

THE STUDENT TEACHER

In keeping with the historic objective of the fourteen State System of Higher Education Universities, *to prepare the best possible teachers for the Commonwealth*, the state universities have maintained quality teacher education programs while developing into multipurpose institutions. This broader educational focus of the state universities has enabled students to utilize more options in career planning. As a result, teacher education programs, within the system, have been able to introduce screening procedures and policies tied to state and national standards, which result in quality candidates for the teaching profession.

In order to insure the continued quality of teacher education candidates, the state universities maintain field experience programs which occur in a context and in a sequence that is consistent with the goals and mission of the teacher education program. These goals are reflected in the previously referenced *ATE* document. Goals include:

- The content of campus-based education is modeled in school-based field experiences.
- Educational changes in schools are studies in teacher education programs.
- The teacher education program has varied field experiences designed to meet varied and sequential goals of the teacher education program.
- Field experiences are sequential and cumulative and based on models of professional development.
- Field experiences incorporate opportunities for ongoing reflection and analysis of teaching and learning.
- Teacher candidates will be able to connect theory and practice.
- Teacher candidates participate in the life of the school as a member of a learning community.
- Field experiences occur with diverse student populations and in diverse settings.
- Performance assessment is a key component of all field experiences.

Student teaching, as the capstone of the field experience component of the teacher education program, includes one full semester of designated work in a school or agency setting at each of the fourteen State System of Higher Education Universities. Qualification for the Instructional I certificate by the state of Pennsylvania includes the successful completion of the student teaching experience, meeting all course and program requirements, and satisfactory scores on all required Praxis tests.