Field Placement Criteria

## Dear Candidates,

## The main purpose of field placements (practicum and student teaching) is to help you develop the knowledge and skills you need to support the learning of a wide range of K-12 students. Field placements provide you with opportunities to observe, plan, practice, and reflect on effective approaches to instruction, differentiation, and classroom management. The program follows several sets of guidelines to accomplish this goal.

## First, we consider the MiT Conceptual Framework and the mission of the MiT Program.

## Second, we follow state regulatory standards for field placements per WAC 181-78A-125 including establishing formal agreements with schools districts that:

* identify the program personnel who are authorized to request a placement,
* identify the district personnel to whom those requests should be made, and
* specify that candidates will not be placed in situations in which personal relationships or previous experiences could interfere with objective evaluation.

Third, we follow Standard 4, Program Design from WAC 181-78A-220(4) which guides placement decisions for programs by instructing that (i) “field experiences provide opportunity to work in communities with populations dissimilar to the background of the candidate” and (ii) “mentors must be fully certificated school personnel and have a minimum of three years of professional experience in the role they are supervising.”

Finally, placements are also determined by district availability and approval.

To ensure that we meet the program’s goals for candidates’ development as well as state requirements, the Education Field Placement Officer *initiates all* discussions about placements. Each district has its own protocols and processes and it is the Education Field Placement Officer’s job to facilitate discussions between the program and the district.

Candidates may not initiate discussions about placements, whether about a practicum or student teaching placement, with possible mentors or district personnel. Nor should they request placements from the faculty or the Education Field Placement Officer based on convenience or desired target areas for employment.

Field placements are determined using the following process:

1. The Education Field Experience Officer sends out a *Field Placement Survey* that helps identify candidates’ strengths and areas in which they need additional experience. The survey data is analyzed and the Education Field Experience Officer confers with the MiT Director and MiT Cohort Faculty to confirm where placements should be made.
2. The Education Field Experience Officer then works with the school districts to find the best placements.
3. The Education Field Experience Officer notifies candidates of their placements and responsibilities for contacting mentors.

To make placements, the Education Field Experience Officer considers the following school characteristics in relationship to candidates’ experiences: i) urban, rural, and suburban demographics; ii) socio-economic populations in the school; (iii) racial and ethnic group composition of the school, and, (iv) representation of linguistic groups and students with special needs. All criteria will be taken into account to find placements that will help candidates develop as excellent educators.

Examples of placements might include the following:

* If a teacher candidate grew up in an urban area and attended or worked in schools that primarily served upper middle class students with little linguistic diversity, one placement *might* be similar to her/his previous experiences. However, other possible placements *might* be in a rural school or in an urban or suburban school serving diverse ethnic, linguistic, and racial populations with a range of academic needs.

* If a candidate attended or worked in urban schools with diverse ethnic, linguistic, and working or middle class students, one placement *might* be similar to her/his previous experiences. However, other possible placements *might* be in a school that includes students from upper middle class backgrounds or in a school that serves students who have grown up in rural communities.
* If a candidate attended or worked in rural or suburban schools, one placement might be similar to his/her previous experiences. However, another possible placement might be in an urban school serving students from diverse ethnic, class, and linguistic backgrounds.

The list of school districts with which Evergreen has field placement agreements can be found on the program website at: <http://www.evergreen.edu/mit/placement/districts.htm>. Candidates are asked to remember that placements are not based on convenience or a desired target area for future employment.

Sincerely,

*Loren Petty*

Loren Petty, Education Field Experience Officer

Sherry Walton, Director, Evergreen Teacher Education Programs