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Reflection

Competency 001-The principal knows how to shape campus culture by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

When I started my internship I visited with my supervisor and went over this competency, and I will say that my campus administrators work hard to shape the campus in a way that is shared by all stake holders. I watched as my principal went over this in a faculty meeting where he addressed the concerns that he had, where all teachers need to get on board with making sure our students are successful in their school work and extracurricular activities as well. He stressed that we needed to focus on success for all students at the high school and have the same vision in mind and I agree with him on that. I feel that we need to make sure students are successful and that all stake holders take part in making sure that happens. This is where we need to make sure that we shape the campus culture by helping teachers learn to share in and support our school as a community in a whole. If the teachers are guided in this direction and the focus is put in building a community that has a common goal in mind then it will be a successful campus and teachers and students alike will be successful. Administrators need to make sure that we look at various types of information such as student demographic data, student achievement data, and issues that affect education in order to develop a vision for the campus that would benefit all stakeholders involved. We have a diverse campus and we need to make sure that we are meeting the needs of all of our students as a whole in order for them all to be successful and the vision that we have set forth is being achieved. Administrators need to make sure that not only is the student and teachers involved in being a part of the campus community but also making sure that the parents and community members are also involved with increasing a positive campus vision.

Competency 002-The principal knows how to communicate and collaborate with all members of the school community, respond to diverse interest and needs and mobilize resources to promote student success.

I have watched as my principal has communicated and collaborated with all members in the school community, with teachers and parents. I hope that I can be as patient as he is when I talk to parents. Both of our administrators are very calm and do not show to be aggravated when dealing with school issues such as parent or teachers. As I watch them keep their composer and show no excitement I hope that someday I can do the same. It is our job as administrators to communicate effectively with families and other community members when dealing with our student’s success. We must make sure that we deal with conflict in a positive manner that is best for all involved; in order to make sure that the conflict is resolved. As the administrator you must make sure that a partnership between parents, businesses and others in the community come together in order to strengthen the program at the school and support the campus goal. I also believe that we need to be effect communicators in our school community in order to make sure that we are promoting student success. Being able to communicate effectively will also help in dealing with conflict that may arise at the school. We need to make sure that we focus on providing opportunities for the parent to be engaged in their child’s learning and success. The administrator of a school has to keep all of these things in mind in order to have a campus that is successful for all. The principal is the captain of the ship, which is the school, if the administrator cannot communicate and collaborate with all stakeholders on the ship, the ship will never move forward which means it will go nowhere. Communication is the most important tool an administrator needs to have in order to be successful.

Competency 003-The principal knows how to act with integrity, fairness and in an ethical and legal manner.

As I seat in my administrators office, I watched as they dealt with school business such as student discipline and talking with parents and I will say that I learned a great deal. They showed me that no matter how mad you get or how in appropriate a parent may talk to you, you should promote high standards, be ethical and show integrity in the decision you make, the actions you take and the behaviors that drive your decisions. We must follow the Code of conduct that is set in place for the school in order to be fair to every student that is on your campus. As an administrator you must make sure that you follow policies and procedures in order to make sure that you stay fair and consistent or it could come back to haunt you later. While attending ARD meetings I had the opportunity to meet parents of students that are in Special Education and you must know the law in order to make sure that these students are receiving the education that is best for them. If they are not receiving the education that is set in their plan then it could come back on you as an administrator because it is the responsibility of the administrator to make sure that teachers are carrying out the students plans. It is the job of the administrator to make sure that the student’s rights are protected and that they are given the learning opportunities that are best for them. We must make sure that we enforce the laws, policies and procedures set forth by the school board and the state in order to make sure that all students are not discriminated against in any way. I will say that by watching the administrators in the ARD meetings, Core Team meetings and parent meeting I was able to understand that the administrator is the one that make sure that everything is done legally and is followed in order to stay in compliance with law especially in order to keep from getting sued by a unhappy parent that feel their child is not being treated fairly or getting the education that they deserve.

Competency 004-The principal knows how to facilitate the design and implementation of curricula and strategic plans that enhance teaching and learning; ensure alignment of curriculum, instruction, resources and assessment; and promote the use of varied assessment to measure student performance.

As an administrator it is very important that teachers are educating our students with various means of technology and materials in order to make sure that all students learning styles are being addressed. I have set in on various meetings with teachers in curriculum planning as they planed effective lesson plans and instruction in order to meet the student needs and all teachers staying on target with the instruction that is done from class to class. By looking at demographic data, student learning data and teaching styles we can better accommodate our student learning and make sure they are successful. By visiting teachers why they are teaching it has allowed me to see ways in which they could change some things if they would be willing to, in order to address all students learning styles in the classroom. As administrators we need to make sure that teachers are using technology in the classroom to teach the students with. I remember when I was going through school all my teachers had to use in the classroom was overheads and film strips. Now we have Elmo’s, smart boards, projectors that can be hooked up to the computer in order to use the internet, you tube and other computer programs to teach with. By having this type of technology we are able to meet the needs of all students that we have in our classes. However it is still very important as a teacher to make sure that we are encompassing and promoting creative thinking skills and problem solving skills not only by the students but also by the teachers in order to make sure that we are creating lessons that will leave the student thinking and wanting to be able to solve the problem. I was able to see this work first hand and also help teachers in using this in the classroom to educate our students.

Competency 005-The principal knows how to advocate, nurture and sustain an instructional, program and a campus culture that are conducive to students learning and staff professional growth.

After visiting with my principal and assistant principal I had a better understanding of this competency. The focus is placed on making sure that students are learning and staff members are receiving the professional training that is needed in order to have a campus that is successful. By looking at data and research we as administrators can make sure that we are making the best decisions for our student and staff. I attended training over Project Based Learning with Technology and after seeing what this was about, I would have to say that I believe that we should be using this in the classroom. Research has shown that this is new age learning for our students where they can self-teach themselves at a self-pace that is conducive to their own learning techniques. Being able to advocate for these students and visit with teachers in order to help them have a better understanding of this type of learning I feel will only be beneficial in the long run. This type of professional growth as a teacher allowed me to see that there are still many ways in which student can learn materials. I feel that as an administrator you need to be open to new ideas and by reviewing research and having professional development set up for your staff this allows them to learn as well in order to help those students. Every student learns differently so it is up to the administration to make sure that their staff is receiving the up to day training that can be used in the classroom to make sure that our students are up to date as well. I have always told my student that the day you stop learning something new is the day that you die. We are always learning, no matter what, we are always learning. I believe that we need to encourage the staff, students, and parents to achieve that campus vision and that would be success for all students.

Competency 006-The principal knows how to implement a staff evaluation and development system to improve the performance of all staff members, select and implement appropriate models for supervision and staff development and apply the legal requirements for personnel management.

I believe that as an administrator it is our responsibility to perform a thorough evaluation of our staff in order to help them grow as educators. I know that as a teacher I am always learning new ways that I could do things different in the classroom and by using the evaluation that my principal performs on me, I can make changes to my teaching style that will ultimately improve my teaching and help my student learn better. I enjoyed this part of the internship because it gave me an opportunity to go in to the classroom and perform evaluations on teachers. I was able to see things that they do in the classroom that works really well and I was also able to see things that they could improve on. I used the same evaluation system that my administrator used on me which allowed me to be able to document things that could help the teacher improve. I then had the teacher come visit with me and we talked about the evaluation, I really felt like an administrator and the teacher took my suggestion and began to use them. It made me feel good to be able to help a teacher out and give little suggestions of ways to improve the lesson in the classroom. As an administrator it is also important to listen to your staff and their ideas and suggestions as well. I visited with a few teachers to determine what type of staff development they would like to be engaged in when we start back to school from the summer break. I feel that the teachers need to have buy in as to what they want to sit through for professional development that would be meaningful to them and possibly help them in the classroom. As an administrator we need to listen to our staff if we expect them to listen to use.

Competency 007-The principal knows how to apply organizational, decision making and problem solving skills to ensure an effective learning environment.

As an administrator you need to be organized, be able to make decision for the campus, staff and students and be able to solve any problems that may come up. I have watch my administrators do just that and I will say that it never ceases to amaze me at how well they handle anything that is thrown their way. I am a very organized person, I have a calendar and everything is in my calendar and I live by that calendar, sometimes I feel that I am OCD, however if I miss something it is probably because it was not on my calendar. I had the privilege of being the one to make some decision which was not easy because I had never done this type of decision making before. I had the opportunity to be the administrator in charge of an ARD meeting, in which I led the meeting and made the decisions, this was not easy at first but then everything just fell into place and I was able to complete the task. I had the opportunity to solve some problems in the front office as well when it came to scheduling of students. I also had the opportunity to solve problems for students when they came to me and could not serve their Dhall that they were assigned because they did not have a way home, so I rescheduled their detention to a different day and if they did not show up they were placed in ISS for a day. Being able to be a manager of a campus, solve problems, make decisions and show organizational skills to your staff is what makes a great leader. However along with that I believe that you also have to make sure that you are collaborating with your employees in order for them to have buy-in or ownership in their job. I believe that this is how you can build positive respectful relationships between yourself and your employees. I would like to see our campus start the new year with some team building exercises in order to get all staff involved and wanting to make our campus a conducive learning environment not only for the students but for the staff as well.

Competency 008-The principal knows how to apply principles of effective leadership and management in relations to campus, budgeting, personnel, resource utilization, financial management and technology use.

I believe that it is the administrator’s responsibility to make sure that all money that is allocated for the campus is used and distributed out to each department as the administrator sees fit. I do believe that the administrator needs to be fair when allocating funds to his staff. I have worked close with the principal when it comes to budgeting because as an Ag teacher we collect and distribute a large amount of money in a years’ time. I believe that we take in more money and spend more money in our department more than any other department, so being able to work on the budget with the principal has been a pleasure of mine. As an administrator you need to make sure that you are allocating funds that are conducive to district policies and campus priorities. You have to make sure that the materials that the teachers are wanting to purchase are not things that will never be used. All purchase request come through the front office and have to be signed off on by the principal or the assistant principal. I will say that I believe that if I were the principal or assistant principal I would document every purchase request that I signed, in order to keep up with how much was being spent and what was being bought. I will say that my principal and assistant principal do not do this which concerns me because how do they know how much money is left in the campus fund. I believe that money should be allocated equally to departments, however if one department is in need of supplies that would help improve their test score or whatever the case may be I would be more apt to purchase the materials that they would need to be successful. I believe that as an administrator you need to collaborate with your staff when it comes to budgeting in order to make sure that everyone has an opportunity to have some ownership in the discussion.

Competency 009-The principal knows how to apply principles of leadership and management to the campus physical plant and support system to ensure a safe and effective learning environment.

I believe that an administrator should always be aware of what is going on in the campus and know how to handle any situation. I have followed our administration around our campus in order to help make sure that everything is up to safety standards and everything is secure for the safety of our staff and students. I sit on the safety committee and I will say that we have procedures in place for any type of emergency. I had the opportunity to help perform fire drills, lock down drills, tornado drills and an off campus evacuation drills, as part of my internship. I was able to go around and monitor the other teachers to make sure that they were doing what they needed to do in order to make sure that our students were safe. The administrators also have to have a crises prevention plan in place should something happen in order to address it and take care of it. As an administrator you also have to make sure that maintenance and custodial duties are being taken care of in order for your campus to function. It is the maintenance and custodian’s responsibility to come in, open the school up in the morning and make sure that everything is functioning as it should. If for some reason something is not working it is their responsibility to inform the principal so that the problem can be addressed. They are also responsible for closing the school up in the evening and locking it up. I had the opportunity to get to work hand in hand with our maintenance men in trying to make sure that our greenhouse is up and working like it should. Administrators wear many hats while trying to run a school and it is not an easy job. I believe from my internship that I have learned that to be an effective administrator you have to be a good listener, a great decision maker, a fair individual, an organized person, and be able to make sure that your students are safe and successful, if you can achieve this then everything else will fall into place.