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Music Education Area Head

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**Practicum Packet: Guidelines for the Cooperating Teacher**

Fredonia’s Music Education students, faculty members, and administrators thank you for the personal and professional contribution you are making by allowing our candidate to work with you and your students! Please feel free to send us comments, suggestions, or ideas that you have concerning our program and/or our students’ preparation. The following are some guidelines that may be helpful in working with our student in this Practicum/Early Field Experience:

* Establish a clear schedule, including times, duties, and locations. This will be your chance to communicate your expectations concerning their participation and the variety of activities with which you are involved.
* Advise the student of your school’s rules concerning dress, conduct, and deportment for teachers. We always advise our students to dress and act conservatively and professionally. However, schools often have unique rules and culture that may not be obvious to the student and that are important for them to know.
* Advise the student of procedures for lockdowns, fire drills, discipline conflicts, and other unique situations. Although this information may not come into play while the student is attending your school, it is important for future teachers to begin to learn the various ways that different schools approach these issues.
* Introduce the student to other faculty and staff members. Our students often look young and act shy, and therefore other faculty members may mistakenly assume that they are high school students. A brief introduction to faculty and staff members can help our students to visualize themselves becoming “real” teachers.
* Discuss the potential areas of responsibility in which (a) the student is most interested or with which they feel most comfortable, and (b) you feel most comfortable in allowing the student to participate. As you get to know our students’ abilities, you can better plan for their participation in your program. Some teachers in this situation request that the Fredonia student “audition” on instruments, conducting, etc.
* Remember that Practicum students have not yet completed student teaching or, in many cases, any methods classes. Although they may not yet have had formal teaching instruction, you can expect them to be ready to learn through opportunities to model on their major instrument, lead warm-ups, join in rehearsals by participating near students who need extra help or attention, and in other introductory and supporting roles.
* Share helpful hints and suggestions with Fredonia students. Our students tell us this is one of the most important parts of any practicum. The more you can tell or demonstrate, the more they will be able to learn.
* Scan Fredonia’s Practicum Agreement and Evaluation forms or fill in the digital forms the student emails you. Fredonia students are responsible for gathering and submitting their Practicum forms, so please email the Practicum Agreement and Evaluation forms you complete to the Fredonia student you host. These forms document students’ completion of NYSED-required pre-service field experiences, so we cannot give credit until we receive the completed forms from them.

A special note: If at any time you feel that your program or your own efforts are being hampered by the student, whether through irresponsible behavior (unprepared, comes late, etc.) or teaching difficulties (musically or technically weak in certain skills), please handle the problem in whatever manner you feel is appropriate. If that means you must cancel the practicum experience or severely limit the student’s involvement in your program, that is acceptable with us. The students all understand that this is always a real possibility and should be treated as a learning experience. Should such an occasion occur, please notify me at your earliest convenience.

Finally, the practicum experience is a valuable part of our students’ preparation to be a well-prepared music teacher. Thank you for supporting the next generation of music teachers by participating in our program!

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