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Facilitating Teacher Reflection through a mutual understanding of the Characteristics of Exemplary Teachers

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Facilitating Teacher Reflection through a Mutual Understanding of the Characteristics of Exemplary Teachers

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What is an exemplary teacher?

- * A person who accepts the challenge of life long learning experiences
- * These experiences are broken down into 3 domains and 5 themes

Domains & Themes

* 3 Domains:

- * Diversity
- * Leadership
- * Technology

* 5 Themes:

- * Instructional Leader
- * Master Practitioner
- * Learning Theorist
- * Curriculum Designer
- * School Content Expert

Domain 1: Diversity

- * An exemplary teacher is an advocate of creating learning experiences that demonstrate sensitivity to others.
- * He/she acknowledges learners of differing abilities and demonstrates a valuing of human differences in race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, and sexual preferences.
- * An exemplary teacher understands that as human beings, we are all evolving physically, cognitively, socially and emotionally.

Domain 2: Leadership

- * An exemplary teacher is a lifelong learner who inspires classroom communities of learners to pursue continuous improvement and growth.

Domain 3: Technology

- * An exemplary teacher is adept in technology and constructs learning environments that respect and integrate the power of technology.

5 Themes

- 1) **Instructional Leader:** An exemplary teacher develops leadership skills and self perception in relationship with other learners, the group, the community, and society.
- 2) **Master Practitioner:** An exemplary teacher develops competence in instructional strategies, reflective practice and the home-school-community partnership triad.
- 3) **Learning Theorist:** An exemplary teacher understands cognitive, physical, and affective development as well as pedagogical theory that address the learning needs of multi-age learners.

5 Themes

- 4) **Curriculum Designer:** An exemplary teacher bases curriculum decisions on research, theory, and informed practice.
- 5) **School Context Expert:** An exemplary teacher comprehends the social, intellectual, cultural, economic, ethical, political, and government influences upon schools including traditional and emerging stakeholders.

Journaling Directions

- * In order to be an exemplary teacher you must reflect on your teaching experience.
- * As you reflect, focus on domains and themes that contribute to your teaching.
- * Identify ONE domain and ONE theme while journaling each week.
- * The domain and theme you choose will be the basis of your journal entry.

Journaling Directions Continued

- 1) Think of topic – see handout (front of 2nd page)
- 2) Choose domain and theme
- 3) Then email the reflection based upon the following four guiding reflective statements...

Guiding Reflective Statements 1-4

- a) In Student Teaching this week I learned...
- b) My new learning connects to the domains and themes of becoming an exemplary teacher in the following ways...
- c) Before my learning and reflection this week, I used to think...
- d) As a result of my learning and reflection, I now believe...

Capturing Diversity

“This experience has led me to recognize the difficulties parents go through when their child has a disability. Some parents do the bare minimum to help their child out while the parent I got to meet wanted to know everything she could do to help her child succeed.”

-Deanna Griffin

The Impact of Leadership

“...I focused on the relationship with the teacher and students. I focused on this area because relationships are very important aspect to a successful classroom. To allow the students to have the most success in your classroom you have to have a relationship where they feel safe and comfortable with the teacher. To have a successful relationship the students need to have the utmost respect for you and they need to know that you can have fun if they do what is expected of them.”

-Brady Grosch

Working with Technology

“In student teaching this week I learned that technology can make or break you. In a teacher’s case it can make you stronger. The printers all stopped working the same day... Before my learning and reflection this week I used to think that worksheets had to be found on-line or out of a book. It was not expectable to make your own worksheets using a marker and paper. My teacher showed me her binder and 50% of her worksheets were homemade also.”

-Kari Yount

Rubric for Reflective Email Journal Entries

Outstanding:

- ◆ All four sections of the entry are addressed with sharp and distinct focus.
- ◆ The student teacher provides substantial and specific statements of learning supported by illustrative examples.
- ◆ Overall, the student teacher demonstrates sophisticated ideas that are well developed and result from careful reflection and personalization.
- ◆ The writing is free from mechanical and word usage errors.

Competent:

- ◆ All four sections of the email entry are addressed with adequate focus.
- ◆ The student teacher provides general support for statements of learning.
- ◆ Overall, the student teacher demonstrates basic reflection on learning and makes general connections to the themes and domains of becoming a leading teacher.
- ◆ The writing demonstrates some mechanical and usage errors.

Unsatisfactory: (An entry of this quality will be returned for further polishing)

- ◆ The email entry does not address all four required sections.
- ◆ The content of the report is superficial and merely lists ideas
- ◆ There are limited demonstrations of reflection and meaning-making.
- ◆ The writing contains repeated weaknesses in mechanical and usage errors that seriously interfere with the student teacher's purpose.

Final Thought...

“Making the commitment to become an exemplary teacher is a choice you should make with care because it is a decision that will affect the way that you live your life and the way others will live theirs.”

-Gerri Jenny

References

American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education. (2010, September). 21st century knowledge and skills in educator preparation. Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/storage/documents/aacte_p21_whitepaper2010.pdf