

# HOLMES CENTER FOR SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS AND EDUCATOR PREPARATION

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## Vision

The educator preparation programs at Plymouth State University strive to develop visionary educators who will take the lead in transforming education in the state, the region, and the nation to better serve all students and their families. Our vision is rooted in Plymouth State's tradition of service, emphasized in the University motto, *Ut prosim*—That I may serve. At the same time, we seek to anticipate and respond to changing demographics and societal expectations by reaching into communities with programs that will educate and inspire. Through collaborations with area schools and community organizations, we aim to emphasize our shared commitment to the education and well-being of all students. Above all, we endeavor to prepare competent and caring educators who exemplify the qualities of Commitment, Service, Vision, and Leadership, and who, in turn, will cultivate these qualities in the students they teach.

## Mission

Plymouth State carries on a longstanding commitment to serve communities, the state, and the region, by preparing thoughtful, reflective educators who envision a better future for all students and willingly accept the responsibilities and challenges of leadership. Beyond the initial certification level, the University offers programs in a variety of educational specialties, which provide educational professionals with opportunities to enhance their personal and professional growth and development. The Council of Educator Preparation builds on the University's mission to provide learning experiences that promote understanding and respect for all people and to foster the constructive, open-minded discourse that is so necessary in a democracy.

## Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for teacher education at Plymouth State University is a shared set of beliefs and attitudes that serves as the foundation for each teacher education program. The framework clearly identifies for faculty, staff, and students the core values that we share as a community. These core values—Commitment, Holism, Experience, Collaboration, and Knowledge—are meaningfully integrated into all teacher education coursework, service learning, and practice teaching experiences. In brief, the underlying assumptions of the conceptual framework are as follows:

### Commitment

We define commitment as dedication, perseverance, and individual and social responsibility. Our candidates are committed to lifelong learning and to increasing self-knowledge. They are committed to the beliefs that all students can learn and that education has the power to transform individuals and the greater society. Our teacher candidates recognize the responsibility of educators to take a thoughtful and critical stance toward themselves and their profession.

### Holism

Our holism perspective involves affirming diversity and understanding the "whole child" within the family, community, and cultural context. It includes working toward an integrated curriculum and recognizing how we as educators are shaped by our own experiences and culture. This holistic perspective shapes our larger vision.

### Experience

Experience allows us to put theory into practice. We provide opportunities for experiential learning that serve communities and schools so that our teacher candidates can do the same for their students. Experience also involves constantly renewing skills and knowledge within one's discipline.

### Collaboration

Collaboration involves working with students, families, and colleagues effectively within the school context toward shared goals, demonstrating respect and openness towards diverse perspectives, and confronting and resolving conflicts effectively and respectfully. Collaboration enhances both teaching and learning and is an essential part of developing the capacity to lead.

### Knowledge

Knowledge refers to understanding the theory, content, methods and materials, and technologies of one's field, as well as understanding child and adolescent development, learning processes, and student motivation within the familial, community, and cultural contexts in which children grow and learn. Teaching that engages all learners combines a

knowledge of students and one's subjects within the cultural, social, and institutional context.

## Diversity Framework for Certification Candidates

In order to teach effectively and ensure student learning in a democratic and pluralistic society, each teacher education candidate at Plymouth State University, by the conclusion of their program, will have developed the ability to describe culture as a multifaceted and dynamic construct; critically examine their own sociocultural positions and understand the ways in which background and experiences shape one's view of the world; learn from and about students, families, and communities, and draw on this knowledge to inform instruction; view students and families of diverse backgrounds and abilities in respectful and affirming ways; acquire and extend their own multicultural awareness by exploring and learning about the history, experiences, beliefs, and values of others; recognize and challenge biases in themselves and others, as well as institutional oppression in schools and throughout society; and implement inclusive, culturally responsive teaching practices.

## Initial Teacher Certification Programs – Undergraduate Degrees

The Educator Preparation programs at Plymouth State University are approved by the New Hampshire Department of Education. Plymouth State University offers these initial teacher preparation programs at the undergraduate level:

- Elementary Education (K-6), (K-8)
- English Education (5-12)
- Music Education (K-12)
- Physical Education (K-12)
- Physical Education and Health Education (K-12)
- Social Studies Education (5-12)
- Visual Arts Education (K-12)

Details about each undergraduate program of study are available within the departmental listing of major degree requirements in this catalog.

Candidates may change from one teaching program to another. However, they must satisfy all requirements of the new program, including reapplying for teacher candidacy in the new program. Teacher candidates who return to the University after a withdrawal must do so under the requirements of the most current academic catalog and complete a new criminal records check.

## Clinical Experiences

All departmental programs require early and continual professional clinical experiences in schools, culminating in the Internship in Teaching. The culminating field experience for a single-level endorsement (K-6, 5-12) is typically one semester. The culminating field experience for K-12 licensure is typically two eight-week experiences (one at the primary level and one at the secondary level). In order for teacher candidates to participate in clinical experiences in diverse settings that are essential for their development as teachers and required for accreditation and state approval, teacher candidates must be willing and able to travel outside of the Plymouth area beyond walking distance. All Internship in Teaching candidates should plan for and be able to secure their own transportation by the junior year. The Holmes Center partners with schools and school districts in placing interns.

## Additional Coursework during an Internship

Enrolling in additional courses during an internship in teaching is highly discouraged; however, candidates who wish to take a course during their internship must obtain permission from the Holmes Center and their program coordinator. Overload regulations regarding eligibility and fees apply to candidates carrying more than a total of 18 credit hours in the internship semester; see Overload Fees in the Tuition and Fees (<https://coursecatalog.plymouth.edu/tuition-fees/>) section.

## Master of Education in Special Education

K-12 Education in Special Education – one-year intensive program. Students interested in obtaining Special Education licensure may do so upon completion of their undergraduate Teacher Certification program. Applications to the one-year intensive program must be submitted to Admissions by April 15 of that year. Students interested in pursuing this program must be accepted into the program following a completed application package, a formal interview process, and a final acceptance by Admissions. Further information can be found on the University website or by contacting the Coordinator of Special Education.

## Certification Programs, Educator and Specialist – Advanced Degrees

Plymouth State University offers educator certification/endorsements in the areas of secondary (5–12) and K–12 through the educator and specialist certification programs. Educator certification programs require a minimum of a bachelor's degree and can be done separately or in conjunction with a master's degree. Specialist certification programs can be done separately or in conjunction with a master's degree or an Education Specialist Degree (EdS). The specialist certification endorsement, however, requires a master's degree or higher at the time of completion.

PSU's educator and specialist certification programs are approved by the New Hampshire Department of Education. Educator and specialist certification program graduates are eligible for recommendation to become a New Hampshire Department of Education licensed educator. Since New Hampshire is a member of the Interstate Certification Compact, PSU graduates are also eligible to transfer their New Hampshire certification to most states by applying to the respective state's department of education. However, the applicant must fulfill any additional requirements of the receiving state. Information regarding the Interstate Certification Contract is available at [nasdtec.net](http://nasdtec.net) (<https://www.nasdtec.net/>)

Teacher candidates typically complete licensure requirements over a two- or three-year period; the requirements may be completed in less time depending on previous academic preparation and the number of courses taken per term. Teacher candidates meet with assigned advisors to review progress toward the licensure requirements. A curriculum planning guide, which may consist of undergraduate as well as graduate courses, will be outlined by the advisor with the teacher candidates. Teacher candidates with degrees in areas other than education may be required to take additional courses to meet licensure competencies, as described by the State of New Hampshire. Beginning as early as the first year, teacher candidates have many opportunities to teach and learn in elementary, middle, and high school settings. This experience culminates in an intensive internship in the area of licensure.

Prior to their culminating experience, students must file paperwork to initiate the Internship or Practicum process, and to confirm their placement(s). Paperwork should be submitted at least one term prior to

the anticipated term of the experience. The criteria for admission and monitoring throughout the teacher candidate's certification program will focus on academic achievement and dispositions. Continual assessment of a teacher candidate's specific strengths and limitations in these areas will be used to determine continuation in, or removal from, the certification program and the readiness to enter the profession.

Those students interested in the educator certification concentration programs not seeking a master's degree must hold at least a baccalaureate degree in order to qualify for admission. A minimum of six credits in the content area must be taken with PSU faculty members to ensure that the University is satisfied with the content area achievement. Should the student not meet the competencies as set forth by the New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) they may be required to take additional coursework. All students must complete a culminating experience in New Hampshire under the supervision of PSU faculty. The specific culminating experience will be discussed in advance with the student's advisor and the Center for School Partnerships and Educator Preparation.

### **Educator Licensure Concentrations (Post-Baccalaureate)**

- Digital Learning Specialist, K-12
- English Education, 5-12
- Health Education, K-12
- Library Media Specialist, K-12
- Special Education, K-12
- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), K-12
- Visual Arts Education, K-12

### **Specialist Certification Concentrations (Master's degree or higher required)**

- School Counselor, K-12
- School Psychologist, K-12

## **Road to Teacher Certification**

Teacher certification candidates must demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for teacher certification. Programs continually assess teacher candidates' competencies through a series of "decision points" to determine each candidate's eligibility to continue in a program on the "Road to Certification." Students enrolled in teacher preparation programs must submit an application for candidacy by the end of their first year at Plymouth and an internship application one year before their internship semester.

### **Decision Point One: Applying for Teacher Candidacy**

- Candidacy Application
- Basic Academic Skills Assessment (Praxis Core or Test Evaluation Waiver)
- Two Faculty Evaluations
- Cumulative GPA of 2.50/3.00<sup>1</sup>
- Criminal Background Check # 1

### **Decision Point Two: Applying for an Internship**

- Internship Application
- Cumulative Department GPA of 2.50/2.60/2.70/3.00<sup>1</sup>

### **Decision Point Three: Internship Preparation**

- Placement Confirmation
- Interview
- Criminal Background Check # 2
- Cumulative GPA of 2.50/2.70/3.00
- Seminar I

### **Decision Point Four: The Internship in Teaching**

- Observation reports
- Mid-term Evaluation
- Seminar II
- Final Evaluations
- Seminar III
- Internship Grade
- Completing the NH Teacher Candidate Assessment of Performance

<sup>1</sup> Details about each program's GPA requirements are available within the departmental listing of major degree requirements in this catalog. A cumulative GPA of 3.00 is required of all advanced degree educator and specialist certification programs.

Interns in programs using the Pass/No Pass grading policy must earn a Pass at the end of the internship in order to be recommended for licensure. Interns who are in programs that have a letter grading policy must earn a "C" or higher at the end of the internship in order to be recommended for licensure. Interns must successfully complete the New Hampshire Teacher Candidate Assessment of Performance.

Removal From Internship: Interns are expected to adhere to all of the following:

1. The host school rules regarding lesson planning, assessment, attendance, professional demeanor, etc.
2. The role of the intern as described in the handbook
3. The competency expectations as outlined on the internship evaluation form
4. The NH Codes of Conduct & Ethics for Educators
5. The PSU Code of Student Conduct.

Failure to adhere to any of these sets of expectations and/or unsatisfactory performance over a period of time will result in the student's removal from the internship experience. Details are provided in the Internship in Teaching Handbook posted on the Holmes Center website.

Candidates who complete all major, degree, and licensure requirements are eligible for recommendation to become a New Hampshire Department of Education licensed educator. Since New Hampshire is a member of the Interstate Certification Contract, Plymouth graduates are eligible for certification in any of the contract states upon application to that state's education department. However, the applicant must fulfill any additional requirements of the receiving state. Information regarding the Interstate Certification Contract is available at [nasdtec.net](https://www.nasdtec.net) (<https://www.nasdtec.net/>)

Requirements for NH Licensure may change, subject to changes made by the New Hampshire Department of Education and the NH State Board of Education. Teacher candidates will find the most current New Hampshire Department of Education requirements online (<https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/division-of-educator-support-and->

higher-education/bureau-of-credentialing/). As teacher candidates near completion of the program, each must file a petition to graduate or a petition for certification. This initiates the audit and licensure process. Once all requirements are met, the Holmes Center will recommend each candidate to the NHDOE for the appropriate licensure. An email will then be sent to the Plymouth State email address stating you have been recommended for licensure. More info is available at <https://www.plymouth.edu/educator-preparation> (<https://www.plymouth.edu/educator-preparation/>).

[teacher-certification/decision-point-ii/mandatory-criminal-records-check-nh-doe-instructions/](https://www.plymouth.edu/educator-preparation/road-teacher-certification/decision-point-ii/mandatory-criminal-records-check-nh-doe-instructions/))

## Basic Academic Skills Assessment and Subject Area Testing Requirements

As part of the New Hampshire Department of Education Licensure requirements, acceptance into an educator preparation program leading to licensure requires a candidate to meet the Basic Academic Skills Assessment (BASA) in reading, writing, and math. Below are options for meeting the Basic Academic Skills Assessment (BASA) requirement:

1. Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators (Reading, Mathematics, and Writing);
2. Other states' basic skills testing for educators (state-dependent, additional tests may be required);
3. Performance at or above a predetermined score (set by the NHDOE) on a nationally recognized test in the areas of reading, writing, and/or mathematics such as, but not limited to, the SAT, GRE, or ACT. Submit the Test Evaluation Request directly to the NHDOE, as outlined below.
4. Hold a New Hampshire Beginning Educator or Experienced Educator License in certain licensure areas.

The following licensure areas require the Basic Academic Skills Assessment: Elementary Education, English Education, English as a Second Language, Digital Learning Specialist, Health Education, Library Media Specialist, Music Education, Physical Education, Social Studies Education, Special Education, and Visual Arts Education.

Candidates who seek New Hampshire licensure in Elementary Education, English Education, Music Education, Physical Education, Social Studies Education, or Visual Arts Education must demonstrate content knowledge through the Praxis II: Subject Assessments. Elementary Education licensure also requires the New Hampshire Foundations of Reading exam. Information about required exams, exam costs, testing sites, passing scores, and exemptions or waivers are available at the Center for School Partnerships and Educator Preparation or online: [ets.org/praxis/nh/requirements](http://ets.org/praxis/nh/requirements) (<http://ets.org/praxis/nh/requirements/>) and [nh.nesinc.com](http://nh.nesinc.com) (<http://nh.nesinc.com>).

## Criminal Records Check

NH state law [RSA 189:13-a(IX)(b) (<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/XV/189/189-13-a.htm>)] requires criminal history record checks for students who declare candidacy in an educator preparation program at an institution of higher education. Additional criminal history record checks, administered by the placement district(s), are required for student teachers and interns. School districts may also require a background check prior to the start of any early or mid-level field experience. Students must comply with local school policies and pay for all background checks. Student background check policies are posted at <https://www.plymouth.edu/educator-preparation/road-teacher-certification/decision-point-ii/mandatory-criminal-records-check-nh-doe-instructions> ([https://www.plymouth.edu/educator-preparation/road-teacher-certification/decision-point-ii/mandatory-criminal-records-check-nh-doe-instructions](https://www.plymouth.edu/educator-preparation/road-teacher-certification/decision-point-ii/mandatory-criminal-records-check-nh-doe-instructions/)).