

ENCOURAGING REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AND TEACHER DISPOSITIONS IN FIELD EXPERIENCES

Daniel Hellman
Missouri State University
DanielHellman@missouristate.edu

Preservice teachers regularly interact with practicing music teachers during field experiences as part of preservice music teacher education. In general, practicing music teachers welcome the opportunity for preservice teachers to observe their classes and rehearsals, and often provide teaching opportunities as well. The qualities needed to supervise students effectively during the experience include reflection, openness, patience, understanding, time and the willingness to share their students. Ideally, practicing music teachers can help guide those future teachers who spend time in their classroom as an important part of their preservice education. Through understanding and addressing the needs of students in field experiences, practicing music teachers can help guide those future teachers who spend time in their classroom as part of preservice teacher education.

However, from the perspective of K-12 teachers, the challenge of mentoring students during early field experiences can often create stress and apprehension. To consider the voice of K-12 teachers, recent research on the perspectives of cooperating and mentor teachers in teacher education research (Yendol-Hopper, 2007; Graham, 2006; Mewborn, 2007) will be examined. Discussion and implications will draw upon recent work considering teacher education reform (Thiessen & Barrett, 2002; Feiman-Nemster, 2001).