
Field-Based Experiences

Well-designed and thoughtfully integrated field-based experiences help prepare candidates to become effective educators. They provide candidates with opportunities to integrate and demonstrate their understanding of pedagogy and subject matter knowledge, research, and best practices. Among other criteria, field-based experiences shall cover a range of time periods within the school year and build toward candidate readiness for full responsibility in the licensure role. PK-12 partners should be involved in the design, implementation, and assessment of field-based experiences. Experiences should include working with diverse student learners, including English language learners, in a variety of settings.

It should be noted that Sponsoring Organizations are responsible for determining candidates' readiness for endorsement, and thus should set expectations accordingly. For example, the requirement for 100 hours of full responsibility in a practicum serves as a minimum; Sponsoring Organizations are encouraged to supplement minimum requirements with additional, rigorous expectations in support of more effectively preparing candidates for the role.

Field-based experiences encompass both the pre-practicum experiences and the practicum placement. Guidance pertaining to each of these is outlined in greater detail below.

Pre-Practicum Experiences

Pre-practicum experiences must begin early in candidates' preparation, include opportunities to work with diverse learners, and be integrated into the courses or seminars that address the Professional Standards for Teachers or the Professional Standards and Indicators for Administrative Leadership. Pre-practicum experiences should not occur as isolated assignments that are disconnected from programs of study. ESE strongly encourages programs to design pre-practicum experiences that require candidates to bridge theory and practice in a rigorous way. Components of pre-practicum experiences may include:

- increasing responsibility to ensure readiness for full practicum;
- targeted, high-quality feedback that leads to improved practice;
- assignments that require candidates to reflect on experiences;
- an assessment, potentially a gateway assessment, of performance of the candidate;
- experiences that require candidates to apply aspects of theory to school/classroom practices;
- opportunities in different school settings, classroom delivery models, etc.; and/or
- experiences at different grade levels within the range of the license being sought.

There are no minimum-hour requirements for candidates engaging in pre-practicum experiences. SO's should design programs and early field experiences in a way that ensures candidates are able to gain the knowledge and skill necessary to perform the full-responsibility requirement effectively in the practicum.

Practicum/Practicum Equivalent Experiences

Practicum/practicum equivalent experiences must be

- completed within a Massachusetts public school, approved private special education school, Massachusetts Department of Early Education Care-approved preschool, educational collaborative, or a school that requires Massachusetts educator licensure; and
- supervised jointly by the supervisor from the preparation program (Program Supervisor) in which the candidate is enrolled and the qualified Supervising Practitioner.

All individuals in educator preparation programs shall assume full responsibility of the classroom for a minimum of 100 hours. For classroom-based practitioners, full responsibility requires that candidates:

- assume full control of all classroom duties regularly fulfilled by the Supervising Practitioner; and
- oversee responsibilities related to the education of all students on the classroom roster.

For educators not based in a classroom (i.e. administrative leadership roles or professional support personnel), full responsibility requires that candidates:

- assume full control of all duties regularly fulfilled by the Supervising Practitioner.

The 100 hours of full responsibility does not have to be consecutive. The intent of this requirement is to mirror the experience of being a full-time educator. Sponsoring Organizations should keep this intent in mind when developing additional guidance around expectations for candidates' practicum experience.

Practicum/Practicum Equivalent requirements are as follows ([603 CMR 7.04 \(4\)](#)):

Early Childhood: Teacher of Students With and Without Disabilities (100 hours in PreK-K, 200 hours in 1-2; at least one setting must include children with disabilities)	300 hours
Teacher, Grades 1-6	300 hours
Teacher, Grades 5-8	300 hours
Teacher, Grades 8-12	300 hours
Teacher, Grades PreK-6 or PreK-8	300 hours
Teacher, Grades 5-12	300 hours
Teacher, All (150 hours at each of any two of the following levels: PreK-6, 5-8, 8-12)	300 hours
Teacher of Students with Moderate Disabilities (for PreK-8, 300 hours in an inclusive general education setting or 75 hours in an inclusive general education setting and 225 hours in a separate or substantially separate setting for students with moderate disabilities; for 5-12, 300 hours in an inclusive general education classroom or 150 hours in an inclusive general education classroom and 150 hours in a separate or substantially separate setting for students with moderate disabilities)*	*300 hours

Teacher of Students with Severe Disabilities (at least 75 hours in an inclusive general education classroom at any level, and at least 150 hours in a setting with students with severe disabilities; the remaining 75 hours may be in either setting)	300 hours
Specialist (unless otherwise indicated)	150 hours
Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent	500 hours
Principal/Assistant Principal	500 hours
Supervisor/Director	300 hours
Special Education Administrator	500 hours
School Business Administrator	300 hours

The practicum/practicum equivalent is supervised jointly by the supervisor from the preparation program in which the candidate is enrolled and the Supervising Practitioner. The Supervising Practitioner and the Program Supervisor will together evaluate the candidate using the Candidate Assessment of Performance. Disagreement between the Supervising Practitioner and the Program Supervisor will be resolved by the decision of a third person chosen jointly by them.

A Supervising Practitioner:

- shall be trained, supported, and evaluated by the Sponsoring Organization to ensure candidates' placement meets expectations for effective preparation
- shall have at least three full years of experience under an appropriate Initial or Professional license; and
- shall have received a rating of proficient or higher on his/her most recent summative evaluation.

Sponsoring Organizations need to identify effective placements for their candidates. This can be accomplished through the development of close partnerships with local schools and districts. Maintaining direct communication with district administrators as a part of a mutually beneficial partnership will enable Sponsoring Organizations to identify appropriate placements for their candidates more easily. Sponsoring Organizations will need to ask school or district administrators to supply the Sponsoring Organizations with a list (the "list" may contain only one name) of the names of teachers and administrators who the school or district recommends and who are both interested and qualified (worked under the appropriate Initial or Professional license for at least three years and rated proficient or higher on most recent summative evaluation) to act in the role of a Supervising Practitioner.