

Early Childhood Mentor Network (ECMN) Practicum Student/Mentee Information 2024-25

This guide is for students enrolled in ECED 2120/2121: Curriculum Development through Play: Birth - Age 4 and/or ECED 2130/2131: Curriculum Development and Implementation: Age 3 - Grade 3 and placed with an ECMN mentor as part of an early childhood program.

During the mentorship, mentors are like helpful guides who give personal support based on what the student needs in their teaching experience. Here are some things mentors do:

- **Getting to Know the School:** Mentors help you understand everything about the new classroom and school, like paperwork, events, rules, and how to communicate with parents.
- **Watching and Giving Feedback:** They watch you teach, either in person or online, and then share really helpful feedback to help you get better.
- **Talking About Your Teaching:** Mentors have conversations with you at important times during your mentorship. This helps you think about what you're doing and learn from it.
- **Learning from Experience:** They think about what you've been through in the classroom and use those thoughts to help you learn more.
- **Answering Your Questions:** If you have questions, your mentor is there to help. They answer your questions in a professional, supportive, and quick way.
- **Being Positive:** Mentors always see the good in you. They support you no matter what, helping you feel confident and encouraged.
- **Becoming an Independent Teacher:** As you finish your practicum, mentors help you transition from being a student to being an independent teacher. They're there to guide you on this journey but mentors can be friends for life!

Practicum Student/Mentee Guidelines

I. Follow the Handbook

As a practicum student, it's important to follow the rules in your college or university's guidelines, syllabi, orientation materials, or handbook to have a positive experience.

II. Practicum Hours

The mentorship usually lasts 10–15 weeks, with either 1) spending 45-60 hours in the mentor's classroom or 2) having 15 hours of virtual mentorship, which includes watching online classes and getting feedback. This helps you get a good overall experience in your chosen field.

III. Talk to Your Mentor

Having good communication with your mentor is key for a successful practicum. When you first meet, decide together how you'll communicate, how often you'll talk, and how quickly you'll respond to each other. This way, you both know what to expect, and it helps build a good relationship.

IV. Be on Time and Respectful

Being on time and attending your scheduled meetings is really important during your practicum. If you're going to be late or can't make it to a meeting, let your mentor know as soon as possible. Use the communication method you agreed on earlier (email, phone call, or text). If there's a delay or you can't make it, tell your mentor at least an hour before the scheduled meeting.

V. If You Have a Problem

While following these guidelines can make your practicum a positive learning experience, it's normal to face challenges. If you ever have concerns or questions about your mentor or placement, don't hesitate to reach out for help. Contact your faculty and the ECMN Team at ecmn@cnm.edu, and we'll do our best to assist you. Your success and well-being during the practicum are important to us.