



PRACTICUM HANDBOOK: Graduate School of Education Candidate Assessment of Performance

For Teacher Candidates, Program Supervisors, and Supervising Practitioners

Graduate School of Education, Office of Field Placement
1815 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138

Mailing Address:
29 Everett Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
Attn: GSOE Field Placement Office

All forms and documents mentioned in this handbook are available through the Lesley website:
<https://www.lesley.edu/academics/graduate-school-of-education/field-placement>

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Eligibility for Practicum.....	3
Teacher Candidate Practicum Planning Responsibilities	4
Program Specific Requirements.....	5
Special Education.....	5
Overview of the Practicum.....	6
Planning for the Semester	6
Visits from the Program Supervisor	7
Overview of Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP).....	7-8
Roles and Responsibilities.....	9
Program Supervisor.....	9
Supervising Practitioner	9
Teacher Candidate	10
Principal	10
Lesley Teacher Candidates Professional Behavior in School Settings.....	10-11
Addressing Concerns.....	11
Graduate School of Education Mediation Policy	11
Voucher Policy for Supervising Practitioners	12
Practicum Log.....	13

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Introduction

Welcome to the Lesley University Graduate School of Education teacher candidate practicum.

The practicum is a three-way relationship between the teacher candidate, supervising practitioner, and the Lesley program supervisor.

During the student teaching/practicum experience, teacher candidates are asked to participate fully in all aspects of classroom and school life. The teacher candidate will be observed by a Lesley program supervisor **three** times during the course of the practicum using the Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP). <http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/cap/guidelines.html>

This handbook provides information to guide you through the practicum experience. We welcome your comments and feedback and urge you to contact us at any time with questions or concerns.

We hope that this collaborative experience will offer exciting opportunities for professional growth and development. We appreciate the efforts of everyone involved in making this a positive learning experience.

KEY: TC: Teacher Candidate, SP: Supervising Practitioner, PS: Program Supervisor (Lesley University)

Eligibility for the Practicum

To be eligible for the practicum, teacher candidates must:

- Be officially accepted at Lesley, pass all courses taken, have a cumulative 3.0 grade average or higher, and have no grades of "Incomplete."
 - Complete [all required pre-practicum courses](#) as noted on the program of study.
 - Complete a 75 hour Early Field Experience through the Office of Field Placement or receive an approval letter from the Field Placement Office for documentation of prior experience.
 - Pass all required Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) for the licensure sought
- Fall Practicums: August 18th**
Spring Practicums: December 20th

Students must submit a legible and complete proof of MTEL score reports to the Field Placement Office when paperwork is turned in. Please note that scores "reported to Lesley" do not reach us in a format appropriate for your file.

Mailing address:

Field Placement Office
Graduate School of Education
Lesley University, 29 Everett Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Office Address:

Field Placement Office
1815 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 0213

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Teacher Candidate Practicum Planning Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of the Teacher Candidate (TC) to initiate contact with the Field Placement Office (FPO) the semester before he/she wishes to complete a practicum, and to inform the Field Placement Office if there are any changes in regards to their site placement or supervising practitioner.
- It is the responsibility of the TC to inform themselves and check with their FPO administrator to make sure all externally secured site placements and supervisors meet the requirements of the State of Massachusetts, Lesley University and their specific program of study.
- The TC needing a placement understands that the role of the FPO is to provide the graduate student with a maximum of two viable practicum placement contacts. A contact is not a guarantee of placement and it is the responsibility of the TC to interview with and fulfill all specific school requirements to secure their position. Refusal of multiple FPO connections could result in postponement of practicum.
- TC's needing a placement on public transportation lines understand that this includes any combination of subway, buses, commuter rail and walking and should be prepared for anywhere up to 75 minutes of commuting time with the possibility of multiple transfers.
- It is the responsibility of the TC to develop a long-term plan for taking and successfully completing all required MTEL's specific to their program of study well in advance of FPO deadlines.
- The TC understands that they are not automatically enrolled in the practicum/seminar and must receive approval from the FPO. Approval may not coincide with University wide "open registration dates and will be granted upon review of individual student files. The TC will be notified by the FPO via email when they have been approved. Once approved it is the responsibility of the TC to officially register for the practicum/seminar through the Registrar's Office.
- The TC understands that a weekly seminar is part of the practicum experience and **in-person** attendance is required. Weekly seminars are generally held weekday afternoons and do not necessarily coincide with past and/or current off-campus cohort schedules. Request for specific seminar leaders are not permitted.
- It is the responsibility of the TC to make suitable arrangements in regards to family life, extra-curricular activities, financial and job related obligations that may conflict with the requirements of a full time, 400 hour practicum prior to the start of the practicum.
- The teacher candidate understands that all practicum related, documents, forms, handbooks, training materials, etc. are available at <https://www.lesley.edu/academics/graduate-school-of-education/field-placement> and should be reviewed and shared with all relevant parties (supervising practitioner, principal, etc.) in advance of starting the practicum.
- The teacher candidate agrees to submit all documents and paperwork to the Office of Field Placement by the relevant deadline for each semester and understands that any delay could result in postponement of their practicum.

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Program Specific Requirements

Special Education:

To qualify as an appropriate practicum placement, the setting must allow the teacher candidate (TC) to gain experience in a wide variety of roles as a special educator as outlined below. The teacher candidate must also be able to fulfil these roles while under the guidance of a qualified and appropriately licensed supervising practitioner (SP) as outlined below.

- The (SP) must be a practicing special educator who holds a license that matches the license area the (TC) is seeking and is currently employed in the role of special educator.
- The SP must be on site and able to perform scheduled and unscheduled observations, provide daily feedback and mentoring, and collaborate and consult with the Lesley University program supervisor (PS) as needed.
- An appropriate setting must provide the minimum amount of required hours in an inclusion classroom, (with at least five students on IEP's). The setting must also allow the opportunity for the (TC) to provide direct instruction across the curriculum, while allowing them to incorporate Universal Design with differentiated instruction to small groups and whole class.
- An appropriate setting must be able to provide the (TC) the opportunity to attend IEP meetings and aid in the development of IEP's, design curriculum for student's on IEP's, and act as the consulting (special education) teacher in an inclusion classroom helping to adapt, modify and lead instruction.
- An appropriate setting will have access to the same group of students in the same settings on a consistent basis and therefore cannot accommodate one-on-one, rotating substitute or strictly consultative roles.
- If the teacher candidate wishes to use their current place of employment for a practicum, they must provide a copy of their resume to the Field Placement Office (FPO) detailing the roles and responsibilities in the current position. The FPO must validate the appropriateness of the site and will give approval at their discretion.
- If practicum is being conducted at the student's current place of employment, he/she must be able to fulfill all requirements of the practicum and seminar course within the timeframe of the Lesley University semester (14 weeks or 400 hours).
- An appropriate setting must allow the student to complete two full take over weeks in which they assume all daily responsibilities of their Supervising Practitioner.

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Overview of the Practicum

Teacher candidates must meet the state standards in order to obtain a teaching license. The practicum provides an opportunity for student teachers to put into practice the theories they have learned in their coursework and demonstrate competency in meeting the state Professional Standards for Teachers. [Guidelines for the Professional Standards for Teachers \(PSTs\) \(www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/advisories/TeachersGuidelines.pdf\)](http://www.doe.mass.edu/edprep/advisories/TeachersGuidelines.pdf)

Standard	Element	Proficient Descriptor*
1: Curriculum, Planning and Assessment	1.A.4: Well-Structured Lessons	Develops well-structured lessons with challenging, measurable objectives and appropriate student engagement strategies, pacing, sequence, activities, materials, resources, technologies, and grouping.
	1.B.2: Adjustment to Practice	Organizes and analyzes results from a variety of assessments to determine progress toward intended outcomes and uses these findings to adjust practice and identify and/or implement appropriate differentiated interventions and enhancements for students.
2: Teaching All Students	2.A.3: Meeting Diverse Needs	Uses appropriate practices, including tiered instruction and scaffolds, to accommodate differences in learning styles, needs, interests, and levels of readiness, including those of students with disabilities and English language learners.
	2.B.1: Safe Learning Environment	Uses rituals, routines, and appropriate responses that create and maintain a safe physical and intellectual environment where students take academic risks and most behaviors that interfere with learning are prevented.
	2.D.2: High Expectations	Effectively models and reinforces ways that students can master challenging material through effective effort, rather than having to depend on innate ability.
4: Professional Culture	4.A.1: Reflective Practice	Regularly reflects on the effectiveness of lessons, units, and interactions with students, both individually and with colleagues, and uses insights gained to improve practice and student learning.

**Proficient Descriptor is included here to provide a sense of the expectation outlined in the element. Specifics about the expectations of demonstrated competency for preparation candidates is outlined further in the Rubric Overview section below.*

Planning for the Semester

Teacher candidates will work in a classroom full-time for a full semester (**14 weeks, 400 hours**). After an initial period of observation and orientation to the classroom set-up, routines, and to the students themselves, teacher candidates should begin to provide one-to-one or small-group instruction. Responsibilities should be added gradually, moving on to whole-class instruction and increasing the number of periods per day teacher candidates are expected to plan and teach the lessons. Teacher candidates should teach more than one content area and gradually move to teaching all the areas of the curriculum.

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Please note that some practicum planning will differ depending on what initial license the student is seeking. Certain licenses require experiences in varying grade levels and classroom environment

Initial license	Practicum
Moderate Disabilities (PreK-8) or (5-12) Severe Disabilities (all levels)	Adapt and modify curriculum Participate in assessment, consultation, and team meetings Assist in writing an Individualized Education Program Observe and be exposed to an inclusive classroom setting (75 hours minimum for PreK-8 and Severe, and 150 hours minimum for 5-12)
Early Childhood Education (Prek-2)	Split Placement: minimum 100 hours at the PK or K grade level; minimum of 200 hours in 1 st or 2 nd grade level, totaling 400 hours
Instructional Technology (all levels)	Split Placement: 200 hours each in two of the three major grade levels (i.e. 1-6, 5-8, 9-12)
Middle School (5-8) High School (8-12)	A minimum of 80% of the total practicum hours must be spent teaching in the specific content area matching the license being sought.

Students are expected to maintain a log of hours to be approved by their program supervisor and supervising practitioner. The practicum log is not a required form, but it is strongly encouraged that the candidate maintains an accurate documentation of hours and experiences completed in the student teaching experience.

By the end of the semester, teacher candidates are expected to take over full responsibility for planning, delivering, and assessing instruction. The nature and schedule of the takeover weeks will be collaboratively determined by the teacher candidate and the supervising practitioner.

Definition of full responsibility (must be at least 100 hours):

- Assume full control of all classroom duties regularly fulfilled by supervising practitioner.
- Oversee responsibilities related to the education of all students on the classroom roster.

Visits from the Program Supervisor

A program supervisor from Lesley will visit the classroom **three** times over the course of the semester. In split placements, the supervisor will visit in the longer placement, but if it involves two areas the program supervisor will arrange to observe in both settings. During each visit, the program supervisor and supervising practitioner will observe as the teacher candidate teaches a planned lesson and will write observation notes to be shared in three-way meetings using the 5-Step Cycle of (CAP).

Overview of Candidate Assessment of Performance (CAP)

Goals of CAP:

- To ensure teacher candidates are ready to make an impact with students on day one
- To measure teacher candidates' practice on key indicators as outlined in the Guidelines for the Professional Standards for Teachers (PSTs)
- To support teachers in improving their practice based on targeted feedback and performance evaluations

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The Candidate Assessment of Performance assesses a candidate's readiness to positively impact students' learning. There are two facets of the assessment system: the content and the process. Evidence is collected throughout the 5-Step Cycle (process) to measure whether a candidate has demonstrated skills at a certain level (content). In each section that follows we describe the details of how the content and process individually and collectively contribute to measuring candidate readiness.

The CAP rubric is used within the CAP process and designed to help candidates and assessors:

- 1) Develop a consistent, shared understanding of what performance looks like in practice
- 2) Develop a common terminology and structure to organize evidence
- 3) Make informed professional judgments about performance ratings

In support of these goals, the CAP Rubric serves as the content anchor throughout the process and as a result is used in each step of the 5-Step Cycle.

The CAP Rubric has several features that, relative to the MA Model Teacher Rubric, are unique. It is important to note, that while the CAP Rubric looks different than the MA Model Rubric for Teachers it varies in form only. The CAP Rubric uses the exact language of performance descriptors outlined in the MA Model Teacher Rubric; this helps maintain alignment and consistency. The major difference between the two rubrics is that the CAP Rubric unpacks the performance descriptors and sets varying thresholds for performance within an element. Candidate performance in an element is assessed across three dimensions: Quality, Scope, and Consistency.

- **Quality:** ability to perform the skill, action or behavior as described in the proficient performance descriptor
- **Consistency:** the frequency (e.g., all the time, sometimes, once) that the skill, action or behavior is demonstrated with quality
- **Scope:** the scale of impact (e.g., one student, subset of children, all students) to which the skill, action or behavior is demonstrated with quality

CAP 5-Step Cycle

As in the MA Teacher Educator Evaluation, the goal of the 5-Step Cycle is to provide educators with a continuous opportunity for professional growth and development through self-directed analysis and reflection, planning, action steps, and collaboration. While these goals remain present in CAP, they are secondary to the primary goal of assessing candidate readiness.

The 5-Step Cycle used in CAP has been modified to meet the needs of teacher candidates, Program Supervisors, and Supervising Practitioners, but retains the same core architecture of the cycle included in the Educator Evaluation Framework:

Step 1: Self-Assessment

Step 2: Goal-Setting and Plan Development

Step 3: Plan Implementation

Step 4: Formative Assessment

Step 5: Summative Evaluation

For more details on this process, please visit <https://www.lesley.edu/academics/graduate-school-of-education/field-placement/candidate-assessment-of-performance-cap-for> or refer to your CAP Overview booklet.

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Roles and Responsibilities

There are several stakeholders involved in the effective implementation of field-based experiences and the assessment of candidate readiness through CAP. Below we have detailed the essential responsibilities for: Program Supervisors, Supervising Practitioners, Teacher Candidates, and PK-12 Schools and District Partners.

Program Supervisor

The program supervisor is a faculty member from the University who observes the student teacher in his/her placement. Supervisors are the liaisons between the University and the school. They familiarize the SP with the CAP and rubric and explain expectations and requirements for teacher candidates. They observe the teacher candidate **two to three** times give constructive feedback to the student, and conduct three-way conferences with the teacher candidate and the supervising practitioner. Along with the supervising practitioner, they assess the teacher candidate's performance based on the Massachusetts Professional Standards for Teachers.

- Provide candidates with consistent guidance, support and high-quality feedback during field based experiences that improves their practice.
- Use CAP as outlined in these guidelines to assess and document evidence of candidate readiness for the licensure role.
- Coordinate the CAP process in collaboration with the Supervising Practitioner and candidate; stay on top of timelines, facilitate meetings; calibrate with the Supervising Practitioner; submit all forms.
- Actively collect evidence during observations, synthesize and analyze the evidence to provide focused feedback to the candidate about their performance.
- Conduct at least two observations of the candidate; review information from all observations; support the Supervising Practitioner in conducting observations.
- Submit data on candidate performance on CAP.

Supervising Practitioner

The supervising practitioner is the teacher in the school under whose direction the student teacher works. They are expected to fully integrate the student teacher into their classrooms, allowing them to assume increasing responsibilities, culminating in two "takeover" weeks. They provide information about the class and the curriculum, access to materials, and an orientation to the school.

They are observed by the student teacher on an ongoing basis, demonstrate lessons, and model teaching practices. They observe the student teachers and meet with them regularly to confer about planning of lessons and units, and to give feedback and suggestions on all aspects of the student teacher's work and progress. They facilitate opportunities for participation with parents and in the school as a whole.

Supervising practitioners are expected to observe and participate in 3-way conferences with the Lesley program supervisor and the teacher candidate regarding the teacher candidate's performance.

- Use CAP as outlined in these guidelines to assess and document evidence of candidate readiness for the licensure role.
- Conduct **three** observations of the candidate; review information from all observations; support the Program Supervisor in conducting observations.
- Actively collect evidence during observations, synthesize and analyze the evidence to provide focused feedback to the candidate about their performance.

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- Identify and set the measures of student learning to be used in CAP prior to the first Three-Way Meeting, support Program Supervisor in interpreting candidate performance relative to the parameters that were set.
- Administer, or support the candidate in administering, the student feedback surveys.

Teacher Candidate

Teacher candidates will be in classrooms full time for a full semester, under the direction of a site-based supervising practitioner. During the course of the placement, they are expected to assume increasing responsibilities in their classrooms, taking full responsibility for parts of the day, culminating in two "takeover" weeks, when they assume full responsibility for the class. In total, they assume full responsibility for a minimum of 100 hours. They are expected to participate fully in all aspects of classroom and school life. They engage in ongoing curriculum and lesson planning, instruction, and assessment based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks; manage the classroom; participate with parents to the extent that is appropriate; and participate in school-wide meetings and professional development activities as much as possible.

- Participate in CAP as outlined in these guidelines including attending Three-Way Meetings; being available for additional observations, and collecting evidence of candidate artifacts.
- Engage in early field-based experiences and activities in coursework that provide you with the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate readiness for the licensure role.
- Demonstrate competency at all threshold levels; attain growth on professional practice goal; have a moderate or high impact on student learning.
- Administer, or support the Supervising Practitioner in administering, the student feedback surveys.
- Provide feedback to your Sponsoring Organization about your experience in your preparation program.

Principal

Lesley University recognizes the complexities and demands of the principal's position. We hope, however, that principals will participate in the student teaching process, to the extent that their schedules allow, in the following ways:

- Work in partnership with Lesley University to select supervising practitioners who are exemplary teachers and role models, who have attained a rating of proficient or higher in the MA teacher evaluation, and who are willing to assume the responsibility of mentoring teacher candidates
- Meet with the program supervisor and help her/him to understand school policies and culture.
- If possible, observe the teacher candidate and provide feedback on performance.
- Invite and facilitate the teacher candidate's participation in school activities, events, and meetings, so that s/he will become part of the school community and learn about the culture of the school.
- Confer with supervising practitioner, program supervisor, teacher candidate, and the Field Placement Office should any problem(s)/difficulties arise during the student teacher's placement.

Lesley Teacher Candidates Professional Behavior in School Settings

As Lesley teacher candidates prepare to enter the school community, it is important that they project a professional image and conduct themselves in an appropriate professional manner at all times. Lesley University Graduate School of Education teacher candidates are expected to follow the guidelines below.

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Social Media and Student Interactions:

- Do not send personal emails or other personal communications to students.
- Use the Lesley University email address for appropriate professional emails.
- Do not send text messages to students.
- Do not provide any personal contact information to students (email, phone, Facebook, home address, LinkedIn, etc.).
- If on Facebook, review for content, check privacy settings, and never “friend” students.
- Maintain confidentiality about student and family information.
- Informal activities with students must be approved by the supervising practitioner and Lesley program supervisor. Relationships and communications with students and families should be purely professional.
- Do not be alone with students; if related to the teaching role, an exception can be made and monitored by the supervising practitioner and Lesley program supervisor.
- Do not use technology for personal matters during class time.
- Turn off cell phone and do not text or use cell phones for any other purposes during class time.
- Become familiar with the school policy handbook, especially regarding mandated reporting procedures for suspected abuse or neglect; communication with students and families; and all other professional expectations, policies, and procedures. In situations where Lesley’s policies are more restrictive than the school’s policies, Lesley students are expected to follow the University policies.

Personal Demeanor:

- Dress professionally and be aware of school dresscodes.
- Be punctual.
- Introduce yourself.
- Ask questions when necessary.
- Demonstrate a willingness to be part of all aspects of the school community.

Addressing Concerns

In cases when the supervising practitioner and/or program supervisor are concerned that the student teacher is not meeting the Professional Standards for Teachers, a Referral Form is submitted, noting their concerns and alerting the Field Placement Office as soon as possible after issues have been identified. A meeting with the student will be scheduled to discuss how those concerns might be addressed. See Procedural Guidelines for Addressing Concerns.

Graduate School of Education Mediation Policy

In the case of disagreement between the supervising practitioner and program supervisor over a student teacher’s attainment of the standards during the practicum and eligibility for licensure, a mediator will be chosen.

The mediator will be someone with appropriate educational credentials and experience in teaching and working with student teachers. The supervising practitioner and program supervisor will agree on the choice of mediator.

After the mediator is chosen, the student will be informed of the choice and of the steps to be followed. The mediator will study available evaluative data pertaining to the student teacher’s performance in the practicum in question. This may include documentation of observations, lesson plans, learning contracts, and summative and formative evaluations.

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The mediator will then interview the supervising practitioner and program supervisor, determine the points of disagreement, and attempt in a neutral, facilitative manner, to resolve disagreement between the above parties. The question to be resolved is: "Has the student attained a minimal level of competence in the standards for licensure and is s/he therefore recommended for licensure?"

If agreement cannot be reached between the two parties, the mediator will determine whether the student meets the standards and should be recommended for licensure. This determination will be binding, as far as passing or failing the practicum in question is concerned.

If the student does not pass the practicum (student teaching), his/her case will be considered by the academic dean, in the usual manner for students in academic difficulty. (See [Academic Program and Review Policy.](#))

This process will be completed as quickly as possible, within twenty working days. The final result of the mediation will be communicated to the student within two days after the issue is resolved.

Voucher Policy for Supervising Practitioners

We are pleased to be able to offer vouchers to our supervising practitioners so that they can enroll in Lesley courses. A voucher worth three credits is issued for a full-time, full-semester practicum after the student has completed his/her placement; however, Lesley cannot guarantee that vouchers will be available for the semester immediately following the practicum placement. Please read the policy below for details regarding tuition waiver vouchers and direct any further questions about procedures to the Field Placement Office at (617) 349-8197.

- Vouchers are mailed to the SP or the school system of the SP (arrangement made by system). It is the responsibility of the SP to find out how his/her school or system intends to use the voucher. It is also the SP's responsibility to check with his/her school or system to see if an expected voucher has been received from Lesley. Lesley's policy is to not replace lost, misplaced, or missing vouchers.
- Representatives with signing authority of the school (director, principal, or superintendent) may assign the voucher only to a current employee. Additional transfer of the voucher is prohibited. Sale of the voucher is prohibited.
- Vouchers may be used only within the time period indicated, which is four semesters (including summer) from the semester in which the voucher is issued. No extensions of this time period are permissible. Vouchers cannot be used retroactively.
- One full or two half vouchers may be redeemed to waive tuition for payment of one course only. The amount waived may not exceed three semester hours of academic credit and will be determined by the number of credits given for the course chosen.
- Vouchers cannot be redeemed for the PhD Programs, Independent Study Contract Courses, or the Master of Fine Arts Program (College of Art and Design and Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences). Vouchers cannot be redeemed for *non-credit* courses, seminars, or institutes.
- Original completed vouchers must be submitted to the Student Accounts Office by the last day of the add/drop or the semester in which the voucher is being used. Vouchers will be applied to your student account after the add/drop date. Person to whom the voucher has been assigned should make a copy of the original voucher for their records.
- The individual using the voucher must pay fees, such as registration, materials, field experience, etc., in full at the time of registration. Cash refunds are not given for a voucher used for a course. In the event that a course is cancelled or filled, the voucher will be returned to the student to use prior to its expiration date.
- Policies surrounding the *Voucher for Tuition Waiver* are subject to change.

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Practicum Log

Student teachers: please complete this form to document your hours for the full time, full semester practicum, and return it to your supervisor at the end of the semester.

Week	Dates	Assisting	Full Responsibility	Total Hours
Week 1				
Week 2				
Week 3				
Week 4				
Week 5				
Week 6				
Week 7				
Week 8				
Week 9				
Week 10				
Week 11				
Week 12				
Week 13				
Week 14				

Semester:

Grade Level:

Supervising Practitioner's Signature _____

Student's Signature _____

Lesley Program Supervisor's Signature _____

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