



2026-2027

Early Childhood Student Teaching HANDBOOK



THE WELS COLLEGE OF MINISTRY

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Preface

This handbook is dedicated to the children who attend early childhood ministries within the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and to those who have the privilege of serving in the public teaching ministry, leading these children ever closer to their Savior. The children's spiritual, physical, cognitive, and socioemotional welfare is the focal point for all the work of teacher candidates, cooperating teachers, and college supervisors.

The handbook is intended to assist in coordinating the efforts of all those working in the Martin Luther College student teaching program. The guidance it offers is directed toward helping to make the student teaching experience contribute significantly to the training of competent teachers and caregivers who will be ready to serve in the church's ministry.

The student teaching experience is a foundational component of preparation for the public ministry and vital to professional growth. The teacher candidate has a great responsibility to be conscientious in all aspects of this work. The cooperating teacher also undertakes a serious responsibility by providing guidance and assistance to help the teacher candidate develop abilities to become a capable teacher. Full cooperation between the teacher candidate, cooperating teacher, and the college supervisor is of utmost importance to achieve a positive student teaching experience.

The principles, policies, and procedures of the student teaching program constitute the majority of the handbook. The comprehensive framework is an important component to a full, complete experience. Any questions or comments related to the guidelines can be directed to Professor Gut or Professor Mehlberg.

May God richly bless the work of teacher candidates, cooperating teachers, and college supervisors during the school year. May his special blessing rest on those who are preparing themselves for full-time service in his kingdom. May his Spirit move us to pray that Christ be and remain the focus of training teachers for our WELS early childhood ministries. To him be the glory!

Your Servant in Christ,



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*Information in this handbook is current as of July 2026. Martin Luther College reserves the right to make changes in this handbook without advance notice. The most current information can be found in the electronic version of the **2026-27 Early Childhood Student Teaching Handbook** on the MLC website.*

Martin Luther College Mission Statement

The mission of Martin Luther College is to train men and women to meet the public ministry needs of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) and to proclaim the Word of God faithfully and in accord with the Lutheran Confessions in the Book of Concord. To fulfill this mission, Martin Luther College carries out all instruction and programs of student life according to the gospel as revealed in the inspired and inerrant Word of God.

With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the college desires

- To deepen in the student saving faith in the forgiving grace of Jesus Christ;
- To strengthen the student in a consecrated spirit of love for God and his Word;
- To foster in the student a servant's heart for Christ-like service in the church, community, and world;
- To educate the student for faithful, capable, and intelligent citizenship in today's world;
- To assist the student in acquiring the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed for service in the church and for lifelong learning;
- To help the student to develop the spiritual, emotional, and physical resiliency that will assist them to persevere in service under the cross; and
- To provide for the student an affordable college experience on a beautiful and attractive campus.

To meet the current ministry needs of the WELS, Martin Luther College

- Prepares men for pastoral training at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary;
- Prepares men and women for service as teachers and staff ministers in the synod's churches, schools, and other institutions;
- Prepares men and women for other public ministry in the church, both full- and part-time, responding to the needs of the WELS;
- Prepares international students for ministry in partnership with WELS mission fields; and
- Provides programs of professional and continuing education that meet the ministerial needs of the WELS.

Early Childhood Ministries – Philosophy, Principles, Guidelines

Introduction

Formal early childhood education has grown in importance in both church and society. The care and education of young children outside the home has become almost indispensable in our society. Early childhood education in the church reflects society's trends as well as the church's concern for the Christian nurturing of young children and their families.

The church needs to think through and articulate the principles and practices that we believe to be appropriate and scriptural in early childhood education. This document presents general statements that can be beneficial to congregations in establishing and operating early childhood education programs. The portions of Scripture cited can provide a useful basis for discussion and be a wholesome guide to practice in our congregations.

Early childhood education is commonly defined as education for children between birth and age eight. While these principles and guidelines are applicable for the education of children birth through age eight, most WELS early childhood ministries focus on the education of children prior to the first-grade level. For purposes of this document, therefore, early childhood is defined as a ministry of education to children at home, in a Christian school, or in some other church agency, from birth through kindergarten.

Philosophy

God specifically gives parents the primary responsibility for nurturing their children. Christian early childhood ministries provide for the Christian nurturing of young children, which is a necessary aspect of the mission of the church. This unique ministry strives to meet the spiritual, social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs of young children in a developmentally appropriate manner.

Principles and Guidelines

I. God gives parents the primary responsibility for nurturing their children.

A. *Parents specifically have been given this responsibility.*

Scripture identifies the family as our first and most enduring relationship. It teaches that children are a "heritage from the Lord" (Psalm 127:3) and that God gives parents the direction to "bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). Christian early childhood ministries will encourage and assist parents in meeting their responsibilities toward their children and will endeavor to emphasize the joys of taking these privileges to heart.

B. *Christian early childhood ministries support parents in carrying out this responsibility.*

Christian early childhood programs are ministries to children and parents. They are carried out with an awareness of the family setting and are responsive to the needs of the family. From the time of the child's birth, early childhood ministries work directly with parents in providing materials, activities, and training in the privilege of being their child's most important teacher. When the parent enrolls the child in an agency of the congregation, this ministry includes the child directly as well as the parent. Parents are included in this training and instruction of the Lord by involving them meaningfully and appropriately in the activities of the early childhood ministry.

II. The Christian nurturing of young children and their families is a necessary aspect of the mission of the church.

A. *The mission of the church is to make disciples.*

The church carries out its various forms of ministry for the sake of and by the command of Christ to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). This disciple-making includes the two complementary tasks of reaching out to the unbeliever and nurturing the faith of the believer. Children are particularly included, as Peter told the crowd on Pentecost: “the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39). Thus, the Christian early childhood ministry of a congregation will include both outreach and nurture in its program and policies.

B. *God has given the church the responsibility to assist parents in training the young.*

The Old Testament often describes the community of believers, the church, as instructed and trained children (2 Chronicles 20:13; Nehemiah 8:3; Nehemiah 12:43). Our Lord gave a specific command to the church to nurture children in his words to Peter: “Feed my lambs” (John 21:15). The church has historically established agencies for the education of the young. Christian early childhood ministries are now a growing part of that rich tradition. The church meets this responsibility when its programs encourage and support parents in their God-given obligations and help children grow as disciples of Jesus Christ.

C. *Christian training is necessary for young children.*

By precept and example, the Bible speaks to the necessity of Christian training for young children. The need for Christian training is found in the sinful nature of the child (Psalm 51:5). The words of our Lord declare that the truths of Scripture can and must be taught to children (Mark 10:14-15), and the admonitions of Proverbs clearly and directly prescribe training (22:6). The examples of Samuel (1 Samuel 3:19) and Timothy (2 Timothy 3:15) are to be emulated by families and congregations today. The WELS upholds its heritage and the clear words of Scripture as it provides for the Christian education of young children. Attitudes, knowledge, and skills that foster growth as a child of God are developed at an early age.

D. *Christian early childhood education is a part of a congregation’s ministry to families.*

The various agencies of Christian education (e.g., childcare, preschool, Sunday School, the Lutheran elementary school, and youth ministries) have a cooperative purpose to support and reinforce the goals of Christian outreach and nurture, particularly as parents and teachers share these goals. Early childhood education should be one strand of the congregation’s approach to Christian education. Under God’s blessings, this ministry will serve to nurture the home-church partnership by being a means to strengthen the relationship of the family with the Savior.

III. Christian early childhood ministries strive to meet the spiritual, social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs of young children in a developmentally appropriate manner.

A. *Christian early childhood ministries need to be developmentally appropriate for young children.*

God created human life as developmental. Every human moves through developmental stages from childhood through adulthood. By that creation and by implication in the words of Scripture, Christian early childhood education should be appropriately structured for the developmental needs of young children.

Characteristics of this type of program are:

Age appropriate: Child development research has shown that children progress through predictable stages of growth and maturation. A teacher who understands the stages of development can better prepare a learning environment and select materials and activities that foster that development.

Individually appropriate: God has determined an individual timetable of growth and development for each child. In addition, each child has unique characteristics, learning styles, and family experiences. Christian early childhood ministries and the teacher's relationship with the child need to reflect an understanding of and sensitivity for these individual differences. Learning in young children is the result of a complex interaction involving all aspects of the child's life—his thoughts; his experiences with materials, ideas, and people; adequate nutrition and rest; and the routines and discipline in his environment. These factors and experiences should coincide with the child's unfolding abilities while also challenging the child's curiosities and understandings. Christian early childhood educators will seek to guide and teach each child to be and to do his best for God.

Socially/culturally appropriate: God has placed children in different social and cultural environments. Christian teachers will want to understand and be aware of the social and cultural context in which the children live so that "by all possible means we might save some" (I Cor. 9:22). Learning experiences will be structured so that they are meaningful, relevant, and respectful of the children and their families.

B. *Christian early childhood ministries foster the development of the whole child.*

A developmentally appropriate program will recognize that young children are holistic learners. Motor skill learning, social learning, intellectual learning, emotional learning, and the learning of spiritual truths are interrelated. Useful learning activities in early childhood education are not compartmentalized by subjects; likewise, a scriptural viewpoint permeates all learning experiences.

A Christian early childhood education program is truly Christian when that program finds its integration and correlation in God's message of sin and grace. These programs should allow children to understand sin, to experience repentance and forgiveness, and to share with and care for others. Children will learn of Jesus their Savior, they will learn the stories and teachings of Scripture, and they will experience the joy and privilege of sharing their Savior with others.

C. *Young children learn through play.*

Early childhood programs involve children as active learners by providing them with play experiences that help them learn. Play enables children to pass through the stages of development by interacting with activities and materials that are concrete, real, and relevant to their young lives. Play as a child-initiated and child-directed activity is a vital component for establishing a foundation for learning. It is important that parents and teachers provide encouragement and facilitate quality play activities, model purposeful types of play, and appropriately participate in the child's play.

D. *Christian early childhood ministries should provide an environment that is safe and secure, and that is arranged and equipped to meet the needs of the age group.*

The relative quality of the physical environment can help or hinder the learning process. Though a congregation may be exempt from the regulations that apply to public or for-profit programs, these regulations as well as the WELS Early Childhood Ministries Standards should be met or exceeded.

E. *Christian early childhood educators will have both a solid foundation in God's Word and a thorough understanding of the theory and practice of Christian early childhood education.*

Besides providing an appropriate curriculum and adequate facilities, the **church** has a responsibility for adequate teacher preparation for Christian early childhood education. This preparation includes a solid foundation in God's Word and a thorough grounding in the theory and practice of Christian early childhood education. Teachers in Christian early childhood ministries should be synodically certified as preschool, kindergarten, or elementary school teachers; and they should be called by the congregation. The training of early childhood educators should include an understanding of developmentally appropriate instructional techniques, child development theory, and some specialized college-level training in early childhood education. Field experience at the appropriate level should also be a part of this training. It is also important for teachers to be actively involved in a program of continuing early childhood education.

**A Code of Ethics for Teachers
in
Early Childhood Education Programs**

Understanding and believing by faith through God's grace, that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst" (1 Tim 1:15), I strive, with God's help, to live my life of faith in the following areas:

A. Responsibilities to my God

I will seek to share the good news of salvation at every possible opportunity. I commit myself to a continual personal study of Scripture and to a regular use of the means of grace (worship and the Lord's Supper) (Ps 122:1). Recognizing that I can do nothing of my own power, I will seek the Lord's help through prayer. I will honor my call, first to the Lord, and second, to the congregation that has called me (1 Ti 1:12). I will use the ECE program as a focus of Kingdom ministry and an opportunity for evangelism outreach into the community (Mt 28:19, 1 Ti 2:3). I will strive to serve all in love as the Lord gives me opportunity (Co 3:23). I will encourage families to nurture their faith also through the use of God's Word. I will encourage others to, and I myself will, invite unchurched parents to worship with us. I will view my body as a living sacrifice to God (Rom 12:1) and strive to have my life be a model of Christian sanctification in and out of the classroom.

B. Responsibilities to the congregation I serve

I recognize my position as a minister serving a particular congregation and I understand that the congregation, formally or informally, has called me to this service. I will enthusiastically support and promote all educational and outreach activities of the congregation and I will participate in those programs to the extent I can (for example, choir, committee work, Sunday school teaching), understanding that the responsibilities of my call take priority. I accept and will support the policies and practices of the congregation I serve. [When such policies determine the enrollment precedence of members of the congregation, I will carry out those policies. When such policies prescribe that all persons who serve as teachers or assistants in the classroom be in fellowship with us, I accept and support those policies.]

I will strive to help the members have a sense of ownership in the childcare center. In the finances, staffing, and business activities of the program I will be accountable to those elected or appointed by the congregation to oversee the operation of the ECE program. If it is my responsibility, I will report regularly on the activities of the early childhood center to the responsible person or board or the voters' meeting. I will respect the pastor as the overseer/shepherd in his responsibilities for the spiritual welfare of the entire congregation (He 13:17). I will respect the physical facilities of the congregation and will exercise good stewardship in caring for them.

C. Responsibilities to the children

I will always remember that the children have been placed in my care by God and the parents whom God has given them. I will see children as fellow believers and heirs with me of eternal life. I will never discriminate against any child because of race, gender, economic circumstances, or physical, intellectual, or emotional impairment. I will seek to have an early childhood center that accommodates children regardless of their circumstance or handicap. To help them grow in their faith life, I will have daily religious instruction in my classroom (Bible stories, prayers, and songs). I will model Christian behavior, and I will carefully plan other activities that will help them grow spiritually, cognitively, physically, emotionally, and socially. In my discipline I will use both Law and Gospel. I will encourage children to attend other Christian educational programs of the congregation such as Sunday school, weekly worship, and vacation Bible school. I will provide for the children a developmentally appropriate as well as individually appropriate curriculum. In keeping with a Christian understanding of self-concept, I will seek to encourage children to see themselves in positive, healthy ways, helping them to understand that what they are is a gift of grace from a loving God. My classroom will have centers or areas that will stimulate the children to play with sound, rhythm, language materials, space, ideas and materials that arouse curiosity, exploration and problem solving in individual ways. I will encourage self-help and independence skills. One goal of the early childhood center will be to prepare children for the exciting world of school learning. My classroom also will build a climate of emotional safety and a feeling of community. I will show children the love and affection that reflects my love for my Savior and I will treat them with respect, which includes listening carefully to them and responding quickly and appropriately to their feelings. I will teach them to regard their parents with the same respect and love.

D. Responsibilities to parents

I will always remember that parents are also God's children who need the help and guidance that God's Word can give. I will respect them as the parents/caregivers/guardians of the child (Eph 6:4) and I understand that they are to the child the most important persons in that child's life. I will respect the family lifestyle/arrangement/customs insofar as it is in harmony with Scripture. I will do all I can to assist parents in their work of training children (Pr 22:6). I will strive to be a Christian role model to the parents (Mt 5:16). I will encourage them to grow in God's Word by attending worship services, Bible information class, or Bible study classes. I will make myself available to parents at all reasonable times. If they are active members of another Christian church, I will encourage them to continue a faithful use of the means of grace in that church. I will speak truthfully of the differences between their church and mine, but I will not coerce or force them away from their current church home. I will encourage them to provide spiritual growth at home through family devotions, private Bible study, and discussing Bible lessons with their children. I will provide parenting classes and literature to help them in their important responsibilities as parents. I will keep parents informed of the activities and goals of the ECE program and health issues through newsletters, personal notes, and personal communication. I will provide them the opportunity and training to serve

as a helper in my classroom. I will honestly inform parents of any assessment I conduct of their children, I will report such assessment in a positive and constructive manner, and I will refer them to resources or persons who can supplement my assessments. I will suggest to parents competent and, if possible, Christian professionals (for example, WLCFS) or resource persons for counseling or other services. I will provide parents opportunities to interact and socialize with other parents.

E. Responsibilities to colleagues

I will seek to strengthen my colleagues in their lives of sanctification even as they strengthen me (Eph 5:19, 20). I will seek to have a relationship with them that reflects God's love and understanding and which includes trust, cooperation, respect, and open communication. If it is my responsibility, I will provide in-service training and instruction and do all I can to make them competent caregivers. I will share with my colleagues materials and ideas that will help them be better caregivers. I will work with them to make decisions in the childcare center that are based on what Scripture and professional practice suggests to be appropriate learning environments. I will support them in their professional development and I will help them receive due recognition for their work and professional achievements. I will speak positively of them to other persons (2 Ti 2:16-17), but I also recognize my responsibility to correct them for unprofessional behavior or a life that does not reflect their ministry.

F. Responsibilities to my profession

I will always try to conduct myself in a professional manner, which includes my appearance and my communication skills. In keeping with my professional responsibilities, I will put the needs of children and parents before my own preferences and emotions. I will be honest about the nature and extent of services that are provided by the childcare program and I will not promise services or skills that are beyond my or the program's resources. I will not serve in positions for which I am not qualified or for which there are not adequate resources for me to fulfill the responsibilities of that position. I will clearly communicate the goals of the ECE program. I will be familiar with laws and regulations that pertain to the childcare programs in my state and insofar as these regulations do not conflict with my Christian beliefs or the Christian goals of the center, I will comply with them and seek to have the responsible church board comply. I will keep myself informed of the latest developments and research in early childhood education through reading and attending workshops or seminars. I will particularly seek to develop professionally in the uniquely Christian aspects of early childhood education.

I willingly commit myself to this because of the children I serve, the parents I assist, and the fellow believers who have given me this responsibility. But, primarily, I do this because of the God who created me, who redeems me, and who sanctifies me.

"I will give them singleness of heart and action ... [for the good of] their children after them." Jeremiah 32:39

(Developed by the class members of EDU0153 The Ministry of the Early Childhood Education Teacher, Lansing, Michigan, 1997)

The Student Teaching Program

Introduction

The Martin Luther College Student Teaching Program is based on the premise that student teaching is one of the most important phases of teacher preparation. It is designed to provide an opportunity for the future teacher to learn good teaching behavior by working with students under typical classroom conditions. Direct experience with teaching and learning in a Lutheran ministry setting and participating in a congregational life permits the teacher candidate to practice principles learned in general and professional education courses. This experience is carried out under the guidance of a cooperating teacher who allows for variation according to the individual student's talents, interests, and needs.

Definition of Terms

1. **Student teaching.** A full-time professional experience during which a pre-service teacher is assigned to a Lutheran school/center for supervised teaching as a part of their college program. The semester-long experience is comprised of two courses which carry a total of 16 semester credit hours.
2. **Teacher candidate.** A college student engaged in student teaching. The term is used synonymously with student or candidate.
3. **Cooperating teacher.** An experienced teacher who guides the daily experiences of the teacher candidate.
4. **College supervisor.** A member of the college faculty who is responsible for supervising and advising a group of teacher candidates and working together with cooperating teachers in the schools/centers where teacher candidates are placed.
5. **Director of Field Experiences.** The member of the college faculty who is responsible for the administration of the student teaching program. The director oversees all field experiences required of preservice education students, including the coordination of the student teaching program.

Objectives of the ECE Student Teaching Program

The major concerns in full-time student teaching in the WELS include effective classroom management, growth and development in personal and professional competency, and an awareness of the total life of a WELS/ELS congregation. While this limited experience cannot make the teacher candidate proficient in the many activities that comprise a teacher's responsibilities, student teaching should prepare every student for the demands which face a beginning teacher. The objectives of the MLC student teaching program follow:

The teacher candidate will

1. work with an experienced teacher to observe, experience, and develop effective nurturing and teaching of young children.
2. work with young children and demonstrate knowledge of their physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development.
3. plan and design learning experiences that match young children's development.
4. select and utilize methods and materials that stimulate active child participation and learning.

5. demonstrate effective and appropriate methods for observing, assessing, and recording young children's growth, development, and learning in an inclusive early childhood atmosphere.
6. develop insights and strategies for effective classroom organization and management.
7. clarify and evaluate a personal philosophy of early childhood program planning, teaching, and management.
8. utilize and refine individual personal qualities which will enhance teacher effectiveness.
9. work and interact as an effective team member in the partnership of staff, parents, and children.
10. become acquainted with the total operation of the early childhood program, its routines, procedures, and regulations.
11. become acquainted with the community and the resources that it offers a teacher.
12. experience a deepening interest and desire to serve the church as a member of its teaching ministry.

Responsibilities of the College Supervisor

The college supervisor is a member of the college faculty who, as a supervisor of teacher candidates and coworker of cooperating teachers,

1. assists in the orientation of directors and cooperating teachers in the student teaching program.
2. orients the teacher candidates at the beginning of each semester of student teaching.
3. observes the teacher candidates in a variety of settings.
4. consults with each teacher candidate and the cooperating teachers either individually or jointly as circumstances indicate.
5. gives help and guidance to teacher candidates, cooperating teachers, and directors relative to information that may be needed to improve the program and to resolve problems which may arise during the student teaching experience.
6. writes a report about the teacher candidate that will be helpful in the placement of the teacher candidate as a beginning teacher and gives this information to the director of field experiences.
7. is a source of encouragement and of counsel to the teacher candidates and to their cooperating teachers.
8. is a liaison between MLC and the teacher candidate.

Observations and Conferences

The college supervisor is usually able to visit each teacher candidate three times during the term. At the time of each visit to the participating school, the college supervisor's work will involve a number of activities. These include examining the teacher candidate's lesson plans, observing the student's teaching, and conferring with the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate in separate conferences. The college supervisor will also conduct at least three triad meetings (the cooperating teacher, teacher candidate, and supervisor) during the student teaching semester. The college supervisor will arrange his or her schedule of classroom visits and

conferences, taking into consideration such things as the number of teacher candidates and college teaching responsibilities.

Responsibilities of the Cooperating Teacher

The role of the cooperating teacher is one of the most important components of the program. In their influential role, the cooperating teacher is to:

1. Become thoroughly acquainted with the Martin Luther College student teaching program.
2. Cooperate with the director in orienting the teacher candidate to the center and the community.
3. Orient the teacher candidate to the classroom and to the routine of the classroom.
4. Acquaint themselves with the background of the teacher candidate through material sent by the college.
5. Prepare the students for the arrival and duties of the teacher candidate.
6. Provide the teacher candidate an opportunity to observe techniques of working with a group and to participate in class before being given full responsibility for the classroom.
7. Acquaint the teacher candidate with writing, filing, and using student records.
8. Acquaint the teacher candidate with available instructional materials, supplies, and equipment.
9. Guide and assist the teacher candidate in establishing objectives, organizing long-range lesson outlines, and preparing daily lesson plans.

NOTE: The cooperating teacher should provide lesson plan templates.

10. Encourage resourcefulness and self-evaluation on the part of the teacher candidate.
11. Observe the teacher candidate's teaching and provide feedback that will foster improvement and provide encouragement.
12. Evaluate the teacher candidate's teaching through conferences, checklists, report forms, and analysis of their self-evaluation.
13. Provide for professional growth of the teacher candidate by requiring attendance at faculty meetings and sharing or suggesting educational literature for their enrichment.
14. Encourage Christian conduct.
15. Cooperate with all other personnel in carrying out all details of the student teaching program and consult with the college supervisor regarding any problems that arise in working with the teacher candidate.
16. Provide an evaluation of the student's performance to the Field Experiences Office following the close of the term.
17. Encourage the teacher candidate to participate in activities of a local congregation.
18. Acquaint the teacher candidate with the individual differences/exceptionalities of the children they are about to teach.

Responsibilities of the Teacher Candidate

Most teacher candidates are aware of the importance of the student teaching experience. They anticipate that their classroom work will have prepared them well and that it will be a satisfying experience. The following items highlight many aspects of the student teaching experience. Cooperating teachers can assist teacher candidates in attending conscientiously to these matters, which will contribute to a successful student teaching term as well as enhancing the learning of the children in their care.

Responsibilities as a Person

1. Complete the *Personal Information Form* (see Appendix) as a means of providing an introduction to the cooperating teacher.
2. Reflect personal faith in the Savior. Let the children sense that teaching the Word is an expression of faith rather than just teaching another subject.
3. Display social skills and sensitivity as a cultured, mature Christian.
 - a. Use the formal mode of address (Mr., Miss, Mrs.) when speaking to the cooperating teacher and others, unless they indicate that a first-name basis is appropriate.
 - b. Deal cooperatively and tactfully with all personnel in the school: nurse, custodian, secretary, and kitchen workers.
4. Display cheerfulness and a positive outlook.
5. Show interest, initiative, and resourcefulness in attacking and solving problems.
6. Seek and recognize the achievements of others. Be ready, willing, and gracious in acknowledging their successes.
7. Be considerate of others, especially the cooperating teacher. Give assistance whenever possible. Be sure to return materials and equipment to their proper places after using them.
8. Avoid discussion of personalities and other forms of gossip. Criticism of teachers, pastors, the administration, parents, the school's facilities, or related matters does not reflect a Christian attitude.
9. Have a receptive attitude toward suggestions and constructive criticism. If unsure about any matter, ask the cooperating teacher.
10. Do not allow personal activities to interfere with the student teaching experience. Spirit-worked values should guide the use of time.
 - a. Teacher candidates should not leave for more than one weekend during the infant/toddler session and one weekend during the preprimary session. Emergencies, of course, are exceptions. Be sure to inform the cooperating teacher, director, and college supervisor well in advance if plans are made to leave for a weekend.
 - b. Having visitors can also interfere with the time needed during weekends to plan and prepare. Consider tactfully suggesting a limit to visits.
11. Do not use cell phones and computers for personal use during the school day. When emergencies arise requiring their need, ask for permission of the classroom teacher and seek their advice on how best to handle emergency communication inside the classroom.

Responsibilities as a Professional

1. Prepare carefully and in detail for each day. It is not enough to be ready to “stand and deliver.” Teacher candidates should try to anticipate and prepare for the unexpected.
2. Strive for understanding and application of the Minnesota standards of effective practice.
3. Get to know the children through observation, conferences, and interactions. Maintaining proper adult-child relationships will contribute considerably to successful teaching and learning.
4. Recognize that child files are confidential. Such information helps teachers in their efforts to teach effectively and should not be the topic of casual conversation.
5. Offer willingly to help prepare newsletters, keep records, and assist with other tasks. Take the initiative to help keep the classroom comfortable and well organized.
6. Plan with the cooperating teacher and gradually develop independence in planning and presenting lessons.
7. Abide by all regulations which apply to students and teachers, including the dress code policy. Teacher candidates are not visitors with a privileged status; rather, they are fellow workers subject to established standards.
8. Complete the Weekly Activity Report (see Appendix) promptly each week.
9. Complete the CFAST form during the Preprimary experience.

Guidelines During Student Teaching

Student Teaching Placements

The teacher candidate may request a specific semester when completing their student teaching application. Shortly after making application, the teacher candidate will be informed of the semester in which they will student teach the following year by the Field Experiences Office.

Teacher Candidates as Substitute Teachers

Under ordinary circumstances, teacher candidates should not be expected to serve as substitute teachers. Asking teacher candidates to serve as substitutes early in the student teaching term could have an adverse effect on their entire experience. Having teacher candidates substitute without supervision for an extended period of time may interfere with their progress in developing teaching skills. If there is an apparent need to use teacher candidate substitutes, the college supervisor should be consulted.

Absences During the Student Teaching Term

Students should follow the calendar of the school in which they are teaching in their professional semester, being present at the school for a full day, each scheduled day of the experience.

When a teacher candidate is ill and unable to go to school, the candidate should text or phone the cooperating teacher as soon as possible. In addition, the absence should be logged in the MLC Portal (Attendance > Schedule Field Exp Absence). When the absence is submitted, an email notification is sent to the cooperating teacher, school administrator, and college supervisor.

When a teacher candidate needs to be excused for athletics, a medical appointment, funeral, etc., the candidate should request an excused absence in advance of the day. The request is made through the Portal (Attendance > Schedule Field Exp Absence). When the request is approved, an email notification is sent to the cooperating teacher, school administrator, and the candidate.

Candidates should have all materials prepped and ready for the day in case of an unexpected absence.

Students will not be excused in order to take professional tests. Note: MTLE testing is no longer required.

The director of field experiences is responsible for determining the length and number of make-up days when absences exceed two times.

Weekend Absences for Teacher Candidates

The demands for planning and preparing to teach will often require teacher candidates to use weekend hours to complete their work. For this reason, teacher candidates are advised and expected to remain at their assigned center during the weekends. A student should not be absent for an entire weekend more than once during the infant/toddler session and once during the preprimary session, excluding holidays and conferences.

A teacher candidate who plans to be absent for a weekend should discuss their plans with the cooperating teacher and college supervisor as far in advance as possible. The teacher candidate is responsible for having their work planned and prepared in advance so that there is no disruption in the teaching schedule.

Extracurricular Activities and Employment

Teacher candidates are discouraged from becoming involved in college extracurricular activities and employment during the student teaching session in order to give full attention to this experience. Any exceptions should be cleared with the director of field experiences and shared with the college supervisor and cooperating teacher.

Teacher Candidate Insurance Coverage

Liability insurance is provided by Martin Luther College for all teacher candidates. The primary limit of liability is \$1,000,000.

Criminal Background Check

The background studies are to be completed according to the requirements in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 245C. The information requested will be used to perform a background study that will include at least a review of criminal conviction records held by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and records of substantiated maltreatment of vulnerable adults and children.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) also requires additional information, fingerprints, and a photograph to complete the background study. For all individuals who are subject to background studies by DHS, the corrections system will report new criminal convictions for disqualifying crimes to DHS. County agencies and the Minnesota Department of Health report substantiated findings of maltreatment of minors and vulnerable adults to DHS. The background check is submitted by the director, and the teacher candidate must fulfill their obligation to get photographed and fingerprinted and reimburse the MLC ECLC for 50 percent of the processing fee.

Immunizations

The MLC ECLC encourages all candidates to be current with immunizations. For those not vaccinated, accommodations may be necessary as directed by the school nurse when working with the infants/toddlers.

Sexual Harassment

MLC adheres to all guidelines regarding sexual harassment in the workplace. A teacher candidate who feels an incident of sexual harassment has occurred should first report the incident to their cooperating teacher. If satisfactory resolution of the incident is not obtained, the teacher candidate should then report the occurrence to their college supervisor. If necessary, the college supervisor will report the incident to the director of field experiences.

Likewise, participating school personnel should report any incidents of sexual harassment on the part of a teacher candidate to the cooperating teacher, and then to the college supervisor of the teacher candidate. If further resolution of the incident is warranted, the college supervisor will report the incident to the director of field experiences.

Social Media

Candidates are not to use social media to contact students or post photos of them. While local school policies may allow these things, MLC wants to be proactive in helping candidates to avoid a potential problem area. Communicating with students via social media or posting photos of them may result in dismissal from student teaching.

Immediately go to any social media sites you manage (Facebook, Instagram, X, etc.) and clean up photos and other content that might be offensive to viewers. Change your privacy settings so that only people you absolutely want to visit can find you. Remove any photos that show you in a swimsuit, drinking alcohol, acting silly, or represent you in any less-than-professional way. Remove any posts that use off-color language or inappropriate humor. Check your “likes” to make sure that anything you’ve liked in the past is something that a Christian role model actually should like. One of the first things some of your cooperating teachers and people in your congregation will do is an Internet search for your name.

In the future, use good judgment about what you post and whom you “friend” and allow to see your posts. Don’t pour your heart out in a status update that reflects your latest mood. Don’t *ever* make negative comments about your church or school and people involved with them. Remember, it’s easy to post something and then forget who sees it. Discernment and good judgment are the marks of good character.

Experiences for Teacher Candidates

Effectiveness in carrying out the many activities that are the teacher’s responsibility may be gained only through years of service in the teaching ministry. The experiences listed below are related to some of the activities in which most teachers are involved. Teacher candidates will benefit from participating in as many of these experiences as possible. Very likely, no single situation will make all of these experiences available to a teacher candidate; neither is this necessary for the accomplishment of the basic objectives of the program. Use the following as a checklist to note the types of experiences in which teacher candidates may be involved during the term.

Infant/Toddler

1. Develop warm, supportive relationships with infants, toddlers, and their families.
2. Maintain a daily schedule that flexes to meet each child’s needs for play, learning, nutrition, rest, and bodily care.
3. Apply infant and toddler health and safety standards.
4. Maintain care and play areas for an infant and toddler environment.
5. Support infants’ and toddlers’ actions, choices, and problem solving for successful early learning experiences.
6. Record infant and toddler observations.

7. Work with parents and caregivers to observe, interpret, and nurture infant and toddler growth and development.
8. Confer regularly with the cooperating teacher and college supervisor.

Preprimary

1. Develop warm, supportive relationships with preprimary children and their families.
2. Observe and assess preprimary children's developmental levels.
3. Support preprimary children's emerging decision making, emotional self-regulation, problem-solving, and social competencies.
4. Maintain a safe and healthy indoor and outdoor learning environment, routines, and transitions that promote children's development and learning.
5. Observe, extend, and participate in young children's play.
6. Develop interactive skills with preprimary children.
7. Plan and implement developmentally appropriate large and small group learning experiences: Bible story, literacy, math, music, movement, science, social studies, dramatic and visual arts.
8. Record child development observations. Share these observations with parents when called upon.
9. Confer regularly with the cooperating teacher and college supervisor.

Minnesota Licensure Requirements

During the student teaching term, each student must strive to meet the MN Standards of Effective Practice (see below) in order to be eligible for Minnesota state licensure. Cooperating teachers complete *Preprimary ECE Student Teaching Evaluation Report – Form A-B* and the *MN Standards of Effective Practice Infant/Toddler Student Teaching Assessment* (see Appendix) to verify the student has successfully met each standard.

While student teaching, each student will also be collecting evidence for their portfolio to demonstrate he/she has satisfactorily met the MN standards of effective practice. The required models of evidence and other pertinent information concerning the portfolio are described in the Portfolio Handbook.

MN Standards of Effective Practice

These objectives of the Teacher Education Program are consistent with the MN Standards of Effective Practice that the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board requires of those seeking state licensure.

Standard 1. Student learning.

- A.** The teacher understands that students bring assets for learning based on their individual experiences, abilities, talents, prior learning, and peer and social group interactions, as well as language, culture, family, and community values, and approaches their work and students with this asset-based mindset, affirming the validity of students' backgrounds and identities.
- B.** The teacher understands multiple theories of identity formation and knows how to help students develop positive social identities based on their membership in multiple groups in society.
- C.** The teacher understands how students construct knowledge and acquire skills.
- D.** The teacher understands how alignment with a student's cultural background is necessary to make meaningful connections that enable the construction of knowledge and acquisition of skills.
- E.** The teacher understands the cognitive processes associated with various kinds of learning, including critical and creative thinking, problem framing and problem solving, invention, memorization, and recall.
- F.** The teacher understands how culture influences cognitive processes and how these processes can be stimulated in a cultural frame.
- G.** The teacher understands that each student's cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical development influences learning and makes instructional decisions that build on learners' strengths, needs, and cultural ways of knowing.
- H.** The teacher understands the role of language and culture in learning and knows how to modify instruction to make language comprehensible and instruction relevant, accessible, and challenging.

- I.** The teacher understands language development and the benefits of multilingualism and multiliteracy and knows how to incorporate instructional strategies and resources to support language development.
- J.** The teacher understands the exceptional needs of students, including those with disabilities and giftedness, and knows how to use strategies and resources to address these needs.
- K.** The teacher is able to recognize the distinguishing characteristics of reading disabilities, including dyslexia, and knows how to implement appropriate accommodations.
- L.** The teacher understands the diverse impacts of individual and systemic trauma, such as experiencing homelessness, foster care, incarceration, migration, medical fragility, racism, and micro and macro aggressions, on learning and development and knows how to support students using culturally responsive strategies and resources to address these impacts.
- M.** The teacher is able to recognize symptoms of mental health illnesses and their impact on learning and knows how to use strategies and resources to address these impacts.
- N.** The teacher understands the influence of use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs on student life and learning.

Standard 2. Learning environments.

- A.** The teacher knows how to collaborate with students to create a welcoming and inclusive classroom community that reflects the diversity of student cultures in the design of the physical and virtual space, expectations, and organizational routines that represent the needs of all students.
- B.** The teacher understands the relationship between motivation and engagement and knows how to design learning experiences using strategies that build student self-direction and ownership of learning.
- C.** The teacher understands the importance of relationship-based, culturally affirming, and proactive approaches to behavior and implements these approaches in order to improve student outcomes and reduce exclusionary practices.
- D.** The teacher fosters an environment that ensures student identities such as race/ethnicity, national origin, language, sex and gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical/developmental/emotional ability, socioeconomic class, and religious beliefs are historically and socially contextualized, affirmed, and incorporated into a learning environment where students are empowered to learn and contribute as their whole selves.
- E.** The teacher understands and supports students as they recognize and process dehumanizing biases, discrimination, prejudices, and structural inequities.
- F.** The teacher communicates verbally and nonverbally in ways that demonstrate respect for and responsiveness to the cultural backgrounds and differing perspectives learners bring to the learning environment.

Standard 3. Assessment.

- A.** The teacher understands the varying types and multiple purposes of assessment.
- B.** The teacher understands how to design, adapt, and select appropriate assessments to address specific learning goals and individual differences.
- C.** The teacher understands bias in assessment, evaluates standardized and teacher-created assessments for bias, and designs and modifies assessments that minimize sources of bias.
- D.** The teacher understands the positive impact of effective descriptive feedback for learners, engages students in understanding and identifying quality work, and uses a variety of strategies for communicating this feedback.
- E.** The teacher knows how and when to engage students in analyzing their own assessment results and setting goals for their own learning.
- F.** The teacher regularly assesses individual and group performance in order to design and modify instruction to meet students' needs in each area of development, including cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical, and scaffolds the next level of development.
- G.** The teacher, independently and in collaboration with colleagues, uses a variety of data, including data disaggregated by student race, ethnicity, and home language, to evaluate the outcomes of teaching and learning and to adapt planning and practice.
- H.** The teacher uses assessment strategies and devices that are nondiscriminatory, and takes into consideration the impact of disabilities, methods of communication, cultural background, and primary language on measuring knowledge and performance of students.

Standard 4. Planning for instruction.

A. The teacher understands Minnesota's English Language Development Standards Framework and uses the framework components to develop learning experiences that support the development of language in content instruction.

B. The teacher understands cross-disciplinary instruction, with particular attention to historically marginalized disciplines to engage learners purposefully in applying content knowledge.

C. The teacher creates or adapts lessons, unit plans, learning experiences, and aligned assessments based on Minnesota's academic standards, or if unavailable, local, national, or international discipline-specific standards.

D. The teacher designs instruction to build on learners' prior knowledge, culture, and experiences, allowing learners to accelerate as they demonstrate their understandings.

E. The teacher plans how to achieve each student's learning goals by choosing anti-racist, culturally relevant, and responsive instructional strategies, accommodations, and resources to differentiate instruction for individuals and groups of learners.

F. The teacher demonstrates the ability to feature, highlight, and use resources written and developed by traditionally marginalized voices that offer diverse perspectives on race, culture, language, gender, sexual identity, ability, religion, nationality, migrant/refugee status, socioeconomic status, housing status, and other identities traditionally silenced or omitted from curriculum by offering a wide range of curriculum materials.

G. The teacher creates opportunities for students to learn, practice, and use language of the content area.

H. Consistent with the local curriculum and state and local academic standards, the teacher demonstrates the ability to create opportunities for students to learn about power, privilege, intersectionality, and systemic oppression in the context of various communities and empowers learners to be agents of social change to promote equity.

I. The teacher explores and applies instructional design principles to create innovative digital learning environments that engage and support learning.

Standard 5. Instructional strategies.

A. The teacher collaborates with students to design and implement culturally relevant learning experiences, identify their strengths, and access family and community resources to develop their areas of interest.

B. The teacher understands the value of and knows how to implement instructional approaches that integrate real-world learning opportunities, including service learning, community-based learning, and project-based learning, into instruction.

C. The teacher develops learning experiences that engage students in collaborative and self-directed learning and that extend student interaction with ideas and people locally and globally.

D. The teacher uses learners' native languages as a resource in creating effective differentiated instructional strategies for multilingual learners, including those who are developing literacy skills.

E. The teacher provides multiple models and representations of concepts and skills which consider diverse cultural ways of knowing with opportunities for learners to demonstrate their knowledge through a variety of products and performances.

F. The teacher asks questions to stimulate discussion that serves different purposes, such as probing for learner understanding, helping students articulate their ideas and thinking processes, stimulating curiosity, and helping students to question.

G. Consistent with the local curriculum and state and local academic standards, the teacher demonstrates the ability to nurture critical thinking about culture and race and knows how to include multiple perspectives and missing narratives from the dominant culture by offering a range of curriculum materials.

H. The teacher varies learning activities to involve whole group, small group, and individual work, and to develop a range of learner skills.

I. The teacher uses technology to create, adapt, and personalize learning experiences that foster independent learning and accommodate learner differences and needs.

J. The teacher employs a variety of strategies to assist students to develop social and emotional competencies, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

Standard 6. Professional responsibilities.

- A.** The teacher understands the standards of professional conduct in the Code of Ethics for Minnesota Teachers, including the role of social media, privacy, and boundaries in relationships with students.
- B.** The teacher understands laws related to student rights and teacher responsibilities, such as for educational equity, appropriate education for students with disabilities, confidentiality, privacy, appropriate treatment of students, data practices, and mandatory reporting requirements in situations of known or suspected abuse or neglect.
- C.** The teacher understands the historical foundations of education in Minnesota, including laws, policies, and practices, that have and continue to create inequitable opportunities, experiences, and outcomes for learners, especially for Indigenous students and students historically denied access, underserved, or underrepresented on the basis of race, class, disability, religion, gender, sexual orientation, language, socioeconomic status, or country of origin.
- D.** The teacher understands how prejudice, discrimination, and racism operates at the interpersonal, intergroup, and institutional levels.
- E.** The teacher explores their own intersecting social identities and how they impact daily experience as an educator.
- F.** The teacher assesses how their biases, perceptions, and academic training may affect their teaching practice and perpetuate oppressive systems and utilizes tools to mitigate their own behavior to disrupt oppressive systems.
- G.** The teacher uses a variety of self-assessment and problem-solving strategies to analyze and reflect on their practice and to make adaptations and adjustments toward more equitable outcomes.
- H.** The teacher demonstrates continual growth in knowledge and skills of current and emerging technologies and applies them to improve personal productivity and professional practice.
- I.** The teacher advocates, models, and teaches safe, legal, and ethical use of information and technology, including appropriate documentation of sources and respect for others in use of social media.
- J.** The teacher actively seeks professional, community, and technological resources, within and outside the school, as supports for analysis, reflection, and problem solving.

Standard 7. Collaboration and leadership.

- A.** The teacher understands the importance of engaging in culturally affirming, reciprocal communication with families about student development, learning, and performance.
- B.** The teacher knows how to collaborate with a culturally relevant and responsive lens with families to support student learning and secure appropriate services to meet the needs of students.
- C.** The teacher plans collaboratively with professionals who have specialized expertise to design and jointly deliver, as appropriate, learning experiences to meet unique learning needs.
- D.** The teacher demonstrates the ability to identify gaps where the current curriculum does not address multiple perspectives, cultures, and backgrounds, and understands how curriculum and instruction impacts students that are not part of the dominant culture.
- E.** The teacher recognizes the responsibility to question normative school knowledge, conventional teaching and other professional practices, and beliefs and assumptions about diverse students, their families, and communities that adversely impact learning.
- F.** The teacher understands multiple leadership models for teachers; knows how to take on leadership roles at the school, district, state, or national level; and advocates for students, the school, the community, and the profession.

Standard 8. Racial consciousness and reflection.

- A.** The teacher understands multiple theories of race and ethnicity, including but not limited to racial formation, processes of racialization, and intersectionality.
- B.** The teacher understands the definitions of and difference between prejudice, discrimination, bias, and racism.
- C.** The teacher understands how ethnocentrism, eurocentrism, deficit-based teaching, and white supremacy undermine pedagogical equity.

- D.** The teacher understands that knowledge creation, ways of knowing, and teaching are social and cultural practices shaped by race and ethnicity, often resulting in racially disparate advantages and disadvantages.
- E.** The teacher understands the histories and social struggles of historically defined racialized groups, including but not limited to Indigenous people, Black Americans, Latinx Americans, and Asian Americans.
- F.** The teacher understands the cultural content, world view, concepts, and perspectives of Minnesota-based American Indian Tribal Nations and communities, including Indigenous histories and languages.
- G.** The teacher understands the impact of the intersection of race and ethnicity with other forms of difference, including class, gender, sexuality, religion, national origin, immigration status, language, ability, and age.

8710.2100 Code of Ethics for Minnesota Teachers

Subpart 1. Scope

Each teacher, upon entering the teaching profession, assumes a number of obligations, one of which is to adhere to a set of principles which define professional conduct. These principles are reflected in the following code of ethics, which sets forth, to the education profession and the public it serves, MN standards of professional conduct and procedures for implementation.

This code shall apply to all persons licensed according to rules established by the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board.

Subpart 2. Standards of professional conduct

The MN standards of professional conduct are as follows:

- A. A teacher shall provide professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner.
- B. A teacher shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to health and safety.
- C. In accordance with state and federal laws, a teacher shall disclose confidential information about individuals only when a compelling professional purpose is served or when required by law.
- D. A teacher shall take reasonable disciplinary action in exercising the authority to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- E. A teacher shall not use professional relationships with students, parents, and colleagues to private advantage.
- F. A teacher shall delegate authority for teaching responsibilities only to licensed personnel.
- G. A teacher shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter.
- H. A teacher shall not knowingly falsify or misrepresent records or facts relating to that teacher's own qualifications or to other teachers' qualifications.
- I. A teacher shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students or colleagues.
- J. A teacher shall accept a contract for a teaching position that requires licensing only if properly or provisionally licensed for that position.

Phases of the Student Teaching Experience

Four major phases of the student teaching experience are considered in this section of the handbook. They are orientation, observation, participation, and induction into teaching. The listing of these phases is not intended to suggest that they are to be provided sequentially. Although these phases will receive emphasis during different parts of the student teaching term, ideally, the teacher candidate should experience each of them throughout the term.

Orientation

A good beginning is important for the teacher candidate. Although orientation is regarded as very significant during the early stages of student teaching, it is most effective when it is a continuous process throughout the student teaching term. The following identifies some of the responsibilities for helping the teacher candidate feel at home, and some suggestions for carrying out these responsibilities.

At the College

The college will assist in orientation by

1. discussing the general policies, rules, and regulations of the student teaching program.
2. making available to the cooperating teacher the *Personal Information Form* which the teacher candidate has completed.

At the MLC Early Childhood Learning Center

The director and other teaching personnel assist in orientation by

1. training the teacher candidate in Sudden Unexpected Infant Death and Abusive Head Trauma (SUID/AHT) and other policies, procedures, and training required before there is contact with children.
2. introducing the teacher candidate to children, families, and colleagues.
3. providing the teacher candidate with a general introduction to the center facilities, program, and policies.

Observation

The teacher candidate is bound to a great extent by the program which the cooperating teacher has planned and implemented for the year. Eager to make a successful beginning, teacher candidates realize that they must teach within the framework the cooperating teacher has established. Thus, it is important that the cooperating teacher demonstrates and explains the procedures which are to be followed in their classroom and in the center.

During the period of time before assuming responsibility for teaching a class, the teacher candidate is an observer and participator in the classroom. Through observation, the teacher candidate can study theory in practice. In order to make observation effective, it is vital that the cooperating teacher has the teacher candidate observe with a purpose. The cooperating teacher should be careful to limit the number of things the teacher candidate is to observe on a given day in order to provide a sharp focus to each observation.

In addition to setting up specific purposes for observing, the cooperating teacher should encourage the teacher candidate to record observations in writing for ready reference. It is all too easy to assume that once a procedure has been observed, the teacher candidate will remember how to follow it in the future.

Logically, observation is an extension of the concept of orientation. Like orientation, observation is of vital importance at the beginning of student teaching, but it will contribute most to the development of the teacher candidate if it is experienced throughout the student teaching term.

The cooperating teacher will help the teacher candidate become acquainted with the working of their classroom by directing observation toward routine procedures such as the following:

1. Children's activities before school begins for the day.
2. Greeting parents and seeing to children's needs.
3. Transition times throughout the day.
4. Routines for using the lavatories and the drinking fountain.
5. Teacher and children clean-up procedures.

The cooperating teacher will make the teacher candidate's observation of planning and teaching more productive by

1. Discussing daily lesson plans with the teacher candidate.
2. Demonstrating how Christian principles are integrated in teaching and in maintaining classroom control.
3. Observing specific parts in a lesson which will be discussed later.

4. Having the teacher candidate take note of specific aspects of a lesson such as
 - a. Small/Large Group Time, Plan-Do-Review
 - b. Adult-Child Interaction

The cooperating teacher may assist the teacher candidate in observing the children by

1. Discussing the general characteristics of children at the age level of those in the classroom.
2. Discussing ways of getting the children's attention and of holding their interest.
3. Helping the teacher candidate analyze learning and discipline problems that arise, considering the causes of such problems, and suggesting possibilities for taking care of the problems.
4. Noting children with exceptional needs in the classroom and discussing ways to work effectively with them.
5. Helping the teacher candidate see how children develop skills, concepts, and attitudes, and how they are led to apply these through effective teaching-learning situations.

During the first week of student teaching, the teacher candidate will complete observation pages included in the student teaching materials or observations designed by the classroom teacher.

Participation

Participation is an integral part of observation. By participating actively in the total program, the teacher candidate has an opportunity to gain direct knowledge of the entire center organization. From the very beginning of the student teaching term, it is good practice to have the teacher candidate assume some responsibilities. The scope of these responsibilities will vary from classroom to classroom and at different grade levels. Some types of activities in which the cooperating teacher may have the student participate are the following:

1. Sharing in the planning of classroom activities
2. Participating in routines that occur before the school day begins
3. Distributing supplies
4. Preparing, locating, and setting up materials that will be used in the classroom
5. Assisting individual children
6. Supervising playground activities and end-of-day dismissal
7. Playing with children

Lesson Planning Overview

Necessity of Lesson Planning

1. It helps the teacher be systematic and orderly.
2. It encourages good organization of the learning experience.
3. It prevents haphazard teaching and goes a long way toward eliminating disorder and thoughtless teaching.
4. It encourages a proper consideration of the learning process and choice of appropriate learning procedures.
5. It encourages continuity in the teaching process.
6. It focuses consideration of goals and objectives.
7. It takes into account developmental learning needs of individual children.

Forms and Types of Plans

1. Bible Lesson Plan
2. Small Group Lesson Plan
3. Music
4. Movement
5. Weekly Planning Form

Evaluation

General Guidelines

Teacher candidates experience some tension and anxiety as they approach the task of guiding children's education in a classroom. These young people need the counsel and aid of understanding, experienced teachers. Evaluation is a very important phase of this assistance. By definition, evaluation of student teaching is the continuous process of appraising the growth of teaching competence as the teacher candidate guides the children's learning.

The purpose of evaluation is the improvement of the teacher candidate as one who serves as a teaching minister of the church. Improvement through evaluation is most likely to occur when it is a continuing process, beginning with the teacher candidate's orientation, observation, participation, induction into teaching, and full-time teaching.

The most improvement will occur, and continued growth in teaching competence will be assured, when the evaluation process includes realistic self-evaluation on the part of the teacher candidate. The *Weekly Activity Report* (see Appendix) is intended to foster self-evaluation. The cooperating teacher should encourage the teacher candidate to complete these activities thoughtfully.

Characteristics of Effective Evaluation

Evaluation should be continuous and include student teaching self-assessment. In addition, evaluation is

1. **Cooperative.** Teacher candidates, cooperating teachers, and college supervisors share in the process. Occasionally, the director may also become involved. The teacher candidate's teaching competence is discussed in a helpful and understanding manner.
2. **Progressive.** Previous discussions and observations form the basis for each new evaluative conference.
3. **Specific.** The teacher candidate receives the most help when you make comments and suggestions which are to the point. Positive feedback and constructive criticism are both part of being specific.
4. **Diagnostic.** The cooperating teacher should discuss effective and ineffective strategies, as well as the causes and implications of them, with the teacher candidate.
5. **Based on valid criteria.** The means and methods used to evaluate the teacher candidate's teaching must agree with the basic principles of the student teaching program. Practical considerations in establishing bases of evaluation include such questions as the following:
 - a. What should the teacher candidate accomplish during the term? Both teacher candidate and cooperating teacher need to have definite values and goals for the program. Has the growth of the teacher candidate toward fulfillment of these goals been satisfactory? Cooperating teachers need to

be aware of the teacher candidate's accomplishments. Remember not to compare them with those displayed by an experienced teacher or a previous teacher candidate you have had.

- b. What is the student's role in the classroom? How has the teacher candidate's presence affected the students' development?
- c. How does the present work of the teacher candidate compare with their earlier accomplishments?

Techniques of Evaluation

The following are means by which evaluation can be made.

1. **Daily observation.** This is a continuous, informal evaluation of the teacher candidate's performance. Notes may be made on the teacher candidate's lesson plan while the cooperating teacher observes. A brief discussion based on the observation may do much to improve the details of the student's teaching skill and their personal and professional qualifications. As mentioned earlier, the observation of the cooperating teacher by the teacher candidate may do much to train the latter to understand this kind of evaluation and, at the same time, train him/her in self-evaluation. Note: it is better to observe for specific items rather than broad generalities.
2. **Recording of Lessons.** The teacher candidate should arrange with their cooperating teacher to record lessons during the term. These lessons can be viewed and discussed by the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate.
3. **Checklists or rating sheets.** Periodic summaries of strengths and weaknesses may be made of the teacher candidate's competence through use of checklists or rating scales. The teacher candidate may be asked to complete a self-evaluation based on a prepared list of teaching qualities. The *Cooperating Teacher–Teacher Candidate Conference Checklist* (see Appendix) may be used for this purpose. For this method to be effective, it is important that the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate discuss the interpretation of the ratings.
4. **Conferences.** It is evident from the techniques listed above that cooperating teacher–teacher candidate conferences are an important means of evaluation in student teaching. It is recommended that at least two longer evaluation conferences be held during the student teaching period. One conference should be held at the middle of the term and another at the close. The *Cooperating Teacher–Teacher Candidate Conference Checklist* should be used as a basis for these conferences. The following guidelines aid conferencing.
 - a. Each participant should recognize the purpose of the conference.
 - b. Conferences may be held at various times and for different reasons, but at all times should be a frank discussion between the participants. "We need to listen to each other, not merely take turns talking."
 - c. The conference should be held in a room where there will be no interruptions and in a setting free from tension.
 - d. The conference should be constructive. Emphasis should be placed on the future, with limited consideration of past errors. Specific topics should be discussed. It is better to arrive at a full understanding of one problem than to rehash several without any solution.
 - e. The end result of an evaluation conference should be a mutual understanding of the teacher candidate's accomplishments, needs, and goals.

Records Used in Evaluation

1.	Organizational System for Lesson Plans (notebook, folder)		
2.	Student Teaching Reports (see Appendix)	Completed	Comments
a.	Weekly Activity Report	Weekly	Completed by the teacher candidate.
b.	CPAST Forms	Completed twice during the Preprimary experience	Completed by the cooperating teacher and the supervisor.
c.	Student Teaching I Summative Assessment	End of Preprimary term	Cooperating teacher and college supervisor together decide the appropriate descriptor. Cooperating teacher submits form electronically to MLC Education Office.
d.	ECE Teacher Candidate Self-Evaluation	End of professional semester	Teacher candidate completes the report after the final ECE student teaching experience and submits electronically.
e.	Student Teaching II Summative Assessment	End of Infant/Toddler term	Cooperating teacher completes and submits electronically.

Evaluation reports c – e are an important source of information utilized in the preparation of recommendations to the Synodical Assignment Committee. These reports are kept on file in the Education Office archives. The student's education file may be viewed by the student upon their request.

College supervisors may also choose to share their reports with the teacher candidate before submitting them to the Field Experiences Office. Teacher candidates may view a copy of their recommendation report that goes to the Synodical Assignment Committee.

Final Evaluations for Student Teaching

The student teaching experience is evaluated without the use of letter grades, carries no grade points, and has no impact on a student's semester GPA or cumulative GPA. The following categories are used for evaluating student teaching:

PASS (P)

Successful completion of the student teaching term. The teacher candidate successfully assumes full-time responsibility for a minimum of six weeks.

WITHDRAWAL (W)

The teacher candidate is unable to complete the student teaching term. The student may reapply for student teaching.

NO PASS (NP)

The teacher candidate completes the student teaching term but does not perform satisfactorily in either teaching or classroom management or both. Note: see Appendix for *Rubric for Final Ratings for Student Teaching*.

The teacher candidate who does not perform satisfactorily on the MN standards of effective practice receives a no-pass (NP) grade for Student Teaching I. The cooperating teacher, the college supervisor, and the director of field experiences will determine jointly if another student teaching term is recommended. The teacher candidate who receives an NP may be required to pass an alternative experience (EFE IV) before the second attempt of student teaching. The primary goal of the alternative experience is to remediate the identified deficiencies related to the MN standards. The teacher candidate must reapply for student teaching through the regular process and will be granted or denied a second student teaching term by the Teacher Education Committee. The Teacher Education Committee's decision is final.

Students who receive an NP for Student Teaching I will not be allowed to do Student Teaching II, and vice versa.

A student who does not participate in an alternative experience (EFE IV) and therefore is no longer a student at MLC must reapply for admission to MLC through the admissions process in addition to reapplying for student teaching.

Under normal circumstances, a teacher candidate will be given no more than two opportunities for student teaching. Only under extraordinary circumstances will an additional opportunity be given.

The student may be permitted to participate in the graduation ceremony, but the diploma is held in abeyance. If the teacher candidate does not remove the NP by successfully completing a second term of student teaching, the teacher candidate may substitute the equivalent number of credits from the MLC curriculum. Under this circumstance, the teacher candidate receives a Bachelor of Science with a major in Educational Studies rather than a Bachelor of Science in Education degree. The student teaching grade remains NP and the note "non-teaching degree" is added to the student's transcript.

An NP may also be given if, in the judgment of the college supervisor, the supervising teacher, and the director of field experiences, the teacher candidate's performance will not improve with another term of student teaching and the teacher candidate should be advised to seek another vocation. The teacher candidate may still earn a diploma by substituting the equivalent number of credits from the MLC curriculum for the student teaching credits. The teacher candidate receives a Bachelor of Science with a major in Educational Studies rather than a Bachelor of Science in Education degree. The student teaching grade remains NP and the note "non-teaching degree" is added to the student's transcript.

Dismissal

Due to issues of performance or conduct that may be detrimental to the welfare of students and/or the integrity of Martin Luther College's student teaching program, a teacher candidate may be dismissed prior to the end of any student teaching term. The decision to remove is made by college administration in consultation with appropriate college personnel and local school officials.

Students dismissed for unsatisfactory progress or unacceptable performance during student teaching do not have the right of appeal. Students who are dismissed before the end of the term are no longer students at Martin Luther College unless they participate in an alternate experience sanctioned and arranged by the director of field experiences. The alternate experience receives credit as Early Field Experience IV.

Any student who has been dismissed before the end of any one of the student teaching terms and wishes to student teach again must re-apply for student teaching through the regular process and will be granted or denied a second student teaching term by the Teacher Education Committee. The Teacher Education Committee's decision is final.

A student who did not participate in an alternate experience and therefore is no longer a student at MLC must reapply for admission to Martin Luther College through the admissions process in addition to reapplying for student teaching.

Graduation Policies

Students completing their degree requirements in December may participate in the May commencement. Students who will satisfy degree requirements in the summer can participate in the previous May commencement, but must register for summer classes prior to the May commencement. Diplomas for students who complete requirements during the summer are dated the last day of the month when requirements were completed.

Students completing a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Educational Studies must complete all requirements for their approved program plan.

Assignment into the Christian Ministry

How the Assignment Committee Carries Out Its Responsibilities

Note: The following paragraphs are excerpts from a paper former Synod President Pastor Carl Mischke presented to the Dr. Martin Luther College faculty in August 1980. The procedure he outlined below continues to be used today.

"A congregation that wishes to call a teacher from the graduating class of DMLC places its call with the president of the district to which it belongs. Using the usual diploma of vocation, the congregation indicates whether it wants a man or a woman teacher, or simply the most qualified candidate. The congregation will specify the grade or grades to be taught, the number of students anticipated, other special duties such as principalship, organ and choir work, or physical education. It specifies the level of competence desired, whether head organist or assistant organist, or only organist, whether as director of a well-developed physical education program or somewhat less than that.

"The ten district presidents [now twelve district presidents] tabulate the information they have concerning the calls in their district and submit it to me [WELS president]. My office then compiles a Book of Requests, and a copy is prepared for each member and advisory member of the Assignment Committee. In this way, each president is not only apprised of the requests from his district but from the entire Synod. So, before we begin the actual placement of individual candidates, we know how many calls there are for men, how many for women, how many principals are being requested, how many organists, how many coaches and directors of physical education. In this way, we become aware of all the needs out in the field.

"But, that's only one side of it. The other side is learning to know the abilities and capabilities of the individual candidates. We do this through the rather sizable volume of information provided by the administration and faculty of DMLC. This includes a brief characterization noting the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate. It notes his academic proficiency or lack of it. It includes an evaluation of the candidates' practice teaching, as well as a recommendation for the type of placement for which he or she is best suited. Frequently, this information is supplemented orally by the advisors.

"In the actual assignment process, matching a specific candidate with a specific place, any call that requires very special gifts (such as the Japan call) is filled first. After the special needs have been met, we follow a rotation according to districts. The district with the highest number of calls is first in the rotation, the district with the fewest calls is last. The district with the highest number will receive a choice every round, the district with only one or two calls will not.

"As each district is given its turn, the president presents the call that he wishes to fill, reviews the requirements of the call, and states the name of the candidate that, in his judgment, best fills that need. The other presidents, as well as the advisors, then have an opportunity to respond, either concurring in the choice or advancing reasons why that candidate might serve better elsewhere. After discussion, a separate motion is passed in the case of each candidate. When all the candidates have been assigned, there is still an opportunity for further review in the event that someone feels that a specific candidate might serve better elsewhere.

“Although each president naturally feels a keen responsibility toward the congregations in his district, that concern is superseded by a concern for the church at large, for the overall needs of the kingdom. The spirit of harmony in that meeting is second to none. The obvious desire to place each candidate where he or she can best serve, where individual talents can be further developed, is much in evidence. I don’t know if I ever had any reservations about the divinity of the call, but if I did, they have been completely removed for me since being privileged to serve as part of the human machinery in the assignment process. Again and again, when one compares his personal candidate choices at the beginning of the meeting for possible assignment to specific places with those that emerge at the meeting’s end, the Spirit’s direction is readily apparent.”

The Assignment Committee and the MLC faculty realize the system of assigning graduates is not perfect—no human arrangement for carrying out the Lord’s work ever is. Nevertheless, we remain confident that the Holy Spirit operates through human procedures to call men and women into the Christian ministry.

Procedure for Assigning Candidates

Graduates of the college are ready for assignment into the Christian ministry upon recommendation of the faculty. The committee on assignment of calls, consisting of the praesidium of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the presidents of its respective districts, determines the placement of the graduates. The college administration and faculty (college president, education dean, VP for student life, director of field experiences) are represented at the meetings of this assignment committee in an advisory capacity.

Understand that the grade level to which teacher candidates are assigned for student teaching *does not* determine the grade level of the first call received through the Assignment Committee. Teacher candidates should not consider it unusual if they are assigned to serve a congregation either at a higher or lower grade level than their student teaching grade level. Needs of the church at large and abilities of the students are the primary considerations in the work of the Assignment Committee.

Policies Regarding a Candidate’s Status in the Book of Candidates

Categories

The Conference of Presidents of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod has provided the following categories under which biographies are placed in the *Book of Candidates*.

1. Available for Assignment

Current or past graduates who have been presented to the church by Martin Luther College and are available for assignment anywhere. Some candidates have delayed availability for assignment because they have not yet fulfilled all of the requirements necessary for assignment, or because they have a spouse or fiancée/fiancé who is not in fellowship with WELS (1a).

2. Declining Assignment

Current or past graduates who have been presented to the church by Martin Luther College but are declining to be assigned because they do not desire to teach in our WELS educational system at this time.

3. Deferring Assignment

Current or past graduates who have been presented to the church by Martin Luther College but have asked that their assignment be deferred to a later date. Assignment may be deferred for one or two years, after which the candidate returns to the assignment committee. Deferring students who do not present themselves for assignment after two years, by that action, indicate that they are declining assignment. Those who decline assignment in this way but at a later time desire to receive a call into the teaching ministry must do so by contacting the president of the district in which they reside. If three or more years have passed since graduation, they must also meet requirements for recertification as WELS teachers.

4. Limited Availability for Assignment

Current graduates who are available for assignment but are limited to a certain geographic area for legitimate and compelling reasons (e.g., marriage or marriage plans or spouse's assignment).

Right of Refusal

Candidates who are offered the opportunity to decline an assignment include:

- Those assigned to foreign fields, including Canada.
- Female students assigned as tutors and married to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary students (when the husband would be required to live in the dormitory and commute to the seminary).
- Those assigned to other unique or unusual circumstances as determined by the Assignment Committee.

Eligibility for Assignment

- Candidates who have deferred their assignment or who have been unassigned are eligible for assignment for a total of three assignment cycles. In the case of students who defer assignment, each year of deferment is included in the three-year limit. In other words, candidates who defer for one year are eligible for assignment for two more years; candidates who defer for two years are eligible for assignment for one more year. Candidates who defer for a third year are no longer eligible for assignment.
- Candidates who have declined their assignment but change their minds within three years of graduation should make a request of their district president to be made available for assignment.
- Eligible candidates who are unassigned at the spring assignment meeting will continue to be considered for assignment throughout the following year and can be assigned at any time.
- Assignment of candidates after an assignment meeting will be done by the respective district president and the synod president, with the Conference of Presidents being informed of the assignment.
- Candidates may be considered for assignment at three spring assignment meetings (and in the year following the third assignment meeting). After three years of being unassigned, the candidate will no longer be considered for assignment. Such candidates may, however, be called directly by congregations in consultation with their district president.
- Candidates assigned to temporary calls shall be considered for assignment at the three spring assignment meetings following the end of their temporary service. During a third year of temporary assignment, candidates may be called directly by congregations in consultation with their district president.

Receiving Your Assigned Call

Procedures to follow when accepting your assigned call:

- a. Write a letter to the congregation in care of the pastor to inform the congregation that you received a Call through the Assignment Committee. Include the thought that you will fulfill your duties to the best of your ability with the help of God. Ask for the prayers of the congregation and the pastor that your work may be done to the glory of God and the welfare of his kingdom.
- b. Write a separate letter of a personal nature to the pastor. If there is no pastor, write to the president of the congregation or the vacancy pastor. Ask when your installation is to be and when you are expected to begin your work. You may also wish to ask about other duties and inquire about living arrangements. If possible, arrange a personal visit after graduation. If the school has a principal, be sure to also write him.

Deferment or Declining Assignment

Occasionally candidates choose to defer their assignment into the Christian ministry for a year or two. The most common reasons that individuals defer are to pursue further study or to serve in international fields through various agencies of the WELS.

A few candidates decline assignment because they do not wish to teach in a WELS school at this time. The following information and procedures should be noted.

A. Terminology

1. Deferment of assignment means that the candidate wishes to delay assignment into full-time public ministry for a period of time, typically one or two years. After the deferring candidate notifies the MLC director of field experiences of their intention to return for assignment, the candidate is presented to the Assignment Committee.
2. Declining assignment means that the candidate does not wish to be assigned into full-time public ministry. The candidate is removed for assignment consideration. If, in the future, the individual wishes to teach in a WELS school, the candidate must contact their district president.

B. Procedures

1. Discuss your plans with your advisor and others who may assist you.
2. Declare your intentions on the *Book of Candidates–Category Form* by the deadline indicated on the form.
3. If you do not submit the declaration form by the deadline, you will be considered a candidate who is declining assignment.