

Competency Reflections

Nikki Foster

University of St. Thomas

EDUC 6336: Educational Administrative Practicum II

Dr. Virginia Leiker

April 15, 2022

## Competency Reflections

### Domain I – School Culture (School and Community Leadership)

**Competency 001** The beginning principal knows how to establish and implement a shared vision and culture of high expectations for all stakeholders (students, staff, parents, and community).

In working closely with the administration and leadership team, we were able to fulfill the school's mission and vision statement by ensuring the learning of every child and promoting the well-being of the whole child through inclusive collaboration. Throughout my internship, I was able to work closely with teachers and staff and provide professional development on requested areas so that the needs of the students could be met. The specific knowledge, skills, and mindset include knowing how to effectively communicate with others and understand that the end-goal is to promote student engagement and learning. In the future, I would love to represent the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Committee. The FACE committee focuses on empowering parents to become advocates for their students, providing opportunities for parents to become parent leaders on campus, additional resources for campuses, including PTOs. FACE committee members consist of staff, parents, and stakeholders in the community.

**Competency 002** The beginning principal knows how to work with stakeholders as key partners to support student learning.

I was able to build a relationship with several families throughout my internship by communication about conferences, after school programs, performances during school hours, as well as, special events like Academic Night, the Father and Daughter Dance, and the Mother and Son Dance. I was also able to meet with stakeholders outside of the school day to promote campus enrollment when the enrollment was low. The specific knowledge, skills, and mindset are remembering that everyone plays a key role in student learning. Leaders should always effectively communicate with the community to ensure that all parties are represented. I plan to become a member of our leadership team so that I can be a part of the team that works with stakeholders. In doing so, I would be able to ensure that stakeholders are part of the conversations that discuss campus needs and the plans to improve student learning.

## **Domain II – Leading Learning (Instructional Leadership/Teaching and Learning)**

**Competency 003** The beginning principal knows how to collaboratively develop and implement high-quality instruction.

During my internship, I was able to collaborate with teachers and internalize lesson plans. Lesson plan internalization focuses on targeting instruction for each child and knowing the lesson “like the back of your hand”. We analyzed data and worked backwards to ensure that everything was aligned. The specific knowledge, skills, and mindset needed are to ensure that lessons are aligned with the state standards and vertical alignment. I plan to continue collaboration sessions for lesson plan internalization as it

ensures that teachers have a solid plan for lessons and they know exactly how to target student engagement.

**Competency 004** The beginning principal knows how to monitor and assess classroom instruction to promote teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

Throughout the internship, I was able to conduct informal T-TESS observations which allowed me to give high leverage feedback. This feedback resulted in teachers being able to aggressively target and monitor scholars during the “we-do” portion of lesson plans and target knowledge and skills deficiencies on the spot to address and correct student misconceptions. The specific knowledge, skills, and mindset needed are having an unbiased viewpoint and documenting exactly what was seen and heard during walkthroughs. I am familiar with some teachers and how they present lessons in the classroom, however, during walkthroughs, I can only document what was seen during the walkthrough.

### **Domain III – Human Capital (Human Resource Management)**

**Competency 005** The beginning principal knows how to provide feedback, coaching, and professional development to staff through evaluation and supervision, knows how to reflect on his/her own practice, and strives to grow professionally.

Throughout my time interning, I have conducted several walkthroughs and coaching sessions, each session was followed-up with a meeting with the staff member where we discussed reinforcements and refinements. The feedback sessions gave me time to speak with teachers to really dig deep and reflect on their instruction and how they felt

the lesson went. We were able to discuss resources and I also held professional development sessions if needed. Our campus motto this year is “watch us grow” and that mindset also applies to staff members; these feedback sessions helped foster the growth mindset for teachers. I plan to continue offering feedback sessions as it helps teachers know their areas of growth so that improvements can be made.

**Competency 006** The beginning principal knows how to promote high-quality teaching by using selection, placement, and retention practices to promote teacher excellence and growth.

When it comes to teacher selection and placement, I was able to recruit teachers to apply for summer school and also sit on the panel that conducted teacher and paraprofessional interviews. For summer school, we planned on having 200 students enrolled, so we needed to have the appropriate number of teachers, paraprofessionals, and staff members. The specific knowledge, skills, and mindset needed are to know are the specific needs of the campus and determine which candidate would best fit those needs so that we can ensure the learning of every student. I would love to be able to interview prospective employees so that I can get a more in-depth understanding of interviewing and selecting a highly-qualified teacher.

## **Domain IV – Executive Leadership (Communication and Organizational Management)**

**Competency 007** The beginning principal knows how to develop relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including selecting appropriate communication strategies for particular audiences.

Throughout my internship, I have been able to participate in various activities that took place during the school day as well as after school. I was able to speak with stakeholders and build relationships with them. With these relationships, we were able to have a large variety of vendors for our academic nights and vendors also donated items for the classrooms. When it comes to communication, I have used different methods of communication for my classroom, however, I did not know that campus-wide communications needed to be done well in advance to allow extra time for a Spanish version of the communication to be completed. Once the Spanish document was completed, we still needed a couple of days to print, sort, and pass out the flyers. The specific knowledge, skills, and mindset needed are to plan accordingly to ensure that deadlines can be met and also to know your target audience and how to best communicate with them. My future goal is to have a translation team. This team would be a handful of staff members that can translate any document that needs to be sent out to parents and stakeholders. In having a designated team, this will reduce the time needed to translate because we will have members assigned to the team rather than asking random staff members if they can do it.

**Competency 008** The beginning principal knows how to focus on improving student outcomes through organizational collaboration, resiliency, and change management.

During the beginning of the year professional development, I was able to sit with the leadership team and instructional specialists and look at the TEKS and vertical alignment to ensure that we are maximizing learning to achieve higher student academic outcomes. We discussed expectations for both Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten, but we also looked at First grade standards even though our campus only serves Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten. In doing this, we were able to effectively collaborate and develop a new system to implement to ensure success. Also, we researched various applications and websites that could be used as a resource and provided the teachers subscriptions. The specific knowledge, skills, and mindset needed are knowing the exact standards that students are expected to learn and to have the end-goal in mind and work towards that. You must be able to work backwards so that we start with the goal and determine the steps to take beforehand. In the future, I plan to remain involved in the vertical alignment meetings as I feel it is extremely vital to student success.

## **Domain V – Strategic Operations (Alignment and Resource Allocation)**

**Competency 009** The beginning principal knows how to collaboratively determine goals and implement strategies aligned with the school vision that support teacher effectiveness and positive student outcomes.

During my internship, I was a member of the DEAC, which is the district level planning and decision making team. We regularly met to discuss various ways to better support teachers so that they could remain effective in the classroom and increase student outcomes. We discussed a variety of ways to offer support: longer planning periods,

eliminating testing, increasing teacher work days/student holidays, etc. The specific knowledge, skills, and mindset needed are to understand that we are not just looking at one campus, but the district as a whole. We must come together and have honest conversations about what we can do to support our teachers which will ultimately increase student outcomes. In the future, I plan to remain a member of the DEAC. I enjoyed going to the meetings and collaborating with others and reporting back to my campus about what the district is going to do as a result. It made the teachers feel supported appreciated; they felt as though they were finally being heard.

**Competency 010** The beginning principal knows how to provide administrative leadership through resource management, policy implementation, and coordination of school operations and programs to ensure a safe learning environment.

I was able to work closely with the administrator that was over campus safety. We thoroughly discussed different procedures that could be implemented as a way to ensure safety. I was also able to work with the administration team to learn more about the process of conducting investigations and staff disciplinary actions. The specific knowledge, skills, and mindset needed are to know the code of conduct and district policy. One goal that I have is to continue working closely with the administrator that heads campus safety. I feel that I have a lot of knowledge that can be shared about new procedures for drills since I have been involved in a real-life lockdown. I hope to be able to implement new procedures that could help keep students and staff safe.

## **Domain VI – Ethics, Equity, and Diversity**



**Competency 011** The beginning principal knows how to provide ethical leadership by advocating for children and ensuring student access to effective educators, programs, and services.

The past year, I worked with our leadership team to ensure that all of our students had opportunities for success. We implemented a new resource that targets our Emergent Bilingual students and gives them tools to truly grasp the concepts being taught. We also designed a new campus-wide program that identifies students who are gifted and talented and created extensive lessons catered to helping them grow and think outside of the box. We also created an after-school program for those students called the Steam Club. We competed at the district's Stem Fest and our club members won first place. The specific knowledge, skills, and mindset needed are to remember to always keep the students first. The students are the reason that we are all there—to help them become successful lifelong learners. In the future, my goal is to remain dedicated to all students. Usually, the students in the middle are the ones who get most of the teacher's time; but we must remember to reach all students, all the time. I would love to create specific programs that focus on different levels of learners so that each group can have an after school club or program to engage in.