



Placing and Supporting Clinical Interns: Fall 2020 Toolkit

As the landscape of teaching and learning continues to evolve, this document provides an overview of clinical regulatory requirements and expectations, answers to frequently asked questions regarding the completion of clinical hours, clarifies the role of clinical interns and cooperating teachers, and offers strategies to ensure clinical interns are adequately prepared.

In response to the evolving needs of school districts and educator preparation programs, through a working group, have developed this toolkit to provide recommendations and strategies for successful clinical practice partnerships.

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As the landscape of teaching and learning continues to evolve, this document addresses the following:

01 Overview of clinical regulatory requirements and expectations

02 Answers to frequently asked questions

03 The role of clinical interns and cooperating teachers

04 Strategies for ensuring clinical interns are adequately prepared

Overview

Clinical practice is a vital component of teacher preparation. Collaboration between the educational community stakeholders including districts, schools, and higher education is a key component of teacher preparation in New Jersey. To provide districts and educator preparation programs with support during these unprecedented times, members of the educational stakeholder community have collaborated to develop a toolkit. The purpose of this document is to share suggestions and strategies for districts and educator preparation programs. They are preparing the next generation of teachers as they navigate and adapt to virtual and/or hybrid learning environments. This toolkit is not intended to be prescriptive; its purpose is to provide a foundation to meet immediate needs, as well as reimagine the future of clinical internships (student teaching).

The landscape of education in New Jersey is rapidly evolving and questions regarding clinical placement have emerged as school districts and educator preparation programs prepare to place clinical interns (student teachers) this fall. Clinical interns play a significant role in supporting teaching, learning, and school culture.

Clinical Regulatory Requirements and Expectations

Every year, Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) and districts work together to ensure that clinical interns have meaningful clinical learning opportunities that prepare them for teaching. Regardless of setting, clinical internships continue to serve as mutually beneficial experiences to support the growth and development of future educators, cooperating teachers, and P-12 students. In preparation for the fall, districts should continue partnerships with educator preparation programs, welcome clinical interns this fall, and encourage effective teachers to serve as cooperating teachers. Educator preparation programs and districts should reference this toolkit as they prepare to place and support future teachers this fall.

School districts are responsible for accepting and placing clinical interns as part of the continuum of professional education and development. Outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-4.4 are the following requirements for the completion of clinical practice (student teaching). According to the regulations, clinical interns shall:

- Complete at least two semesters, according to the placement school district's schedule, including professional development days with the school district prior to the first day of class for students
- Be assigned a school district cooperating teacher for guidance and direction
- Be placed within the endorsement subject he or she will pursue for certification
- Be placed under the direct and continuous personal supervision of an appropriately certified cooperating teacher
- Engage in weekly conferences with a school district cooperating teacher
- Be assigned a clinical supervisor by the preparation program
- Be observed by a clinical supervisor at least every other week

Frequently Asked Questions

Do the clinical requirements for teacher certification outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:9A-4.4 apply to both virtual and in person settings?

All clinical interns must meet regulatory requirements regardless of environment, in person or virtual setting. The roles of clinical supervisors and cooperating teachers remain the same, though they should be adapted for the environment in which they are supporting interns.

Which academic calendar and school closing decisions should clinical interns be following, the district or educator preparation programs?

The educator preparation program and the district should determine this decision collaboratively.

Do clinical interns need substitute credentials?

While recommended, and preferred by many districts, the educator preparation program and the district should determine this decision collaboratively.

The Role of Clinical Interns and Cooperating Teachers

Ways Clinical Interns Can Support Teaching, Learning, and School Culture

The following are some examples of the ways that clinical interns can assist teachers and students in a remote or hybrid learning environment:

- Prepare and monitor whole class, small group, and one-to-one asynchronous learning lessons and activities
- Teach face-to-face whole class, small group, and one-to-one lessons while the cooperating teacher teaches remotely
- Teach whole class, small group to one-to-one lessons remotely while the clinical intern teaches face-to-face
- Provide one-to-one support for students who need individualized attention, virtually, or face-to-face
- Oversee an online “center” or “station” (virtual breakout groups)
- Use a Learning Management System (LMS) such as Google Classroom, Schoology, or Blackboard to help in assessing and monitoring student work
- Provide social and emotional supports to students
- Support and follow up with families regarding remote learning

Strategies for Supporting Clinical Interns

Considerations for Educator Preparation Program, Districts, and Schools

The following are some examples of the ways that EPPs, districts, and schools can assist clinical interns in their clinical practice in a remote, or hybrid learning environment:

- Provide clinical interns with access to district email accounts, the LMS used to provide virtual instructions, and any other associated digital platforms
- Support secure remote clinical observations by the university supervisor
- Provide opportunities and share protocols for clinical interns to meet assessment requirements for certification, including the collection of videos to meet edTPA requirements
- Onboard clinical interns:
 - Share policies and procedures for in-person, remote, or hybrid learning environments
 - Invite them to school-wide professional development opportunities and meetings (i.e. I&RS, parent teacher conferences)
 - Schedule dedicated time for cooperating teacher and clinical intern to meet (daily for check-ins; weekly for planning and feedback sessions)
 - Develop a schedule with cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and clinical intern to clarify expectations for in person and virtual observations

Strategies for Supporting Clinical Interns (continued)

Considerations for Clinical Interns

The following are some examples of the ways that clinical interns can support teaching, learning and school culture in a remote, or hybrid learning environment:

- **Virtual Instruction**
 - Consider becoming certified in a learning management system
 - Become familiar with the school's platform (e.g. Google Classroom, Schoology, or Blackboard) and ways to collaborate with cooperating teacher for instructional and/or meeting purposes
 - Plan and deliver both whole group and small group instruction.
- **Hybrid Instruction**
 - Develop lessons that are transferable from face-to-face to virtual
 - Differentiate instruction to meet every child at their appropriate level
 - Create opportunities to build relationships/community with students
 - Social/emotional support for students AND families
 - Provide IEP/504 accommodations
 - Work with grade level team/colleagues
 - Dedicate time to debrief lessons and plan for next day with the cooperating teacher