

# The Acorn

A Newsletter for CSB/SJU Cooperating Teachers

**Volume 6, no. 1--Friday, August 25, 2023**



## **Growing, Nurturing, and Supporting CSB/SJU Student Teachers**

*The Acorn* is a newsletter for the cooperating teachers working with student teachers from the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University. This publication is intended to help our cooperating teachers understand their roles and responsibilities as well as provide them with current research and best practice in working with student teachers. Additional information helpful to mentorship, pedagogy, and current issues in education is often included.

## **A Message from the Director of Student Teaching**

Thank you to all of our cooperating teachers for welcoming teacher candidates from our program into your classrooms and schools this year. We are grateful for you and honor the work you have done and will do with all of our students. Your involvement in shaping future educators is work we deeply value and appreciate.



We ground our work as teacher educators in our model of Teacher as Reflective Decision Maker and with the institutional values and beliefs embedded in Benedictine traditions. All of these elements center on an individual's responsibility to thoughtful practice and community. As a mentor teacher, you are bringing someone new into your community—classroom, school, and beyond—to engage in building practices that will positively impact teaching and learning. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (2011) remind us that "Teachers learn by doing, reading, and reflecting (just as students do); by collaborating with other teachers; by looking closely at students and their work; and by sharing what they see" (p. 83).

As your time with our student teachers begins, we have been mindful that being a cooperating teacher is a significant commitment of time and energy. We have begun to ease that by having our teacher candidates center their work around goals that will be shared with you. We know that

“mentors need to collaborate with the mentee for establishing...goals and facilitate the mentee's self-reflection towards a higher level of expertise” (Hudson, 2004, p. 144). To become more intentional about their work and growth in the teaching and learning community, our candidates rely heavily on their cooperating teachers for their modeling, feedback, and collaboration to that end.

To help your student teacher succeed, I encourage you to consider the advice of educator Jill Staake (2018):

1. Be honest and direct
2. Model the right behaviors
3. Help them plan in advance
4. Use co-teaching, especially at the beginning
5. Provide constant feedback
6. Be up front when they're struggling

These tidbits connect us back into our teacher candidates as reflective members of the teaching and learning community and position us to collaborate as builders in the next generation of educators.

This semester we will be working with our student teachers to develop their professional identities and practices. Guiding that intention will be the work of [The Minor Collective](#). In [Teaching Fiercely](#) and [We Got This](#), Kass and Cornelius Minor provide us with frameworks to improve our practice to support diverse learners and build equitable, productive classroom spaces. I encourage you to check these out.

References:

Darling-Hammond, L., & McLaughlin, M. W. (2011). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(6), 81-92.

Hudson, P. (2004). From generic to specific mentoring: A five-factor model for developing primary teaching practices. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 27(2).

Staake, J. (2018, November 16). *6 ways to HELP student teachers succeed*. We Are Teachers. <https://www.weareteachers.com/help-student-teachers/>.

## Coaching Adult Learners and Mentoring Student Teachers Requirements

Effective July 1, 2022, all individuals who serve in the capacity of cooperating teacher or university supervisor for student teachers are required to complete training on coaching strategies for adult learners. To meet this PELSB and State requirement, CSB/SJU provides three options for cooperating teachers and university supervisors:

1. For members of Education Minnesota, complete the training through their professional development platform: [https://meaonline.learnupon.com/users/sign\\_in?next=%2Fdashboard](https://meaonline.learnupon.com/users/sign_in?next=%2Fdashboard)
2. For members of the CSB/SJU student teaching community, complete the training with us using this link: [Coaching Adult Learners training](#)
3. For individuals who have completed training with another placing institution, provide evidence in the form of a CEU certificate or letter from the granting institution to the CSB/SJU Director of Student Teaching via email at [jmeagher001@csbsju.edu](mailto:jmeagher001@csbsju.edu)

This training is required once every five years. A statewide system of reporting completion is in process to ensure all cooperating teachers and university supervisors who serve the state's student

teachers have met this requirement. CSB/SJU will be reporting our completers to that entity each semester.

Thank you for your time and attention to this responsibility. The information you will glean from these trainings should be valuable to your role.

## The First Two Weeks for Student Teachers

### Week 1 with Students:

- Help the student teacher get to know your students, the teachers, and the school
- Review the Orientation Guidelines/Checklist
- Assist the student teacher in setting up observations—one of the cooperating teacher and another of a colleague
- Allow the student teacher to assist with planning, preparation of lessons and materials, monitoring of individual and group work.
- Develop a schedule to build reaching responsibilities up to full teaching responsibilities for a minimum of 3 full weeks for 12- and 16- week placements, 2 for 8-week placements.
- Discuss goals the student teacher has and begin providing feedback toward those goals.

### Week 2 with Students:

- Work with the student teacher in lesson planning (reviewing plans daily) and management design.
- Co-teach lessons throughout the day
- Conduct informal observations and provide actionable feedback.
- Complete [feedback form](#) (optional). Feel free to email any celebrations or concerns to Jennifer Meagher at [jmeagher001@csbsju.edu](mailto:jmeagher001@csbsju.edu)
- Elementary: Allow the student teacher to solo teach 30-40 minutes per day and lead morning meetings/classroom routines.
- Secondary: Allow the student teacher to fully teach at least one section

## Quick Links

[CSB/SJU Student Teaching Handbook](#)

[Student Teaching Observations 2023-2024](#)

This observation/evaluation form should be used to complete observations throughout the placement. Six formal observations of the student teacher are required within the span of student teaching. We ask that you complete 6 for a 16-week placement, 5 in a 12-week placement, 3 in an 8-week placement, and 2 in a 5-week placement. The entire form does not need to be completed for each observation; however, by the end of the placement, each part should be addressed.

Additional Forms:

[Cooperating Teacher Information](#) (if not completed in the past three years)

[Feedback](#) (week 2 and as needed after)

[Cooperating Teacher's Final Evaluation of Student Teacher](#)

[Cooperating Teacher's Dispositional Evaluation of Student Teacher](#)



# Encouragement for the Beginning of the Year

<https://youtu.be/zI13SkDPFIY>



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