

Welcome to the Internship Year

Through the combined efforts of all of us, Interns, Collaborative Teachers, and Field Instructors, we know we will have a rewarding and exciting school year. We believe that a successful internship can be built upon the following beliefs and objectives:

Beliefs About Teaching and Learning

- All persons are learners and bring particular experiences, perspectives, and insights to educational settings which are essential contributions to be built upon in any teaching - learning relationship. The responsible and effective teacher must assume the capacity of all learners and seek ways to extend their knowledge and interns.
- Teachers are learners as well, and need to pursue and extend their own interests in and understanding of subject matter and how to teach it in ways that respect the integrity of students and the disciplines. And, they need to examine those understandings in light of ongoing developments in disciplinary fields.
- Teaching practice is complex and evolving in relationship to new learners, changing school circumstances, new perceptions and understandings, interactions with colleagues, etc. Reflection and inquiry are essential tools for life-long learning by teachers.
- Teachers have essential experience and insight about the education of youngsters which are necessary resources for successful schools. School settings which do best in educating youngsters also foster teacher initiative and collaborative decision making.

Beliefs About Learning to Teach

- Interns learn best in the company of exemplary teachers who are committed to ongoing study and improvement of their own practice.
- Interns need carefully structured and sequenced opportunities to practice thinking and acting like a teacher.
- Both universities and schools have important and complementary contributions to make to interns learning.

Based upon current research by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC, 1998), we concur with the following objectives for the internship experience:

- 1) to facilitate the application of knowledge and skills
- 2) to convey advanced knowledge and skills
- 3) to assist timely acculturation in the school climate
- 4) to reduce stress and enhance job satisfaction
- 5) to support professional induction

We know that the Internship Year is a learning year for all of us. Together with a supportive and communicative atmosphere, we can all be successful.

Michigan State University
Faculty & Staff
Special Education Internship