Office of Field Experiences
The College of Education’s Office of Field Experiences coordinates early field experiences and student teaching placements for all students in Purdue University’s Teacher Education Programs. We work closely with our partners in school corporations throughout Indiana to ensure successful and rewarding placements for our students. Our goal is to seek the best possible placement so that the experience becomes the capstone of each student’s educational program. You can be a part of the experience!

Early Field Experiences
Early Field Experiences Extensive course work regarding current educational methods and specific content area is required for all students in the Teacher Education Programs at Purdue. An integral part of this training is the theory-into-practice component when students are placed at local schools for early field experiences. All students complete Block I (Exploring Teaching as a Career/Multiculturalism and Education) and Block II (Learning and Motivation/The Inclusive Classroom), which have a field experience component. Students spend additional time in local classroom settings as part of their methods courses.

Early field experiences provide students a variety of school and grade level settings where students observe, assist, plan and ultimately teach. These experiences give students the opportunity to reflect upon learning and teaching in a particular school setting and help tremendously in preparation for student teaching.

Candidate Competencies
Prior to beginning student teaching, each student must meet performance-based standards that demonstrate his or her readiness for student teaching. These standards include:

• Successfully completing required professional education and content area courses with an acceptable GPA
• Meeting basic skills and content requirements such as passing Praxis I and II exams
• Demonstrating competence in all early field experiences

For more information
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Office of Field Experiences
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“My students and I benefit from the fresh ideas, new approaches, and latest research that a student teacher brings to the table.”

—Nadine Roush, 4th grade teacher
Amelia Earhart Elementary School
Lafayette, Ind.
Why Serve as a Cooperating Teacher?
Serving as a student teacher’s cooperating teacher will allow you to enjoy a number of benefits. As a mentor for a student teacher, you will:
- Witness fresh, new ideas in action
- Have the opportunity to reflect upon your own pedagogy in a constructive way
- Stay up-to-date on current trends and innovations in education
- Observe your own students and classroom from a new perspective
- Experience renewed enthusiasm for the profession
- Become familiar with new and emerging classroom technologies
- Develop and hone your professional skills
- Earn credit toward license renewal
- Receive an honorarium

How to Become a Cooperating Teacher
Advise your department chairperson and/or principal that you are willing to mentor a student teacher. Throughout the year, the Office of Field Experiences sends requests for student teacher placements to school corporation offices. These requests are usually passed on to specific schools within the corporations. Once your principal is aware of your interest, he/she can let you know when the opportunity to serve as a cooperating teacher is available. When you receive the request, you will have the chance to review the student teaching candidate’s application and transcript. You may also interview the candidate, if you wish.

Roles and Responsibilities
The role of the cooperating teacher is vital in the development of a student teacher. You will help the student teacher plan lessons, develop classroom management skills, assess and evaluate student achievement, and learn other important professional skills.

Visitation and Observations
You will work closely with the student teacher’s University supervisor, who will provide support and guidance throughout your student teacher’s placement in your classroom. The supervisor will visit your classroom bi-weekly to observe and evaluate the student teacher’s performance.

Leaving the Classroom—“Solo” Teaching
As the student teacher gains more confidence, the long range plan should include “solo” teaching so that he/she experiences managing a classroom independently. The cooperating teacher retains the responsibility for the classroom, students and the student teacher and, therefore, should be available (in close proximity).

The length of student teaching placements varies according to program area. For more specific information, visit: www.education.purdue.edu/fieldexp/students/student_teaching/application.html

“So much of what young teachers need to know can only come from hands-on experience in the classroom and I enjoy offering them that opportunity.”
—Kathy Nimmer, English and creative writing teacher Harrison High School, West Lafayette, Ind.

www.education.purdue.edu/fieldexp/teachers