



September 2008

Dear Art Education Students in the Schools Option:

I would like to introduce myself and the Pittsburgh student teaching practicum. As Penn State University's full-time Supervisor of Student Teachers in Art Education, I am available to you as a resource for the planning and preparation of the student teaching experience, including securing living accommodations, the coordination of elementary and secondary placements, related course assignments, and the completion of your certification papers and files..

Because I am based in Pittsburgh, have taught art education in Pittsburgh Public schools, and because of my professional affiliations, I have the benefit of knowing and cultivating relationships with art educators throughout Allegheny County. I endeavor to make the best possible student/mentor match based on the students' personalities, interests, and needs. Pittsburgh and the surrounding Allegheny County offers the opportunity for Penn State University student teachers to experience teaching within diverse student cultures. Other aspects to student teaching require deliberate guidance, instruction, monitoring, and support. These Pittsburgh program components have been established with connections and oversight by The Penn State University's Art Education Program.

The Pennsylvania State University begins the student's introduction to Pittsburgh in the semester prior to student teaching experience. As part of the capstone course, A ED 490, a full day field trip to Pittsburgh is planned. The Pittsburgh field trip offers student teachers an interactive visit to an elementary school where they prepare and instruct a mini art lesson for Pittsburgh students. Observations of secondary school classes and a reception follows. There are also opportunities for the incoming students to speak with the student teachers working at that time in the schools, as well as opportunities to tour parts of the city in which students may want to live. The personal connection between supervisor and student teachers continue on campus when I interview and meet with the student teachers at University Park. During the student teaching experience in Pittsburgh I offer instruction and support in our weekly student teaching seminars, as well as the multiple observations and conferences with each of the students in their schools.

While the living arrangements in Pittsburgh are the responsibility of the students, we work together to ease the stress of securing housing. *Craigslist* at <http://pittsburgh.craigslist.org/> has been a very useful resource. Also the fall student teachers that secure housing over the summer, often transfer their living accommodations to spring students. The unfurnished apartment rents range from \$450 - \$500 (including utilities) for five months (August—December, or January—June). It is difficult to find a short-term lease for less than five months. I strongly suggest that students live in the East End of Pittsburgh if at all possible. Most students do have transportation, however if I know a student is without a car, I will find that student placements where public transportation is available. My goal is to keep travel time to the schools where students are placed to ten or thirty minutes each way depending on traffic. Because I know the city well, I also help students map out the best routes to and from their school locations. Students usually have cell phones, and will need laptops or computers. The cost of course materials and books is minimal, \$150 or less.

I am here to discuss any further concerns you or your family may have regarding student teaching in Pittsburgh.

Very Best Regards,

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