



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 18, 2020

TO: Deans of Approved Michigan Educator Preparation Institutions

FROM: Leah Breen, Director, Office of Educator Excellence
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports

SUBJECT: Guidance for Apprenticeships and Internships in 2020-21

On June 30, 2020, Governor Gretchen Whitmer released [*MI Safe Schools: Michigan's 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap*](#) to provide "guidance, support, and clarity to safely bring students back to the classroom for in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year" (p. 3). Educator preparation institutions have shared several questions about the implications the Roadmap has on clinical experiences for teacher candidates. This memo is intended to provide guidance on acceptable activities for supporting candidates during the apprenticeship and internship phases of their preparation programs in the upcoming year.

In Phases 1-3 of the Roadmap, no in-person instruction is permitted. Candidates may still engage in valuable clinical experiences, including internships, during these phases. There are no prohibitions or limitations on instruction in a virtual context in law, administrative rule, or the [*Clinical Experiences Requirements*](#). Candidates will need to be supported in adapting the instructional practices they have developed in their preparation programs to virtual settings. Conversely, candidates in apprenticeship and internship placements can serve as valuable partners for veteran teachers in supporting their transition to teaching in a virtual environment. Any activities in which candidates engage that support the needs of the school community, from direct instruction to supporting families, should be considered valid service toward meeting clinical experience requirements for certification.

In Phase 4 of the Roadmap, in-person instruction is permitted, and schools are strongly recommended not to allow "family members or other guests ... in the school building except under extenuating circumstances determined by district and school officials" (p. 23). While none of the requirements or recommendations for Phase 4 explicitly forbid teacher candidates from entering school buildings, the Roadmap does put considerable decision-making power in the hands of local schools to determine whether candidates in apprenticeship or internship phases of their preparation should

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be classified as “guests” or a part of the instructional community of the school as they develop policies to ensure the health and safety of their students. As with Phases 1-3, clinical experiences involving virtual connectivity to in-person classrooms are permissible for fulfilling certification requirements. All candidates who are able to engage in in-person clinical experiences during Phase 4 must follow the safety protocols in place for the schools and communities in which they are placed. Educator preparation institutions should proactively reach out to the schools in their communities to determine what service they and their candidates can provide to support safe reopening of school buildings. Any activities in which candidates engage that support the needs of the school community, from direct instruction to supporting families should be considered valid service toward meeting clinical experience requirements for certification.

In Phases 5 and 6 of the Roadmap, in-person instruction is permitted, and strong restrictions on family members and guests in school buildings from Phase 4 are not recommended. As with all other phases, clinical experiences involving virtual instruction are as permissible as those involving in-person instruction for fulfilling certification requirements. Candidates must continue to follow all safety protocols in place for the schools and communities in which they are placed, and opportunities to serve the school community beyond participation in classroom activity should be considered valid service toward meeting clinical experience requirements for certification.

The minimum requirements are defined in administrative rule and preparation standards for clinical experiences for educator certification, including:

1. R 390.1123(1)(b)(ii) of the [Teacher Certification Code](#),
2. R 380.204(1)(b) and R 380.206(1)(c) of the [School Psychologist Certification Code](#),
3. R 390.1303(b)(ii), R 390.1303a(b)(ii), R 390.1305(1)(e) of the administrative rules for [Certification and Licensure of School Counselors](#),
4. R 340.1012 of the administrative rules for [School Social Workers](#),
5. R 340.1771, R 340.1772, and R 340.1782 of [the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education](#),
6. R 380.105 of the [School Administrator Certification Code](#), or
7. Standard 7 of the Michigan Standards for the Preparation of [School Principals](#) or [Central Office Administrators](#).

This memo does not waive these requirements. In support of our educators, Michigan Department of Education (MDE) will accept cumulative hours in lieu of a requirement of “weeks”. For example, if student teacher cannot complete 12 successive weeks of student teaching at six hours per day, a cumulative amount of approximately 360 hours of combined virtual or in-person experiences can be accepted. The above guidance and flexibilities for arranging virtual and in-person clinical experiences for teacher candidates are applicable to these other credentials.

In instances in which a provider determines that closure of a school building for in-person instruction has impeded a candidate’s ability to demonstrate appropriate proficiency for issuance of any of these credentials, MDE urges institutions to support candidates in non-traditional ways. These options might include extending the clinical

experience for the candidate, if possible, or assigning a grade of incomplete until the candidate can return to the clinical setting. MDE recognizes that providers must follow policies in place at their respective institutions in determining such options.

If you have additional questions, please contact BreenL1@Michigan.gov.