

## LIAISON SCHOOL MODEL

### Overview

The Liaison School Model represents how we approach the field experience and student teaching components of the teacher education program. The Teacher Education Institute (TEI) has established relationships with a network of preK – 12 school districts throughout Western New York. Together, we work collaboratively to provide intensive, mentored field experience and student teaching opportunities for our students preparing to become intellectually-curious, critically-reflective, and practically-informed educators for the profession of teaching.

Each liaison school team consists of the following:

- A **teacher education associate** (TEA) from UB who teaches the fall semester field experience and the spring semester seminar in teaching courses, and observes and provides feedback and evaluation throughout the spring semester student teaching placements;
- A school-based **liaison** who coordinates the fall semester field experience course with the TEA and assists in obtaining cooperating teachers for each assigned preservice teacher;
- A group of teachers who begin working with preservice teachers in the fall semester; some of these teachers will continue as **cooperating teachers** in the spring semester for a student teaching placement;
- A group of **preservice teachers**, typically from a variety of certification areas, registered for the field experience course in the fall semester preceding their spring semester student teaching (most preservice teachers will be placed in their liaison school site for a student teaching placement; however, due to logistics, some preservice teachers will be placed in other school sites for both of their student teaching placements).

Immersion at the liaison school affords the following benefits to the preservice teacher:

- A thorough understanding of the school community;
- Extensive and varied interactions with students, faculty, and staff prior to the start of student teaching;
- The development of a dynamic mentoring relationship with the TEA and cooperating teacher;
- A forum for discussion and professional development among peers and future colleagues;
- A smooth transition to student teaching that promotes optimal learning for students.

The classroom teacher and her/his students also benefit in a variety of ways. During the fall semester field experience course, the preservice teacher will become an additional resource in the classroom to complement the teacher's instruction and facilitate students' learning. S/he will develop a relationship with the teacher and her/his students and gain knowledge of the school and its curriculum. This carries over to student teaching, wherein the preservice teacher is able to readily engage in the placement. Many cooperating teachers inform us that they enjoy this opportunity to work directly with prospective teachers, because it energizes their teaching and allows them to participate in and influence the beginning professional development of those studying to become educators. This is echoed by preK-12 school and district leaders, who additionally inform us that because this model fosters the sharing of ideas and expectations, it promotes a smoother transition to teaching and supports their efforts of teacher recruitment and retention.