

## Level II – *Preparing to Teach* Pre-Practicum

You are continuing with your field experiences as part of your journey towards becoming a teacher. Pre-practicum field experiences are critical opportunities for you to observe and participate in a wide variety of school and community settings. You will be able to carefully examine school and community life and educational practices across a diverse range of contexts.

This guide is intended to help you understand the **resources that exist in the School of Education** at Roger Williams University to support you in the field, as well as **your role and responsibilities** during pre-practicum field experiences. All education courses (EDU) in the School of Education require students to participate in field experiences. Prior to beginning practicum, you must demonstrate that you have successfully completed field experiences in both urban and suburban schools. The assignments and their purposes and appropriate field settings are determined by faculty in the School of Education in conjunction with the Field Experiences Office.

### Level II – Pre-Practicum Field Experience Guide:

**All field experiences are only arranged by the Field Experiences Office. You may not make your own arrangements to conduct observations or teach/work with students.** The Field Experiences Office works with the entire faculty to find appropriate placements based on each professor's course requirements.

**Once you are notified by the field office, through your professor, that your placement has been determined, it is your responsibility to:**

- Contact the school administrator or cooperating teacher over the telephone or email to **set up an initial meeting.**

**Once you are notified by the field office that your placement has been determined, it is your responsibility to:**

- Contact the teacher you will be working with (host teacher) over the telephone or via email to **set up an initial meeting.**
- **Bring your original copy of your criminal background check (BCI)** with you when you go to the school. When you sign in at the office, ask if you need to leave a **copy of your BCI** with the school office staff (do not leave the original, only a copy).

**At the initial meeting in the school,** it is essential that you:

- Share your field experience assignment with the host teacher
- Be explicit about whether you need to conduct an observation; interact with students, school personnel, and families; co-teach a lesson; meet with the cooperating teacher during the span of a few planning periods, etc.
- Jointly determine how you will carry out your plans
- Make sure to exchange contact information with the host teacher. Discuss the most efficient way to get in touch before, during, and after the school day.

**Before you begin your work with students:**

- Provide the *Case Study Parent Permission Form* to the teacher if your assignment requires a case study
- Provide the *Media Permission Form* if your assignment requires you to film, record, photograph, or use e-mail or the internet with students.
- You **may not** engage in case study work or implement media projects with students until these forms are signed and returned to the school by parents or guardians.
- Your professor will provide you with the appropriate form.

**During all school visits, you must be respectful and responsible when you interact with students and teaching staff. Please keep in mind the following:**

- **It is your responsibility to follow through with your pre-practicum experiences in a timely fashion.** Do not wait until the last weeks of the semester to complete your assignment!
- Ask to **read a copy of the school's handbooks** for teachers and students. The handbooks will provide valuable information about the policies and procedures of the school.
- Be energized and alert! Teaching is a demanding profession, and you must be ready **to positively engage all students for success.**
- **Be punctual!** Arrive 5-10 minutes ahead of time. If you will be late or absent, telephone the school at the main number and leave a message for the teacher. Follow-up with an email explaining the circumstances of your absence. Make arrangements for when you will return to the school.
- **Abide by the school/district dress code** for teaching personnel. Dress professionally. Clothing and accessories that may distract young people should be avoided—remember, the focus is teaching and learning!
- **Turn off cell phones** or other devices that could interrupt your ability to observe or work with the students or disrupt a classroom. Do **not send or receive text messages** when you are at the field experience site.
- Social Media sites are used by students of all ages. **Refrain from engaging in the use of social media with the students** in all field experience sites.
- While you will report to your professor on the details of your field experience, you are expected to **maintain the confidentiality of all information.** Casual discussions of what occurs in your field experience should not occur. If, at any time, you feel the physical and/or emotional health and safety of a child is jeopardized, you are required to report the details of the incident to your cooperating teacher.

- **Continually communicate** with your host teacher according to the plan you made at your initial meeting. Ask questions at the appropriate moment.
- Contact your professor immediately if there is a significant issue with your placement with which you need help problem-solving. The faculty and staff in the School of Education at Roger Williams University are committed to supporting your success to the extent possible.
- You **are not to be with children/adolescents, unsupervised**, at any of your Level I or Level II Field experience placements. The cooperating teachers should remain in the rooms with you when you are observing students or working with students. If you have a situation where you find yourself left alone with students in a classroom, please bring it to the attention of the professor that is teaching the course that requires you to be in a school setting.

**You must be respectful and responsible when you interact with a partnering school site. Failure to follow through on the responsibilities outlined in this document is unprofessional and may impact your grade.**