May 7, 2010

Dear Secondary Education Students,

Congratulations on your acceptance into the teacher education program in the Graduate School of Education. You have a great adventure ahead!

I am the Coordinator of the Master’s Program in Secondary Education. I make the arrangements for your student teaching placements, and monitor your experiences in both fieldwork and coursework.

I am starting to work on fieldwork placements for the summer and fall terms. In order to do so, it is important to hear from you. We ask that you complete the attached form and email it back to me (mloucas@gse.upenn.edu) no later than May 17. Your honest answers on this form will help me to find a good fit between you, your Classroom Mentor and your Penn Mentor. Your Classroom Mentor (CM) is the experienced classroom teacher in whose class you’ll be working every school day. Your Penn Mentor (PM) is your university-based resource person and student teaching supervisor. PMs provide ongoing feedback, support, suggestions, and evaluation as you move through your fall and spring fieldwork. They are former classroom teachers with vast experience and resources to share with you.

As you know, all of your student teaching will happen in School District of Philadelphia public or charter schools. Please understand that we cannot guarantee a student teaching placement in a particular part of Philadelphia, nor in a particular type of school. Many of you, for example, would prefer to work in the schools closest to Penn’s campus. While we acknowledge this request, we simply do not have enough placements here in West Philadelphia to accommodate the demand, and we know that placing you with the best possible classroom mentor in a rich learning environment must take priority over convenient location. While we try to meet as many of your preferences as possible, we may need to make adjustments so that we cluster student teachers together in schools to create learning communities. Thank you, in advance, for your flexibility and readiness to work in a variety of situations. All of our schools are accessible by public transportation (with varying degrees of ease), and you will receive all of the information you need about how to get to your fieldwork sites.

Finally, this placement form also incorporates some questions related to your summer fieldwork preferences. Your goals during the summer placement in a community based youth learning organization will focus on getting to know young people in Philadelphia outside of school settings: What do they care about and hope for? Why is this organization meaningful to them? What kind of learning is happening for them in this organization? Do they see connections between the kinds of learning, teaching, and work going on in this organization and the learning, teaching, and work that happen in school? How do you see yourself in relation to these young people? You will have the opportunity to explore these and other questions throughout summer term, in the field and in your classes.

You’ve probably already been in touch with Maureen Cotterill, maureenc@gse.upenn.edu throughout the admissions process. Please feel free to contact her or me if you have any questions about the program. I can be reached at mloucas@gse.upenn.edu. And don’t forget to complete this form and email it back right away. We need to have these forms no later than May 17 to proceed with making placements. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Michelle Loucas

Coordinator, Secondary Education
Student Teaching Placement Preference Form
Due: ASAP (May 17)

Name __________________________________________

PRIMARy certification area ____________________________

SECOND certification area* ____________________________

*Only for students seeking two certifications (i.e., Spanish and Math) while in our program. We will assign you to classroom mentors in both subject areas. If you would like to consider this option and have not already done so, please contact me (mloucas@gse.upenn.edu) as soon as possible.

Please be aware that it is possible in Pennsylvania (other states might be different) to obtain a second certificate, once you have completed a program and received your certificate in one area, by passing the PRAXIS exam in the second area.

Assignment Preferences
Please check off, below, whichever statements currently reflect your interests. Again, we’ll take this information into consideration along with other factors.

**Level**
- ____ I would like a middle school (grades 7-8) placement if possible.
- ____ I would like a high school (grades 9-12) placement if possible.
- ____ I would like either a middle or a high school placement.

**Type of school**
- ____ I am interested in a comprehensive, neighborhood school if possible.
- ____ I am interested in a magnet school if possible.
- ____ I am interested in either a neighborhood or a magnet school.
- ____ I don’t know in which type of school I might be interested.

**Transportation**
Do you have a car?  Yes  No

Please note that having a car is helpful but not necessary, as most of our placements are accessible by public transportation.

Do you have any special travel concerns that you think might restrict your placement to certain locations? Please describe them here.

Please check off, below, the regions of the city that would be most convenient for you (and then be aware that we will do our best, but might not be able to accommodate your interest):
- _____ South  _____ Northeast  _____ West  _____ North Central
About you

Please address the following questions. Brief answers are fine. Please know that we are not judging or evaluating you by any answers you might offer. Rather, honest answers to these questions will allow us to do our best to provide a workable match with your Mentors.

Undergraduate field(s) of study ________________________________

Undergraduate institution ________________________________

Any particular specialization within that field? (E.g., Asian history, within the context of a history major)
___________________________________________________

What other expertise, hobby, interest, etc., would you like us to be aware of?

In what ways and contexts have you worked with young people? What ages?

Many of our schools vary by race, class and SES. What experience have you had with these various types of schools? What is your own educational background?

If you know already, tell us what kind of setting you hope to teach in after graduation (urban or suburban? Public or independent?).

Describe your approach to learning, planning and organization. For example, are you a careful planner and organizer? Or are you free-spirited, ready to go with the flow? What best helps you learn? Close guidance or independence? Quiet time? Talking with others? Doing? Reading?

What are your pet peeves regarding people with whom you work closely?
Circle below the two (2) qualities that are most important for you to find in your student teaching mentors. All of the qualities listed are valuable at different times and in different circumstances, but it would be helpful if you would indicate the two that are most critical to you on a consistent basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nurturing</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Hands-off</th>
<th>Hands-on</th>
<th>Focus on positive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Lively</td>
<td>Command of classroom management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command of subject</td>
<td>Willing to provide independence</td>
<td>Organized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anything else you would like us to take into consideration as we identify a student teaching placement?

**Important:** Please attach a digital snapshot of yourself to this email, or mail a photo to Graduate School of Education, ATTN Pat Friess, 3700 Walnut St, Phila, PA 19146. Be sure to indicate your name and program (Secondary TEP) with the photo!

**Summer Fieldwork**

You will be assigned to work with young people in a community-based organization for two mornings per week during the summer term. These placements will **primarily be made based on location:** to the extent possible, we will try to place you in the part of the city where you will be student teaching in the fall. We hope this gives you opportunities to get to know that community as soon as possible. However there are cases where we will also want to factor in the specific skills or interests you bring to the table. For this reason, we ask that you indicate below if you have a particularly strong background in any of the topics below, and to **offer a few words about this background,** if you haven’t already done so elsewhere on this form. **It is perfectly fine to check several items, or none at all.**

- [ ] Technology-based work (web design, video production, hardware, other)
- [ ] Academic tutoring
- [ ] Environmental/nature studies/ gardening
- [ ] Bike repair and education
- [ ] Creative arts education (dance, theater, music, visual arts, other)
- [ ] Business education
- [ ] Writing and publishing
- [ ] Working with animals

Thank you for sharing this information.