**Child and Family Development Resource Center and Practicum Students**

In an effort to foster competencies necessary for successful student teaching, The Child and Family Development Resource Center has thoroughly considered several required key experiences for Practicum Students. During the twelve weeks of practicum work at the Center, students will be given the opportunity and support to plan, implement, and reflect on the practices noted below with his/her Cooperating, or host, Teacher and/or Supervisor. Under the guidance of skilled mentors, practicum students will gain valuable experiential learning opportunities.

The Practicum Experience is designed to give students experience in observing and individualizing for a ***focus child***, with or without an identified exceptionality. The experiences noted below are designed to support the Practicum Student in considering his her focus child as well as all students. Each required activity provides further opportunities for Practicum Students to refine and improve on competencies especially in the area of individualization.

The experiences below were selected in order to provide increased opportunities to practice competencies necessary for student teaching success. They include learning experiences targeted towards whole group, small group, and individual children. Together with the Cooperating Teacher, ideal times will be selected for the Practicum Student to plan, implement, and reflect on the following required key experiences to be conducted/led by the Practicum Student:

***Shared Reading/Oral Storytelling***

Practicum Students will engage in ***at least two*** Shared Reading and/or Storytelling experiences with a whole group. The Practicum Student will read a book or tell a story (with or without flannel board figures) that is related to the investigation underway or one that is highly engaging to children. The Practicum Student will share his/her Shared Reading plan with the Cooperating Teacher prior to the event. ***Individualized*** questions before, during, and after the shared reading/storytelling experience will reflect different levels of higher order thinking (Bloom’s Taxonomy) from remembering to creating:

* Remembering: can the student recall or remember the information?
* Understanding: can the student explain ideas or concepts?
* Applying: can the student use the information in a new way?
* Analyzing: can the student distinguish between the different parts?
* Evaluating: can the student justify a stand or decision?
* Creating: can the student create new product or point of view?

At least one shared reading/storytelling experience will be video recorded (facilitated by the CFDRC) for the Practicum Student to view and reflect upon privately.

***Small Group or Cooperative Group Activity***

Practicum Students will lead a cooperative group activity weekly (after the first few weeks of observation). In addition, Practicum Students will develop at ***least two*** cooperative group experiences during their practicum. Distinct from learning center time, cooperative learning involves placing all children in the class into groups of 2 to 5 at separate tables at the same time. An adult is positioned at each table and conducts the same, brief activity. Each cooperative learning session will include the following steps:

* Children are purposefully grouped, based on the nature of the activity. Sometimes quieter and more active children are placed together; other times older and younger children are blended. Children who are having difficulty with peer relationships might be placed with potential friends. Groups may vary for each activity and group composition is always planned prior to the experience.
* Activities are planned to address at least one performance standard and one content standard (usually related the investigation currently underway). These are engaging activities that include novel, concrete objects and often involve literacy.
* Planned activities are often intended to show children how to use materials that will later be available to them in learning centers. For example, a class community puzzle may be put together by four children in a cooperative learning activity, with teacher guidance, and then later placed in the manipulatives center for use during free play time.

After observing cooperative group activities led by the Cooperating Teacher, the Practicum Student will begin to implement weekly cooperative learning experience planned by the Cooperating Teacher. After reflecting on this with the teacher, the Practicum Student will develop ***at least two*** of his/her own cooperative group activities with support from the Cooperating Teacher. Planning the experience will include suggestions on grouping to be approved by the Cooperating Teacher. The Practicum Student will note how he/she plans to ***individualize*** for the students in the groupings as needed.

***Planned Transitions***

The Practicum Student will carry out transition activism weekly; first observing and following activities developed by the Cooperating Teacher followed by developing his/her own transition activities. The Practicum Student will develop and implement ***at least two*** transition activities defined as: A **cognitively-oriented send-off activity** that will smoothly transition children from group time to the next activity. This may include asking children to select and discuss the learning center where they will start the day. It may also include cognitive and language-rich challenges: “If you are *not* wearing brown shoes you can choose a center.” etc. (No longer than 20 minutes).

After observing several transitions planned by the Cooperating Teacher, the Practicum Student will implement a transition he/she has observed. Subsequently, the Practicum Student will develop her own transition under the guidance of the Cooperating Teacher. Transitions are a good way for a Practicum Student to practice ***individualizing*** for each student being transitioned from one activity to the next (i.e. type of questioning, wait time, etc.).

***Responsibility of the Practicum Student***

* Be professional: including prompt arrival, appropriate clothing, effective and respectful communication with children, staff, and families.
* Maintain confidentiality.
* Review the Investigations Curriculum Handbook
* Review the Volunteer/Observer Handbook abiding by the Center’s policies and procedures
* Review of the plan book and planning process
* Be prepared for the day (plans, materials)
* Participate in ONE weekly staff meeting with CFDRC staff and Director
* Participate in ONE monthly development session with the CFDRC Staff and Director

***Responsibility of the Cooperating Teacher***

* Orientate the Practicum student to the Investigations Handbook, plan book, and classroom environment
* Assist the Practicum with the required activities as needed (model, assist in planning, and reflect)
* Meet and reflect weekly (30 minute session) with the Practicum Student providing feedback

***Responsibility of the Director of the CFDRC***

* Provide a tour of the Center
* Provide additional individualized support to the Practicum as needed
* Visit the classroom and offer to reflect with the Practicum Student
* Facilitate issues as they arise between the Practicum Student and Cooperating Teacher