contribute to your status of professional in the classroom and your students and parents will see you as such.”
(NBTA Teachers Handbook, p.9)

Professional dress during practicum is expected every day. Professional clothing items may include:

- dress pants/skirts,
- collared shirts/blouses,
- blazer/sports jacket,
- cardigans/sweaters, and
- comfortable closed-toe shoes.

Please ensure that clothing is not only professional but also practical for a busy and active work environment.

Professional Learning Sessions

Teacher candidates are required to attend course-related professional learning (PL) sessions typically held on Fridays. A schedule will be provided.

Completion of Assignments

Teacher candidates are required to have all assignments submitted and completed to a acceptable standard, determined by the course instructor, by the last day of each Bachelor of Education academic term. ***Failure to do so will delay the start of practicum and may jeopardize professional certification and potentially continuation in the B.Ed. program.***

PROCEDURES

Course Registration

Based on their letter of acceptance, teacher candidates have been registered for their compulsory and major teachable courses. Teacher candidates are not to make changes to their assigned courses as these are required by the Department of Education for teacher certification in the Province of New Brunswick.

- Teacher candidates are required to take all Core Courses (School Law, Teacher Ethics and Professional Conduct, Classroom Management, Exceptionalities and Differentiation, Integrating Technology in the Classroom, Assessment and Evaluation, Indigenous Education and Reconciliation) and Preparation for Practice.
- All middle/secondary teacher candidates are required to take a minimum of four (4) methods courses: Middle School Literacy and Language Arts plus three other Method courses in teachable subjects (i.e., mathematics, sciences, social studies, history, literacy/language arts, visual arts, music, physical education, French second language). Enrollment in these methods courses is based on students' teachable areas and additional considerations. It is highly recommended that at least two methods courses be taken by the end of term 2.
- Elementary teacher candidates are required to take all elementary methods courses.
- All FSL teacher candidates must take the three (3) FSL methods courses.
- Course overload requests will be considered on a priority basis for teacher candidates who require them for certification in New Brunswick.

Procedure

All course registrations are to go through the Administrative Coordinator - teacher candidates may **NOT** do them manually in STU Self-Service. To make changes to course registration, contact the Administrative Coordinator of the School of Education._

Course Loads and Overloads

This program enables teacher candidates to become a certified teacher by completing 60 credit hours in 11 months. Teacher candidates are advised to balance their course load wisely for the three academic terms, considering that there are several required courses that must be completed prior to their first field placement. The maximum allowable course load is 63 credit hours. Students are not permitted to audit courses.

Procedure

Teacher candidates who wish to register for more than the maximum 60 credit hours must submit a formal request for permission to overload. Not all requests are granted. Teacher

Candidate requests to overload should be sent to the Director of the School of Education. The request should be addressed to the School of Education Faculty Members, include a rationale for taking the additional course load, and be copied to the Administrative Coordinator. Teacher Candidates will be notified of the decision via email.

Course Change & Add and Drop Information

Dropping and adding courses is permitted only during the first week of classes in each academic term. Dropping or adding a course requires the approval of all instructors involved and the Director of the School of Education.

Procedure

To request a course change please email the Administrative Coordinator of the School of Education. Teacher candidates are responsible for ensuring that their course load does not drop below the minimum 60 credit hours required for the degree and certification.

Accommodations

Teacher candidates who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible, and before the start of the program or course whenever feasible. Early communication is necessary to allow adequate time for instructors to implement appropriate support and to ensure that the learning needs of all students in the course are addressed from the outset.

Teacher candidates are responsible for submitting the required documentation to SAS to initiate the accommodation process. The SAS office is in George Martin Hall, Room 104, and is open Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Candidates may also contact the office by email at accessibility@stu.ca, or book an appointment through the SAS website.

Full details are available at: www.stu.ca/accessibility

Procedure

Professors will be advised through Student Accessibility Services of the accommodation(s) that a teacher candidate requires. It is the responsibility of the teacher candidate to ensure up to date information is provided to SAS for **each** term. Students with accommodations are encouraged to approach individual instructors for supports directly relevant to the professional program.

Outside Commitments

Teacher candidates are expected to give full priority to the requirements of the Bachelor of Education program. Outside employment, volunteer commitments, and commuting

arrangements must not interfere with attendance, participation, or the completion of program responsibilities. No special accommodation will be made for scheduling conflicts related to work, volunteer activities, travel, or commuting distance and time.

It is the responsibility of each teacher candidate to plan accordingly to ensure they can meet all academic and practicum obligations without disruption.

Grading System

In a professional faculty, passing a course entails strong academic performance and active participation in learning activities, such as class discussion and small group work. **Teacher candidates must pass all assignments in a course to pass.** If work does not meet the minimum standard set, in the course syllabus, teacher candidates may be asked to resubmit their work. Teacher candidates may have one opportunity to do so within a specific timeframe. Where traditional letter grades are used in a course, the teacher candidate's final standing in a course is indicated by the following letter grades:

GRADING SYSTEM ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION				
Letter	GPA Points	%	Descriptor	Detailed Description (as per STU Calendar)
A+	4.3	95 – 100	Exceptional	Demonstrating an exceptional knowledge of subject matter, the literature, and concepts and/or techniques. In addition, it may include outstanding powers of analysis, criticism, articulation, and demonstrated originality. A performance qualitatively better than that expected of a student who does the assignment or course well.
A	4	90 – 94	Excellent	
A-	3.7	85 – 89	Nearly Excellent	
B+	3.3	80 – 84	Very Good	Demonstrating considerable knowledge of subject matter, concepts, techniques, as well as considerable ability to analyze, criticize, and articulate; performance in an assignment or course which can be called "well done."
B	3	75 – 79	Good	
B-	2.7	70 – 74	Fairly Good	
C+	2.3	65 – 69	Better than Adequate	Demonstrating a reasonable understanding of the subject matter, concepts, and techniques; performance in an assignment or course which, while not particularly good, is adequate to satisfy
C	2	60 – 64	Adequate/Satisfactory	
C-	1.7	55 – 59	Barely Adequate	

				general university requirements and to indicate that the student has learned something useful.
D	1	50 – 54	Minimally Acceptable	Marginal performance, demonstrating a low level of understanding and ability in an assignment or course; less than adequate to satisfy general University requirements, but sufficient to earn a credit.
F	0	0 – 49	Failure	Failure

Attendance Policy

Rationale

Teacher candidates preparing to enter teaching are expected to demonstrate the same level of professionalism as practicing public school teachers. As such, this attendance policy aims to ensure that teacher candidates are engaged and present for the learning experiences critical to their professional development while respecting rights and accommodating legitimate reasons for absences.

We believe in providing every teacher candidate with the best possible foundation to meet program requirements and succeed in the teaching profession. This will ensure that you are fully prepared and confident as you progress through the program and will enhance your readiness and success for the teaching profession.

Policy Statement

All teacher candidates are required to attend and actively participate in all classes, including the Practicum. This means that teacher candidates are expected to reduce absences to the greatest extent possible. Additional information regarding attendance during the Practicum can be found in the Field Placement section.

The Bachelor of Education program is experiential and collaborative and, as such, demands full engagement and participation. Attendance is vital to professional learning, degree completion, and teacher certification. Being present, on time, and fully engaged, whether online or in person, is a daily expectation. Because most courses require group work, teacher candidates should also expect to be available to meet with fellow teacher candidates outside of class times, especially on Fridays.

Absence for legitimate and/or unavoidable reasons:

Teacher candidates may be excused from attendance for the following reasons:

1. Medical Reasons: Including illness, medical appointments, and mental health needs.
2. Religious Observances: Participation in religious holidays or ceremonies.
3. Family Responsibilities: Including caregiving responsibilities for family members.
4. Other unforeseeable and unavoidable events such as bereavement and accident.

Each situation will be assessed individually and in a manner that respects the rights of the teacher candidate. Teacher candidates should be prepared to provide medical documentation for any absence beyond 2 days.

Procedure for Reporting Absences:

1. Notification: Teacher candidates must inform the course instructor and the Director as soon as possible regarding their absence, providing the reason for the absence. For planned absences, notification must be given in advance. For unforeseen absences, notification should be given at the earliest opportunity, ideally before class.
2. Documentation: The School of Education may request medical documentation, for absences due to illness, injury, or medical emergencies. However, teacher candidates who are absent for reasons related to a known disability or other protected grounds under the New Brunswick Human Rights Act will be supported in accordance with the University's duty to accommodate. Documentation requirements will be handled sensitively and in accordance with privacy laws.
3. Make-Up Work: Teacher candidates are responsible for any missed class content and for completing alternative learning tasks assigned by the instructor, at their discretion, which may be adjusted as part of an approved accommodation plan. It is the responsibility of the teacher candidate to follow-up and communicate with their instructors promptly concerning missed content and skills.
4. Unapproved or Excessive Absences: The course instructor will inform the Director if a teacher candidate is in jeopardy of not meeting the academic and professional expectations of the course. This may result in the candidate being required to withdraw from the course or from the program. If a teacher candidate is at risk of being dismissed from a course or from the program due to attendance concerns, they will receive a Notice of Concern from the instructor and/or the Director.

NOTE: Nothing in this policy is meant to detract from St. Thomas University's legal and ethical duty to accommodate a known disability, and/or a person's rights under the *New Brunswick Human Rights Act*. As such, this factor shall be considered in the individualized management of attendance and any decision related to the dismissal of a teacher candidate from a course or the program due to absenteeism. All situations will be addressed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with applicable human rights legislation and university policies.

Academic and Non-Academic Misconduct Policies

The School of Education follows the rationale, procedures, and consequences outlined in the University Policy on Academic Misconduct and the Non-Academic Policy on Misconduct. As such, Teacher candidates are advised to read and familiarize themselves with the policies

https://www.stu.ca/student_policies/

Teacher candidates should accurately reference any writing, including lesson plans or other instructional materials. For information on proper citation consult the [APA Style Manual](#). Please consult the American Psychological Association's website for details: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>

Professional Suitability Policy

Rationale

The School of Education has a duty to ensure that teacher candidates in a program leading to professional certification demonstrate behaviours suitable for the profession. As part of its accreditation, the School of Education must follow university guidelines and those of the provincial government who are the governing body for teacher certification.

The School of Education expects teacher candidates to act in accordance with the [Professional Code of Conduct of the New Brunswick Teachers' Association](#) and in accordance with the requirements of the [New Brunswick Education Act](#). In addition to the codes of professional conduct, teacher candidates are expected to adhere to the Policies of the [Department of Education and Early Childhood Development](#) with particular attention to [Policy 701](#) (Policy for the Protection of Pupils) and [Policy 703](#) (Positive Learning and Working Environment).

While the intent of this policy is to uphold standards of professional suitability and respond to concerns of unsuitable professional conduct, the School of Education has a responsibility under St. Thomas University's duty to accommodate a known disability, and/or a person's rights under the *New Brunswick Human Rights Act*. As such, this factor shall be considered in the individualized management of professional suitability and any decision related to the dismissal of a teacher candidate from a course or the program due to unsuitable professional behavior.

Procedure - Professional Standards Review

In cases where there are concerns about a teacher candidate's professional suitability, faculty will discuss and review the professional suitability of the teacher candidate. The

review's goal is to identify and support teacher candidates in meeting the standards of professional suitability.

Consequences

The range of actions following a concern over a teacher candidate's professional suitability include but are not limited to:

- Detailed feedback focused on supporting the teacher candidate in attaining the suitability requirements.
- A Notice of Concern from the Director of the School of Education will record the teacher candidate's failure to adhere to feedback following the professional suitability review. This notice will include plans for remediation.
- A teacher candidate may be removed from a course or practicum, and may be recommended for dismissal from the program, should they fail to meet the expectations outlined in the remediation plan set forth in the Notice of Concern.

Social Media Policy

Rationale

Social media has become extremely popular because it allows people to connect in the online world to form relationships for personal, political, social and/or business purposes. St. Thomas University recognizes that teacher candidates may use social media to engage with colleagues, friends, acquaintances, and other groups.

Social media (also known as social networking) consists of a growing body of technologies, software, tools, platforms and practices that enable people to shift between the role of audience and author for the purposes of communicating and networking via the internet, wireless networks or other electronic means in order to create, share, post or consume content, profiles, opinions, insights, experiences, perspectives, and other information and resources.

These communications typically, but not always, involve online groups or communities of users with shared or common interests who participate in electronic conversations or information sharing. Social media can take many different forms, including text, images, audio, video, and other multimedia communications.

Procedure

Teacher candidates are personally responsible for any social media/network communication created by them. Teacher candidates should be mindful that their personal social media content, even if it does not relate directly to students or teaching, may be relevant to their suitability to teach.

Teacher candidates are encouraged to review their public social media content and consider whether they would want their content to be seen by the parents, students, colleagues, or administrators they will interact with in their profession. Teacher candidates are expected to model a high standard of behavior for our profession.

Consequences

Complaints around inappropriate use of social media by teacher candidates will be reviewed under the Professional Suitability Policy and/or the University's Policy on Non-Academic Misconduct.

Withdrawal Policy

ACADEMIC TERM WITHDRAWAL REQUESTS: Teacher candidates considering withdrawal from the program during the academic term should communicate with the Director of the School of Education. A request to withdraw from the program must be made in writing to the Director of the School of Education.

PRACTICUM WITHDRAWAL REQUESTS: If the teacher candidate wishes to withdraw from the practicum, they must first indicate their intentions to the Coordinator of Field Placements. A decision will be made if the teacher candidate must remain in the practicum until permission to do otherwise is granted by the School of Education. The granting of permission may take up to one week.

Dismissal from the Program Policy

The School of Education may recommend to the Vice-President (Academic & Research) the withdrawal/dismissal of a teacher candidate if:

- there is significant evidence that the Teacher Candidate is unable to meet the requirements of successful field placement;
- there is evidence that the teacher candidate has not met the requirements of the NB Standards of Practice for Initial Teachers Education Programs and the *Teacher Candidate Handbook*;
- the teacher candidate fails to adhere to the attendance policy as outlined in the *Teacher Candidate Handbook*;

- the Teacher Candidate violates the Professional Code of Conduct of the New Brunswick Teachers' Association and/or the New Brunswick Education Act, and/or its associated policies;
- the Teacher Candidate fails to attend or chooses to leave the assigned field placement without approval of the School of Education.

The recommendation for dismissal will be brought to all full-time School of Education faculty. After this meeting, a recommendation for dismissal or withdrawal may be made to the Vice-President (Academic & Research) with copies to the Registrar and teacher candidate. At the dismissal or withdrawal meeting with the teacher candidate, a SRC Student Advocate may be present. A dismissal or withdrawal will result in no graduation, no certification and removal from the Bachelor of Education program.

Teacher Candidates who have been dismissed from the Bachelor of Education program may appeal to the Senate Admissions and Academic Standing Committee by contacting the Registrar's Office.

SECTION 2: FIELD PLACEMENT AND PRACTICUM PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

***NOTE:** In case of school closures for unforeseen circumstances, an alternative practicum format may need to be considered. Expectations for this alternative format would be communicated to teacher candidates as soon as possible after its approval by the Teacher Certification Branch and University Administration. Updates to the Handbook would be required in such instances.*

EDUC 5015 Field Placement is a mandatory fifteen (15) credit hour pass/fail course. Requirements include: an Observation Week, a Field Placement Observations and Reflections Journal, a Symposium Presentation in January, and successful Practica. **Completion of the B. Ed. Program is contingent on successfully completing the field placement course and all related components.**

PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS

To ensure that the interests of students in the public school are a first priority, and to provide the best preservice teacher education possible, the following procedures are in place for the teaching practicums in the St. Thomas University Bachelor of Education program.

The Bachelor of Education program is based on the following assumptions:

- Teacher Candidates are capable of and responsible for directing their own professional development with guidance from the Mentor Teacher in the classroom and the University Supervisor.
- Both the Mentor Teacher and the University Supervisor support Teacher Candidates' professional development with encouragement and constructive criticism. Practicum assessment and evaluation are steppingstones in the process of developing effective teaching strategies.
- The relationship between the University and the public school system is based upon mutual respect. The University and public school system attempt to help Teacher Candidates develop their own values and teaching identities as they negotiate the realities of school life.

Field Placement Location

Teacher Candidates must not make any preliminary arrangements with potential Mentor Teachers. The School of Education determines the field placements in collaboration with public school districts. There are specific district processes in place for identifying potential Mentor Teachers and practicum placements. Placements are restricted to New Brunswick. Please note

that many placements are outside the Greater Fredericton Area. Therefore, it is your responsibility to plan for transportation to and from your field placement and plan for housing accommodations, if required. Arrangements may also include sharing a ride with another student, taxi, renting a car, or borrowing a family car. Transportation and housing costs will be a *financial consideration* for you during your two field placements. You may be required to return to your home area, if you live in New Brunswick, and it is not possible to find you a placement in the Fredericton/Oromocto area.

Vulnerable Sector/Criminal Record Check

A Vulnerable Sector/Criminal Record Check valid until, at least, the end of the school year is required. You must provide the *original* on or before Orientation Days, in August, and keep copies for yourself. Please refer to Section 1.

Vaccinations*

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development supports the goals of immunization, which are to minimize the risk that an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease will occur and to ensure that students are protected in the event an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease does occur. Therefore, it is your responsibility to have satisfactory proof of immunization records should these be requested by your practicum school. Please make sure that your immunization(s) (shots) records are updated and available upon request. **A superintendent can refuse admission to a school if a Teacher Candidate is unable to provide satisfactory proof of the immunizations. Failure to be prepared to provide immunization records may jeopardize the Teacher Candidate's ability to successfully complete their practicum in the available timeframe.**

*(Further details will be added to the Bachelor of Education Teacher Candidate Handbook if needed.)

Denied Placement

*The STU School of Education **may deny** placement in the field (public school) for a practicum if:*

- the prospective Teacher Candidate has failed to complete one or more courses successfully;
- there is evidence that the prospective Teacher Candidate is unable to deliver the quality of instruction normally expected of Teacher Candidates in the subject area or at the required grade level;
- there is evidence that the prospective Teacher Candidate has violated the NBTA Professional Code of Conduct of the New Brunswick Teachers' Association and/or the NB Education Act;

- the prospective Teacher Candidate does not provide a current and appropriate vulnerable sector/criminal record check;
- the prospective Teacher Candidate has not passed the official test on Policy Statement 701 and Child Victims of Abuse and Neglect Protocol (created by the School of Education and approved by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in accordance with the Education Act (S.N.B. 1997, c. E-1.12).

Practicum Responsibilities

Teacher candidates must follow the Professional Code of Ethics for teaching (see web address for *Code of Professional Conduct of the New Brunswick Teaching Association, 1997*) as well as all policies, regulations and sections of the NB Education Act. You will:

- Thoroughly prepare lesson plans, materials, and equipment needed in teaching for every lesson.
- Create lessons that reflect current research in the discipline and be the result of your own work. Purchasing lesson plans from the internet does not make you the owner of that content or guarantee that the content reflects best practices. Please see the section on Academic Misconduct in the University Handbook. When creating lesson plans, it is important that they reflect current research in your discipline and represent your own original thinking and professional judgment. While AI tools can be helpful in generating ideas, organizing content, and offering suggestions based on current educational trends, you are responsible for ensuring the final product aligns with curriculum standards and best practices. Relying solely on pre-made or purchased lesson plans from the internet, or copying content generated by AI without thoughtful adaptation does not make you the author of that work and may not reflect effective or up-to-date pedagogy. You must critically evaluate and customize any resources you use. Please review the section on Academic Misconduct in the University Handbook to understand the expectations around originality and ethical use of tools and materials in your academic work. Finally, instructors will indicate in their course outlines whether AI can be used and to what extent.
- Create and demonstrate methodologically appropriate lesson plans for multiple disciplines.
- Carry out teaching responsibilities to meet program expectations
- Present yourself professionally throughout the practicum.
- Attend meetings after classes are dismissed for the day (e.g., staff meetings, grade level meetings, departmental meetings, extra-curricular activities).
- Attend staff meetings and any professional learning activities arranged by the school, district or province, including May Council Day.
- Engage in critical and reflective analysis of the relationship between theory and practice with the intent of improving practice.
- Complete all assessments of student work and submit all records of

- student performance before the final day of the practicum.
- Complete the Field Placement Observations and Reflections Journal. This is a **compulsory component to successfully completing the practicum**. The journal is intended to be a record of the Teacher Candidate's critical and analytical reflections on the events, experiences and observations of the practicums. Sections of the journal are to be completed at periodic intervals and must be shared/discussed with their University Supervisor on an ongoing basis. Teacher Candidates are required to return their completed journals to the Coordinator of Field Placements during the first week back on campus if not before.
 - Attend individual and/or group meetings with the Mentor Teacher and/or University Supervisor. These meetings provide valuable opportunities for feedback, reflection, and support. They help ensure that your goals are aligned with the expectations of the placement and the university, and they allow you to ask questions, share challenges, and celebrate successes. By being present and engaged in these meetings, you demonstrate professionalism, commitment to your development, and respect for the collaborative nature of the teaching profession.

Practicum Expectations

NOTE: In case of unexpected, long-term, school closures, an alternative practicum format would need to be considered. Expectations for this alternative format would be communicated to teacher candidates as soon as possible after its approval by the Teacher Certification Branch and University Administration.

In a regular practicum, you are expected to shift from observation to active teaching as soon as possible. However, individual differences in Teacher Candidate readiness are taken into consideration. Normally, Teacher Candidates will be ready to assume some teacher responsibilities after having spent two or three days in a teaching environment, observing, and conducting mini lessons. The proportion of time spent in observation will decrease as the Teacher Candidate assumes the teaching role during the practicum. It is extremely important that teaching be carefully planned with the Mentor Teacher to prevent undesirable outcomes, to support the success of your learners, and to ensure the Teacher Candidate's success. Initial teaching activities may include helping individual students, conducting a lesson with a small group, taking responsibility for part of a lesson or, in some cases, teaching a complete lesson to the class.

During the practicum, you will develop the knowledge, attitude and skills to demonstrate your ability to assume full-time equivalent (FTE) teaching responsibilities. Please take advantage of this opportunity to develop your own teaching skills. It is hoped that the practicum will prepare you to apply pedagogical theory in making instructional decisions, analyzing the educational

needs of students, using appropriate materials and resources, and assessing students' learning. The amount of teaching that you assume will have a great impact on your professional development and will determine your degree of success.

The minimum teaching requirements in each practicum are as follows:

- Once you are oriented to the classroom/learning environment, the teaching load should be gradually increased. In the First Practicum, you may gradually assume full teaching (1.0 FTE) at a time agreeable with the Mentor Teacher and the University Supervisor.
- In the Second Practicum, you should be prepared to gradually assume full teaching responsibilities (1.0 FTE) at an earlier time. By the end of the second week of the Second Practicum, you should have a full teaching workload assuming all teaching responsibilities. This means that you are responsible for the planning and the delivery of all lessons. Your Mentor Teacher will continue to coach you and provide feedback.

In both stages of your practicum:

- Your day should be comparable to that of regular full-time teaching staff. It is expected that you will devote adequate non-instructional time to planning lessons, evaluating students' work, attending meetings, and participating in school or community activities.

At mid-point of a practicum (3 – 4 weeks), you will receive an Interim Teaching Evaluation that will highlight your strengths and areas of concern. It is expected that you will discuss this evaluation with your University Supervisor and that you will determine what you need to do to address the areas of concerns to continue improvement.

- In the final weeks of a practicum, time may be allocated (**maximum of 2 days**) to visit other classrooms above or below the grade that you have taught in the school. You could also spend time with the Methods and Resource teachers and other school support staff to better understand students who require extra support to be successful.
- You are expected to complete your Field Placement Observations and Reflections Journal; the University Supervisor will provide you with feedback on your reflections. You will need to present your completed journal to the Coordinator of Field Placements during the first week back on campus to get your final grade for your practicum.
- You are also expected to present a symposium paper during the first week of Term 2 (this is a requirement for completion of EDUC 5015).

PRACTICUM POLICIES

Practicum Attendance/Absences Policy

You are required to follow your placement school's schedule and not the university's schedule as it pertains to holidays. Therefore, you assume the same responsibilities for attendance as do the regular school staff. This includes all professional learning days.

DO NOT go to school sick to avoid having to complete additional days of practicum. This puts the health and well-being of students, teachers, and school staff at risk. The School of Education provides 5 extra days at the end of the second practicum that can be used if it is determined that a candidate would benefit from extra time in a school setting to meet expectations and to complete program and certification requirements.

Unplanned school closures (power outage, furnace, water problems, etc.) that are specific to your field placement school must be brought, without delay, to the attention of the Coordinator of Field Placements. This does not apply to district-wide closures due to weather conditions given that the Coordinator would already be informed of these closures.

Teacher candidates may be excused from school for the following reasons:

- Medical Reasons: Including illness, medical appointments, and mental health needs.
- Religious Observances: Participation in religious holidays or ceremonies.
- Family Responsibilities: Including caregiving responsibilities for family members.
- Other unforeseeable and unavoidable events such as bereavement and accident.

Each situation will be assessed individually and in a manner that respects the rights of the teacher candidate and in accordance with the New Brunswick Teachers' Collective Agreement.

Procedure

In the event of **any absence during your practicum**, you must send ONE email copied to your University Supervisor, Mentor Teacher, Coordinator of Field Placements and Director of the School of Education as early as possible **before classes begin for the day**. When you have assumed full-time teaching responsibilities, you are also expected to provide a lesson plan for the day to your Mentor Teacher. Be prepared to provide medical documentation for any absence beyond 2 days within the 15-week practicum.

Teacher certification in the province of New Brunswick requires a successful practicum as

determined by the School of Education. Provincial certification may be withheld for a Teacher Candidate who fails to meet these requirements. If valid absences extend beyond a two-day limit, permission by Faculty may be granted for up to 5 make-up days in the week following the end of the second practicum. Should valid absences extend beyond that, a teacher candidate may request permission to complete the practicum in the following academic year through a request for Deferred Practicum Placement.

Absences of the Mentor Teacher

In the event of the Mentor Teacher's absence, the public school *must* assume advisory responsibility of the classroom (e.g., through a regular substitute teacher or through departmental supervision). During this time, the Teacher Candidate should, if possible, continue teaching the classes that the Mentor Teacher has been teaching.

In the case of an absence that will *exceed three consecutive days* or the sudden unavailability of the Mentor Teacher for the remainder of the practicum, the Coordinator of Field Placements should be contacted immediately.

Deferred Practicum Placement

A deferred placement may be granted for medical reasons. If a medical issue requires that a teacher candidate discontinue their practicum, they must **immediately** request a deferral in writing and provide supporting documentation from an appropriate medical professional.

Procedure

The request for deferred placement is made to the faculty of the School of Education via the Director and copied to the Field Placement Coordinator.

Should a deferred field placement be granted, the School of Education will attempt to arrange a placement at the earliest possible time, consistent with the teacher candidate's academic program and subject to the availability of appropriate settings. The teacher candidate will have to provide medical documentation prior to the deferred placement indicating they are ready to take on the rigors of the program. Please note that there are additional costs associated with a deferral.

Withdrawal/Dismissal from the Practicum and B.Ed. Program

The School of Education may recommend to the Vice-President (Academic & Research) the withdrawal/dismissal of a Teacher Candidate from a practicum

(public school) if:

- there is significant evidence that the Teacher Candidate is unable to meet the requirements of completing a successful practicum;
- there is evidence that the Teacher Candidate has not met the requirements of the *Standards of Practice for Beginning Teachers in New Brunswick* and the *Bachelor of Education Handbook*;
- the Teacher Candidate fails to adhere to the attendance policy as outlined in the *Bachelor of Education Handbook*;
- the Teacher Candidate violates the New Brunswick Teachers' Association Code of Conduct, and/or the New Brunswick Education Act, and/or its associated policies;
- the Teacher Candidate abandons the assigned practicum and/or its associated responsibilities without approval of the School of Education.

Procedure

If the teacher candidate wishes to withdraw from the practicum, they must first indicate their intentions to the Coordinator of Field Placements. The teacher candidate must remain in the practicum until permission to do otherwise is granted by the School of Education. The granting of permission may take up to one week.

THE UNIVERSITY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

The Coordinator of Field Placements and School Districts coordinate the field placement of teacher candidates. The two placements are arranged with the best match possible (appropriate grade level/subject areas) for Teacher Candidates and Mentor Teachers. Schools and School Districts participate in the field placement process with the understanding that their priority is K-12 students' safety and learning.

Each Teacher Candidate is assigned to one or more Mentor Teacher and University Supervisor for the duration of the practicum. The University Supervisor works with both the Teacher Candidate and Mentor Teacher throughout the practicum. The University Supervisor is either an academic staff member of the STU School of Education or a person appointed by our School for Teacher Candidate supervision. The Mentor Teacher and the University Supervisor each prepare evaluation reports of the Teacher Candidate's progress using university-approved evaluation forms. The evaluations are graded as Pass, Incomplete, or Fail.

Information packages containing all required materials are provided to teacher candidates prior to the start of the practicum. Prior to each practicum, Teacher Candidates attend a mandatory meeting with the Coordinator of Field Placements who fully explains the expectations for teacher candidates and the process for placements and the practicum. A high degree of

professionalism is **always** expected of teacher candidates.

Role of the Mentor Teacher

- To provide verbal, written, formal and informal feedback to the Teacher Candidate on their progress on a daily basis.
- To discuss with and make available to the Teacher Candidate an outline of the long- range goals, the organization of the grade or course, and the curriculum guides.
- To help and encourage the Teacher Candidate to explore school records (**where admissible**), test materials, teacher resources and special services, and to answer questions about the students, the school and the community as well as the school rules and mission statement.
- To facilitate the development of the Teacher Candidate's independence by taking an inconspicuous position in the room while the Teacher Candidate is in charge.
- To confer with the University Supervisor regarding the Teacher Candidate's progress.
- To help prepare the final evaluation report of the Teacher Candidate's progress in co-operation with the University Supervisor.
- To make a recommendation to the University Supervisor, to pass or to fail a Teacher Candidate.

Role of the University Supervisor

- To regularly communicate with the Teacher Candidate during each stage of the practicum.
- To confer with the Mentor Teacher regarding the Teacher Candidate's progress.
- To read the Teacher Candidate's journal.
- To provide verbal/written, or formal/informal in writing feedback to the Teacher Candidate on a regular basis.
- To maintain an evaluation file on the Teacher Candidate.
- To maintain contact with the Coordinator of Field Placements and the Director of the School of Education when needed.
- To prepare a final evaluation report and make a recommendation to the School of Education, to pass or to fail a teacher candidate.

Role of the Public-School Principal

- To recommend Mentor Teachers.
- To observe Teacher Candidates in teaching situations as time permits.
- To invite Teacher Candidates to participate in any in-service or other professional learning activity when possible.
- Where appropriate, to communicate information that may assist in the

overall assessment of Teacher Candidates.

- To make suggestions about improving the practicum experience to the Coordinator of Field Placements and/or the Director of the School of Education.
- To contact the Coordinator of Field Placements or the Director of the School of Education about any concerns that school personnel may have about a Teacher Candidate.
- To provide feedback about the overall teacher education program to the School of Education Director.

Role of the Coordinator of Field Placements

- To coordinate the placement and supervision arrangements for all Teacher Candidates.
- To provide information to school personnel regarding the professional background of Teacher Candidates.
- To arrange for all required materials to be sent to schools.
- To answer questions pertaining to all aspects of the field placement and practicum program.
- To advise on matters of attendance, professional conduct, Teacher Candidate performance, etc.
- To liaise with University Supervisors.
- To keep the Director of the School of Education informed on all field placement and practicum matters.
- To remove Teacher Candidates from the practicum if such action is deemed necessary.

Professional Letters of Reference

An abbreviated Final Evaluation Report will be provided to you. It is not the University Professor, Supervisor, or the Mentor Teacher's responsibility to provide a reference letter, but they may choose to provide one upon request. If you wish to have a letter of reference you will need to professionally and directly request one.

Advice on how to request a letter of reference is widely available online, and you should review the etiquette for requesting a professional reference before approaching a referee. Links include: <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/how-to-ask-a-professor-for-a-recommendation-2060798> and <https://undergrad.stanford.edu/academic-planning/engage-faculty/asking-letters-recommendation>

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