

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Office of Field Experiences • 1200 University Street • Unit 9038 • Spearfish, SD 57799

EDFN 595

Pre-Admission Teaching Practicum

Fall 2026

Clinical Educator Handbook



BLACK HILLS

STATE UNIVERSITY

"The Mission of the College of Education is to prepare competent, confident, and caring professionals."

Introduction

Thank you for your willingness to work with our BHSU students! Your commitment to the professional development of new teachers is commendable.

The Professional Teacher Preparation Program at Black Hills State University is designed to provide a variety of field experiences for the BHSU student. These field experiences, coordinated with university coursework, help give them the experience necessary to develop as a competent, confident, and caring educator.

EDFN 595 - Pre-Admission Practicum is the first of three field experiences in which BHSU students will develop their skills and understandings of teaching as a professional career. Specifically, the pre-admission practicum experience is designed to provide:

- (1) an opportunity to observe a teacher in a classroom,
- (2) a chance to interact with students in a K-12 school environment,
- (3) an opportunity to understand each school's culture and key individuals, and
- (4) information to determine if teaching is a career one wants to pursue.

BHSU students are required to spend a minimum of twenty (40) hours in a classroom to observe and talk with practicing teachers. The BHSU student will look at the classroom through the lens of the ten Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards (proficiencies new teachers should demonstrate) and explore the many dimensions of each of the standards.

They will observe practicing teachers demonstrating these standards and will discuss questions related to each standard through an in-depth interview with each teacher. They will also record observational notes from classroom visits and write a final paper demonstrating their understandings of the InTASC standards supplemented with classroom examples.

The following pages provide an in-depth description of this practicum course and the mission of the BHSU Professional Teacher Preparation Program.

GLOSSARY	
Clinical Educator	K—12 Classroom Teacher; previously known as Clinical Faculty or Cooperating Teacher
Students	All students/learners in K—12 classrooms

The BHSU College of Education Mission Statement & Explanations

The Mission of the College of Education is to prepare competent, confident, and caring professionals.

We aspire beyond the pedagogy of traditional teaching approaches to design effective learning environments with the goal of preparing competent teachers. These teachers create classrooms of active and reflective learners. Competent teachers are knowledgeable of content, understand that a clear awareness of theory leads to better practice, reflect on their teaching experiences, and use multiple methods and strategies to promote student learning.

We aim to develop confident teachers who believe they can profoundly affect students' lives in a positive manner, who persevere in the face of obstacles and failures to excel in the teaching profession, and who embrace the challenges of being lifelong learners and transformative intellectuals.

We seek to develop caring teachers by modeling care and concern for our education students. The faculty strives to treat each student with respect and dignity, to value diversity, to honor all students' ideas, beliefs, and individual differences, and to establish a learning community of understanding and open communication in the College. In turn, we expect our BHSU students to demonstrate care and respect for all learners in their field placements.

Expectations of the K-12 Clinical Educator

Please note that the BHSU students have not yet been admitted to the Professional Teacher Preparation Program and this is their first field experience. They are required to complete a minimum of forty (40) hours in your classroom. During that time, please allow them to do all of the following:

1. Observe you as you teach and plan, if possible. They are required to take observational notes during this time so that they can begin to see the connection between the InTASC standards in theory and how they play out in practice. Since they have had no methods coursework, please do not expect them to plan and teach any lessons. They have not yet been trained for this.
2. Discuss any questions they might have and explain why you make the teaching decisions you do. Additionally, they will have a set of interview questions for you. This requires approximately thirty (30) minutes of your time. Please make time for this interview at your convenience. Your positive encouragement of their inquisitiveness is much appreciated.

Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC)

Standards and Suggestions for Observation Notes

InTASC Standard 1: Learner Development. The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

How does the teacher...

- o demonstrate understanding the developmental needs of the students?
- o provide multiple opportunities for students to assume responsibility for and be actively engaged in their learning?
- o help students make connections between new learning and students' prior knowledge?
- o provide learning experiences that are developmentally appropriate?

Think about who formulates the questions in the classroom: teachers, students, or both. What is the typical teacher/student interaction in the classroom? Is the variety of students' multiple intelligences considered in instruction and class assignments? What do these things imply about the relationships between teachers and students in the classroom?

InTASC Standard 2: Learner Differences. The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

How does the teacher...

- o design instruction appropriate to each learner's learning styles and needs?
- o adjust instruction to accommodate the needs of all students (time and circumstance of work, tasks assigned, communication, and response modes)?
- o select instructional strategies that provide appropriate learning opportunities for all students?

Think about what the teacher does to help struggling and advanced students. How does the teacher meet the needs of students in ways that are useful for the students? What accommodations are made to teaching and learning? Are they adequate for the student? What do the accommodations made by the teacher suggest about their beliefs about all students' abilities to learn?

InTASC Standard 3: Learning Environment. The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

How does the teacher...

- o use clear procedures and expectations to help students take responsibility for their own and others' learning and interactions?
- o use student interests, give students choices, and lead students to ask their own questions in the classroom?
- o manage student behavior and implement rules and procedures?
- o manage time and materials in a way that is conducive to learning?

- o make adjustments to the classroom to enhance student relationships, motivation, and learning?

Think about the physical arrangement of the school and classroom. What does it suggest about the school's/classroom's environment and the relationship between adults and students? Describe the classroom's social environment: cohesiveness, diversity, formality, pace of learning, favoritism, cliquishness, satisfaction, apathy, competitiveness, and authoritarian or democratic atmosphere. What are the classroom routines and rules? How and by whom were they decided? What does this imply about teacher and student relationships in the classroom? How are students grouped for instruction? What seems to be the basis for the grouping? What assumptions about learning does the grouping pattern reflect? What beliefs, values, attitudes, and behaviors does the grouping pattern promote in students?

InTASC Standard 4: Content Knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) taught and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content. How does the teacher...

- o demonstrate understanding of the content being taught?
- o encourage students to look at ideas from varying perspectives?
- o refer to other content areas to help students make connections?

Think about who decides what is taught in the classroom. Are students encouraged to accept or to question the views expressed in their textbooks? Of the views expressed by their teachers? Of their own views and those of other students? What does this suggest about the source(s) of authority in the school?

InTASC Standard 5: Application of Content. The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues. How does the teacher...

- o model effective communication for students?
- o provide support for students' speaking, writing, and other media?
- o use a variety media communication tools to enrich learning opportunities?
- o demonstrate culturally- and gender-appropriate communication with all students?

Think about who does most of the talking in the classroom. Do students listen to each other as attentively as they do to the teacher? Do the students address most of their statements/questions to the teacher or other students? What does this imply about the relationship between teacher and students in the classroom?

InTASC Standard 6: Assessment. The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

How does the teacher ...

- o use a variety of informal and formal strategies to make choices about how to adjust instruction?
- o Select, construct, and use assessment strategies appropriate to learning outcomes?
- o get learners involved in self-evaluation and use information about students' experiences, needs, learning behaviors?

Think about if/how the teacher knows if students are indeed learning. What tools are used to assess student learning? What assumptions are made about student learning by using these assessments? How does the teacher use assessment data to inform what is done next with each student? What does this suggest about the teacher's view of the relationship between assessment and student learning?

InTASC Standard 7: Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context. How does the teacher...

- o plan lessons and activities to address varied learning styles and needs?
- o adjust plans to respond to unanticipated occurrences or student needs?
- o develop short- and long-term plans?

Think about the emphasis the teacher places on lesson plans. How are they done? In what format? Why? What does this imply about the importance of being prepared for each class?

InTASC Standard 8: Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways. How does the teacher...

- o use different teaching and learning strategies (variety of visual presentations/explanations) to encourage critical thinking and problem solving?
- o assume different roles (instructor, facilitator, coach, audience) to accommodate learner needs?

Think about if there is a focus on a single correct answer or on a number of possible answers or strategies to arrive at an answer? Who or what is the source of authority in the classroom? Are varied teaching strategies used?

InTASC Standard 9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner. How does the teacher...

- o use classroom observation for evaluating the outcomes of teaching and learning and as a basis experimenting with, reflecting on, and revising practice?
- o use professional literature, colleagues, and other resources to support self-development as a learner?
- o actively share and seek feedback both within and outside the school to reflect on practice?
- o grow and develop professionally and model professionalism?

Think about whether the teacher works well with colleagues and reflects on lessons taught? How does this reflection cycle impact instructional practices? What does this imply about the value the teacher places on personal improvement as an educator?

InTASC Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners,

families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

How does the teacher...

- o participate in a professional learning community?
- o work with counselors, other teachers, community professionals, etc. to support student learning?
- o seek to establish communication and cooperative partnerships with parents/guardians to support students' learning and well-being? o advocate for students?
- o show professionalism?

Think about how the teacher interacts with parents. Is the communication one-way only (teacher-to-parent) or is input welcomed from parents? Are parents viewed positively by the teacher? What assumptions does the teacher make about parents and the students' home lives? What does this imply about the teacher's beliefs about parents and their ability to support their children? How does this impact the teacher's ability and desire to support all students? How does this impact the teacher's expectations for student achievement?

Procedures for BHSU Students to Contact School/K — 12 Clinical Educators:

1. The Office of Field Experiences contacts the EDFN 595 students about placements.
2. BHSU students are expected to call each school as soon as they are placed. They will tell the secretary who they are and that they are in the Pre-Admission Practicum and are working with [clinical educator's name]. They will ask for contact info (e-mail, phone, etc.) and then contact the clinical educator.
3. Set a date for an initial visit and negotiate classroom observation dates and times with their clinical educator. They will complete the Practicum Planning Form provided in the student handbook.
4. They must be sure to check in at the office at the beginning of each visit.
5. They must be pleasant, courteous, and professional at all times. They are making their first impression on people in the field of education. Dress professionally.

Tips Given to BHSU Students to Create a Positive Field Experience:

1. Be genuinely enthusiastic and curious about teaching as a possible profession. Offer assistance by asking, "What can I do to help?"
2. Show interest when talking with and listening to the clinical educator and PK-12 students.
3. Cooperate with the clinical educator, helping as asked, accepting direction, and being dependable.
4. Take time to chat with the school secretaries, principal, and custodian about their roles and jobs within the school structure.
5. Be punctual and in the classroom when the clinical educator expects you.
6. Remember that confidentiality is imperative.
7. Follow PK-12 students out to other rooms, such as the library, computers, music, etc. if possible. Coordinate these visits with your clinical educator.
8. Do not chew gum, eat candy or in any other way violate school rules.
9. Leave all cell phones off while in the class room.
10. Do not be critical or judgmental. Avoid giving suggestions to your clinical educator!
11. Do not be left alone in the classroom with PK-12 students.
12. Participate in all events and duties that your clinical educator attends, if possible.
13. Ask to see teacher, PK-12 student, and/or parent handbooks, as well as the school calendar.
14. If there is a substitute, stay! The substitute can sign the time log.

Clinical Educator Information on Forms to Sign/Fill Out

BHSU students will have some forms for which they will need your signature and/or comments. These are:

1. **Practicum Planning Form.** During their first visit with you, BHSU students must discuss with you a mutually agreeable schedule for the completion of their hours at your school. They are to complete the EDFN 595 Practicum Planning Form with your approval. A copy of this form can be found on page 10 of this handbook. In addition, they are to meet the principal (or administrator designee) and get his/her signature as well. Completion of the principal section will be based on a time that is most convenient for the administrator.
2. **Clinical Educator Interview Questions.** BHSU students must conduct an interview with you (the questions are on page 11 of this handbook). Please sign off on the bottom of that sheet to confirm that the interview was successfully completed. They are responsible for returning this form to the university instructor.
3. **Time Log.** BHSU students will fill in the details of when they arrived and left each day. Please sign off each day to verify their attendance. Please also sign the bottom of the sheet on their final day confirming that they have attended a minimum of 40 hours (page 12 of this handbook). They are responsible for returning this form to the university instructor.

EDFN 595 Practicum Planning Form

Use this template to plan the dates during which you will complete your practicum hours.

Contact Information for Each Placement			
Candidate Name:		Clinical Educator Name:	
School:	Content:	Grade Level(s)	Others:
School Phone #:	Clinical Educator email: _____ Candidate email: _____		
Introduce Yourself			
I met the school administrator or designee on (date) _____		Signature from the school administrator or designee _____	
I have a school handbook and reviewed it: yes no		I have a school calendar: yes no	
The school day begins at _____		The school day ends at _____	
Did you have to do a school orientation or training required by the school district? Yes No (This is usually for students placed in Spearfish Middle School and Rapid City Area Schools)		Date:	
Tentative Schedule			
My practicum is _____ hours ELED 495 is 6 to 7 weeks: Calendar provided		I plan on starting my practicum hours on _____	
Date and Time:		Date and Time:	
Date and Time:		Date and Time:	
Date and Time:		Date and Time:	
Date and Time:		Date and Time:	
Date and Time:		Date and Time:	
Date and Time:		Date and Time:	

Interview Questions for the PK-12 Clinical Educator

1. Learner Development - How do you meet the developmental needs of all the different learners in your classroom? (InTASC 1)
2. Learning Differences - What types of diverse learners do you have in your classroom? How do you adjust your instruction to accommodate the learning differences of the learners in your classroom? (For example: Special Needs Students, Gifted, ELL, etc.) (InTASC 2)
3. Learning Environments - How do you create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation? How do you manage student behavior and implement rules and procedures? (InTASC 3)
4. Content Knowledge - What is the most important content you teach your students? How do you decide what to teach and how to teach it? (InTASC 4)
5. Application of Content - What strategies do you use to encourage communication in your classroom? How do you use technology to help you communicate ideas to learners? How do you engage your students in critical thinking and collaborative problem solving? (InTASC 5)
6. Assessment - What data do you collect about student learning in your classroom? How do you use that data/evidence to guide your instructional practices and improve student learning? What tools are used to assess student learning? (InTASC 6)
7. Planning for Instruction - Describe your process for long-term and short-term lesson planning. Do you plan collaboratively with your colleagues? (InTASC 7)
8. Instructional Strategies - What different kinds of instructional strategies do you use that help foster your learners' critical thinking and problem-solving abilities? (InTASC 8)
9. Professional Learning and Ethical Practice - Describe how you use reflection as a way to improve your practice as a professional. What professional literature do you read to stay current with the teaching profession? (InTASC 9)
10. Leadership and Collaboration - How do you foster relationships with colleagues, parents, and the community? (InTASC 10)
11. Why do you teach?
12. What is the best thing about teaching, in your view?
13. What is the most frustrating thing about teaching?
14. What advice do you have for me as a BHSU student?

Signatures below verify that the BHSU student and clinical educator have met and discussed the questions above.

Clinical Educator Signature

Date

BHSU Student Signature

Date

EDFN 595: PRE-ADMISSION TEACHING PRACTICUM

Time Log

BHSU Student Name _____ Semester/Year _____

School _____ District _____

Clinical Educator _____ Grade Level/Subject _____

You must fill out all information in the table below and have your K-12 clinical educator sign off on each visit, as well as at the bottom of the page verifying your total hours. You fill in the information; the clinical educator simply verifies the times and signs his/her name.

Date	Time Arrived	Time Finished	Total Hours Completed	K-12 Clinical Educator Signature

I verify that the above-named BHSU student has completed _____ hours under my supervision.

K-12 Clinical Educator Signature

Date