



STUDENT TEACHING HANDBOOK

**Academic Year
2026 - 2027**

School of Education

ccsu.edu/education

1615 Stanley Street, P.O. Box 4010, New Britain, CT 06050



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A Message from the Dean's Office

Dear Student Teacher,

Welcome to the culminating experience of the teacher preparation program – student teaching. This is an exciting and transformative time in the journey to becoming a professional educator! You are about to apply everything you have learned in coursework to real classroom settings, under the guidance of experienced mentor teachers and university supervisors.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with the expectations, responsibilities, procedures, and support resources necessary for a successful and meaningful student teaching experience. It will serve as your go-to reference throughout the semester, helping you navigate this important phase with clarity and confidence.

Student teaching is more than just a requirement – it is an opportunity to:

- Build strong relationships with students, colleagues, and the host district.
- Develop effective instructional practices.
- Demonstrate your commitment to professional growth.
- Reflect deeply on your teaching identity and philosophy.

Please read this handbook carefully and refer to it often. We encourage open communication throughout the process. If you have questions, concerns, or need support at any time, your university supervisor, cooperating teacher, program coordinator, and School of Education Dean's office are here to help you.

We are excited to support you as you take this important step toward becoming a certified educator. We believe in your potential and look forward to seeing the positive impact you will make in the classroom.

Wishing you a successful and rewarding semester ahead!

Sincerely,

Dr. Daisy Torres-Hill, Assistant Dean & Certification Officer

Ms. Ashley Fournier, Administrative Faculty Program Associate

School of Education Dean's Office

Central Connecticut State University

General Information

Affirmative Action Policy

Central Connecticut State University is committed to Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 46a-68. The university maintains annual Affirmative Action Plans and strives to ensure equitable opportunities for all employees and students.

For more information, please visit the Office of Regulatory Affairs: <https://www.ccsu.edu/office-regulatory-affairs>

Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers

Student teachers are required to adhere to the Connecticut State Department of Education Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators, which outlines the ethical and professional standards required of all educators. These standards emphasize responsibility to students, the profession, and the community, including maintaining professionalism, ensuring equitable treatment of all students, and upholding confidentiality.

The Code serves as a basis for decisions related to certification and professional conduct. For the full text of the Code, please refer to: Connecticut Regulations of State Agencies, Section 10-145d-400a.

All student teachers are required to adhere to the **Connecticut State Department of Education Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators**.

https://portal.ct.gov/sdecertification/knowledge-base/articles/resources/general-information/where-can-i-read-about-the-connecticut-code-of-professional-responsibility?language=en_US

Diversity

The School of Education at Central Connecticut State University provides high quality student teaching experiences to ensure student teachers are prepared to meet the needs of all learners in a global society. Student teaching placements are secured in diverse settings, offering student teachers the opportunity to engage with students and families who represent considerable ethnic diversity across partner schools. The Dean's Office and teacher-preparation faculty will guide and support student teachers as they implement inclusive instruction in diverse classrooms. Through diverse teaching and learning opportunities, student teachers will engage in critical pedagogy and reflection aimed at understanding and narrowing the achievement gap.

The School of Education offers equal access to student teaching placements and support programs, maintaining high expectations for success of all student teachers. The Dean's Office values the contributions of individuals and groups representing diverse ethnicities, races, genders, and sexual orientations in cultivating the next generation of teachers.

Health Awareness Notice

In appreciation of the rise in the number of cases of Tuberculosis in Connecticut, student teachers who are going to be placed in the community, be it for student teaching, internships, or volunteer work, may wish to have a repeat Tuberculosis screening within six months prior to placement. This is a skin test called "Mantoux" or "PPD," which is available at CVS Minute Clinic, urgent care centers, or your own physician's office. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Central Health Services at 860-832-1925.

School of Education Contacts

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Preparing for Student Teaching

Attendance

Student teachers are expected to maintain excellent attendance at their assigned placements. When a student teacher is absent for more than two days, they must make up the time at the end of the student teaching placement, extending the last day past the official end date set by the School of Education Dean's Office.

Absences are permitted only for exceptional situations such as death in the family, serious illness, or the observance of religious holidays. Holiday trips, doctor appointments, family functions, or job interviews are not considered excusable absences, as the student teaching semester is part of a planned program. Personal days will not be excused.

Student teachers should contact the classroom teacher and university supervisor when it is apparent an absence is necessary. For every lesson that a student teacher is responsible for and will miss due to absence, the student teacher must make the lesson plan(s) and have the necessary materials available for the cooperating teacher to use to teach the lesson. Repeated tardiness is not acceptable and may be grounds for dismissal from placement.

All teaching assignments are for the full school day. Student teachers are expected to be at school during the same hours as the classroom teacher and are expected to attend all after-school meetings such as department/grade-level meetings, workshops, faculty meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and after-school events. Student teachers may not leave early to coach or work.

The only reason a student teacher may be excused earlier than the end of a school day is to attend a scheduled seminar class at the university. In the event of a conflict with seminar, the student teacher should discuss their situation and determine a solution with their instructor.

Calendar

The schedule of teaching days that are followed during student teaching must conform to that of the school, not to that of the university. Student teachers living in Central residence halls must arrange housing for periods of time when residence halls are closed. School holidays and university holidays do not always coincide. Student teachers will follow the school district's calendar and not Central's calendar.

The duration of a student teaching placement differs by individual program. Student teaching officially begins on the first day of the new semester. A calendar of start and end dates is included in the student teacher placement confirmation as well as in this handbook. Should a student require special consideration or accommodations with respect to a placement start or end date, the School of Education Dean's Office will discuss the situation with the cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and program coordinator, and follow up with a determination in writing.

Communication

Email will likely be one of the primary forms of communication between a student teacher and the cooperating teacher. Avoid the use of text lingo, emoticons, etc. For email communications, be clear and concise while also being courteous. Prepare in advance and allow sufficient time for your cooperating teacher to respond. Kindly ask the cooperating teacher to identify their preferred mode of communication should you need clarification on something or if there is a reason you will not be able to attend as scheduled. Use your Central email address when emailing your cooperating teacher.

Eligibility

Student Teaching Eligibility – Low Grades

The grade earned in any Professional Program course, or any course required by the respective major field of study, must be a C or better. Transcripts are checked at the end of the semester before student teaching (and summer session, if applicable). *If a grade of C- or lower is posted, the Dean's Office will cancel the placement seven days after the grade posting period closes.* The prospective student teacher will then need to re-apply when a satisfactory grade is earned in the course. This includes any grade change made during the grade appeal process.

Student Teaching Eligibility – Incompletes

Any incompletes posted prior to the semester of student teaching must be completed/resolved two weeks before the first day of student teaching. *Failure to do so will result in cancellation of the placement by the Dean's Office; the student teacher will need to re-apply for the subsequent semester.* Acceptable documentation may include an e-mail from the course instructor or a note on university letterhead. The grade earned must meet all program requirements. All questions regarding the above should be directed to the School of Education Dean's Office.

Important Student Teaching Dates

Event	Fall 2026	Spring 2027
Student Teaching Orientation	Tuesday, August 18 th , 2026	Tuesday, January 19 th , 2027
First Official Day of Student Teaching	Tuesday, August 25 th , 2026	Wednesday, January 20 th , 2027
End of First 4 Weeks Midterm evaluation due for first 8-week placement	Friday, September 18 th , 2026	Friday, February 12 th , 2027
End of 8 th Week	Friday, October 16 th , 2026	Friday, March 12 th , 2027

- Midterm evaluation due for 16-week placement - Final evaluation due for first 8-week placement		
End of 12 th week - Midterm evaluation due for second 8-week placement - The SOE Dean's Office is aware that schools break may impact this date. Please plan accordingly with your team.	Friday, November 13 th , 2026	Friday, April 9 th , 2027
End of 16 th Week - Final evaluation due for second 8-week placement - Final evaluation due for 16-week placement	Friday, December 11 th , 2026	Friday, May 14 th , 2027

Length of Student Teaching Placement

The duration of a student teaching placement differs according to the individual program. Student teaching officially begins on the first day of the new semester. Should a student require special consideration or accommodations with respect to a placement start or end date, the Dean's office will discuss the situation with the cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and program coordinator, and follow up with a determination in writing.

Elementary student teachers: One 16-week placement

Secondary student teachers: One 16-week placement

All-level/PreK-12 student teachers: Two 8-week placements

Within this time frame, each student teacher is expected to assume the full teaching load of the cooperating teacher for an extended period.

Orientation

All student teachers must attend student teacher orientations on campus held prior to the start of their student teaching semester. Students will also meet with their cooperating teacher and university supervisor to review the expectations and structure of the student teaching experience and review the Candidate Performance Assessment of Student Teaching (CPAST) evaluations, observations, and rubrics to provide structure and access to resources associated with this requirement for program completion.

Part-Time Student Status

Student teaching and concurrent seminar credits may equate to part-time student status. While the student's credit load is less than the 12-credit minimum to be classified as full-time, Financial Aid reviews the awards of student teachers every semester to make there are no negative consequences to registering for less than 12-credits.

If you believe that this part-time status may impact your financial aid, contact the Office of Financial Aid at finaid@ccsu.edu or 860-832-2200 to discuss the situation.

Placement for Student Teachers with Background Issues

A student teacher may be denied or removed from a placement by a school district due to incidents on the background report. Central will attempt to place students with incidents, but it may not be possible to locate appropriate placements. Student teachers who fail to pass the background check may be unable to complete their chosen degree or certification program at Central Connecticut State University. The university is not responsible for a student's inability to complete their chosen degree or certification program.

Pre-Season Professional Developmental Meetings

The student teacher should start the first day of their semester. If the district is offering pre-season professional development or faculty meetings, we encourage student teachers to be in attendance to experience all aspects of being a teacher, including introduction to the school community.

Student Teaching Placements

Student teachers who refuse a placement may need to repay for student teaching the following semester. In rare instances the School of Education Dean's Office may not be able to ascertain a suitable placement for a student teacher. Possible factors contributing to this are: lack of available/eligible (TEAM-trained) cooperating teachers; prioritization of in-district mentoring of new teachers over student teaching; application materials that do not meet the criteria set by a district; and cooperating teacher – student teacher interviews resulting in the cooperating teacher declining the student teacher's placement.

Cooperating districts, schools, and teachers are investing their time, talent, and expertise in YOU so that future students may learn and grow. Each has adopted their own set of beliefs, policies, procedures, curricula, and strategies. Please remember that you are both a guest in the host district and an ambassador of Central.

Transportation

Each student teacher is responsible for his/her transportation to and from all assigned field experience and student teaching placements.

Verification Fingerprinting and Criminal Background Policy

Each school or school district hosting students for observation, field experiences, practicums, internships, or other school-based placements determines its own background check and fingerprinting requirements.

Student teachers must follow the policies and procedures of the school district in which they are placed. Upon notification from the district, student teachers are responsible for completing all required background check and fingerprinting processes.

While grant funding may occasionally be available to offset fingerprinting costs, the student teacher is ultimately responsible for all onboarding and associated fees. Background checks completed for one district do not transfer to another; student teachers must meet the requirements of each district in which they are placed.

During Student Teaching

The student teaching experience prepares student teachers to develop and demonstrate competence as a classroom teacher under the guidance and mentoring of a TEAM trained, licensed cooperating teacher and a university supervisor who is an experienced former educator. The student teaching assignments range from eight weeks (for student teachers who have two placements) to sixteen weeks (for student teachers who have one placement) each semester.

The goal of student teaching is for student teachers to experience continuous, sustained, and extensive responsibility for planning and delivering instruction as well as managing all aspects of the day-to-day experiences in the classroom. The student teacher will be supported with rich and varied experiences that are also challenging; this encourages both resilience and self-efficacy.

Activities Outside of School

Preparation for teaching continues before and after the school day; therefore, student teachers are strongly urged not to hold employment during the student teaching semester. If it becomes necessary for the student teacher to work, it is recommended that employment be on the weekends, so as not to interfere with student teaching responsibilities.

If it is determined that the student teacher's employment is interfering with the student teaching responsibilities, the student teaching assignment may be terminated for the semester.

Addressing Concerns

Student teachers are expected to maintain professional conduct at all times. If a cooperating teacher has concerns regarding a student teacher's performance or professional dispositions, the cooperating teacher should contact the university supervisor immediately. When appropriate, a conference with the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor may be scheduled to discuss the concern and develop an action plan.

If a student teacher is removed from a placement, the School of Education (SOE) is not obligated to secure an alternative placement, and a PreK-12 school is not required to offer another placement. The student teacher may be required to repeat the practicum course in a subsequent semester when another placement may be arranged.

If a student teacher has concerns regarding their cooperating teacher or placement environment, the student teacher should contact the university supervisor to discuss the situation and determine next steps.

Open and ongoing communication among the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor is essential to a successful student teaching experience. Strong communication supports student teacher growth and helps prevent issues from escalating. When concerns do arise, the following process will be used:

Step	Action	Who Is Involved	What Happens
Step 1: Initial Conversation	Identify and discuss concern	Cooperating teacher, university supervisor, student teacher	Concerns are addressed directly and promptly. Expectations are clarified and immediate feedback is provided.
Step 2: Professional Growth Plan <i>(if needed)</i>	Develop formal support plan	Student teacher, cooperating teacher, university supervisor <i>(Dean's Office may be involved)</i>	A Professional Growth Plan (formerly called the "Focus Form") is created outlining: • Area(s) of concern • Action steps and supports

			• Clear expectations • Timeline for improvement Plan is based on data (observations, lesson plans, evaluations) and signed by all parties. A copy is provided to the student and the Dean's office.
Step 3: Monitoring & Support	Implement and track progress	Cooperating teacher, university supervisor	Student teacher progress is monitored closely. Ongoing feedback and support are provided based on the plan.
Step 4: Removal Consideration	Determine next steps if no improvement	Cooperating teacher, university supervisor, Dean's Office	If expectations are not met, a meeting with the student will take place. Removal from the placement may be considered based on the severity of concerns or lack of progress.
<i>A cooperating teacher or school district may request immediate removal at any time. Standard steps may be bypassed.</i>			

Block Scheduling

In school districts following a block schedule (90-minute periods), the student teacher must prepare for and teach two daily blocks and participate in an academic support experience such as intervention, math lab, writing center, tutoring, or enrichment.

CPAST

The Candidate Preservice Assessment of Student Teaching (CPAST) is the primary tool used to evaluate student teachers during student teaching. A student teaching observation form is used to provide formative feedback during formal observations. Student teachers can expect a minimum of three formal observations during an 8-week placement and six formal observations during a 16-week placement. The CPAST rubric is used for both midterm and final evaluations.

Summative evaluation occurs at the conclusion of the student teaching experience and results in a final grade that reflects the student teacher's overall performance. The university supervisor is responsible for determining the final grade and is expected to consult with the cooperating teacher prior to submitting it. Final grades are submitted through the university's Banner system, while Student Learning and Licensure (SL&L) is used to document observations, feedback, and evaluation materials.

Ongoing, well-documented observations and evaluation reports are essential throughout the student teaching experience. Student teachers are expected to review, reflect on, and maintain all feedback in an organized and accessible manner. In addition to written formative feedback, university supervisors conduct formal observations and communicate feedback through SL&L.

Following each observation, the university supervisor submits a written evaluation in SL&L that includes evidence of the student teacher's planning, instruction, classroom management, communication, and assessment practices. Feedback highlights strengths and provides targeted recommendations for continued growth.

Employment in District

On occasion, student teachers are offered positions in districts starting before the end of the semester. The School of Education Dean's Office may consider releasing the student teacher for a position only when the student teacher has completed their responsibilities as a student teacher. In these cases, the student teacher should contact Dr. Daisy Torres-Hill, Assistant Dean & Certification Officer, at dtorres-hill1@ccsu.edu.

Grades

The university supervisor is responsible for assigning the final grade for student teaching. Prior to determining the final grade, the university supervisor will confer with the cooperating teacher. Together, they evaluate the student teacher's performance, including strengths and areas for growth, as part of the midterm evaluation process.

Appendix A outlines the criteria associated with each letter grade. The university supervisor, cooperating teacher and student teacher are encouraged to review this information at the beginning of the student teaching placement and revisit it throughout the semester.

Grounds for Removal

A student teacher may be recommended for removal for reasons including, but not limited to:

- Student teacher-initiated withdrawal (no guarantee of reassignment).
- Chronic absence or tardiness.
- Failure to abide by student teaching responsibilities.
- Inappropriate responses affecting teaching performance.
- Criminal conduct affecting professional standing.

Lesson Planning

Lesson planning is both a skill and an art, developed through consistent practice. Student teachers are expected to prepare a complete lesson plan for every lesson they teach.

- Submission Timeline: Lesson plans must be submitted to the cooperating teacher two days before instruction to allow time for review, feedback, and revision. Failure to meet this requirement may jeopardize the placement.
- Organization: Plans can be stored in a binder or digital folder. University supervisors will review plans during each observation.

Number of Preps

For students in secondary education, we ask that student teachers be responsible for no more than three preps (separate courses to prepare for). If a unique situation should occur where more than three preps are associated with a teaching load, the cooperating teacher and university supervisor should contact School of Education Dean's Office.

Policy on Strikes and Other Job Actions in Schools

The School of Education Dean's Office is authorized to make decisions concerning the withdrawal of student teachers from situations that prohibit the completion of the total student teaching experience. The School of Education Dean's Office will consult with chairpersons of affected departments prior to making decisions affecting the withdrawal of student teachers.

In the case of a strike, student teachers are to report immediately to the School of Education Dean's Office. If a strike is prolonged, the student teacher may be transferred to another school. The purpose of asking student teachers to stay out during a strike is to maintain individual and university neutrality, as Central representatives are guests in the schools/districts. The student teacher is expected to contact their university supervisor with any questions.

Professional Expectations

Central student teachers serve as ambassadors of the School of Education. As emerging professionals, they represent both the university and the teaching profession, model appropriate behaviors for students, and uphold high standards of conduct within the classroom and broader school community.

This section outlines some of the professional responsibilities expected of Central student teachers both inside and outside the classroom.

Responsibilities of the student teacher as a professional include:

- Conducting themselves in a professional manner at all times.
- Maintaining appropriate professional appearance, including dress and grooming.
- Becoming familiar with and adhering to university policies and the policies of the cooperating school (see Policy Statements section).
- Maintaining confidentiality of all student information.
- Demonstrating respect for all students by being empathetic, courteous, and responsive to individual needs.
- Acting with fairness and impartiality in all interactions with students.
- Embracing their role as a member of the school community and contributing positively to it.
- Seeking, valuing, and applying feedback to improve practice.
- Developing and submitting lesson plans in a timely manner using the appropriate template.
- Submitting all lesson plans at least two days in advance (by the end of the school day) to allow for review and feedback by the cooperating teacher.

Appearance

A school is a professional environment. Teaching, as a public profession, is inherently a conservative profession. Student teaching places a student teacher in the public eye at all times. Student teachers must be aware of the image they present to the community.

Every school has expectations regarding the appearance of its faculty and staff. Student teachers are expected to meet or exceed the schools' expectation of appearance, always dressing professionally in the schools. It is the student teacher's responsibility to become familiar with the school's expectations for faculty appearance and to dress appropriately during student teaching. Inappropriate appearance or dress may result in removal from the placement and can adversely affect continuation in the professional program.

Appropriate Clothing

- Student teachers must wear clean, neat, and un-torn attire.
- All clothing should be modest and not excessively short, tight, or revealing.
- Footwear (shoes, boots, and sandals) should complement professional attire.

Appropriate Grooming

- Personal hygiene is very important when working closely with students and school employees. Odors or perfumes and fragrances should be avoided, particularly because of possible allergic reactions.
- Hair should be clean and neat; facial hair must be trimmed and groomed.

Inappropriate Clothing

- Clothing, jewelry, or hairstyles that disrupt the educational process or endangers students, including but not limited to those items which include messages, language, or logos that advocate sex, drugs, violence, bigotry, hate, profanity, alcohol, tobacco, or gang activity are not permissible.
- Any excessively tight or form-fitting article of clothing is not considered professional dress.
- Tank tops, shorts, cutoffs, fatigues, spandex, spaghetti straps, halter tops, low-cut garments, short shirts and flip-flops are considered inappropriate dress.
- Tattered, frayed, ripped, or excessively worn and faded clothing are not considered professional dress.
- Transparent, translucent, or sheer clothing may not be worn.
- Clothing associated with gang activities including athletic jerseys and headgear which may be associated with gang affiliation are not permissible.
- Clothing that bares any part of the mid-section, even if the mid-section is bare unintentionally, is not acceptable.
- Any portion of the student teacher's underwear or undergarments shall not be visible at any time, even when bending or reaching up.

The only exceptions to the above rules occur for those student teachers who are engaged in physical education or technology education activities which might require appropriate attire for specific applications.

Conduct on Social Media

Social media is an integral part of daily life. While it can support teaching and learning, it may also present challenges for student teachers working with children and adolescents. Inappropriate use of social media has the potential to negatively impact a student teacher's professional standing and future career. Student teachers are strongly encouraged to ensure that personal social media accounts are private and not accessible without appropriate authorization. K-12 students should not be able to access or "find" student teachers through personal accounts.

According to the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators, "*The Education profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professionalism.*" As a student teacher in the School of Education, your conduct – including your use of social media – reflects both Central Connecticut State University and the teaching profession. Student teachers are expected to exercise sound professional judgment and to consider how their online presence may be perceived by students, colleagues, and school communities. All communication should be respectful, accurate, and appropriate.

While no policy can anticipate every situation, student teachers placed in partner schools must refrain from social media use that:

- Breaches professional boundaries between student teachers and K-12 students (e.g., sharing personal beliefs, experiences, or details about personal lives).
- Is unrelated to curriculum, instruction, or student learning.
- Uses personal social media platforms to communicate with students.

- Disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school or district.
- Includes harassing, defamatory, obscene, discriminatory, threatening, or otherwise inappropriate content.
- Creates a hostile work or learning environment.
- Violates confidentiality of students, colleagues, or school personnel.

Violation of these expectations may result in disciplinary action, determined on a case-by-case basis by the School of Education and/or the placement site. The School of Education reserves the right to remove a student teacher from a placement or the professional program pending review. In certain situations, violations may also result in legal action or external investigation.

Student Learning & Licensure Requirement (SL&L)

All students within the School of Education and those in programs leading to teacher certification are required to submit artifacts electronically at various points in their training. Therefore, a Student Learning & Licensure (SL&L) account is required for all students, including those in student teaching.

For each observation by the university supervisor, the student teacher is required to submit their lesson plan in SL&L. A minimum of six lesson plans must be submitted by the student teacher to SL&L. For each observation by the university supervisor, an observation rubric will be completed in SL&L by the university supervisor. The university supervisor will also complete a mid-term and final evaluation in SL&L, as well as an Educator Disposition Assessment (EDA). The EDA is used to evaluate the student teacher's professional attitudes, attributes and dispositions that affect their performance as a teacher. It is the student teacher's responsibility to upload lesson plans into SL&L within 24 hours of teaching the corresponding lesson.

Student Teachers Left Alone in the Classroom

At times during the student teaching experience, the cooperating teacher may briefly step out of the classroom. This should occur only after the student teacher has demonstrated effective classroom management and the ability to successfully implement a lesson. The cooperating teacher must remain readily available during this time.

Student teachers should not be left alone for extended periods. The cooperating teacher retains legal responsibility for the classroom at all times, regardless of physical presence.

Student Teaching Seminar

Student teaching requires a full-time commitment. Most programs conduct a student teaching seminar that runs concurrently with the student teaching experience. This is the only course a student may take during the student teaching semester. Although the specific objectives for the seminar vary across programs, the focus of the seminar is to reflect on and process the student's teaching experience. Often the instructor will have specific assignments to help internalize the student teacher's learning and growth. It is an essential and required part of student teaching. Session topics include:

- Teacher Leadership: Exploring the role of teachers as leaders within school communities.
- Learning Communities: Developing collaborative environments for student and professional growth.
- Current Research and Theory: Examining contemporary educational research related to classroom and school practices.
- Action Planning: Developing strategies for effective classroom management and professional collaboration.

Student Teaching Takeover Plan

As a student teacher, you are learning to teach and will need encouragement, guidance, feedback, and support in developing your instructional skills and understanding student behavior. To support this process, the cooperating teacher and student teacher are expected to develop a individualized “Takeover Plan.” This plan provides clear expectations and allows adequate time for preparation and gradual assumption of teaching responsibilities.

During the first two weeks of the placement, student teachers should focus on building relationships with students and the cooperating teacher, becoming familiar with the district curriculum and grade-level expectations, and observing classroom instruction. This is also an appropriate time to observe other teachers and assist with routine classroom tasks.

Each student teacher is expected to assume a full takeover, meaning full responsibility for the cooperating teacher’s instructional load for a designated period. Full takeover expectations vary by program. Typically, student teachers complete:

- Three (3) weeks of full takeover in a single placement, or
 - Elementary, English, History, Math, World Language, Science
- Two (2) weeks per placement for K–12/all-level student teachers
 - Art, Physical Education, Music, Technology and Engineering Education, Special Education, TESOL, Dance Education

The transition to full takeover should be gradual. As student teachers demonstrate readiness, the cooperating teacher incrementally increases instructional responsibilities, leading to full takeover. The return of teaching responsibilities should also be gradual, with the cooperating teacher resuming responsibilities over time. A sample takeover progression timeline is provided in the Appendix.

The Cooperating Teacher

Cooperating teachers are the classroom teachers who host student teachers. These teachers have completed the Connecticut State Department of Education’s Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) program. The cooperating teacher is identified as the school-based supervisor. They are responsible for providing primary, daily support and supervision for you. The cooperating teacher is the role model and resident expert. They are also sharing their classroom, students, time, talent, and passion with you.

What is the role of the cooperating teacher?

- Facilitate the student teacher’s interactions with students from the first day.
- Observe and analyze/reflect upon instructional delivery.
- Work closely/communicate with the university supervisor throughout the duration of the student teaching placement.
- Set and share expectations that increase as the student teacher assumes greater responsibility.
- Include the student teacher in all professional school and team meetings.

Observation of the cooperating teacher in action during the introductory phase is an invaluable learning experience. Through observation, you can learn many strategies that will smooth the transition and increase the performance efficacy. Errors committed by the beginning student teacher can often be avoided with careful attention to the cooperating teacher’s classroom procedures.

The University Supervisor

The university supervisor is the Central representative responsible for supervising the experience of a student teacher(s). As the student teacher continues to progress, they may need encouragement, reassurance, guidance, and instruction in specific skills. The supervisor provides such support and advice, whether on-site, through TEAMS/Zoom, or through email.

To support the student teacher, ensure growth, and provide accurate feedback the university supervisor will:

- Outline the teacher preparation program responsibilities requirements and class assignments in collaboration with the cooperating teacher.
- Determine the grade for student teaching.
- Lead regular conferences, or Triad meetings, that include the student teacher, university supervisor and cooperating teacher.
- Confer with the cooperating teacher about the student teacher's progress, areas of needed growth, areas of improvement, and areas of talent.
- Observe and evaluate the student teacher on an on-going basis and provide objective documentation to support the assessment of specific areas of the student teacher's knowledge, dispositions, and performance.

Use of Student Teachers as Substitutes or Hires

Graduate and undergraduate student teachers may not serve as a substitute for the cooperating teacher or another teacher while they are student teaching. Although the student teacher may be performing most or all of the duties of the classroom teacher, a substitute teacher must be hired by the district – even during the “full take-over” period. Additionally, the student teacher cannot be hired by the district in any capacity while student teaching.

Weather-Related Absences

Connecticut weather can be unpredictable. Student teachers are expected to follow the schedule and teacher protocols of the district with regards to late opening, early dismissals, and school closures. While this information is posted on district websites and by news organizations, each school has a specific procedure for communicating schedule changes. It is the responsibility of the student teacher to become aware of this information and relay it to the university supervisor as necessary.

If districts are closed due to weather for an extended period, a decision regarding making up the days missed will be made by the School of Education Dean's Office. In such situations, the School of Education Dean's Office will be in close communication with the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor.

Completing Student Teaching

Connecticut Teacher Certification Requirements

Please note that all students need to apply for their certification through the State of Connecticut. Information about State of Connecticut testing requirements for the certification programs offered by Central can be found at www.ct.gov/sde/cert under **“Assessments.”** If you take an assessment at a Connecticut test center, your scores will automatically be reported to the Connecticut State Department of Education. Please note that scores may not be accepted unless the correct Social Security number is included on the score report.



All required assessments must be successfully completed before your certification application can be signed by Central's Certification Officer. If Central does not have your scores on file, you are responsible for submitting an official copy of your score report to the Certification Officer, even if you previously requested that scores be sent.

Information about test preparation and registration can be found at the following websites:

- Praxis: www.ets.org/praxis
- Connecticut Foundations of Reading Test: www.ct.nesinc.com
- ACTFL (World Languages): www.languageTesting.com

When score reports become available, testing companies will notify you by email. Scores are accessible online for a limited time; therefore, student teachers should download and save copies promptly. Additional fees may apply if score reports need to be retrieved after they are no longer available online.

State of Connecticut Certification Application Guidance steps are listed in the appendix.

If you have questions, contact:

Daisy Torres-Hill, Ed.D.

dtorres-hill1@ccsu.edu

Certification Officer, School of Education

CT Certification Assessments

As part of the educator preparation program and the certification process, student teachers are required to successfully complete specific assessments established by the State of Connecticut. Required assessments vary by certification area and are designed to measure candidates' knowledge and readiness to teach in their chosen discipline. Students are responsible for understanding the assessment requirements for their certification area and completing all required exams set by the Connecticut State Department of Education.

The chart below outlines the required assessments for each certification area. Students should work closely with their academic advisor and certification officer to ensure they meet all testing requirements prior to recommendation for certification.

Certification Area	Requirement Assessment(s)	Testing Code
Art Education (All Level, PK-12)	Praxis - Art: Content Analysis	5135
Dance Education (All Level, PK-12)	*Does not require State assessments	
Elementary Education (PK-6)	Praxis Elementary Education - Multiple Subjects	
	Subtest 1: Reading & Language Arts	5002
	Subtest 2: Mathematics	5003
	Subtest 3: Social Studies	5004
	Subtest 4: Science	5005
	Foundations of Reading	890
English Education (Secondary, 4-12)	Praxis - English Language Arts: Content & Analysis	5039
History/Social Studies Education (Secondary, 4-12)	Praxis - Social Studies: Content Knowledge	5581
Mathematics Education (Secondary, 4-12)	Praxis - Mathematics: Content Knowledge	5165
Music Education (All Level, PK-12)	Praxis - Music: Content and Design	5114

Physical Education (All Level, PK-12)	Praxis - Physical Education: Content and Design	5095
Science Education (Secondary, 4-12)	Praxis Subject Specific	
	Biology: Content Knowledge	5236
	Chemistry: Content Knowledge	5246
	Earth and Space Sciences: Content Knowledge	5572
	General Science: Content Knowledge	5436
	Physics: Content Knowledge	5266
Special Education (All Level, PK-12)	Praxis - Foundational Knowledge	5355
	Foundations of Reading	890
Technology & Engineering Education (All Level, PK-12)	Praxis - Technology Education	5053
World Languages Education (Secondary, 4-12)	ACTFL for the specific language sought	
	Oral Proficiency Interview	OPI
	Writing Proficiency Test	WPT

For additional information, including passing scores, and the most up-to-date certification requirements, please visit the [Connecticut State Department of Education's Required Assessments](https://portal.ct.gov/sdecertification/knowledge-base/articles/resources/assessments/what-assessments-are-required-for-ct-educators?archived=true&language=en_US) page. Assessment requirements are subject to change; students are encouraged to refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education website for the most current information.

https://portal.ct.gov/sdecertification/knowledge-base/articles/resources/assessments/what-assessments-are-required-for-ct-educators?archived=true&language=en_US

Final CCAST Evaluation

The CCAST is the final evaluation used during your student teaching experience. It is designed to measure your growth and performance as an educator by assessing the knowledge, instructional skills, and professional responsibilities expected of beginning teachers.

Throughout your placement, you will receive ongoing feedback to help you develop and improve in each of the CCAST performance areas. At the end of your student teaching experience, you, your cooperating teacher, and your university supervisor will collaboratively complete your final CCAST evaluation based on the evidence gathered throughout your placement. You, your cooperating teacher, and your university supervisor will review, celebrate areas of strengths, discuss areas of continued growth, and answer any questions you may have.

Your final CCAST evaluation serves as the primary assessment used to determine your final student teaching grade. It is an important measure of your readiness to enter the teaching profession and provides meaningful feedback to support your continued professional growth as you transition into your career as an educator.

Graduation

Students must apply for graduation through Central Connecticut State University by the published deadline for your intended graduation term. Applying for graduation is required and is separate from registering for classes or completing your student teaching placement.

Before applying, students should review their degree requirements and ensure they are on track to complete all coursework and program requirements. Eligibility to graduate is determined by the University and is based on the successful completion of all academic and program requirements.

Students are encouraged to meet with their academic advisor regularly to verify their degree progress and address any outstanding requirements before submitting a graduation application.

For more information about graduation application deadlines, eligibility requirements, commencement, and the graduation application process, visit the Registrar's Office graduation webpage: <https://www.ccsu.edu/registrar/apply-graduate>

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can I request a specific school or district?

All student teaching placements are coordinated by the Dean's Office. Student teachers are encouraged to indicate their preferences on the student teaching application, which is distributed the semester prior to placement. While preferences are considered, student teachers may not independently arrange their own placements.

2. What are the expectations for attendance?

Student teaching is a full-time commitment. Student teachers must attend every day, follow the school's schedule, and arrive on time.

3. What should I do if I am absent?

Notify your cooperating teacher and university supervisor as soon as possible. Missed time may need to be made up.

4. When are lesson plans due?

Lesson plans must be submitted at least two days in advance to allow for review and feedback.

5. Will I have full responsibility for teaching?

Yes. All student teachers are expected to complete a full takeover of teaching responsibilities for a designated period of time.

6. How am I evaluated during student teaching?

You are evaluated through CCAST, formal observations, and ongoing feedback documented in SL&L.

7. Who determines my final grade?

The university supervisor assigns the final grade in consultation with the cooperating teacher.

8. Can I work or have another job during student teaching?

Student teaching requires full-time commitment. Employment should not interfere with your responsibilities.

9. What happens if there are concerns about my performance?

Concerns are addressed through a structured process that may include a meeting, a Professional Growth Plan (PGP), and ongoing support.

10. What happens if I am removed or withdraw from my placement?

You will not be placed in another setting during the same semester. Future placement opportunities may also be impacted.

Appendix

Appendix A – Final Grade Determination

HOW STUDENT TEACHING GRADES ARE DETERMINED

Performance. Standards. Growth.



The final grade is based on the teacher candidate's performance with respect to the **CCSU Student Teaching Evaluation Rubric**. This rubric aligns with the **Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCT) Rubric for Effective Teaching 2017**. It also contains subject-specific criteria, or "attributes." It is important for the teacher candidate to read the Evaluation Rubric, understand it, and become familiar with the criteria for which scores are determined.



A generic evaluation document is located at the end of this handbook.



The candidate's subject-specific evaluation information is accessible in **SL&L**.



GRADING LEVELS

Each indicator on the rubric is scored as follows:



EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS
Indicator Fully Met

3
points



MEETS EXPECTATIONS
Indicator Met

2
points



EMERGING
Indicator Not Met

1
point



DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS
Indicator Not Met

0
points



REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADE

Total points earned across all rubric indicators determine the final grade:

GRADE	POINT RANGE	
A	43 or above	The teacher candidate must score 43 points or above.
A-	38 – 42	The teacher candidate must receive a score between 38 – 42 points.
B	34 – 37	The teacher candidate must receive a score between 34 – 37 points.
C	29 – 33	The teacher candidate must receive a score between 29 – 33 points.
F	28 or below	The teacher candidate must score 28 points or below.



EVEN IF A TEACHER CANDIDATE'S PERFORMANCE IS OUTSTANDING,
they cannot earn an A+. The highest grade possible is **A**.



*Your grade reflects your growth, your professionalism, and your readiness to lead.
Use feedback, stay reflective, and keep striving for excellence!* 

Appendix B – Professional Growth Plan (PGP)

Professional Growth Plan (PGP)

School of Education
Central Connecticut State University
Student Teaching Support ~ Identified Areas of Support

Teacher Candidate:
Cooperating Teacher:
University Supervisor:

Discipline:
School:
Date:

Identified Areas Needing Immediate Focus:

Classroom Management
Lesson Implementation
Professionalism

Lesson Planning
Integrated Feedback
Other:

Specific strategies to be implemented by the teacher candidate for areas marked above:

Area 1

Area 2

Area 3

Please see next page for additional steps

Support Strategies for the Teacher Candidate (List Below)

1

2

3

4

Next steps may include, but are not limited to:

- Additional Focused Support
- Student Teaching Contract
- Meeting with Assistant Dean and/or Academic Department
- Additional Observation (by University Supervisor, School of Education - Assistant Dean)

The Cooperating Teacher may exercise their right to terminate the placement.

The areas of focus will be reevaluated by (candidate): _____

Teacher Candidate

University Supervisor

Cooperating Teacher

Appendix C – State of Connecticut Certification Application Guidance

Step 1: Create Your CECS Account

- Visit the Connecticut Educator Certification System ([CECS](#)) portal.
- Create an account using a personal email address (not CCSU email).
- Save your login information.
- Record your Educator Identification Number (EIN).

Step 2: Apply for Certification

- Log in to CECS and click "Apply Online".
- Select the appropriate Teacher/Educator certification endorsement.
- Submit an application. There is no fee for the first-time issuance of an Initial Educator Certificate in Connecticut.

Step 3: Submit Your Institutional Recommendation (ED 170A)

- Complete the highlighted sections of the [ED 170A form](#).
- Email the completed form to Dr. Daisy Torres-Hill, Assistant Dean & Certification Officer, at dtorres-hill1@ccsu.edu.
- The Certification Officer will verify completion of certification requirements and will complete the remaining sections.
- The Certification Officer will submit your institutional recommendation to CSDE.
- Institutional recommendations will be batch forwarded to the State on the 15th of each month.

Step 4: Send Official Transcripts

- Request transcripts from all colleges/universities attended.
- Wait until your Central degree is officially posted before sending your [Central transcript](#).
- We strongly recommend mailing your transcripts directly to the state. Send transcripts (include your EIN on the envelope) by mail to CSDE:

CT State Department of Education
Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification
P.O. Box 150471
Hartford, CT 06115-0471

Step 5: Monitor Your Application

- Check your CECS account regularly for updates.
- Standard process of certification applications is 6-8 weeks and 10-12 weeks during peak months.

Appendix D – Student Teaching Takeover Timeline

STUDENT TEACHING TAKEOVER TIMELINE

A gradual release of responsibility to build confidence, competence, and student success.

8-WEEK PLACEMENT



16-WEEK PLACEMENT



This progression supports your growth as a teacher while ensuring a successful experience for you and your students.

Appendix E – Web Resources for Employment

CTREAP: <http://www.ctreap.net/>

Capital Region Education Council (CREC): <https://www.crec.org/careers/>

Connecticut Education Association (CEA): <https://cea.org/jobs/>

Indeed: <https://www.indeed.com/l-Connecticut-jobs.html?vjk=6c8a880a73e34f98>

Teach Connecticut: <https://connecticut.teach.org/schools-community>

US Department of Education: <https://www.ed.gov/>

Appendix F – CCAST Summary

Candidate Preservice Assessment of Student Teaching	Candidates are evaluated in two areas: professional dispositions and instructional practice. Review these expectations with your cooperating teacher and university supervisor throughout the placement.
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1. PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Professional dispositions reflect the attitudes, behaviors, and responsibilities expected of all educators.

Professional Growth	Participates in professional learning, reflects on it, and applies new learning.
Communication with Families	Communicates professionally with families and shares information that supports student progress.
Punctuality	Arrives on time for daily teaching and other professional responsibilities.
Deadlines and Obligations	Meets responsibilities, communicates absences, and provides plans when absent.
Preparation	Comes prepared with organized plans, materials, and resources; remains flexible.
Collaboration	Works productively with the cooperating teacher and school community.
Advocacy	Recognizes learner or professional needs and take appropriate action.
Response to Feedback	Receives feedback professionally and uses it to improve practice.

2. INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE (PEDAGOGY)

Instructional practice reflects your ability to plan, teach, assess, and reflect on instruction.

Focus on Learning	Plans measurable, appropriate goals and aligns objectives, activities, and outcomes.
Materials and Resources	Selects relevant, accessible resources that support learning goals and learner needs.
Assessment of Learning	Plans varied, culturally relevant ways for students to demonstrate learning and growth.
Differentiated Methods	Connects learning to prior knowledge and adapts instructions for diverse learners.
Learning Targets and Directions	Communicates accurate targets, clear directions, and a logical lesson sequence.
Critical Thinking	Engages students in problem solving, conceptual connections, and questioning assumptions.
Checking for Understanding	Uses formative assessment and adjusts instruction in response to student needs.
Digital Tools	Uses appropriate technology to support goals, engagement, and demonstration of learning.
Learning Environment	Creates a safe, respectful classroom with effective routines, relationships, and engagement.
Data-Guided Instruction	Uses student data and appropriate tools to plan instruction and set goals.
Feedback to Learners	Provides timely, clear, descriptive, and actionable feedback.
Assessment Techniques	Uses varied, developmentally appropriate formative and summative assessments.
Research and Theory	Connects instructional decisions and student progress to educational research or theory.

PERFORMANCE LEVELS

3 EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	2 MEETS EXPECTATIONS	1 EMERGING	0 DOES NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS
Exemplary, consistent performance that often goes beyond expected practice.	Consistently demonstrates expected performance for a teacher candidate.	Developing skill; additional support or consistency is needed.	Expected practice is not yet demonstrated; significant improvement is needed.

You will receive ongoing feedback from both your cooperating teacher and university supervisor to support your growth.
Use this guide to understand what is expected and to reflect on your progress throughout your student teaching experience.

The full CCAST evaluation is in the SL&L platform.

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