Standard 3

3.1   How does the unit work with the school partners to deliver field experiences and clinical practice to enable candidates to develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to help all students learn? [maximum of three pages]

Collaboration between Unit and School Partners

Minnesota State, Mankato has a rich history of closely engaging with P-12 partners. The Center for School-University Partnerships (CSUP), housed in the College of Education, was established in 1988. It acts as a liaison between eight Professional Development School districts, encompassing fifty-four P-12 sites, and post-secondary programs involved in educator preparation including Elementary, Secondary, Special Education, Leadership, School Counseling, and Arts and Sciences. A formal PDS model was adopted in 2001. PDS sites include: Mankato Area Public Schools, LeSueur-Henderson Public Schools, St. Peter Public Schools, Sibley East Public Schools, Waseca Public Schools, Faribault Public Schools, Owatonna Public Schools, and Bloomington Public Schools.

The Center for School-University Partnerships Professional Development School (PDS) received the 2012 Exemplary PDS Achievement Award from National Association for Professional Development Schools (Exhibit 3.3.a for NAPDS award application). In 2007 the Mankato Model and its effective mentoring and induction practices was recognized by Minnesota 2020 in their *Growing Gap, Minnesota's Teacher Recruitment and Retention Crisis* report as well as by MnSCU with an A*cademic and Student Affairs Award for Innovative Partnering and Collaboration* in 2008.

The PDS Partnership is characterized by a shared focus on achievement, specifically on diversity and equity. The partnership has been engaged in ongoing exploration of data to address gaps in achievement among racial and language groups and ways to support P-12 students with exceptionalities and from diverse backgrounds.

Coordinated by CSUP, the PDS model allows 18 master teachers to be released from their teaching responsibilities in order to spend half their time in service to their school and half their time in service to the university. These teachers, referred to as Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA), are involved in collaborative professional development, engage in short and long term planning for teacher preparation, and handle all placements of university students within their district. Additionally, TOSAs supervise teacher candidates during student teaching as well some pre-student teaching field experiences. In place of each of these master teachers, a newly licensed teacher assumes classroom responsibilities and receives a [premier fellowship](#) at the University to pursue a graduate program. Memoranda of understanding between PDS and non-PDS districts are included in Exhibit 3.3.a.

In addition to the PDS sites listed above, we work with 37 districts in southern and central Minnesota as well as partner districts in south Texas, Australia, Costa Rica and the United Arab Emirates. (Exhibit 3.3.b Placement Data Documents.) To provide supervision in non-PDS districts, approximately 20 additional university supervisors are hired for student teaching supervision. The qualifications of university supervisors include recent K-12 experience (either as teacher, administrator or supervisor) and a graduate degree; however, some supervisors are hired without graduate degrees if they have extensive teaching experience. The assignments for supervision are based on the scope of their license, teaching expertise, and geographical location. This group is extremely stable with changes typically occurring when TOSAs are reassigned by their district. Occasionally, a university supervisor will retire or not be hired back based on licensure/geographical placement needs. If a supervisor is unable to meet the expectations as outlined in the Teacher Candidate Handbook, he/she will not be asked to return to the position. (See Exhibit 3.3.c for handbook details and 5.3.b for a summary of supervisors' qualifications.) Supervisors meet monthly for professional development, including inter-rater reliability

work on assessment, Teacher Performance Assessment and coaching strategies (see Exhibit 3.3.d for supervisors' meeting agendas). These meetings are also opportunities for supervisors to provide feedback on performance of candidates.

Cooperating or mentor teachers are assigned jointly by the district and MSU. Approximately 63% of mentor teachers have masters degrees or above. (Criteria for selection can be viewed at Exhibit 3.3.c and a summary of qualifications can be viewed in Exhibit 5.3.b.) In supporting candidates during the experiences, mentor teachers serve as models for effective practice and as teacher educators using a co-teaching model of student teaching. Mentor teachers share their classroom in a co-teaching mode for 65% to 70% of the student teaching semester and allow solo teaching the remaining time.

Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

Candidate performance during field experiences in the Professional Education Unit is evaluated according to knowledge, skill and professional dispositions outlined in the conceptual framework and aligned to the *Danielson Framework for Effective Teaching* with each experience becoming more complex (See Exhibit 3.3.f). The Danielson Framework was selected as a basis for field experiences since many of our partner districts use this model for teacher induction and professional growth. The Danielson Framework aligns closely to the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice. In addition to the student teaching formative and summative rubric, initial licensure programs use three other levels of the rubric. These correspond to the developmental level and complexity expected as candidates progress through the teacher education program. The dispositions are assessed through *Showing Professionalism,* which appears in a compressed form on all of the field experience rubrics. The rubric *Showing Professionalism* elaborates on these expected dispositions and is used as a stand-alone rubric for introductory level courses and often employed as a complementary rubric with *Teacher Credential Level II* and *Teacher Credential Level III*. Levels II and III are generally used during intermediate blocks of courses. *Teacher Credential Level IV* is used at the student teaching level.

Evaluations are completed by the cooperating teacher and university instructor for each field experience. If a teacher candidate does not meet the minimal expectation for any given element of the rubric, he/she may not pass to the next field experience or if allowed to do so, will have a student assistance plan assigned. Issues may be related to content knowledge, professional dispositions, pedagogical skills or student engagement. The issue and appropriate student assistance plan is noted through a Professional Communication report in the Student Information Management System (SIMS) by the faculty supervisor. The student assistance plan is implemented by the department chair in collaboration with the original supervisor and advisor. Often, an assistance plan takes an additional semester to complete. It is not unusual for candidates with an assistance plan to choose another major. Teacher candidates are introduced to this evaluation system in their program's initial coursework. Professional development on the Danielson Framework is regularly offered by Integrated Field Services for faculty, university supervisors (which includes TOSAs), and cooperating teachers.

In addition to other assignments, student teachers have a responsibility to develop a competency log on communicating with families. They regularly participate in parent-teacher conferences and IEP meetings. From the time they are in field experiences, candidates communicate with parents through newsletters and talk with parents. Student teacher candidates become members of the instructional teams, participating in activities such as professional learning communities, Teachers Assisting Teachers Team meeting, professional development workshop on strategies such as differentiation using stations (which is then applied in co-teaching lessons), curriculum meetings on new English Language Arts standards, and grade level team meetings in which testing data is analyzed. They also learn to use districts' data management systems to analyze and inform instruction. Teacher candidates document these activities in a Professional Responsibilities log that is reviewed by their supervisor.

Resources to guide faculty, cooperating teachers and teacher candidates in field experiences provide more details about the functions and support structure of the OFIE (Exhibits 3.3.b and 3.3.e). Faculty work with the Assistant Director to request field placements for initial and advanced candidates. Information for faculty is available at [Faculty Information for Pre-Student Teaching](). The Assistant Director either contacts the TOSA if the request involves a PDS district or contacts the school or district directly if it is a non-PDS. A summary of the expectations and background check results is shared with the school administrator. Once placements are made, the professor of record provides specific expectations, assignments and evaluation information to cooperating teachers through information packets prior to the experience.

At the request of our school partners, all candidates are required to have a national background check conducted upon admittance to professional education. If a teacher candidate is assigned a school or service learning placement prior to entrance to professional education, an abbreviated background check from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension is conducted. The abbreviated check is also done for placements done for advanced candidates.

Field experiences and clinical practice at the advanced level are defined as practicum, internships, project demonstration, action research, or other approved P-12 related activities. In many cases, these projects are completed by candidates in their own classroom or school building. However, if they seek access to another district both within and outside the partner districts, the OFIE facilitates those placements. Educational Leadership faculty work closely with PDS and non-PDS schools to facilitate high quality placements for internships to include carefully-selected school-site supervisors. School Psychology, School Counseling, and Speech-Language Pathology work with the OFIE for high quality placements and arrange site supervisors for practicum and internships. Expectations for activities and assignments are set by program faculty to assess knowledge, skills and professional dispositions to help all students learn (Exhibits 3.3.b).

Candidates in advanced programs for teachers synthesize and critique theory and research learned in coursework to classroom practice, analyzing data on student performance and reflecting on their practice. In reading, for example, candidates implement instructional structures, analyze effectiveness, and reflect on student learning and their own performance. Similarly, candidates in programs for other school personnel develop, implement and evaluate projects in their designated field. These projects are designed to benefit the school sites as well as provide an opportunity for candidate learning. Assessments and evaluations are designed to measure the particular standards and competencies designated for that program and are reported in the Pass-Port system.

3.2.a   Standard on which the unit is moving to the target level [maximum of five pages]
- Describe areas of the standard at which the unit is currently performing at the target level.
- Summarize activities and their impact on candidate performance and program quality that have led to target level performance.
- Discuss plans and timelines for obtaining and/or sustaining target level performance as articulated in the rubrics of unit Standard 3.

The Center for School-University Partnerships (CSUP) facilitates the PDS model with eight partner districts. The superintendents along with the COE Dean and the director of CSUP meet monthly for the PDS Governance Council. Chaired by one of the superintendents, the council considers issues related to the partnership such as financial cost sharing, specific needs of the various partners, vision of the partnership, or specific concerns. The sustainability and vitality of the PDS Governance Council structure continues at "leading" status for NCATE PDS standards for "Accountability and Quality Assurance."

Our collegial reputation played a major role in being invited by the Archibald Bush Foundation to submit a proposal for the Network for Excellence in Teaching (NExT). PDS representatives have played significant roles in the proposal process and implementation with district membership on working and focus groups. We have used this opportunity to further engage our partners with one of the largest impacts on innovations in field experiences. (Exhibit 3.3.a contains NExT Proposal and Milestone Reviews.) TOSAs play a critical role in planning for NExT with two TOSAs serving on Curriculum Redesign and Field Experience committee, one TOSA serving on the COE Assessment Committee, and four TOSAs and one superintendent serving on the New Teacher Center (NTC) Consultation Team.

In addition to CSUP, two other offices have as their primary focus responsibility to collaborate with P-12 partners, both PDS sites and non-PDS sites. The Center for Mentoring and Induction (CMI), the Office of Field and International Experience (OFIE) and CSUP serve as a bridge between the university and P-12 partners. This engagement includes: Placement of field experiences; preparation of cooperating teachers and university supervisors; building capacity within P-12 sites; and collaborating on initiatives and curriculum re-design. These three office/centers form a working group called Integrated Field Services (IFS). The goal is to be more strategic with interactions and professional development with partner districts in order to capitalize on human and financial resources both at the university and P-12 districts (See Exhibit 3.3.d for IFS brochure). The model facilitates communication of partnership endeavors and coordinates professional development. Professional development offerings in areas such as co-teaching, cognitive coaching and reflection and the Danielson Framework benefit partner districts as well as MSU, preparing P-12 and University faculty to work more effectively with candidates and teachers. This interaction serves to tie the university and districts together in their shared responsibility for developing effective teachers and increasing P-12 student achievement.

Another venue of shared professional development is the PDS Institute, which is based on strategic planning by the PDS Governance Council and Design Team to develop a common shared professional vision of educational leadership within the 21st century framework. The participants are P-12 teachers, administrators and university faculty (from various colleges). A list of past participants and a brochure with current program details can be found at PDS Leadership Institute.

New for 2011-2012 is professional development for P-12 and university faculty in Professional Learning Teams. Guidelines and support for the work of learning teams is provided by the NExT Curriculum Redesign committee and is documented in Exhibit 5.3.g *Learning Team Guidelines* and *Learning Team SMART Goal*.

In addition to their role as student teaching supervisors, TOSAs are involved in instructional programs during pre-student teaching field experiences. TOSAs meet monthly for Responsive Forums that include sharing through a TOSA presentation and learning in an IFS-facilitated session. COE faculty are invited to collaborate with the TOSAs during the afternoon of each Responsive Forum and regularly participate in these collaborative discussions. These faculty/TOSA discussions have led directly to changes in field experience configurations and assignments. For example, weekly full-day experiences were added to the elementary four-week, full-time field experience as a result of these discussions. Teacher Performance Assessment back-mapping was another issue for discussion. COE faculty wanted to prepare teacher candidates for the TPA experience during student teaching, yet needed to balance the TPA needs with other activities and assignments that were critical to these earlier experiences. As faculty considered various components of TPA, they received suggestions from the TOSAs. Many of the TOSAs have participated in formal TPA scorer training, been calibrated and scored TPAs. The TOSAs were able to provide concrete recommendations about what would be most beneficial to the teacher candidates within the field experiences. (See Exhibit 3.3.a for Responsive Forum invitations.)

In preparation for field experiences, TOSAs present an overview of the school to the teacher candidates. TOSAs also present seminars on topics such as benchmarking, co-teaching, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports and academic language. These seminars may occur at the school

site and involve school staff as presenters in addition to the TOSA. In one case, a TOSA and faculty are meeting on-site to help an introductory level class reflect on their observations for the Context for Learning.

Although all field experience placements are initiated with a request to the OFIE Assistant Director, TOSAs make all placements for teacher candidates and advanced candidates within their districts. Long-term placements, in which a teacher candidate completes both a final field experience and student teaching at the same site, can be a challenge to faculty supervising the field experience. Placements may be distributed across a large geographical area, making travel for supervision difficult. In these cases, the TOSA will serve as a primary supervisor for the field experience candidate outside the primary field experience site, tracking the candidate's progress and communicating regularly with the cooperating teacher and university faculty. The university faculty member retains responsibility for the teacher candidate but does not observe the candidate as regularly as those at the primary sites.

TOSAs are also instrumental in organizing programs that promote P-12 student learning. In one example, an English Education faculty has teacher candidates using an online platform to interact with ninth grade students at a local high school. Her students act as writing and reading mentors for the ninth grade students. This provides the teacher candidates practice thinking about and supporting ninth grade writers and enlarging ninth graders' understanding of literature. It also provides one-on-one assistance to the ninth grade students. (See Exhibit 3.3.a for survey containing additional examples.)

The unit and its PDS partners regularly share expertise and resources. Faculty provide professional development sessions to our partner schools. Typically, these sessions are initiated by a TOSA who works with her principal and university faculty member to tailor the session to meet the needs of the building. Topics range from reading instruction to using assessment data in designing instruction to developing professional learning communities (See Faculty Survey in Exhibit 3.3.a for examples). Traditionally the TOSA's time is split 50% to the University as a liaison and 50% to the school district to lead/assist with ongoing initiatives. The cost of the Graduate Teaching Fellowship is shared between the university and district, while the TOSA remains on the district contract for 1.0 FTE salaries plus benefits. The university also supports professional development experiences for the TOSA at no cost to the district. (For details on resource sharing, see pp. 12-14 NAPDS award application, PDS contract and articulation agreement in Exhibit 3.3.a.)

Candidates' Development and Demonstration of Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions to Help All Students Learn

In addition to the changes occurring with NExT, a major change has come with *Teacher Performance Assessments* (TPA). Minnesota is an accelerated state and MSU has been a pilot institution, meaning that we have been involved with TPA from the earliest pilot in spring of 2010 (See 3.3.b for TPAC overview, TPA Design Framework and TPA timeline). TPA is a subject-specific measure of readiness to teach, focused on student learning. It requires candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of content, pedagogy, students, assessment, language acquisition, research and theory on learning as well as the ability to reflect on the evidence of their instruction to improve student learning.

Beginning in Fall 2010, initial licensure teacher candidates entering professional education were informed of a field experience redesign which included: greater emphasis placed on study away opportunities; focus on using PDS for primary placement sites; fewer districts used for teacher candidate placement to allow for increased professional development for the hosting teachers; establishment of long-term placements (the two final semesters) in a single district which would promote "deep roots" within a district and promote an increased awareness of the cultural context for student teaching; co-teaching strategies used in all final year placement sites; and TPA used to inform competency in the Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice (aligned to INTASC). In order to facilitate these transformational changes, it was imperative for our PDS partners to be involved in the process.

One major change that occurred as part of NExT is the use of a co-teaching model for student teaching. As defined by MSU, the mentor teacher and student teacher candidate work collaboratively, add instructional value and work to enhance learning for diverse groups of students. They form an instructional team, effectively addressing diverse student needs. Data driven research supports the effectiveness of co-teaching as a viable strategy for teacher preparation and student achievement. As of fall 2011 all general education student teachers were in co-teaching placements and mentor teachers and student teachers were trained in co-teaching. Co-teaching provides the opportunity for student teachers to observe their mentor teacher in the act of teaching in a more purposeful way than occurs in traditional student teaching. In turn, the student teachers are observed by their mentor teachers and TOSAs. TOSAs also meet with mentor teachers in a group to reflect on their experiences with co-teaching. (See Exhibit 3.3.b for an overview of the co-teaching phase-in timeline and 5.3.c for co-teaching professional development and details about the model.)

Although the initial licensure programs use the same evaluation instruments based on the Danielson Framework, they differ in the design of the experience. All are designed to provide opportunities for candidates to apply and reflect on their content, pedagogical and professional knowledge, skills and professional dispositions. Exhibit 3.3.b shows the specific activities and assignments, including technology integration and TPA components for each field experience across the three departments. TPA components have been built into field experiences with the full TPA completed during student teaching. As more information has become available on TPA, faculty have fine tuned TPA assignments, focusing particularly on teacher candidates' writing their reflections. TPA provides a common means for candidates to measure and reflect on their impact on student learning during student teaching, replacing the *Student Learning Impact Project*. During the *Teacher Candidate Final Seminar* TOSAs meet with small groups of candidates to facilitate further reflection about TPA.

The technology focus during field experiences is on use of strategic tools like the SMARTboard, digital video, student data bases and computers and iPads to enhance student learning. This focus reflects the outcomes in the conceptual framework. Field experiences are designed to match the technology availability on site with requirements for candidates. Candidate communication via D2L, Facebook and blogs is used as well. Like TPA, the expectations for use of technology are changing as hardware becomes available. For instance, candidates in Elementary completed an iTutoring program with iPads provided by the COE to students in a PDS site and candidates on campus. Students in KSP regularly use Google docs to design effective lessons that are used on iPads as differentiation stations in schools.

As part of their continuous improvement work within departments, faculty review field experience placements for each program to plan for the next semester or academic year. They consider the quality of the placements, expectations of partner districts, and demographic data on the schools. This discussion is often facilitated by the OFIE Assistant Director who presents data to help faculty to consider the next steps in improving field experiences. As described in the Standard 4 narrative, faculty in the unit have set criteria for experiences in diverse settings that all candidates are expected to meet. Faculty compare the demographic data against that diversity criteria. Faculty also have planned for opportunities for candidates to demonstrate proficiencies in working with diverse students from diverse ethnic/racial, linguistic, gender, and socioeconomic groups.

Faculty have sought ways to incorporate co-teaching in pre-student teaching field experiences. Through the work of the TOSAs and faculty, modeling and learning about the co-teaching strategies/methods now occurs within MSU courses. Similarly, as more mentor teachers have experience with co-teaching in their role as cooperating teachers for student teachers, they seek to use that model in their work with teacher candidates during pre-student teaching field experiences.

Teacher candidates are engaged in many service projects that make a real difference in the learning of P-12 students. For instance, secondary candidates are tutoring English Language Learners at

a high school, elementary candidates tutor struggling readers four days per week on the iPad resulting in real differences in learners' performance, secondary candidates are tutoring in AVID, elementary candidates are developing SMARTboard lessons for cooperating teachers, and candidates volunteer to assist with parent activities such as Kindergarten Roundup, Literacy Nights and Title I Fun Night.

The pre-student teaching coursework and field experiences are designed to provide opportunities for candidates to work collaboratively with other candidates in co-teaching lessons during particular field experiences, critiques of videos of others' teaching and working collaboratively on projects during coursework. TPA components are built into pre-student teaching field experiences with the full TPA during student teaching, providing a significant opportunity for reflections on practice and effects on student learning. TOSAs as well as mentor teachers are well trained observers. Both groups have significant professional development in the Danielson Framework and co-teaching. The TOSAs have additional training in cognitive coaching. During student teaching, candidates are organized into Learning Communities which meet regularly under the guidance of a university supervisor. During those sessions candidates focus on TPA critiquing and reflecting on each other's work.

In addition to the Teacher Credential evaluations explained in 3.1, our work across the field experiences with TPA provides further opportunities to deepen candidates' exploration of their knowledge, skills and professional dispositions. TPA requires candidates to differentiate for learners who might otherwise be overlooked. Candidates use a detailed lesson plan that calls for specific planning to differentiate for specific learner needs. In addition, candidates must design and use assessments that allow them to identify learning differences among diverse students, particularly those with language needs and exceptionalities. All initial licensure programs require additional case study assignments in field experiences that focus on students with exceptionalities, helping candidates to demonstrate proficiencies to support student learning. (See Exhibit 3.3.b for Co-teaching TPA Lesson Plan and Field Experience charts for Initial licensure programs.)

Discuss plans and timelines for obtaining and/or sustaining target level performance as articulated in the rubrics of unit Standard 3.

The OFIE will develop a formal evaluation process for the student teaching program. This will involve a set of assessment tools for the candidates, mentor teacher and supervisor. Candidates will have an opportunity to provide feedback on their experience, including the supervision from their mentor teacher and university supervisor. Additionally, the mentor teachers will be asked to provide feedback about the supervisor's performance. Finally, feedback from supervisors about the mentor teacher's performance will be elicited. University supervisors and former candidates will assist the Director of OFIE in the development of these tools.

It is our goal to have nearly 100% of the Elementary candidates in long-term placements for Fall 2012 Block 3 and Spring 2013 student teaching. Our goal for KSP and SPED is that we will make every attempt to place them in long-term placements. These students have been told that this is the upcoming plan.

The Student Teaching Placement Options chart was redesigned to align all available school district partners to a PDS partner school. Candidates have been told that we will first try to place them in a PDS school, moving to a non-PDS school only if a PDS placement is not available.

We are currently investigating how we can move co-teaching training to a more sustainable model. We are planning to move to a hybrid, differentiated model, which includes online learning prior to face-to-face. Training would be jointly delivered by University faculty and TOSAs, reducing the need for larger training sessions and building capacity within partner districts for co-teaching training. In addition, we will make changes to the delivery schedule to more purposefully support candidates in long-term placements. Initial training as they begin their first semester will be followed by additional

training as they enter their full-time student teaching semester. This schedule will allow training to meet the needs of candidates and mentor teachers as they progress through their co-teaching relationship.

To improve our ability to best select and train mentor teachers, OFIE will continue to collect demographic data on mentor teachers that will inform placement decisions as well as training and support. Things such as mentor teachers' licensures, continuing education in co-teaching, Framework for Teaching, literacy, technology, as well as their previous experience in working with teacher candidates would be accessed through a database.

We are beginning to offer international experiences earlier in teacher candidates' programs, starting this summer with an experience in Costa Rica. The Intercultural Developmental Inventory has been administered to samples of candidates engaging in international student teaching experiences and "traditional" partner district placements. Pre and post assessment of these candidates allow for measurement of growth in intercultural competencies and comparison of relative rates of growth among those in the international versus national placements. Beginning in spring of 2012, larger samples of student teaching candidates will take the IDI so that growth can be evaluated from the beginning of their program to the end of student teaching. The unit will move toward administration of pre-post assessments of the IDI for all candidates within one to two years.

Starting with the current semester, teacher candidates, cooperating teachers and faculty will be using the Pass-Port data management system to input evaluation information and track field experiences. This system will provide the capacity to track individual candidate placements and provide reports on placement sites now done by a graduate assistant.