

Winthrop University-School Partnership Network

SCHOOL LIAISON

2023-2024 Handbook

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GENERAL INFORMATION

What is a School Liaison?

The Partner School/Content Area Assembly Liaison is a site-based staff member (teacher or school leader) committed to the goals, mission, and vision of the Winthrop University-School Partnership Network. The primary responsibility of the liaison is to serve as a facilitator and conduit between the university and school educators, most particularly to individual classroom teachers in coordination with the Rex Institute staff. The liaison supports the networking of their school and/or teachers to other Partner Schools. The liaison provides leadership and support in partnership efforts including, but not limited to, high quality teacher preparation, professional development, educational renewal, and addressing educational challenges through inquiry and research at the building level.

The liaison is a paid position through Winthrop University with expectation for performance as outlined below in the roles and responsibilities. Liaison pay occurs on a semester basis according to teacher candidate placement activities and typically ranges from \$200 (hosting early clinical, field experiences, or internship)) to \$300 (hosting a combination of early clinical, field, and internship).

Roles and Responsibilities of the School Liaison

- Support the implementation and assessment of the Partnership Network
 - Serve on Partnership Advisory Council (attend all meetings or appoint a replacement)
 - Communicate with and respond to Partnership staff and other liaisons in an efficient manner
 - Assist in data collection and analysis to determine the effectiveness of the Partnership on student learning and teacher quality
 - Submit the annual *School-Based Reflection, Assessment, and Goals*
- Collaborate with Partnership staff in determining and coordinating a process of professional development that meets the needs of teachers and university students
 - Hold regular meetings with and/or direct study groups for Winthrop students
 - Collaborate with school and University faculty on action research endeavors
 - Encourage expert teachers in the school/district to share their strengths with others
 - Utilize the enthusiasm, energy, and expertise of Winthrop students to improve instruction at the school or within the specified content area
- Assist in the implementation of clinical experiences for Winthrop candidates
 - Identify potential host and mentor teachers within the liaison's school or content area
 - Assist with matching host and mentor teachers with Winthrop candidates
 - Become acquainted with Winthrop students at school or within the content area
 - Serve on exit interview committees and/or create end-of-year surveys for teacher candidates
- Act as first level of support for host and mentor teachers and Winthrop faculty and students
 - Connect Winthrop students with resources at the school level (not applicable to CAA liaisons)
 - Connect teachers at the school with University resources

- Assist Winthrop faculty with implementing field experience requirements and aligning course content with sound pedagogical practice
- Observe and provide formal and informal feedback regarding teacher candidate performance

HOST TEACHERS

What is a Host Teacher?

A host teacher is a teaching professional who is approved by the school and the university to serve as a classroom guide and evaluator for one or more early clinical and field experience students (see [Education Core Overview](#) for clinical experience courses). Early clinical and field experiences do NOT include the internship.

Roles and Responsibilities of a Host Teacher

Host teachers will:

- Engage with and guide Winthrop teacher preparation students during early clinical work in conjunction with a university course.
- Communicate with university personnel about Winthrop student progress.
- Assist in the completion of university course assignments.
- Debrief with university course instructor/supervisor and school liaison.
- Complete a clinical assessment for each teacher candidate.

Qualifications of a Host Teacher

In order to serve as a host, teacher must:

- Complete the ADEPT process (*unless approved otherwise by principal, such as teachers new to district but still in ADEPT sequence*);
- Submit an application with a self-assessment; and
- Receive a favorable recommendation by the school principal or school designee.

Steps to Becoming a Host Teacher

To become a host, teacher must:

1. Communicate interest with principal, whom will support the faculty member moving forward with the application or advise against participation.
2. Submit [online host teacher application](#).
3. Contact principal to complete the [online recommendation form](#).

Placement Procedures for Host Teachers

The placements process differs for various courses as summarized below.

EDCO 200 (developmental sciences and poverty) and *EDCO 201/EDCO 202* (multilingual learners/exceptionalities) are placed as a class, with the entire class going to the school during the class time (see the [Field Overview](#) for more information on course content/hours/expectations). This allows the course instructor to also be at the school to guide teacher candidates and support host teachers.

1. Field times are typically:
8:00 AM – 10:50 AM (elementary school field placements)
12:30 PM – 3:20 PM (middle or high school field placements)

EDCO 201 - Effective Practices for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners in the P-12 Classroom

EDCO 202 - Effective Practices for Exceptional Learners in the P-12 Classroom

Instructors cover the majority of course content during the first half of the semester on campus and then teacher candidates spend the second half of the semester (twice a week for 6-7 weeks) in the host school.

Field times may need adjusting for individual candidates who have class back on campus; however, this is only for the instructor to approve and will be communicated with the host teacher.

2. A class spreadsheet (candidate name and content area) is sent to the liaison from the Office of Field and Clinical Experiences after the university drop/add period has ended (typically the Monday after classes start). NOTE: Liaisons should NOT alter the spreadsheet except to enter requested information as it is used to upload directly into placement systems.
3. Liaison works with others at the school to appropriately place candidates in general education/related arts classrooms.
 - a. For these courses, the **focus is on the learner**. Candidates follow the students to different experiences (e.g., lunch, another content course, related arts, etc.) when not planning with the teacher.
 - b. Whenever possible, assign candidates to teachers in their content area; however, the main focus is, again, on the learner.
4. Liaison returns the completed spreadsheet to the Office of Field and Clinical Experiences paying close attention to include teacher's full name, correct email address, and room number. At this time, check with the Office to determine if any assigned teacher needs to complete a Host Teacher application (required for compensation).

The information provided by the liaison is used to enter data into the field management and assessment system; therefore, it is critical to submit correct and updated information. PLEASE inform the Office of Field and Clinical Experiences if there is ever a change in host teacher.

In addition to undergraduate early clinical courses, teacher candidates in the Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program also complete field hours; however, these are often scheduled independently with the host teacher due to program and work schedules. These courses may include EDCO 602 (technology), EDCO 610 (multilingual learners/exceptionalities), and EDCO 660 (classroom climate).

Prior to the year-long internship, teacher candidates engage in a “*methods*” or *field experience block* to ensure internship readiness. These candidates are placed at multiple schools to plan and implement content-specific lessons. Often, the candidates are also taking either a course in classroom management and/or technology (graduate students often have a diverse learner class as well). These general courses are meant to support students as they integrate pedagogy with content. Placement for these pre-internship experiences may occur in one or more schools and often begin with communication from the Office of Field and Clinical Experiences regarding teacher availability.

Use the [Education Core Overview](#) or the [Education Core course webpage](#) for additional details about teacher responsibilities in specific courses.

Compensation for Host Teachers

The [Host and Mentor Teacher Model](#) outlines the guidelines and compensation for host and mentor teachers. Host teachers receive a certificate they can submit with applications for certificate renewal, as well as an “allotment” for classroom supplies. The amount of the allotment depends upon the field experience hours. See “[Host Teacher Allotment](#)” section for additional information.

MENTOR TEACHERS (for additional details, see the [Year-Long Internship Handbook](#))

What is a Mentor Teacher?

A mentor teacher is a teaching professional who is approved for mentorship by the school and the university and serves as role model, instructor, and coach for the intern. The mentor teacher provides continuous formative assessment helping the intern assume the multiple roles of a teaching professional.

Roles and Responsibilities of a Mentor Teacher

Among the many responsibilities of mentorship, the mentor teacher should become familiar with the background of the intern and help the intern become acquainted with school and classroom procedures and policies. The mentor teacher should be available to the intern for consultation outside of the school day and commit to meeting with the intern and university supervisor on a consistent basis.

Winthrop places a focus on [co-teaching](#) as foundational to the internship experience. Effective mentor teachers share the many aspects of classroom practice with the intern, especially as they move into a leadership role. [Transition plans](#) are available on the Rex Institute website to assist in planning mentor/intern balance. Part of the balance includes interns successfully solo-teaching; however, mentor teachers remain an integral part of the classroom throughout the entire internship experience.

Qualifications of a Mentor Teacher

Winthrop’s mentor teachers are carefully selected through state specified criteria that reflect high expectations and a collaborative process involving both school and university partners. With our clinically-based approach to teacher preparation within our Partnership Network, mentors must meet specific qualifications to serve in this role.

In order to serve as a mentor, a teacher must meet these minimum qualifications:

- Have a minimum of one year’s teaching experience in South Carolina beyond completion of the state’s formal evaluation process
- Be approved by the school administration
- Model excellence in teaching, exhibit high expectations for students, and demonstrate strong skills in planning, oral/written communications, collaborative decision making, judgment, and human relations
- Demonstrate the willingness and ability to participate in the training and professional development necessary to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to be an effective mentor
- Have received an outstanding performance evaluation for the last two years of teaching
- Commit to the time and effort needed to serve as a mentor (this includes sufficient time to meet with the intern during non-instructional time – planning periods, before/after school)
- Participate in the interview process with Winthrop College of Education, Sport & Human Sciences personnel

Roles of an Effective Mentor Teacher

- Participate in the full South Carolina Mentoring Cycle which includes:
 - Pre-observation conferences
 - Observations
 - Post-observation conferences
- Understand and utilize the resources available through the [Office of Field and Clinical Experience](#), such as the required Observation Record and midterm/final Evaluations
- Maintain the confidential nature of the mentoring relationship when conversing with other teachers
- Stay in close communication with the university supervisor, sharing positive feedback as well as goals established with the teacher candidate
- Facilitate whole-school experiences for the teacher candidate (especially during Internship II)
 - Identify a “buddy classroom” for ELEM/ECED teacher candidates to experience the grade level spectrum
 - Have teacher candidate observe other team members whom teach different preps
 - Target and schedule teacher observations of those whom excel in areas such as classroom management, grouping, etc.

Steps to Becoming a Mentor Teacher

1. Communicate interest with principal, whom will support the faculty member moving forward with the application or advise against participation.
2. Submit [online mentor teacher application](#).
3. Contact principal to complete the [online recommendation form](#).
4. Participate in an interview with school and university representatives ([sample interview questions](#)).

Placement Procedures for Mentor Teachers

1. Placements are made by the Field Placement Coordinator in conjunction with faculty from the Partnership Network and the respective program areas and in cooperation with principals and/or personnel directors in participating school districts. The Competency Review Committee, comprised of three faculty members from the candidate’s content area, meet to

determine if the student is ready to move from Internship I to Internship II. Once the candidate passes the Competency Review Process, the Competency Review Committee recommends continuation in Internship II.

2. All placements must be made in public school settings with teachers whom meet the criteria as stated for mentor teachers.
3. A candidate may not be assigned placement with a relative or close family friend serving as the mentor teacher (or paraprofessional) or where the principal is a family member.
4. A candidate may not be assigned a placement in a school where they have previously worked.
5. If there are special considerations requested in placements, the candidate must make that request in writing to the Field Placement Coordinator at the time the internship application is submitted.
6. Requests for changes in placements by teacher candidates must be made in writing to the Office of Field and Clinical Experiences Director and will be considered only where there is evidence of extenuating circumstances.

Assessment and Evaluation of Mentor Teachers

Surveys completed by interns and university supervisors at the end of each semester provide feedback on mentor teachers. After three experiences as a mentor, data is aggregated through the Office of Field and Clinical Experiences. The anonymous feedback is provided to the mentor teacher for reflection.

Compensation for Mentor Teachers

At the end of each semester, mentor teachers are provided a monetary stipend for their service. This is provided to the respective district office to include in their regular paychecks. Winthrop pays the stipend, as well as fringe benefits associated with the stipend amount. In addition, several other benefits exist, such as access to a faculty/staff ID, reduced tuition rates, and more. Visit the [Host and Mentor Teacher Model](#) for additional information.

- Note – [Reduced Tuition Guidelines](#) require advance notice, so encourage qualifying mentors to submit their desired coursework at least a month prior to registration. *This benefit is also available to school liaisons and administrators whom are active in the Partnership Network.*
- Mentors interested in having a faculty/staff ID should email [Dr. Bettie Parsons Barger](#). She will contact the mentor to acquire the necessary information for adding them to the system before they can visit the university to have their ID made.

HOSTING AND MENTORING FAQs

Who are the host and mentor teachers at my school? Email the [placement coordinator](#) in the Office of Field and Clinical Experiences to have a list sent via email.

Does a mentor teacher have to submit a separate application to be a host teacher? NO. The mentor teacher application is sufficient to host and mentor; however, host teachers must submit the mentor

teacher application to act as a mentor. This is due to qualification differences defined by the SC Department of Education.

What are some effective strategies for recruiting new host and mentor teachers? One of the goals of most schools in the Partnership Network is to “rotate” host and mentor teachers to ensure the same people are not doing all of the work.

Strategies shared by liaisons include:

- Continuous conversation about participation in the Network and the shared commitment to new teacher development;
- School leaders construct a rotation schedule for hosting and mentoring;
- Email Winthrop leaders to request a specific time for early field courses such as EDCO 200 or EDCO 201/202 that better fits school schedule;
- Have those with successful hosting and mentoring experience share strategies for engaging teacher candidates for the benefit of the students (small grouping, targeted interventions, etc.);
- Ask Winthrop instructor to speak to the faculty about the field experience as well as provide professional development; and
- Highlight the external benefits.

HOST TEACHER ALLOTMENT

After the midpoint of the semester, a list is sent to liaisons in schools hosting early clinical and field experiences. The liaisons should carefully confirm the roster for accuracy and immediately inform the placement coordinator if changes are needed. The list includes the host teacher name and the amount of their allotment based upon the courses and students they are hosting.

Dates are established towards the end of the semester for accepting classroom material orders. Liaisons facilitate the order process with individual host teachers at their sites using the order form available on the [Partnership Advisory Council](#) (PAC) webpage then compile ONE list per school submitted to the Rex Institute [administrative specialist](#). Host teachers do not have to order materials just for their classroom; they can order materials for use at home, with their own family, etc. but must stick to the items on the form unless extenuating circumstances exist (contact the [Partnership Network director](#)).

Orders are shipped directly to the school for the liaison to distribute; therefore, it is important to save order information for individual teachers.

Tips on facilitating the order process:

- Use the auto-calculate form available on the [PAC website](#);
- Establish a due date of at least 3-5 days prior to the Winthrop due date; and
- When orders arrive, utilize teacher candidates to sort and distribute items.

FIELD PLACEMENT ONLINE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – Student Learning and Licensure (previously known as “Via”)

Winthrop utilizes an online management system to track student performance through several aspects of the teacher education process. One part of the system includes information and evaluation on field experiences. The SL&L system allows host teachers to approve hours that teacher candidates were in their field placements as well as evaluate their performance on field rubrics. The SL&L system is NOT used for final internship courses; however, cases often exist in which candidates are taking a field course (e.g, EDCO 305 – technology) for which the mentor teacher may be asked to assess their performance in SL&L.

[SL&L Instructions](#) for host teachers are available online with associated login directions and screen shots. The most common trouble-shooting tip is always to use Chrome or Firefox (never Explorer, which is often the default browser). If liaisons cannot help a host teacher with SL&L, the first point of contact is the course instructor whom can then contact someone at Winthrop for support.

CURRICULUM

Education Core

The [Education Core](#) at Winthrop University provides initial teacher preparation candidates (at the graduate and undergraduate level) with foundational experiences and critical content to develop as highly effective educators. Candidates transition from student to professional through clinical experiences culminating in a year-long internship experience. The Education Core focuses on knowledge and skill acquisition, thus content is not presented singularly but throughout the sequence of courses and reinforced in program areas. This does not mean concepts and ideas are repeated; rather, they are deliberately integrated at multiple points to support candidate development of (1) fluency, (2) maintenance, and finally (3) generalization.

Content Area Courses

In addition to the Education Core, teacher candidates take courses specific to their content area that might also have dedicated field experiences. All program areas include a “field experience” course that acts as a readiness experience prior to Internship I.

See the [Education Core](#) website for an overview of the initial teacher education curriculum as well as support documents such as syllabi, assessments, host teacher information, and online modules.

The Rex Institute for Educational Renewal and Partnerships

The [Rex Institute](#) is a service-oriented organization within Winthrop's Richard W. Riley College of Education that serves, facilitates, and supports faculty and College of Education initiatives that involve internal and external collaboration, partnership, and outreach. The Partnership Network is part of the Rex Institute along with the Office of Field and Clinical Experiences, Professional Learning, Education Core curriculum, Teaching Fellows/Teacher Cadet, and more!

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The Office of Field and Clinical Experiences

The goal of the [Office of Field and Clinical Experiences](#) is to support each student in attaining the competencies required to both enter their chosen profession and to grow professionally throughout their career. University faculty, supervisors, and host teachers utilize their expertise and engage with students through a variety of strategies and resources. Rigorous content and field assessments verify that our students are performing to Winthrop University's high expectations.

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