Student Teaching Placement Policies
Montana State University-Bozeman
Field Placement & Licensure
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1. Policies and Procedures are collaboratively developed and regularly reviewed by the university faculty and representatives of local school districts.

2. All placements are coordinated by the Field Placement and Licensure Office (FPLO) in cooperation with the local school district administrators in which placements are being sought.

3. School administrators are made aware of the student teaching policies. All students are provided equitable treatment by the FPLO and K-12 partners.

4. Cooperating teachers and university supervisors have considerable teaching experience, are prepared to supervise teacher candidates (TCs), and are well informed of university policies.

5. The school administrator will assure that the cooperating teacher is well qualified and willing to work with a teacher candidate (TC). Cooperating teachers must have a minimum of three years teaching experience at a similar grade level and subject area as that of the TC.

6. The FPLO will make every reasonable attempt to coordinate the best possible placement for the student.
   a. Placements are arranged, as much as possible, so students will gain a variety of classroom experiences.
   b. Students are placed where they will receive an unbiased assessment and will not be placed in a school district where they have friends or relatives in professional positions. This helps ensure an equitable experience for all candidates.

7. TCs are given an opportunity to request placements in a geographic region or within a specific school district. However, a student must be prepared to accept any placement coordinated by the FPLO.

8. TCs are also given an opportunity to request placement at a preferred grade level. The FPLO attempts to place each student in his/her requested grade level. However, a student may be assigned to any grade level appropriate to his/her licensure level. The FPLO does not have control over the final placement. K-12 administrators may adjust FPLO requests to reflect the priorities and resources in their schools.

9. Each student should be prepared to spend at least one semester in a teaching placement outside the immediate Bozeman area.

10. The term ‘Bozeman Area’ includes all the school districts within driving distance of the MSU campus, from Livingston to Willow Creek. Candidates should not request a local placement if they are unwilling to be placed in any of the districts in this area. The FPLO does not accept requests for only Bozeman or Belgrade placements.

11. The teacher candidate must not negotiate his/her own placement with a teacher or a school administrator. This also applies to a TC’s friends and relatives seeking placements on his or her behalf. Placements arranged in violation of this policy are subject to cancellation.

12. Out-of-state placements are granted to students who request them and have strong need to be placed in another state. Students should meet minimum standards of a 3.0 or better GPA in their major, minor, professional education courses, and in their cumulative academic work. Students must submit two letters of recommendation from MSU faculty who can speak to the potential for success in an out-of-state placement.

13. All coursework and program requirements must be completed before student teaching begins.

14. Working at a part-time job while student teaching is discouraged. If it is absolutely necessary to work while student teaching, priorities should be kept straight. It would be shortsighted to succeed at work and fail or do poorly at student teaching.

15. If a student teacher does not accept his/her first placement, another placement the same semester cannot be guaranteed. Candidates who decline placements jeopardize timely completion of student teaching and risk being put on hold for one or more semesters.

16. Student teachers may substitute teach, in their assigned classroom, for a maximum of 5 days after a positive midterm evaluation with appropriate approval. Teacher candidates cannot be used as replacement teachers or long-term substitute teachers, even within the placement classroom.

17. We cannot guarantee a placement within walking or biking distance from a TC’s home or apartment. Candidates must be prepared to either drive or find a ride with someone else.

18. If a teacher candidate is asked to leave a school district for any reason, s/he will be required to wait one year before reapplying to the MSU Teacher Education Program for another placement.