

Field Experience Office
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: *Can I student teach at home?*

A: Student teaching must take place in Rochester area school districts, where the College has a relationship with school personnel and college supervisors have a reasonable travel distance. The new NYS Education Department requirements for certification have made it critical that teacher candidates receive the guidance and support needed for achieving the goals of the program while at Brockport. There are two alternatives to doing student teaching in the Brockport/Rochester area: Student Teaching in Australia and Student Teaching in New York City through SUTEC (see more about both of these options on the Student Teaching page of this website).

Q: *Do I have to be fingerprinted for field experience or student teaching?*

A: Some districts require that teacher candidates submit their fingerprinting forms to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) prior to placing in the district. We will let you know if you are placed in one of those districts well in advance so you have time to get fingerprinted.

Q: *I don't have time between my classes to complete my 50 hour field experience. What should I do?*

A: We recommend that you complete 5-6 field experience hours per week over a 10-week period. With that in mind, we recommend you identify a block of time each week and establish a routine schedule for field experience (i.e. a three-hour block of time two days per week OR a single five-hour time block one day per week). Travel time does NOT count toward your 50 hours. It is important to leave enough time between classes for your field experience when registering for the following semester.

Q: *Why is my placement taking so long to confirm?*

A: We work diligently to confirm each of 200 placements each semester based on NYSED, program, and candidate requirements. Please be assured that you will have a placement and enough time to complete it. Some placements are confirmed by particular districts sooner than others, which is why your classmates may begin their placements before you.

Q: *My SBTE is not responding to my emails or phone calls. How do I get in touch with him/her?*

A: To avoid this as a last-minute problem, make sure you contact your SBTE as soon as you receive your placement confirmation. Sometimes it takes a few days for teachers to respond to your communiqué. A follow-up phone call or another email politely stating your request is appropriate if you don't get a response after 2-3 days. Be sure the email address and phone number are correct. If you are still having problems, sometimes it is helpful to contact the district secretary at the main office, indicate that you are having difficulty connecting with your SBTE, and ask if there might be a best way to connect (phone, email, a written message for the teacher's mailbox, etc.). This should generate a response from the teacher. If not, contact the Field Experience Office and we will intervene.

Q: *Why isn't my placement at the school district I requested?*

A: If a teacher candidate requests a particular SBTE or district, and it is valid for the placement (appropriate phase or correct content and grade level), we make every attempt to request the placement for the candidate. Often, the school district administrator will not be able to accommodate the request for reasons within the school district itself. Once that happens, we place a new request at other districts until an appropriate placement is confirmed.

Q: *I'm taking EDI 514, Methods in Special Education, in order to get my Students with Disabilities (SWD) certification. I already have my initial certification. Do I need a field experience with this course?*

A: Candidates who already hold NYS Certification do not need to complete a 50-hour field experience associated with EDI 514.

Q: *I completed a Field Experience Placement Request form and resume last semester, but didn't take the course or complete the 50-hour field experience. Can the Field Experience Office just use my paperwork from last semester?*

A: A new form and resume are needed each semester, regardless of the circumstances.

Q: *I will be on vacation/traveling/working when the Student Teaching Conference and Professional Development Days are being held. Do I really need to be there? Can I make it up at another time?*

A: The Student Teaching Conference and Professional Development Days are mandatory and teacher candidates are responsible for making arrangements in their schedules to be able to attend. Dates are provided well in advance to avoid conflicts. On rare occasions (for example, travel abroad with a college-sponsored group) and **with prior consent** from the Director of Field Experience, a candidate may be excused and presented with the opportunity to make up the workshop. The Field Experience and Certification staff cannot make individual appointments for missed workshops.

Q: *I don't have a car/don't like to drive far/don't have a lot of time. Can you place me in the Brockport School District?*

A: The Field Experience staff makes every attempt to place candidates near their home to reduce travel time. However, placements are based on New York State guidelines, and at least one placement must be in a high-need school. We also have to work around the availability of school personnel. With over 200 placements each semester, we cannot accommodate every request for a local placement. It is the policy of the Department of Education and Human Development that teacher candidates are responsible for transportation to and from field experience and student teaching placements.

Q: *What is a high-need school?*

A: Schools are considered high-need based on the percentage of children in the district who are eligible for free or reduced lunch programs. This rating changes from year to year in some districts, based on changes in the student population.