
Student Teacher as Substitute Teacher Policy

PennWest University values its school partners and their willingness to invite our teacher candidates into their schools. We are also cognizant of the statewide teacher shortage and the need for qualified substitute teachers. In response to the implementation of Pennsylvania HB 416/Act 91, PennWest University will adopt the following guidelines, effective February 15, 2022, regarding the use of teacher candidates as substitute teachers.

As teacher candidates are still in the process of completing their teacher preparation programs, they have not yet fulfilled the requirements necessary to gain certification in the state of Pennsylvania. Therefore, Institutions of Higher Education are responsible for ensuring that teacher candidate requirements are completed prior to the end of the teacher candidate experience. Likewise, it is important that teacher candidates realize that substitute teaching without a teaching certification may expose them to potential liability in the classroom that may impede their receipt of the certification in the future. The following procedures will be piloted during the Spring 2022 semester for teacher candidates that intend to act as substitute teachers under Act 91 guidelines:

- Teacher candidates will indicate their interest/willingness to substitute teach in their assigned classroom/building.
- Names of teacher candidates interested in substitute teaching who have received at least one satisfactory observation related to their student teacher program can be submitted, by the school district, to the District's HR department or District approved substitute teaching service, for approval as a substitute by the school's Board of Education.
- The University Supervisor will be asked to provide input as to the readiness of the teacher candidate to serve as a substitute teacher in their content area in addition to the submission of a mid-semester PDE 430 evaluation on which the teacher candidate has earned a satisfactory rating.
- The District Mentor Teacher from the first student teacher placement will provide input as to the readiness of the teacher candidate to serve as a substitute teacher in their content area.
- A District administrator (e.g. Superintendent, Principal, etc.) will meet with the teacher candidate prior to the first substitute teacher assignment to provide a brief orientation and answer any questions from the teacher candidate.
- Teacher candidates will only be asked to serve as a substitute teacher in their assigned building, preferably in their content area.

- A teacher candidate will be compensated at the daily substitute teacher rate for his/her service to the district.
- Teacher candidates CANNOT count time substitute teaching toward the completion of their teacher preparation programs.
 - *12-weeks of student teaching are required for PA certification.*
 - *All university assignments must be completed for program completion.*
 - *All PA Department of Education competencies must be met prior to receiving PA certification.*

PennWest University believes in the value of the mentor teacher/teacher candidate relationship. Working under the direction of a certified teacher provides direct and immediate feedback that prepares teacher candidates to assume the role of a full-time classroom teacher. PennWest University also recognizes that teacher candidates are entering the workforce at a time when staff shortages are a daily reality and a district wide challenge. We understand that there is value in having teacher candidates serve as substitute teachers in a **limited** and **intentional** role. PennWest University asks that the use of teacher candidates as substitute teachers be done sparingly. Teacher candidates that do not fulfill university and state competencies cannot be recommended for certification at the end of their programs.