Week 5 Assignment

Reflection

Throughout this course, we have discussed curriculum management and the role of the instructional leader in improving student achievement. We looked at curriculum management in terms of the TEA learning system and its components and how that system can be implemented and improved at both the district and campus level. We also discussed the importance of curriculum management planning and its relationship to educational philosophy; definitions of curriculum; descriptions of the written, taught, and tested curricula; curriculum support; and the curriculum development and implementation. In addition, we examined organizational and curriculum development theories that serve as the foundation for our work as instructional leaders.

We have aligned the content of this course to three of the Educational Leadership Constituent Council’s (ELCC) standards for educational leadership. For your final assignment, you will write three reflective essays relating to how the content in this course has aligned to these standards and which of the topics covered will be most relevant to you as a school administrator. By giving your responses to the questions that follow, you will:

- record what you have learned in this course.
- reflect on its significance in your professional life.
- develop a plan to further increase your knowledge and skills.

Follow These Steps

1. Reflect upon what you have learned in this course that correlates with Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) Standards 2, 5, and 6.
2. Assume a school leadership role, either as an administrator or a teacher leader. From that vantage point, record your reflection in the form of three 150-word journal entries.
3. Use the guiding questions in each section to stimulate your thinking and guide your writing.
4. Write reflectively instead of in question-and-answer style, and follow the guidelines for writing listed in each section.
Rubric

Use this rubric to guide your work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Accomplished</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflections</td>
<td>Student summarizes course learning by providing thorough responses to each Reflection section of the guiding questions provided. (9 points)</td>
<td>Student summarizes course learning by providing responses to 2 Reflection sections of the guiding questions provided. (6 points)</td>
<td>Student summarizes course learning by providing responses to 1 Reflection section of the guiding questions provided. (3 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>No errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation. (1 point)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Responses lack clarity and depth and/or multiple errors in grammar, spelling or punctuation. (0 points)</td>
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Reflection One: Educational Leadership Constituent Council Standard 2

“ELCC Standard 2: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by promoting a positive school culture, providing an effective instructional program, applying best practice to student learning, and designing comprehensive professional growth plans for staff.

- Standard 2.1: Promote Positive School Culture
- Standard 2.2: Provide Effective Instructional Program
- Standard 2.3: Manage Resources”

This course has been a tough one. I don’t know if it is that I can see the light at the end of the tunnel, that I am really tired, or that it is not one exactly the most interesting of courses we have had in the program. No matter the cause, and no matter how difficult it was to trudge through the readings, I have still learned a great deal.

I have learned that one of the most important aspects of being an effective leader of a campus is to know the standards, policies, and expectations of the campus. You must be aware of state requirements, and have an open and innovative mind when attempting to accomplish these goals. It is often said that to be successful one must surround themselves with successful people. I believe this to be true in education as well as business and industry.

Once a school leader is versed on the expectations and goals, he/she must then discern how to reach those goals. One way is to build trust among the teachers and staff of the campus. This can be obtained in many ways, including making suggestions, giving feedback, modeling, using inquiry and soliciting advice and opinions, and giving praise. (Blasé & Blasé, 1999). This helps to build trust and confidence, therefore breeds success.

Another way to build success is to use data effectively. I use data quite a bit in my job, and find myself looking for additional ways to utilize the data to improve student success. After this course I have learned the value to examine a wide range of data, not just results from standardized tests.” (Boudett, City, Murnane, 2006)

All of these methods will help me to become a more effective leader, by building better relationships, understanding my goals, and improving student success by implementing the two.
Reflection Two: Educational Leadership Constituent Council Standard 5

“ELCC Standard 5: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

- Standard 5.1: Acts with Integrity
- Standard 5.2: Acts Fairly”

- What did you learn in this course about collaboration and the building of trust?
- How will you relate your knowledge of curriculum management to staff members working at your school?
- What are examples of ethical decisions that you envision yourself having to make as you implement change initiatives related to curriculum and instruction in a campus learning environment?
- What guiding principles will you follow to ensure that you act fairly and with integrity?

Collaboration and trust have been an ongoing theme throughout this entire program. It is also a continuous aspect in my job. Many techniques were pointed out in this particular course. One of my favorites was the need for professional development. I believe it is very important to assure all faculty and staff have the opportunity to participate in ongoing activities to promote their growth. This not only helps them to learn innovative teaching methods, but it gives them empowerment, confidence, and self-value.

According to Teacher-principal relationships Exploring linkages between empowerment and interpersonal trust (2004), “Trust contributes to a positive working environment characterized by honest, supportive relationships.” (Page 261) Through collaborative meetings, workshops and just plain listening, a supportive relationship can be built with the campus leader and their staff, resulting in a positive atmosphere. This can only help in building student success.

As a leader, it will be up to me to assure every employee is treated equally and impartially. Strong worth ethic should be demonstrated by the leader to assure integrity, transparency, and honesty throughout the campus. Consistent performance evaluation standards should be established, equal expectations should be distributed, and a standardized rewards/disciplinary system must be built. Everyone should know what to expect from the leader at all times.
Reflection Three: Educational Leadership Constituent Council Standard 6

“ELCC Standard 6: Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

- Standard 6.3: Influence the Larger Context

- In the area of curriculum management, what is the relationship between campus-level leaders, school district leadership, and state leadership? How will those relationships affect your day-to-day duties as an administrator?

- What steps can you take to become an instructional leader beyond your school, and how can you influence decision-making at the district or even state levels about curriculum and instruction?

Everyone has a boss. Although the principal is the campus leader, he/she is still accountable to the superintendent, the school board, parents, the community and the state. Curriculum management is the heart of a principal's performance measurement. This is what drives all aspects of the job. Every decision a principal makes eventually goes back to curriculum management. It drives teacher recruitment/retention, the budget, professional development, and day-to-day activities.

Leadership comes with many responsibilities, and if successful, a principal can make his/her campus become a model to other schools across the state. Other schools will come to them for ideas and best practices. District leaders seek innovative, forward thinking individuals to help them assure their students are successful, and their campuses are respected across the state. When implementing the practices discussed in this course, a campus leader will do just that.

Success is in our hands. We must be sure as leaders to instill trust in our staff, implement innovative practices throughout the campus, and analyze data to support our decisions. With that, our schools will improve exponentially, molding our future leaders as they sit in our classrooms.