

PROMISE and POTENTIAL

**A
Bloomington Junior High School
and
Illinois Wesleyan University
Partnership**

Coaches' Handbook

**Educational Studies 225 and 255
Fall 2011**

<http://www.iwu.edu/edstudies/Promise/>

Contents

Promise and Potential Personnel	1
IWU Field Experience Protocols	2
Required Hours, Schedule, and Absences	2
Dress	3
BJHS security protocol and sign in	3
Transportation and parking	3
Communicating with school personnel	4
Interacting with BJHS students	4
Confidentiality and Incident Reporting.....	5
The Promise and Potential Partnership	6
Introduction	6
Coaching.....	7
Orientation.....	7
Coach-student matches	7
Student self-referrals.....	8
Student Planners.....	8
Schoolwork	8
Laptops.....	8
Engaging students.....	9
Ending the semester	10
Shadowing.....	10
Communication with parents and/or guardians	11
Special events	12
Program Support	13
BJHS faculty	
BJHS team sites	
School supplies	
Mentoring resources	
On-line access to students' grades	
Promise and Potential forms	
Appendices	
I. BJHS Student Self-referral form	14
II. Note of introduction (sample)	16
III. Coach-Parent Progress Report (sample).....	17
IV. Coaches Program Assessment Survey	18

PROMISE AND POTENTIAL

Personnel

August 2011

ILLINOIS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY		
Program Administrator		Faculty
Robin Leavitt CLA 116 rleavitt@iwu.edu 556-3504	Pennie Gray CLA 118 pgray1@iwu.edu 556-3446	Sumer Seiki CLA 141 sseiki@iwu.edu 556-3925
BLOOMINGTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL		
Site Coordinator Mary Aplington Counselor, Student Services aplingtonm@district87.org 827-0086 http://www.district87.org/staff/aplingtonm/		
BJHS Team Coordinators		
Michelle Nauman, 6H1 naumanm@district87.org team website: http://www.district87.org/staff/naumanm/	Jessie Nicoson, 6B nicosonj@district87.org team website: http://www.district87.org/staff/nicosony/	
Nancy Pichla, 6H special education pichlan@district87.org	Diane Gallucci, 8B galluccid@district87.org team website: http://wordpress.district87.org/8bteam/	
Suzie Hutton, 7H huttons@district87.org team website: http://www.district87.org/bjhs/7h/		

FIELD EXPERIENCE PROTOCOLS

Public schools are not required to offer field placements. Your field placements are a result of the hard work and dedication of local school personnel working in partnership with Educational Studies faculty. Your placement has been planned so that you may gain the most out of the experience. It is understandable that you might feel some trepidation when encountering a new experience – and in particular becoming a guest member of a school community. While you may have been in schools before, you most likely have not taken on a professional role. This guide is meant to help you make the transition from college student to school professional. **Study this handbook carefully – you will be held responsible for acting in accordance with all expectations and protocols. Failure to do so will jeopardize your status in the Teacher Education Program (TEP).** Now is your opportunity to demonstrate your emerging professionalism.

Required Hours, Schedule, and Absences

Both Educ 225 and 255 have a specified *minimum* number of 20 hours required over the term. Each week you will spend one-and-a-half hours of coaching during the time and days you have been assigned. Additional time is to be spent shadowing your BJHS student(s) in his or her classes, per your course requirements. You should attend your field placement site until the last day of classes, regardless of the number of hours accumulated, as school personnel – and more importantly, your BJHS students – are counting on your participation for the entire semester. The district calendar indicating days when schools are closed is located at <http://www.district87.org/yearlycalendar.php>.

Enrolling in Educ 225 and 255 constitutes a commitment to BJHS students and teachers. A roster indicating your assigned day and time will be provided to you during the first week of classes. **Under no circumstances are you to contact school personnel to arrange or change placements. You must contact your professor or IWU Promise and Potential administrator Professor Leavitt to request any placement change.** Changes are rarely made, cannot be guaranteed, and must be approved by school personnel. The only approved reason for changing your placement time is another academic class commitment. On-campus work-study jobs must accommodate students' academic requirements, which include field placement. If necessary, ask your professor to contact your campus employer to make this clear.

We cannot overstate the importance of your dependability, for your own success in this class, and for the well-being of the BJHS students with whom you must establish a trusting relationship. *Be on time.* When rare circumstances make it impossible to be punctual, call the school. *Be sure your message is communicated clearly and to the right person, including your BJHS students.* If you must miss a session (for emergencies and serious illness only), *e-mail your professor and the team coordinator* indicating the reason for your absence. If you know ahead of time that you will miss a session, be sure to let your professor, the team coordinator, *and your BJHS students* know ahead of time well in advance of the time you are expected at the school so that accommodations may be made. **Absences should be limited to illness, family emergencies, and official school holidays** (check the school calendar). We all have days when we may not feel our best, but *unless you are completely incapacitated or contagious, you are expected to make the best of it and keep your commitment to your BJHS students.* Absences not due to school holidays or testing dates must be made up before or during finals week. Unexcused or excessive *absences* from the field will lower your course grade and/or jeopardize your status in the TEP.

Dress

Consider BJHS teachers your role models as to how to dress. In general, your appearance and demeanor should enable BJHS staff to easily distinguish you from BJHS students. Communicate respect and professionalism by your physical presence and dress. Wear clothes that are comfortable, but clean and neat (no torn jeans, for example). Do not chew gum on school premises. Do not wear hats or sunglasses inside the building. Long hair should be combed neatly. Refrain from wearing revealing or suggestive clothing. Women should not wear very short skirts, low cut blouses, or low rise jeans without a long shirt. Your midriff and backside should not be exposed. Do not wear t-shirts with inappropriate language or graphics. Do not wear earrings anywhere but on your ears. Do not dye your hair any unnatural color. Remember, you are not a student while at the school, but a professional, so save your experimentation for on-campus life. A report of inappropriate dress or demeanor may affect your course grade.

BJHS Security Protocol /Sign in

When you arrive at the school (except for the 8am classes when doors are open), press the buzzer at the front entrance; show your ID and announce that you are an IWU student; the door will unlock and you may proceed to the front podium to sign in. **You must sign in, and out with the monitor at the front entrance each time** you are at the school. Do **not** sign out at the same time you sign in. *Sign out only upon actual departure.* Do **not** sign in for another coach. There are sometimes circumstances when BJHS personnel may need to know if you are in the building and failing to follow this protocol can be very problematic.

Purchase an IWU lanyard and ID sleeve from the IWU bookstore. Put your IWU ID card in the sleeve of the badge. **Always wear your IWU ID lanyard with your IWU ID card when at the school. You will not be admitted to the school, or will be asked to leave the school, if you are not wearing your ID.** Adhere to these protocols when you attend the site orientation and thereafter.

Transportation and Parking

You are responsible for your own transportation. If you need directions to the school, please consult the map on the wall outside CLA 144 or talk with your professor. BJHS is within walking distance to IWU, but you may wish to carpool with other coaches. BJHS is also on the city bus line. Lack of transportation is not a valid reason for missing coaching. Plan ahead and walk to the school if you must.

As the BJHS staff has grown and the number of university students working at BJHS increased, school parking resources are limited. Park on one of the side streets by the school or in the lot **behind** (south of) the school. Park in designated parking spaces only! Failure to do so interferes with transportation for students and teachers, as well as compromises access to the school by emergency vehicles. Cars that are not parked in areas designated for parking will be *towed at your expense*. When in your car, **DO NOT** pass the school buses as they load at the end of the school day. When the buses are loading and the stop arms are out, it is illegal, and extremely dangerous to pass — even in a parking lot. The bus drivers are watching and will report drivers who violate the law to the police.

Communicating with school personnel

Your primary school contact is the team coordinator for your grade level, whose name and email address is listed on page one of this document. In addition, you may contact the school counselor, Ms. Aplington, who is the site coordinator for the *Promise and Potential* partnership. Limit your interactions at the school to members of your team and Ms. Aplington. Do not contact other school personnel without permission from your professor or Ms. Aplington. If you have questions about your work with students, talk with the team coordinator. As the school day is usually hectic for everyone, teachers may prefer that you email them. BJHS teachers want to be supportive, but remember that *they can't know what help you need unless you communicate with them*. After school is NOT a good time for Coaches to communicate with BJHS teachers. Try reaching them during the E&R period, or send them an email.

Do not contradict or challenge school personnel. Although you may be working at and contributing to the school, you are a guest and a representative of IWU and should conduct yourself accordingly. *This is your opportunity to demonstrate your emerging professionalism.* If you have concerns about your participation, discuss them with your professor or the IWU partnership administrator, Professor Leavitt. Students engaging in unprofessional behavior jeopardize their status in the Teacher Education Program, and field placements for all IWU students.

Interacting with BJHS students

BJHS students have been instructed to call you "Coach [your last name]." A simple "Coach" or "Coach [initial of last name]" is also allowed. Under no circumstances should BJHS students refer to you by your first name. This protocol has been established to help you and your BJHS students understand and maintain the professional boundaries expected in public schools.

Treat your students with respect and warmth but demonstrate *appropriate distance* from them. Do not divulge information of a personal nature (e.g., your love life, campus parties). Be conscious of the tone of your language as well as your choice of words. Learn the school's policy regarding touching students. Take advantage of class discussions to learn how to balance professional rapport with genuine warmth and affection towards students. If you are inappropriate in your interactions school personnel will let us know. Maintain a professional rapport and you will have a successful placement.

While coaches are permitted to take field notes while on site, tape recording during E&R sessions or classroom visits is prohibited.
--

Do not reward BJHS students for work well done with candy or other food treats. Focus on meaningful acknowledgement for their accomplishments and how they serve students' short and long term goals.

Do not eat, drink, or chew gum while you are coaching. Water is the only exception. If you are diabetic, plan ahead, but know that an exception to this rule applies to you for your well-being. Please let school personnel know of your personal health requirements so that they do not misjudge you should you be observed having a snack.

We understand that you may develop relationships with your students, but **under no circumstances are you to communicate with your students by telephone or email outside of school during or after the semester.** Should a BJHS student phone or email you, inform your team coordinator, so she may talk

with the student about appropriate boundaries. Similarly, let the teachers know if students are misbehaving, so that they may talk to the students and make sure they are getting what they need from the program. Sometimes students need to be removed from the program. Please do not hesitate to report problematic behavior. These protocols have been established for your own protection, for the benefit of all BJHS students, and to ensure that no problems arise which may endanger the partnership.

School personnel must always be present when you are working with BJHS students. You are **never** to be in a room alone with a student, even when a BJHS teacher may ask this of you. You are also **never** to take a student outside.

Confidentiality and Incident Reporting

Maintain confidentiality about individual students, teachers, and families connected with the school. Refrain from casual discussion about students in their presence, or the presence of other adults, including teachers and school personnel, when not warranted. Before you may start your field work, you must sign a *Confidentiality Agreement*.

The exception to confidentiality is if you believe that a student is in danger of harming him/herself or someone else, or if you suspect abuse or neglect. If a student shares information with you regarding an abusive situation, a drug problem, or a suicide attempt, it is your responsibility to report the information to the school counselor, Ms. Aplington, *immediately*. It is not your role to determine if there is actual danger or abuse. When there is some question as to what constitutes a critical incident, err on the side of caution. **Do not leave the school without contacting P&P site coordinator and counselor Ms.**

Aplington. If necessary, respectfully tell the school secretary that you have been instructed to interrupt the school counselor to report an incident. *You must follow BJHS protocols for reporting any concerns about a student*. Inform the student that you cannot maintain confidentiality under these circumstances.

You must also immediately complete an **Incident Report** form (http://www.iwu.edu/edstudies/Promise/pp_coach_resources.shtml). Save the completed document then attach the document to an email to your professor, Ms. Aplington, and Professor Leavitt without delay. Failure to do so will affect the assessment of your professional conduct in the Teacher Education Program. These confidential records are kept until deemed no longer necessary. Please ask your professor or Professor Leavitt for assistance in processing critical events. Refer to the Illinois Department of Children and Families website for a free on-line version of *A Manual for Mandated Reporters* <http://www.state.il.us/DCFS/docs/Mandated.pdf>.

<p>IWU Educational Studies Department Incident Report (to be completed by IWU student)</p>
<p>Your Name: _____ School site: BJHS Date and time incident occurred: _____ Names of students and/or personnel involved: _____ School or IWU witness(es) to incident: _____ Location of incident (e.g., classroom, lunchroom...): _____ Brief description of incident. As accurately as possible, record what each person did and said. Discuss your own role in the event. Describe the actions you took to report this event to school personnel. (Use reverse side if necessary.) Submit this form via email to your IWU professor, Professor Leavitt, and Ms. Aplington within 24 hours of an incident.</p>

THE PROMISE AND POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIP

Introduction

Promise and Potential is a partnership between Illinois Wesleyan University (IWU) and Bloomington Junior High School (BJHS). The mission of the Partnership includes supporting the promise and potential of *all* students, particularly those who may be struggling in school. For your field placement concurrent with the courses *Education and Social Justice* and *Studying Children*, you will be working as a *Promise and Potential* Coach at Bloomington Junior High School. Your participation in the program is integral to your education as a teacher-scholar for social justice.

The Bloomington public school district is urban, serving approximately 6000 students from diverse economic, racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. A significant number of the 1300 sixth through eighth grade students enrolled at Bloomington Junior High School (BJHS) face one or more of the following challenges which may prevent them from experiencing success in school.¹

- history of poor school attendance;
- low grades and/or low standardized test scores;
- limited proficiency in English;
- poor organizational skills;
- difficulty following or understanding directions;
- distracted or inattentive behavior in class;
- failure to complete or turn in homework;
- discouragement about academic achievement;
- isolation from, or poor relations with, peers;
- discipline problems; and/or
- lack of motivation, self-confidence or self-efficacy.

Many participating students are from low-income families² – and thus two to ten times more likely to drop out of school than children from middle and high income families, respectively.³ Many of these children live in vulnerable families and neighborhoods with a high incidence of poverty, teen pregnancy, unemployment, substance abuse, and violence.

These young adolescents are at a crucial point in their development – research shows that the stresses related to school achievement and behavior begin to intensify at the middle school level, posing seemingly insurmountable challenges to already disadvantaged and vulnerable students.⁴ Specially designed intervention and attention from caring adults may make the difference between a child who becomes a successful contributing member of society, or one who gets lost, becomes a burden, and

¹ Wheelock, A. & Dorman, G. (1988). *Before it's too late: Dropout prevention in the middle grades*. A report by the Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

² Low-income families receive public aid, are supported with public funds, or are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches.

³ Regardless of race, family income is the most important predictor of school success. National Center for Educational Statistics. (1993). *Dropout rates in the United States: 1992*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

⁴ Wheelock, A. & Dorman, G. (1988). *Before it's too late: Dropout prevention in the middle grades*. A report by the Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

often a danger, to the community.⁵ *It is important to note that we consider these vulnerable students youth with promise and potential* – hence our project name.

Coaching

You will be working twice a week as a “Coach,” or mentor-tutor, with one or two BJHS students during their “E&R” period.⁶ All coaches on a team work together in a shared space. You will have the opportunity to ask questions about your role as a *Promise and Potential* coach during the first week of your Educ 225 and 255 classes.

Mandatory BJHS orientation. The first day of coaching (typically the second week of classes) during your assigned day and time is set aside for a site orientation. **You must attend the site orientation even if you have been previously placed at BJHS;** protocols change from semester to semester and vary from team to team. ***Failure to attend the orientation will result in your being dropped from your Educational Studies course!***

PRIOR to the site orientation, learn more about BJHS by reviewing the school website links listed below:

- The BJHS school website: <http://www.district87.org/bjhs/>. Explore the team websites of the teachers with whom you will be working.
- The BJHS video tour (3 min.): <http://www.district87.org/bjhs/images/tour.wmv>.
- The video, “This is BJHS” (3 min.):
(<http://www.district87.org/bjhs/videos/BJHS%20Tour%20Part%201.wmv>).
- The video, “A Day in the Life” (5min.):
http://www.district87.org/bjhs/images/2008_day_in_the_life.wmv
- Study the *BJHS Student Handbook*: http://www.district87.org/bjhs/2011-12_BJHS_Handbook.pdf
Knowing the school rules for students will help you in your role as a model and facilitator of successful school behaviors and guide you when you have questions about how to respond to student behavior.

The advance preview of these sites will prepare you for the BJHS site orientation, which is designed to help you learn the routines, rules, and procedures of the school, and those particular to each team. We want you to feel comfortable at the school, so take advantage of the site orientation to ask questions. **Coaching Protocols** specific to each team level will be distributed and discussed at the site orientation. Protocols tell you where to meet and work with your students and how to access information.

Coach-Student Matches. Participating BJHS faculty believe that most students work with coaches best in pairs, but some do best on an individual basis. As BJHS students’ situations or schedules change, you may find that the students assigned to you changes. Please be patient with BJHS teachers as they identify the students who work best together in pairs during the days you are assigned to the school. If you are uncertain as to the status of your match, contact the team coordinator via email with your questions. If changes in student assignments create difficulties for you with respect to completing assignments for Educ 225 or 255, talk with your course instructor. If you find that your students do not work well together, let the team leader know.

⁵ Clinton, G. (2002). Mentoring programs for at-risk youth. *The Prevention Researcher*, 9 (1) 1-3.

⁶ “E&R” is an abbreviation for “enrichment and re-teaching.”

Student self-referrals. Most BJHS students have nominated themselves to be participants in the program. They are aware of their needs, but they may not know how to remedy the causes of the challenges they experience in school. This is the coach's challenge. During your first week of coaching you will work together with your BJHS students to identify their strengths and areas in which they need assistance, using the BJHS Self-Referral form (see Appendix I). You will also use the form to assist your students to set goals for the semester, and discuss how the coaching sessions might be used to help students continue progress toward goals. The BJHS team leader may make the form available to you, or you may need to download the form from the *Promise and Potential* website (<http://www.iwu.edu/edstudies/Promise/>) to print and take with you to the school.

*Please note: **BJHS students' materials are to remain at the school.** Under no circumstances should they be removed from the building.*

You will find that your BJHS student may need help with tasks you may take for granted: organization, planning, and homework. Supplemental resources are available to help you meet students' needs on the *Promise and Potential* website: <http://www.iwu.edu/edstudies/Promise/>.

Turn your cell phone off while coaching. Leave at home or in your car.

Help BJHS students use their planners. Students are provided with planner/calendars by the school. Planners are tools to assist students with goal setting, recording assignments, noting progress, and communicating with home. BJHS students should bring these planners to every coaching session. One of your roles as a coach is to remind them to do so. At the end of each coaching session, please take a few minutes to record the activities of the session in each student's planner. It would be best to involve the student in this recording, either asking the student to identify those things that will be written down, asking the student to record them, or a combination of the two. Involving the student in this discussion of the activities and accomplishments of each session helps the student develop an understanding of goals and steps towards success. Families have indicated that more information about activities of coaching would be very helpful to them. It can also be very helpful to request that students have a parent or guardian read and initial this record.

Help with school assignments. Every BJHS student has assignments to work on during coaching sessions (no matter what they may tell you). If students tell you that they do not have anything to work on, check their planner, check their grades, and/or check with their teachers to learn if they have any missing assignments. Please note that while helping BJHS students with their schoolwork is important, it is not the primary purpose of coaching. Rather, your goal should be to help students understand the importance of their assignments to their academic success and help them to plan and implement strategies for completing their schoolwork. As you present academic information in different ways, working on students' assignments with them becomes a vehicle for supporting their learning and achievement. *Under no circumstances are you to complete students' homework for them.* The emphasis should always be on student understanding of the content of their assignments rather than just getting it done.

Using mini-laptops. Mini-laptops are available for coach and student use during E&R time. These laptops were purchased with grant funds from the Bloomington William T. Kemper and Commerce Bancshares Foundations. You will play an important role in the piloting and assessing the use of the

laptops to support students' academic success. Team leaders will review with you how to use the laptops with your students, but some uses are listed below:

- Check grades/assignments/ team websites
- Use free on-line sites games to enrich reading and math skills (team leaders will provide a list of approved sites)
- Word processing (working on writing assignments, note-taking)
- Research per class assignments
- Access coach resources (IWU Promise and Potential site) for activities to build relationships, enhance study skills, etc.

Coaches must learn and adhere to the technology protocols listed below, including computers accessed in the IMC, and ensure that their students also follow the protocols:

- **It is of primary importance that the use of laptops is guided by BJ student needs; coaches should be able to articulate how the use of a laptop meets the needs of their students.**
- The laptops cannot be taken out of the school.
- Coaches are not to bring their own laptops to use at BJHS. If a laptop is not available, coaches and BJHS students may work on IMC computers.
- During E&R, laptop use will be no longer than 15 minutes per student, unless otherwise directed by the team leader.
- The laptop screen must be visible to the coach at all times to ensure the laptop is being used as permitted. The coach is responsible for monitoring student use of laptops.
- Teacher approval is required to access any website requested by a BJHS student. Coaches are to forward sites to their team leader for approval via email. The site should not be accessed until approval is granted.
- Computer time is not to be used as reward or incentive, but to facilitate learning.
- BJHS students are permitted to use laptops to check their district email only – no personal emailing allowed.
- BJHS teachers will explain to their students how to use laptops, but you may need to re-teach as needed, including how to:
 - Log on and off.
 - Shut down.
 - Store and recharge at the end of every session.

Engaging students. During your E&R sessions, students at times may tend to look around or talk with other students instead of focusing on their tasks. As there is very limited time to work with your students, all of that time should be used productively. Before you leave the classroom or locker area, ask the students what work they have to do during your session together. If necessary, ask to see it. Make sure students have all the materials they need (pencil, binder, folder, textbook, worksheet, flashcards, novel, etc.) before you go to the E&R site. If students are in need of school supplies, ask your BJHS team coordinator how to access supplies available at the school. Be proactive. If you and your students would like to do something other than homework, get a book from the library, make use of some of the *Promise and Potential* activity resources on line, or spend time getting to know more about your students. Take a look at the students' lockers and perhaps spend time cleaning and organizing them. Or help the students organize their binders. Ms. Hutton and Ms. Nauman keep school-wise worksheets in their rooms (133, 109) for Coaches to use. *Do not just sit and do nothing.* We realize that it is sometimes difficult to keep students engaged, but *be persistent.* If you need some suggestions on how to manage your E&R time, please let your professors and BJHS teachers know. It is in the students'

best interest to be engaged and for them to know that this is a structured time and that you are there to help them. If your BJHS students are **absent** any one day, ask the team coordinator how you might help out for the hour. Finally, partnership faculty understand that motivating students may be a challenge. Under no circumstances however, are you to reward BJ students with candy or other treats.

Ending the semester. As you near the end of the time you and your students will have together, spend some time helping your BJHS students plan for your departure and absence. Review the students' successes during your time together, and talk with them about how they achieved these successes. Then ask each student how she or he will continue the habits and behaviors established over the coaching period once you are gone. This discussion is critical to coaching—too often when their mentors depart, students revert to previous patterns of behavior resulting in an undoing of the successes you achieved together. Your professors and BJHS team coordinators can help you initiate this discussion.

At the end of the semester, BJHS students and their teachers will complete surveys evaluating your performance as a coach, and the impact of coaching. A sample survey is included in Appendix IV.

You are required to complete an on-line survey reflecting on the impact of the *Promise and Potential* program and what you have learned from the experience of being a coach.

Shadowing

To enhance your contextual understandings of these students' lives, and to gain additional understandings to support their academic performance, you are required to spend some time in your BJHS students' classes over the semester; the specific number of hours is determined by your course professor. You will need to learn the students' class schedules. Educ 255 coaches also will want to make a point of shadowing students in their physical education classes. Most BJHS teachers are aware that you will be visiting their classes. Learn the team protocols for shadowing—those teams or teachers who require advance notice and those who allow walk-in without notice. Avoid arriving and departing during the middle of BJHS class periods as much as possible in order to minimize disruption. Always introduce yourself as an IWU coach to teachers when entering their classrooms.

Most BJHS teachers prefer coaches to be as unobtrusive as possible, to minimize disruption; others may invite you to participate. *When any BJHS teacher asks you to help in the classroom, you must comply; assisting the teacher is a valuable learning experience.* In general, however, when shadowing, your role is to support the student's participation in class, which might include helping the student to stay on task, attend to the teacher's lesson or other instruction, or take notes. As a coach, you are in a way the teacher's echo, providing the student with the assistance he or she needs in the classroom. You will also model successful classroom behaviors by listening to the teacher yourself, and taking notes to guide your activities during coaching sessions. Educ 255 students will need to observe their students and to record field notes for their Student Portraits.

Record all shadowing time on the IWU field log posted on the Promise and Potential Website:
<http://www.iwu.edu/edstudies/Promise/>.

Lunchtime. BJHS school administrators prefer that you **not** observe your BJHS students during the lunch period.

Communication with Parents and/or Guardians

The three communications described in this section of the handbook are intended to strengthen the home-school connection while informing parents and guardians about student performance. They are also a means of celebrating the students' achievements. And you will learn important skills regarding teacher-parent communication.

At the beginning of the semester, once you have been matched with your BJHS students, you will write a **note of introduction** to each of your student's parents or guardians on *Promise and Potential* note cards which will be made available to you. Be sure that these notes are appropriately formal, with a standard greeting and sign-off. Appendix II provides examples of what to include and how to phrase your note. You must proof read your note to be sure it is grammatically correct and your handwriting is legible. Your professor may ask for a copy of the note prior to mailing. Students' addresses may be accessed on line via the District 87 website (skyward). You may mail the notes at no cost through the Educational Studies office, Center for Liberal Arts, 146.

At about midterm, you will write **progress reports** to each of your students' parents or guardians. Check with your course professor regarding due dates. From the *Promise and Potential* website (http://www.iwu.edu/edstudies/Promise/pp_coach_resources.shtml) download the form, **-Parent Progress Report**. Save the form to your own hard drive and rename it as follows: "[your last name]_parentreport." Once your report is approved by your professor, you may mail the form at no cost through the Educational Studies office.

Of primary importance in writing these reports is sensitivity to your parent/guardian audience. Refrain from labeling ("lazy"), judging ("bad attitude"), ratings ("above average") and making comparisons to other students ("should" statements). **Describe what the student *does* do, rather than what he or she *doesn't* do.** Note the students' strengths, and speak to areas that need improvement by discussing them in terms of what would help the student be successful. It means a lot to parents and guardians to hear positive observations of their students, and to realize that you really are developing an understanding of who the students are as individuals. You can be positive at the same time you are honest by attending to your word choice and phrasing. It also is very important that your writing is grammatically correct. *If students or parents are not native English speakers, talk with your team coordinator or professor about translating the form.*

Ideally, you should involve your BJHS students in the completion of this form. Discussing students' strengths and areas for improvement with them is a way to demystify the coaching experience, and to elicit genuine participation during E&R. It is also a way to demonstrate your own authentic interest in understanding the students' perspectives. Your students can help you decide what photographs to include with the report, for a visual representation and celebration of your students' successes (provided parental consent has been given). Permission to take photos has been requested by the school. The program administrator will let you know the status of parent permissions.

You may use your own camera or the one available for your use in each team classroom. Some ideas for photos to include are:

- The BJHS student at work.
- Coach and BJHS student together.
- BJHS student working with other BJHS students during E&R.

- Pictures of BJHS student's success, for example,
 - Newly organized locker.
 - Completed planner.
 - Completed homework.
 - A, B, or C graded class work.

An example of how to phrase what you are learning about your students is included in the sample report in Appendix III. Use the students' first names when discussing them, in order to personalize the report. You may want to elaborate more than in the examples, but keep your reports confined to one page. Consult with your IWU professor regarding assistance with the tone and content of your reports. Your professor may require you to submit draft reports prior to sending final versions to parents/guardians.

Remember to adhere to the confidentiality agreement and do not share the information provided in the progress report with anyone not on your team.

At the end of the semester, you will write each student's parents or guardians a **thank you note** on *Promise and Potential* note cards which will be made available to you. Thank them for the opportunity to work with and get to know their student and mention one of the ways you have seen the student grow over the term. Finally, share what you have learned about being a good teacher from the experience of working with the student. Turn in a copy of this note to your professor.

Special events

At least once each year, an event is organized for BJHS students and/or their parents. The event may be for families, or a field trip to the IWU campus. We often ask coaches to assist with the planning of these events. **You are required to make every effort to attend and participate at such events.** The only exceptions for not doing so are academic or work commitments, which you should discuss with your professor. The time spent planning for and participating in these events count toward your field hours and should be recorded on your IWU Field Log.

PROGRAM SUPPORT

BJHS team faculty coordinators. In addition to the site orientations at the beginning of the semester, one or two team meetings will be held to provide coaches with an opportunity to meet and talk with BJHS teachers. You are required to attend these sessions – they are for your benefit, and in turn, the benefit of your BJHS students. The agenda for these meetings will primarily be guided by your questions, concerns and observations. You are advised to bring your observation or field notes or some sort of “discussion starter.”

Information about Bloomington Junior High School and specific team and teacher activities can be accessed via the school website: <http://www.district87.org/BJHS/>. Click on “Team Links,” and then any one of the 6th, 7th, or 8th team links, and then individual teachers.

Supplies. Please speak with your team coordinator about any school supplies you believe would support your work with students. Standard school supplies are available for any student unable to supply them due to a lack of financial resources. Please inform the team coordinator if your student is missing school supplies.

Mentoring resources which may help you establish relationships with your BJHS students and help them with their study skills and goal setting can be located on the *Promise and Potential* website: <http://www.iwu.edu/edstudies/Promise/>.

On-Line access to students’ grades. School personnel have made it possible for you to access students’ grades in order to help them understand their strengths and weakness and to set goals. Team coordinators will provide you with user names and passwords for access. Go to <http://www.district87.org/bjhs/>. Select “Grades” in the top left purple box. Select “**Student Log In to Check Grades**” in the lavender box, lower right. Log in using the student’s username and password. On the next screen Select “Gradebook.” Clicking on the grade for each class will provide a detailed assignment summary, including name, date, score as well as current standing. The system is not accessible towards the very end of a quarter, during the time in which final grades are being entered and verified.

You may access the documents listed below from the Promise and Potential website:

<http://www.iwu.edu/edstudies/Promise/>

- Promise and Potential Handbook
- IWU Field Experience Log
- BJHS Student Self-Referral Form
- Parent Progress Report Form
- Incident Report Form
- Coach Resources to help you establish relationships and work effectively with BJHS students

Appendix I

BJHS Student Self-Referral Form⁷

(to be completed by BJHS student with IWU Coach)

http://www.iwu.edu/edstudies/Promise/pp_coach_resources.shtml

Student Name (please print) _____ Grade/Team _____

Coach: _____

For each of the areas below, you may check (x) more than one item as a strength or area in which you need help.

	My strength	I need help
Organization (binder, locker, using my planner)		
Study skills		
Test-taking skills		
Asking for help (from teachers or classmates)		
Attending school or class each day		
Paying attention in class		
Getting along with classmates /making friends		
Getting along with my teachers or other adults in school		
Completing my schoolwork and assignments in...		
English		
Mathematics		
Social Studies		
Reading		
Science		
Other (please indicate):		
Feeling confident and good about myself		
Being motivated about school		
Other (e.g., creativity)		

Please complete the sentence below:

My best year in school was...

because.....

Now use the reverse side to write your two most important goals for coaching this semester.

⁷ 225 students should draw upon this information to write the *Neighborhoods and Schools and Parent Progress Reports*.

My top two goals for coaching are....

Goal #1: _____.

To achieve this goal, I need to ...

My Coach can help me with the goal by:

I also may need help from:

Goal #2: _____.

To achieve this goal, I need to ...

My Coach can help me with the goal by:

I also may need help from:

I agree to work on the skills and goals above and cooperate with my Promise and Potential coach and my teachers.

I understand that the above information will be shared with my teacher, and other Promise and Potential personnel.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix II
Note of introduction

SAMPLE 1

Date

To the parents or guardian of [*child's first name*],

My name is [*your first and last name*]. I am a student at Illinois Wesleyan University studying to be a [*elementary, Spanish,*] teacher. This fall I will be working with [*child's name*] as his/her [choose one] *Promise and Potential* Coach. I'm looking forward to helping your child reach his/her potential and become the best student that he/she can be. Together, we will work on setting and achieving his/her goals. This may include strengthening organization and planning skills, help with schoolwork, and other skills for success. Thank you for allowing me to work with your son/daughter. I expect that this will be a positive educational experience for the both of us and look forward to working with [*student name*].

Sincerely,

[*your first and last name*]

SAMPLE 2

Date

To the parents or guardian of [*child's first name*],

My name is [*your first and last name*]. I am an Illinois Wesleyan University student enrolled in a teacher education course. This fall I am a coach with the *Promise and Potential* program at Bloomington Junior High School and have been paired with your son/daughter [*child's name*]. I am looking forward to the opportunity to work with your son/daughter and to get to know him/her better. Above all else, my goal is to help [*child's name*] become the successful student s/he strives to be, and I can already see that s/he is well on his/her way. Thank you very much for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

[*your first and last name*]

Appendix III
Coach to Parent/Guardian
BJHS Student Progress Report - SAMPLE

http://www.iwu.edu/edstudies/Promise/pp_coach_resources.shtml

Coach Name:
BJHS Student Name:

Date:
Grade/Team:

I am an Illinois Wesleyan University student working this semester as a Coach with the *Promise and Potential* Program at Bloomington Junior High School. I have been working with your child since the beginning of the semester, and we have enjoyed getting to know each other.

So far, I have learned that your child has the following strengths:

[child's name] has effective organizational skills. His locker is always neat and his binder and planner show great attention to detail, with assignments highlighted and papers neatly divided by subject. [child's name] holds high expectations for himself. When he concentrates he is able to produce quality work. I also have learned that he has the confidence to ask questions when he needs help.

Since we've been working together, I also have observed the following improvements:

[child's name] has been working hard on math and shown great improvement as his class has transitioned into more difficult math work. When we first began working together, he had some difficulty understanding math concepts required to complete his work correctly. [child's name] was, however, very pleased with his last math test, which he excitedly told me he earned an A, a sign of the progress he has made.

Over the next few weeks, the two or three areas of growth we plan to work on are:

[child's name] needs some help with his reading and writing skills, which we plan to work on for the rest of our time together. We are trying different strategies to help [child's name] with his comprehension, including reading small passages which he then summarizes. I am going to continue to help [child's name] with his study skills in all subject areas, as well as help him focus more in class and during our time in E&R. [child's name] has the desire and ability to succeed, and I look forward to continuing to help him achieve his goals.

I am very interested in anything you would like me to know about your child. Please feel free to write me a note and send it to me by enclosing it in your child's planner. Thank you.

Appendix IV
Coaches Program Assessment Survey
 completed by participating BJHS students⁸

Grade:

Team:

Please help us evaluate your Coach by responding the following questions:

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
My coach was present and on time for our E& R sessions.				
My coach was respectful toward me.				
My coach listened to me.				
My coach was interested in my success.				

Please add any other comments about your coach:

Please indicate how you have benefited from participation in the Coaches program:

	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I improved my study habits.			
I completed and turned in more assignments with my Coach's help.			
I pay more attention and participate more in my classes.			
My school attendance has improved.			
I improved my grades overall.			
I have more interest in, and take more responsibility for, getting good grades.			
I use my planner more to keep track of assignments.			
I feel more comfortable asking for help.			
I keep my locker and school supplies more organized than before.			
I learned to set goals and to plan to reach them.			
My attitude toward school and education is more positive than before.			
I have more confidence in my abilities and myself.			
I feel better about myself.			
I feel capable of succeeding in school.			
I learned about making friends.			
I do not give up as easily as I once did.			
I take more pride in my work.			
I learned how to show more respect toward my teachers and other adults.			
I don't get in as much trouble in school as I used to.			
I learned how to get along better with my classmates.			

What was the best thing about participating in the Coaches program?

Please write any additional thoughts about the Coaches program.

⁸ Coaches are also evaluated by BJHS team leaders.