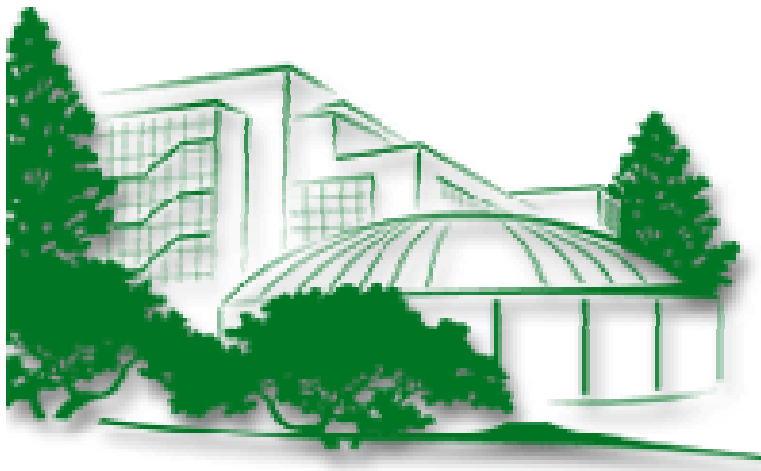


Becoming a Mentor Teacher



**Working with MSU's
Secondary Teacher Preparation
Team**

February 2006

Secondary Team Website: <http://ed-web2.educ.msu.edu/team4/>

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Secondary Team Website and Relevant Links To Information/Materials

- Secondary Team Homepage: <http://ed-web2.educ.msu.edu/team4/>
- Secondary Handbooks: <http://ed-web2.educ.msu.edu/team4/handbooks.htm>
- Secondary Team Calendar: <http://ed-web2.educ.msu.edu/team4/calendar.htm>
- College of Education Website: <http://www.educ.msu.edu/>
- “Learn To Teach At MSU” <http://ed-web3.educ.msu.edu/college/coe-movielist.htm>

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Priorities for MSU's Teacher Preparation Program

Priorities for the program as a whole

- High standards for our graduates
- Knowing subject matters and how to teach them
- Working effectively with culturally and academically diverse students
- Creating and managing a classroom learning community
- Working effectively with adults in schools, universities, and communities
- An effective support system for learning both in schools and in MSU courses
- Working arrangements that benefit our graduates, Partnership Schools, and MSU

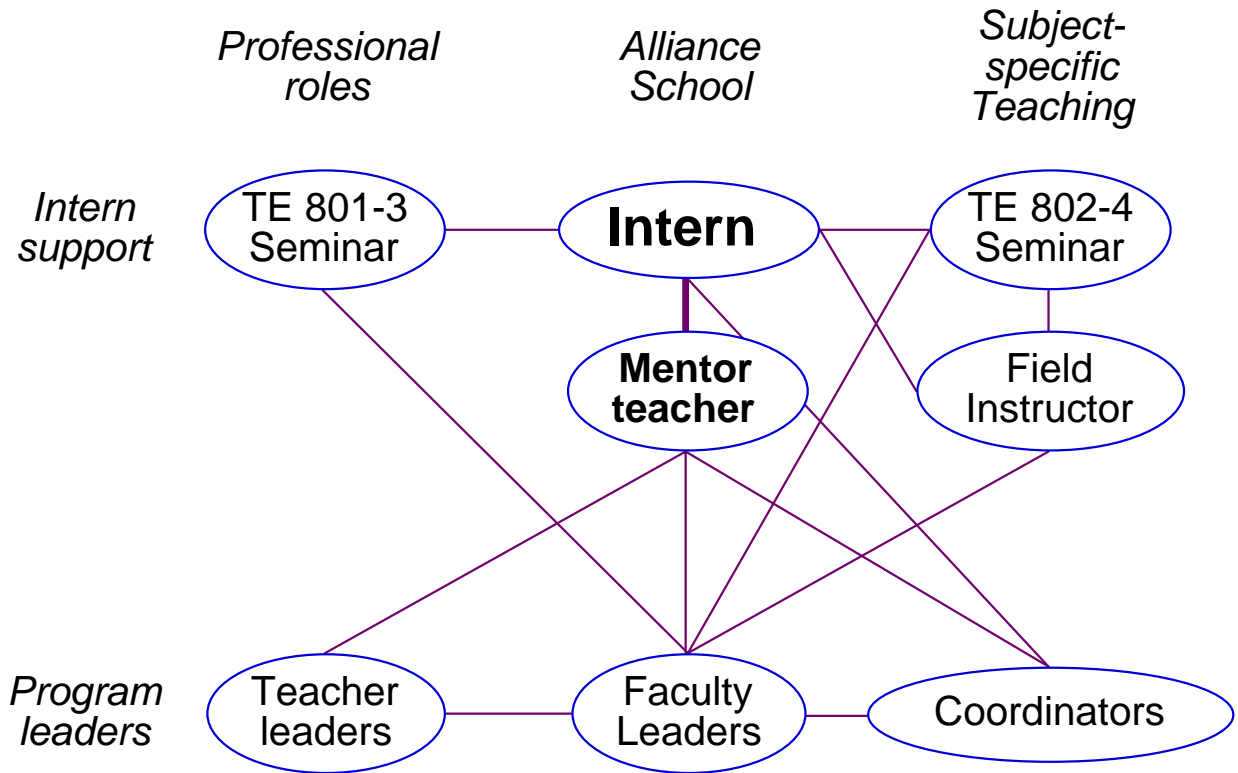
Priorities for Partnership Schools

- Shared goals for teaching and teacher preparation
- Departmental clusters of interns or students
- Renewable three-year commitments between MSU and Partnership Schools
- Communication and coordination between MSU and school personnel
- Balance among urban, suburban, and rural schools
- Support for technology, including E-mail and Internet connections
- Financial support for interns

Priorities for mentor teachers

- Active mentoring of teacher preparation candidates
- Communication with other mentors and MSU staff, including attendance at mentor meetings
- Support for collaborative work among candidates and between candidates and teachers
- Participation in evaluation of interns and undergraduates
- Interest in learning about teaching and teacher education

Support System for Interns



Interns' most important learning experiences come from their work in schools and their relationships with their mentor teachers. The field instructor, seminar instructors, and program leaders support this relationship and help interns learn from their experiences in thoughtful and productive ways.

Comments on Being a Mentor Teacher

Thinking about working with an intern next year?

Becoming a good mentor for a prospective teacher means taking on a new role: going from being a good teacher to being a good teacher of teachers

Here's what experienced mentoring teachers have said they need to do...

- welcome the intern “as a learner” and “let her in on your thinking” about how you teach;
- become a personal mentor for your intern, who is “part student, part colleague, part friend”;
- “tolerate (maybe even enjoy) questions, philosophical discussions about teaching”;
- “be prepared to re-examine my own teaching with my intern”;
- “give up a lot of privacy” in inviting another person into your classroom and your teaching;
- “make space in your teaching style and in the curriculum” for the intern to try out ideas”
- practice “shoulder to shoulder” teaching in guiding the intern’s development;
- learn to “step in and out of each others’ teaching” in ways that respect the integrity of both individuals;

Mentoring teachers are also expected to do the following:

- meet with intern at least once a week at a regularly scheduled time to co-plan and discuss concerns;
- assist intern in getting to know students, parents, and school colleagues;
- help intern gain familiarity with district curriculum and grade level objectives, school policies, curricular resources;
- consult regularly with the MSU liaison / field instructor and participate in evaluating intern’s progress at mid-term, end-of-semester, and end-of-the-year conferences;
- participate in professional development activities for collaborating teachers (e.g. Summer Institute, periodic school-based CT study group sessions).

Here's what experienced mentoring teachers have said they gain from having an intern...

- “I get nudged off my personal plateau and challenged to re-think my own teaching practice”
- “I become better able to talk about my teaching and to have an impact on education more broadly than just in my own classroom”
- “I have an opportunity to ‘give something back’ to my profession by helping to develop future teachers”
- “I have someone else to talk to who has seen the day to day classroom events and appreciates the struggles and successes we experience”
- “I get a chance to see my intern grow and develop as a teacher over a whole school year.”
- “I can learn new ideas and approaches to teaching that weren’t part of my teacher education experience”
- “My students benefit by having another teacher in the room”
- “I get an opportunity to connect with other teachers in my building”

Priorities for Mentor Teachers

Mentor teachers are key members of a support system for teacher candidates, that also includes course instructors, program faculty leaders and coordinators, and field instructors for interns. Details about the roles and responsibilities of different members of the interns' support system can be found on pages 7-26 of the Handbook for Mentor Teachers.

Effective mentor teachers are often also excellent teachers of middle and high school students. In our experience, though, other qualities are even more important in a good mentor than excellent classroom teaching performance. The qualities and commitments that are most important to us in mentor teachers include the following:

- *Active mentoring of teacher preparation candidates.* Being a mentor requires a variety of activities in support of students and interns, including co-planning and co-teaching (see page 11 of the Handbook for Mentor Teachers), support and feedback during lead teaching, and helping with suggestions while giving the student or intern freedom to experiment. The most successful mentors are those who take their work as teacher educators seriously and who find the right balance for their intern between structure and guidance and freedom to experiment.
- *Communication with other mentors and MSU staff, including attendance at mentor meetings.* Being a mentor requires regular communication with the field instructor, coordinator, and course instructors. For mentors working with interns, there are also required meetings (jointly planned and led by teacher leaders and MSU staff) in which mentors discuss the program and to talk with other mentors and MSU staff. The first of these meetings is in August, before the beginning of school. There will be several other meetings during the school year, at times when interns can act as substitutes.
- *Support for collaborative work among candidates and between candidates and teachers.* Collaborative planning and teaching are an essential part of learning to teach for our students and interns. They need opportunities to work cooperatively with one another and with experienced teachers to plan lessons and entire units, to teach and evaluate their students, and to reflect on what they have learned from their experiences.
- *Participation in evaluation of interns and undergraduates.* We ask mentor teachers to provide oral and written evaluations of seniors and interns who work with them. Interns have conferences with their mentors and field instructors at the middle and end of each semester (see pages 26-28 of the Handbook for Mentor Teachers). The single most important piece of information considered by schools hiring our graduates is the Exit Performance Description written by the mentor teacher.
- *Interest in learning about teaching and teacher education.* The most effective mentor teachers are teachers who want to learn more themselves, about teaching and about teacher education. Participation in our teacher education program offers many opportunities for professional growth, through working with interns, with other mentor teachers, and with MSU staff. We are looking for mentor teachers who are eager to take advantage of these opportunities.

Opportunities for Secondary Teachers to Participate in MSU's Teacher Preparation Program

The Teacher Education Program at Michigan State University relies on partnerships with schools to provide school-based learning opportunities for teacher candidates. Mentor teachers can choose from among several options listed below to participate in teacher education. Each option requires a different time commitment for the collaborating teacher. All are important steps in a teacher candidate's learning to teach.

Program Level	TE Courses	Time in Schools	Time Period	Professional Account Allocation
Intern (placed with a teacher or several teachers and clustered in schools)	TE 801/803, Professional Roles and Teaching Practice; TE 802/804, Reflection and Inquiry in Teaching Practice	4 days a week during non-lead teaching, 5 days per week during lead teaching (about 4 weeks fall semester and 10 weeks spring semester)	1st day that teachers start until the end of the MSU spring semester in late April or early May	\$350
Seniors (generally placed in clusters of 2 or more with one teacher)	TE 407/408 Crafting Teaching Practice	4 hours a week	Late September until the end of the MSU spring semester in late April	\$60

For more detailed and accurate information about schedules, see the Program Information for Mentor Teachers handout or the Handbook for Mentor Teachers. The information above is for the 2005-2006 Academic Year. Since we make revisions in the program each year, it may not be accurate for 2006-2007 or future years.

FAX (by 3/3/06)

To: Secondary Team (attn: Paul John Kurf) Fax : 517-432-5092

From: _____ Fax: _____

Please bring this form to your school principal/building administrator for signature

Teacher Participation Information Form

Name: _____

School: _____

Subjects Taught: _____

Grade: _____

School Number: _____ Home Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

I would be interested in working with MSU teacher candidates during the 2006-2007 school year:

____ An Intern ____ One or more Seniors

____ I have consulted with my building principal/administrator,

_____, about this form.

SIGNATURE of Principal/Administrator

What additional information do you believe would be helpful for us to know about your classroom and schedule to best match teacher candidates with your situation and needs?

Are there other teachers in your school who would be interested in work with an intern?

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

____ I am not able to work with MSU teacher candidates next year, but please contact me in the future.

For Additional Information or Mailing Address (if unable to fax form)
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