

Dunkirk City School District

A Long-standing After-school Tutoring Field Experience

State University of New York at Fredonia
Responsive Educator Program

Office of Field Experiences
(716) 673-3443

Semester long sophomore level early field experience providing tutorial instruction to K-8 learners in a diverse small city school district.

"I was really surprised, especially when I started making more lesson plans in 250, at how long it actually takes to make one lesson plan. People think because you are an education major, that you just pull out information, but they don't understand how hard it is. It's not a bad thing, it takes a long time to make a really good lesson plan."

- a sophomore participant

In the 1990s, the then Education Department began an after-school tutoring program to a diverse elementary and middle school in a small city school district, thereby providing sophomore teacher candidates with a field experience while participating in a course on campus. This has evolved into a partnership with the now College of Education servicing two elementary and a middle school in the district.

The *Introduction to the Exceptional Learner (EDU 250)* course for elementary majors, is taught by SUNY faculty on campus. Teacher candidates work in pairs, arriving at dismissal to provide supplemental instruction in reading and writing for grades K-2 at Dunkirk School #3 and grades 3-5 at Dunkirk School #7. The course instructor also provides assistance during tutoring sessions.



Conversations between school administrators and College of Education faculty resulted in a new model for adolescence majors, which better serves the needs of the district. In fall 2013, the course will be taught during the day by SUNY faculty at the Dunkirk Middle School. The field experience will immediately follow the course with teacher candidates working in pairs instructing young teens.

Continuous support from the Dunkirk City School District administration, faculty and staff has allowed this long-standing partnership to exist. The College of Education is dedicated to positively impacting pupil learning.

Program Highlights

- ❖ Teacher Candidates working in pairs allows for shared planning and reflection
- ❖ 10 weeks in the school
- ❖ Experience in a multicultural district
- ❖ Teacher Candidates provide tutorial assistance focusing on literacy skills in reading and writing based on Common Core Standards.
- ❖ Tutors switch roles being the teacher and the teacher assistant. Teaches how to offer professional reflection.
- ❖ Teacher Candidates focus on developing lesson plans based on their own assessments.
- ❖ Literacy graduate students teach tutors about assessment