

Dunkirk City School #7

On-Site Freshmen Field Based Course

SUNY Fredonia
College of Education
Responsive Educator Program

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A semester long clinically rich freshman early field experience course, offered each semester, began with a principal's vision to encourage young children to look to their future and consider becoming teachers.

"This field experience was incredibly eye-opening and taught me the challenges and triumphs of a special education educator. I was involved in the lesson and worked individually with children on a daily basis. It was a privilege working with children within and outside the classroom."- Emily Donals, *Childhood Inclusive Education*

Since fall 2007 the College of Education has partnered with a diverse elementary school in a small city school district, to provide freshmen teacher candidates with on-site instruction followed by a field experience.

The *Introduction to Contemporary Inclusive Education* course (EDU105), taught by SUNY faculty, is held twice a week in the school's Media Center where candidates witness the start of the school day in addition to learning pedagogy. Immediately following class, the teacher candidates report to an assigned classroom where they provide instruction and assistance under the guidance of the cooperating teacher and a Field Representative from the Office of Field Experiences.



By providing this authentic experience, candidates are motivated and immersed in the climate of the school. The experience builds a necessary foundation as they enter the field of education. Being able to experience the opening day, morning announcements, fire drills, bus safety, assemblies and other interruptions, freshmen witness how such events impact the classroom and the learning culture of the building. The connection between theory and practice is authentically evident as the candidates move seamlessly from the "course time" to the "field time". Continuous exposure to the NYS Common Core Standards better prepares teacher candidates.

Continuous support from the Dunkirk City School administration, faculty, and staff has allowed the teacher candidates to become an integral part of the school's community. The College of Education is dedicated to positively impacting pupil learning.

Program Highlights

- ✦ On-site instructor offers support
- ✦ 13 weeks in the school
- ✦ Authentic setting, immersed into school climate, become an integral part of school
- ✦ Teacher Candidates demonstrate high level of professionalism, know attendance is vital
- ✦ Teacher Candidates provide extracurricular support for events
- ✦ Candidates run literacy centers and offer remedial work
- ✦ Teacher Candidates are role models for the pupils
- ✦ Experience integrated co-teaching
- ✦ Observe varied teaching styles
- ✦ Character education impacted teacher candidates