

EDU 53 AND 56 EDUCATION FIELD PLACEMENT GUIDE

Department of Educational Studies, Swarthmore College

It is important to review this guide prior to your first visit.

EXPECTATIONS FOR PLACEMENTS AND STUDENT VISITORS

Field placements provide students with the opportunity to connect theory to practice while also developing a deeper understanding of the many factors and issues present in school settings. For this placement, your field teacher will expect you to work one-on-one or in small groups with students, or to assist with large group instruction.

In all field placements, students are expected to:

- Know the requirements and objectives of their fieldwork.
- Be punctual, reliable, and professional.
- Interact with teachers and students in respectful ways.
- Inquire how best to help, assist, and support the field teacher.
- Become involved in classroom activities.

BASIC PLACEMENT DETAILS

Determine the course requirements and objectives for this specific field placement. What are you expected to accomplish at this placement? Are you aware of the number of required visits/hours? Review the Letter to the Field Teacher, which describes expectations for your fieldwork. Are you prepared to explain these expectations to your field teacher?

When your placement is finalized, you will receive an email with specific details from the Field Placement Coordinator, Cathy Dunn. She will provide you with your school's name, start date and time slot for visits. She will also list the clearances that you need to bring for your school site. If she knows the placement teacher's name, she will provide it. In some cases, you will be assigned a placement teacher when you arrive for your first visit.

DIRECTIONS AND TRAVEL

Research a transportation plan for travel to your school; usually the field coordinator will provide you with instructions to use public transportation or the details on a van pool. If it seems unnecessarily long or difficult, contact the field coordinator Cathy Dunn (cdunn1) for assistance. If possible, plan to arrive 15 minutes before your field placement is scheduled to begin. **Print a copy of the directions and bring them with you on your first visit, as well as a map of the area in case you get lost. For van pools, bring phone numbers for your driver and fellow passengers.**

Write down the school's address and their phone number, in case you have a problem.

Train tickets are much more expensive if you wait to buy them on the train. We advise you to purchase tickets in advance. If you are a Swarthmore student and plan to seek travel reimbursement for your fares or for gas, please

visit the Department's website under "Field Placements and Clearances > Travel Reimbursement Policy" and review the requirements. It is important that you keep your receipts! Reimbursement occurs at the end of the semester, unless your circumstances require immediate assistance with travel fares. In such cases, for help, contact Ruthanne Krauss, the Administrative Assistant. She also handles all travel reimbursement questions. Swarthmore cannot provide travel reimbursement for TriCollege students enrolled in this class; they should contact manaksingh44@gmail.com to inquire about their school's policies.

SCHEDULING YOUR VISITS

You will visit the school's website prior to your first visit, to learn more about the school. While there, also look also for a calendar that might indicate when the school is closed for holidays or in-service. If you cannot find this calendar on the school's page, it may be posted on a larger district website. Make sure to check that the school is open on your planned visit dates. Put these dates on the back of the letter of introduction that you will bring to your placement teacher.

WHAT TO BRING TO YOUR PLACEMENT

- Letter for each of your teachers, which includes your visitation schedule and contact info on the back.
- Proper Clearances, as described in your placement email. Olney students turn these into HR office.
- Photo ID on lanyard (*Your driver's license or Swarthmore ID*)
- School Directions, including a map or Contact Info for your Van Driver (phone number)
- Transportation Fares (*Save receipts for reimbursement*)
- Appropriate attire (*See next section for details*)

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE AND PROFESSIONALISM

Please wear clean, professional attire appropriate for your school's context and your role as an adult in the classroom. If you have questions, ask your professor and other students familiar with the school for guidance about what to wear. It can be helpful to look at the school's dress code, which is often posted on their website. Also take cues from your field teacher and other professionals in the school.

Should you find yourself waiting or in a school office area, we encourage you to observe and interact with the environment. Consider greeting and acknowledging the staff and students that you might encounter. Your cell phone should always be off and put away while in the school building. Please do not bring food or drinks into the school until you understand what is acceptable to that school's culture (ask your teacher if you aren't sure).

Students should be mindful of appropriate and professional interactions with children. Under no circumstances should you be in electronic communication with minors or have contact outside of the classroom setting. Please use staff or single stall bathrooms in school buildings. Child safety, professionalism, and confidentiality will be covered in class, prior to your first fieldwork visit.

MISSING A SCHEDULED VISIT

If you are ill, it is important to contact your teacher as soon as possible and to copy your professor on the email. If you wake-up ill, both email and call your teacher, since he/she may have difficulty receiving a message at the start of the school day. Having too much academic work is not a valid reason for missing a placement. Emails should be short, concise and professional (check your spelling).

Most importantly, please remember that field teachers expect you to be professional and on time; if you make a mistake, a short note of apology is a good idea.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the case of inclement weather, it is your responsibility to determine if your school is closed or running on a different schedule. Information about school closings/late openings can be found at <http://philadelphia.cbslocal.com/schools/> or on the School District of Philadelphia's webpage.

Additionally, if you are taking public transportation to your placement, be sure to check the SEPTA website for information about route changes or closings. This information may be found at www.septa.org. If a school is open but you cannot get there due to weather, be sure to notify your teacher(s) as soon as possible.

Philadelphia public schools often stay open in poor weather conditions, but SEPTA will often experience significant delays.

PLACEMENT QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Make sure to discuss with your professor the guidelines for appropriate contact with minors and the proper process for reporting any concerns that might arise while in the field. Remember that you should never be alone with students, have physical contact with them or correspond/communicate with them outside of the classroom.

Several Department members assist in the planning and supervising of field placement experiences. Please direct your questions to the following contacts accordingly:

- Contact your professor with questions/concerns about field work and your experiences at the school.
- Contact Swarthmore's Fieldwork Coordinator, Cathy Dunn (cdunn1@swarthmore.edu), with questions/concerns regarding placement logistics, start dates, etc. (215)868-5954
- Contact the Department's Administrative Assistant, Ruthanne Krauss (rkrauss1@swarthmore.edu) with questions/concerns about transportation reimbursement. (610)328-8344
- Contact your school/teacher regarding absences after your start date. Copy your professor.