

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

COMPETENCY 1.0

DETERMINING EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Skill 1.1 Expectations concerning students at various developmental and instructional levels

Students are at varying stages of development in any grade. The administrator of the school should have knowledge of the developmental stages that children go through so as to be knowledgeable about the curricular outcomes and types of learning activities teachers can plan. These domains include children's intellectual, social, emotional, physical, spiritual, and moral development.

Intellectually, kindergarten students are curious and eager to learn. They are interested in books and stories and love to be actively involved. They are lively and constantly in motion, but depending on their individual circumstances, they may not be very well developed socially or emotionally. The spiritual and moral development of children before they come to school also depends on their family situations. At this stage, children need a lot of extra support with literacy and numeracy.

As students progress through the grades, teachers and administrators are able to see growth in all areas. The administrator knows that although elementary grade children like to think they are grown up, they still act their age and do childish things. The instruction that teachers provide in the classroom should include ongoing modeling. At this developmental stage, students do not remember directions and need to have them written down. They are active because they are still growing, so it is common to find them racing around. They need time in the gym or outdoors. Most elementary school students have become fluent readers, but there may still be some who are struggling. When students have problems with reading, it usually results in problems in other subjects.

At the junior high level, students are not quite so active physically; however, they are more mentally mature and teachers can engage them in frank classroom discussions. They like to experiment, so disciplinary problems tend to increase in this age group. These students are fairly independent in their study habits, but there will be groups of students who still need support or who need to be prodded into completing their work.

In the high school years, students become more independent learners. By this time, struggling students can choose to take different courses of study; however, supports must still be provided in school.

Skill 1.2 Assessments of community needs, expectations, and population projections

All leaders must have the capacity to plan. The ability to plan is an essential skill in today's high-pressure and ever-changing school environment. It serves the very practical function of assisting administrators in organizing their work and projecting solutions to problems. Making a determination about what to plan for precedes the activity of planning.

DECISION MAKING AND PLANNING

During the decision-making process, the principal must gather as much information as possible from the community and the school. Data sources must be identified and information obtained. This process must be systematic and include such information as the source(s) of the original data, potential data sources, ways to obtain the data, means to analyze the data, whom to involve and when, and how to make the decision to create the fairest and best solution(s).

Decision making requires planning, which has long been recognized as a key factor in successfully running a school. Mandates from superiors, desires of subordinates and others in the learning community, and a vision must be considered by school principals during planning. In addition, early stakeholder involvement is essential for buy-in. In designing a plan, the school leader must adhere to established deadlines, develop a flow of activities, identify resource allocations, and select evaluation methods. The tasks may involve changing an existing situation or creating a new one to benefit the students. Tasks must be prioritized and delegated to appropriate persons. Routine tasks/planning areas include student achievement, accreditation, co-curricular activities, scheduling, parent organizations, student trips, and special school events. Managerial competencies are required to accomplish each of these tasks.

Planning includes the flexibility to reorder plans as unexpected roadblocks occur. The principal is also able to see when and from whom help is needed to achieve goals in a timely manner. Schools have scarce resources and limitless demands placed upon them. Technology is expensive and places tremendous demands on the budget. The proactive principal understands this and makes a plan to maximize available resources including relocation, renovation, and new construction. Leaders must also allocate such resources as audiovisual equipment, media resources and space, meeting rooms, teacher and staff offices, multipurpose rooms, classrooms, laboratories, cafeterias, playgrounds, indoor and outdoor space for physical education, and auxiliary spaces.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

Some problems in a school are related to the larger community and require knowledge beyond the school. For example, if drugs are allegedly being sold blocks from a school and students are supposedly making purchases during the lunch hour, information should be obtained. For this type of problem, community involvement is critical.

Many school districts use the cohort-survival method to project student populations for future years. This formula, which considers current enrollment, local births, mobility rates, and new home construction, provides the school district with a population estimate that can be used for planning purposes. Dialogue with local community organizations, religious institutions, realtors, and politicians provides valuable information concerning shifts in population.

Skill 1.3 Recognition of specific needs of diverse populations, such as gender, race, and ethnicity, and mobile populations

Once school principals have an understanding of the important issues affecting teaching and learning, they must be able to deal with them using existing legal guidelines, which exist to protect the rights of students and staff.

FEDERAL LAWS RELATED TO EDUCATION

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is one such guideline designed to help schools improve by focusing on accountability for results, freedom for states and communities, successful educational strategies, and choices for parents. Some important terms associated with NCLB include *adequate yearly progress (AYP)*, *standardized assessments*, and *Title I*.

Today in our country's schools there are more than 6 million children with disabilities. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was enacted in 1975 to make sure that children with disabilities, like their nondisabled counterparts, had the opportunity to receive a free, appropriate public education. Among other reasons, IDEA is in place to improve accountability, expand services, simplify parental involvement, and provide more timely access to services and supports for students with disabilities. There is a continuous goal of educating students with special needs in the least restrictive environment.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

During the 2001-2002 school year, nearly one in twelve public school children, almost 4 million children, received special assistance to learn English. This number continues to increase. These students, like all others, are protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. This act states, "School systems are responsible for assuring that students of a particular race, color, or national origin are not denied the opportunity to obtain the education generally obtained by other students in the system." The U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the federal agency responsible for enforcing Title VI, adds that states are also mandated to protect and help students "overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs."

Maintaining confidentiality is of the utmost importance in the school setting. If students, parents, or staff members know that important information can be kept confidential, this can promote more active participation in the school community. One existing federal law that deals with confidentiality in the schools is FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which governs the disclosure of student education records.

RECOGNIZING AND RESPECTING DIVERSITY

Principals must be aware that a school with students from a various races and ethnicities and with various learning styles can provide extraordinary academic and social opportunities to the entire school community. Diverse schools offer opportunities not always available in other settings. When knowledge can be shared not only by teachers and textbooks, but also by fellow students with a variety of life experiences and cultures, learning takes on a whole new meaning. For example, classroom discussions with students from different backgrounds can be rich and challenging, fostering critical thinking. Students also learn different perspectives on global issues, motivating them to study and more thoughtfully define their own views.

It is also important to make sure that everyone feels safe and comfortable in school. Administrators must try to make students and parents feel welcome and included in every aspect of the school community. Invite members of diverse groups to share their stories and culture with others.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

Principals must learn to recognize and respect the diversity in their schools. The key for effective school leaders in a diverse school is to face obstacles early on, tackle them with energy and creativity, and build a school culture based on a foundation of respect and high expectations. Creating awareness within the entire school community is an important step in the success of a diverse school. When doing this, principals should ensure that community stakeholders know that diversity is recognized and valued in their schools. Principals should offer resources, such as professional development, to help teachers and parents become more culturally aware and ensure that all stakeholders are treated fairly and equitably.

Skill 1.4 Awareness of the national perspective concerning education

Schools do not exist in a vacuum. They are open systems, interrelated with the environments within which they exist. The external environment of schools includes parents, businesses, taxpayers, and politicians. All of these are important to schools as their actions directly or indirectly affect the operations of a school. Legislatures, colleges, and other governmental or educational agencies increasingly influence schools as well. Administrators must realize that while schools cannot be all things to all constituents, schools depend on their environments for resources and support. It is important for school leaders to know who possesses and exercises power in a community and for schools to conduct public relations campaigns to keep the community informed about their effectiveness.

Administrators must also facilitate schools reacting to changing environmental conditions, demographics, and economic issues. For instance, changes in the job market require the educational organization to prepare students accordingly. Accommodating these changes must be handled delicately; a school leader can expect difficulties if there is a significant departure from the standards and norms expected in the community.

Schools have recently needed to consider not only the immediate community, but also the broader public, governmental regulations, and the fear of declining enrollment or state takeover. Federally-mandated accountability systems such as No Child Left Behind have put governmental and public oversight into the mix. While this legislation leaves operational policies to local regulation, schools must demonstrate that they successfully prepare all students to meet achievement standards. In many ways, this federal law has encouraged schools to become more competitive with one another for students, attention, and funding.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

Skill 1.5 Interpretation of research in making decisions

Administrators must possess decision-making skills to solve problems and deal with the variety of issues that occur daily. Traditionally, administrators have been required to evaluate teachers' instructional practices and collect evidence of student learning.

ASSESSMENT CHECKLISTS

In equipping principals for this task, state and federal agencies have provided various assessment checklists to ensure authentic assessments of effective teaching and learning. Some of these checklists include:

- Professional Skills
- Professional Administration Preparation
- Knowledge of Effective Academic Implementation
- Classroom Management Strategies
- Effective Instructional Practices
- Culturally Responsive Teaching
- Incorporation of State Learning Requirements
- Cooperative Communication Strategies

STRATEGIES OF ASSESSMENT

Research-based strategies of assessment suggest that administrators incorporate student self-assessments of their own learning and productivity. In addition, teachers should effectively implement curricular designs, understand state and district learning targets, and define and facilitate classroom instruction. Thus, building authentic assessments becomes an integral aspect of teaching and learning.

In determining whether standards are being met in the classroom, administrators must use descriptive assessments. Assessments must identify culturally responsive teaching methods that incorporate cultural knowledge, history, experiences, and relevancy of contextual knowledge. This allows students to critically reflect on their own cultural identity and beliefs. It also builds a relationship between students and staff in a comprehensive learning community.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

Assessments are a consistent component of the academic curriculum in school communities. Each subject area has pre- and post- assessments that are used to evaluate the skill level and ability of each learner. Assessments identify areas where teachers can construct meaningful lessons that are accessible to all learners. To reap the full benefits of assessment tools and strategies, today's educators must be able to generate consistent quantitative data to track student learning in various subjects. It is the job of the administrator to ensure that assessments are congruent with academic content areas. They must also be administered consistently to generate quantitative information that is beneficial to student learners and teachers seeking to maintain and improve upon instructional practices.

Skill 1.6 Assessment of student achievement in identifying needs and setting priorities

The evaluation of students is a very important aspect of the teaching and learning process. Periodic testing measures learning outcomes based on established objectives. It also provides information at various stages in the learning process to determine future student needs such as periodic reviews, re-teaching, and enrichment. As the end process, the evaluation of students' performance measures the level of goal attainment, which is operationalized through the learning activities planned by the teacher. At varying stages of the teaching and learning process, the intended outcome must be measured, the level of goal attainment established, and this continuous cycle of student evaluation proceeds.

EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Evaluation and measurement are often used interchangeably to imply the same process. However, while closely related, they should be differentiated. *Evaluation* is the process of making judgments regarding student performance, and *measurement* is the actual collection of data that are used to judge student performance. Evaluation is related to student performance when the focus is on how well a student carries out a given task or when student work is the focus of the measurement.

The purpose of the student evaluation will determine the type of process to use. Diagnostic, formative, and summative evaluations are the three types most commonly used. *Diagnostic evaluation* is provided prior to instruction to identify problems, to place students in certain groups, and to make assignments that are appropriate to students' needs. While it is important to address the specific needs of students, teachers must be cautious of the ramifications of grouping children in homogeneous versus heterogeneous groups. It may appear to save time to group and work with children of similar abilities, yet it often fails to foster students' intellectual and social growth and development. In fact, it has been shown that children in mixed groups benefit from the diversity within the group.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

Formative evaluation is used to obtain feedback during the instructional process. It informs teachers of the extent to which students are really learning the concepts and skills being taught. The information should lead to modifications in the teaching and learning process to address specific needs of the students before arriving at the end of the unit. Therefore, it must be done frequently, using the specific objectives stated for learning outcomes.

Summative evaluation is used to culminate a unit or series of lessons to arrive at a grade. Knowing the content studied and having the specific skills required to score well on tests are two different endeavors. Successful performances require not only learning content, but also following the format of the assessment. Often, standardized tests are considered to be summative evaluations. Therefore, teachers must train students in test-taking skills such as following directions, managing time effectively, and giving special attention to the type of tests and the skills required.

Regardless of the type of assessment, educators must gather and analyze the information they yield to determine students' strengths and weaknesses. The problem areas uncovered should be discussed with students collectively and individually and with parents at parent-teacher conferences. Whether diagnostic, formative, or summative, the evaluation of student performance should be a continuous process.

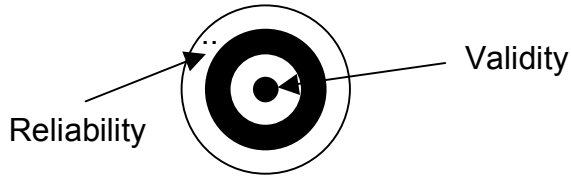
The accuracy of student evaluation is essential. Accuracy is determined by the usability of the instrument and the consistency of measurement, which is observed through reliability and validity of the instruments.

Validity is the extent to which a test measures what it is intended to measure. For example, a test may lack validity if it was designed to measure creative writing but it is also used to measure handwriting.

Reliability refers to the consistency of the test to measure what it should measure. For example, the items on a true-or-false quiz, given by a classroom teacher, are reliable if they convey the same meaning every time the quiz is administered to similar groups of students under similar conditions. In other words, there is no ambiguity or confusion with the items on the quiz.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

The difference between validity and reliability can be visualized in terms of throwing darts at a dartboard. There is validity if the dart hits the target (an assessment measures what it is intended to measure); it is reliable if the same spot is hit time after time (the assessment consistently measures what it should measure). The goal should be to develop assessments that are both valid and reliable (every time the assessment is administered, it measures what it is intended to measure).



Usability, another factor in the evaluation process, refers to practical considerations such as scoring procedures, level of difficulty, and time to administer the test. The usability of a test is questionable, for example, if the scoring procedures had to be changed to accommodate local financial circumstances or if the allotted time for a test had to be reduced because of other circumstances.

Standardized Achievement Tests

Because the purpose of assessment instruments is data gathering, it is important to use various forms of information-gathering tools to assess the knowledge and progress of students. Standardized achievement tests have become a central tool in education today, particularly due to No Child Left Behind. The widespread use of standardized achievement tests to provide information for accountability to the public has driven many teachers to “teach to the test” and embrace more objective formats of teaching and learning. These tests are very limited in what they measure and too often they are used to make major decisions for which they are not designed.

Standardized achievement tests can be norm-referenced or criterion-referenced. In *norm-referenced* measurements the performance of the student is compared with the performance of other students who also took the same test. The original group of students who took the test establishes the norm. Norms can be based on age, sex, grade level, geographical location, ethnicity, or other broad classifications.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

Standardized, norm-referenced achievement tests are designed to measure what a student knows in a particular subject in relation to other students with similar characteristics. The test batteries provide a broad scope of content area coverage so that the test can be used on a large scale in many different states and school districts. However, the questions may not measure the goals and content emphasized in a particular local curriculum. Therefore, using standardized tests to assess the success of the curriculum or teachers' effectiveness should be avoided (McMillan, 1997).

Norm-referenced standardized achievement tests produce different types of scores that are useful in different ways. The most common types of scores are the percentile ranks, or percentile scores, grade-equivalent scores, stanines, and percentage of items answered correctly.

The percentile score indicates how a student's performance compares to the norming group. It indicates what percentage of the norming group was outscored by a particular student taking the test. For example, a student scoring in the eightieth percentile did better than 80 percent of the students in the norming group. Or, 20 percent of the norming group scored above the particular student and 80 percent scored below. The scores are indicative of relative strengths and weaknesses. A student may show consistent strengths in language arts and consistent weakness in mathematics. Yet one could not base remediation solely on these conclusions without a closer item analysis or a closer review of the objectives measured by the test.

The grade-equivalency score is expressed by year and month in school for each student. It is used to measure growth and progress. It indicates where a student stands in reference to the norming group. For example, a second-grade student who obtained a grade-equivalent score of 4.5 on the language arts section of the test is really not achieving at the fourth-grade, five-month level, as one might think. The 4.5 grade equivalence means that the second grader has achieved at about the same level as a student of the norming group who is in the fifth month of the fourth grade. However, when compared to other second graders in the norming group, the student may be about average.

A point of consideration with grade equivalence is that one may never know how well the second grader might do if placed in the fourth grade or how poorly the second grader might do if given the fourth-grade test compared to other second graders in the norming group.

Stanines indicate where the score is located on the normal curve for the norming group. Stanines are statistically determined but are not as precise as percentile ranking because they only give the area in which the score is located, but not the precise location. Using stanines to report standard scores is still found to be practical and easy to understand for many parents and school personnel.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

Stanines range from one to nine (1-9), with five being the middle of the distribution.

Finally, achievement test scores can be reported by percentage of items answered correctly. This form of reporting may not be very meaningful when there are only a few questions or items in a particular category. This makes it difficult to determine whether the student guessed well at the items, was just lucky at selecting the right answers, or knowingly chose the correct responses.

Criterion-referenced standardized achievement tests are designed to measure the student's performance that is directly related to specific educational objectives, thus indicating what the student can or cannot do. For example, the test may measure how well a student can subtract by regrouping in the tens place or how well a student can identify the long vowel sound in specific words.

Criterion-referenced tests are specific to a particular curriculum, which allows the determination of the effectiveness of the curriculum, as well as specific skills acquired by the students. They also provide information needed to plan for future student needs. Because of the recognized value of criterion-referenced standardized achievement tests, many publishers have developed tailor-made tests to correlate with state and districts' general goals and specific learning objectives by pulling from a test bank of field-tested items. The test scores are reported by percentage of items answered correctly to indicate mastery or non-mastery.

Aptitude Tests

Aptitude tests are another standardized form of testing that measure the cognitive abilities of students. They also measure potential and capacity for learning. While they do not test specific academic ability, the student's ability level is influenced by his or her experiences in and out of the academic setting. Aptitude tests are used to predict achievement and for advanced placement of students.

Other Forms of Assessment

Teacher-made tests are also evaluative instruments designed by classroom teachers to measure the attainment of objectives. While they may lack validity, they serve the immediate purpose of measuring instructional outcomes. Teacher-made tests should be constructed to measure specific objectives, but they also take into account the nature of the behavior that is being measured. Among teacher-made tests are multiple choice, essay, quizzes, matching, alternative choices (yes/no, agree/disagree, etc.), and completion items (fill-in-the-blanks).

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

Portfolio assessment is fast becoming a leading form of assessment, in which the student and teacher collect sample work in a systematic and organized manner to provide evidence of accomplishments and progress toward attaining specific objectives.

Certainly, testing is very important in the assessment of students' progress, but there are other sources of information that can be used for assessment as well. For example, conferencing and cumulative records of a child's work may also provide factual information for cognitive and psychomotor assessments. Other information sources may include interviews, diaries, self-assessments, observations, and simulations.

Skill 1.7 Principles of developing and implementing strategic plans through use of group process conflict resolution and consensus building

Traditionally, the successful educational leader was recognized as an effective communicator if he or she could persuade subordinates to strive toward challenging goals. Measuring leadership success in these terms resulted in some assumptions; however, current research has shown that the following assumptions inhibit effective communication:

- The leader's ideas/goals are viewed as best for the institution. This assumption fosters an authoritative style which discounts the value of ideas generated by employees. Honest feedback is discouraged.
- The setting of goals is the responsibility of an individual or administrative group, not the result of collegial collaboration. This assumption reflects the leadership attitude that employees lack the professional knowledge to participate in the decision-making process.

Post-World War II studies of the social component of work environments revealed that greater communication restraints existed in businesses with rigid social structures that encouraged stereotypical role perceptions. The emphasis on a hierarchical structure fostered low-quality or nonexistent communication between persons who felt inferior and authority figures who perceived themselves as superior.

The development of instructional leadership models in the 1970s was based on traditional assumptions that effective school leaders were firm disciplinarians who set high expectations for employee performance. They set the goals that staff and faculties were expected to meet.

FACILITATIVE LEADERSHIP

Studies of human dynamics in the 1980s and 1990s led to total quality management in business and industry. This concept applied to education includes the idea of facilitative leadership, a leadership model which stresses that productive work environments depend on interpersonal relationships that are collaborative and empower all persons involved in the educational process.

The need for power and achievement become shared criteria. The leader focuses on involving employees in problem solving, which leads to improved performance and higher levels of achievement. Like cooperative-learning models of classroom management, facilitative leadership requires improved communication based on the perceptions of senders and receivers. It also recognizes behavior and emotions as communication tools.

Sender Perceptions

- Open communication is sharing, not persuading. To favorably present an idea, persuasive techniques must be used to analyze the audience's biases, interests, and emotions. However, the object is not to identify these elements and refute conflicting ideas. The goal must be to use information about the audience to better understand how the idea will be decoded. Discussion from all perspectives results in better decoding and appropriate action. The outcome will be a mutually acceptable position, not one side attempting to convince the other.
- Open communication results from relating to, not controlling, others. Behavior, like language, is recognized as a form of communication. A leader must demonstrate the ability to constantly assess the consequences of his or her words and behaviors against the ideas and actions of others. If the message is to be properly decoded, behavior must be as conscientiously encoded as language. A receiver decodes emotionally as well as cognitively; thus, the listener can only react appropriately if he or she understands the expected response or if anxiety does not block an appropriate response. Senders must also recognize that misinterpretation of the message may result from the receiver's lack of experience with the sequential nature of behavior communication— antecedent, behavior, consequence. For example, if in an earlier experience with a former principal, a faculty member has been patronized, he or she may not recognize sincere praise. The teacher may view praise, especially general praise, as condescension; he or she may respond with disbelief because that reaction was acceptable in the old pattern of behavior. If the principal is sensitive to this barrier to communication (filtering) he or she will develop another means of transmission (another medium or sender) until the teacher learns the skill of accepting praise based on trust of the sender and his or her delivery method.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

- Open communication relies on reciprocal trust. Supervisors must deliver consistent verbal and nonverbal messages, exhibit empathy for the values and ideas of others, demonstrate sincere commitment to the school's vision and the work of the staff and students, be honest in sharing information, and be accessible to all members of the school community.
- Effective communication requires appropriate vocabulary and grammar. Select words and symbols that are understood by all or that can be explained with alternate word choices. Avoid making incomplete statements or expecting listeners to fill in the blanks. Encourage questioning for clarification.
- Finally, senders must use feedback as a means to evaluate the effectiveness of communication. Concentrate on non-judgmentally receiving listener reactions. View disagreement as a tool for analyzing the clarity of the presentation. Ask focused questions that give the listener the opportunity to ask for additional information. Use perception checking and behavior description to elicit listeners' perceived feelings or observable behavior.

Receiver Perceptions

- Seek understanding, not judgment. Do not argue points of disagreement. Try to understand what the sender is saying. Identify specific points of agreement and disagreement. Paraphrase areas of agreement to determine if interpretation is correct. Point out areas of disagreement for further examination and discussion.
- Practice active listening skills. Recognize that receiver decoding skills are affected by feelings about and perceptions of the sender and that this can hinder receipt of the message. As a receiver, ask questions or paraphrase your message, focus on the sender's ideas, and ask specific questions to reveal his or her level of attentiveness. Avoid drawing heated, emotional, defensive, or attacking responses. Remember that open communication is based on reciprocal trust.
- The principal competency of *self-presentation* is related to the ability to convey a message effectively and to share ideas in a nonevaluative manner.

The principal should:

- Communicate ideas (his or her own and others') in clear, informative ways in both one-on-one and group situations
- Stimulate others to ask questions about their own issues

TEACHER CERTIFICATION STUDY GUIDE

- Present him- or herself in a way that is not viewed as controlling or demanding conformity

Included in the realm of self-presentation are the qualities of good grooming, a pleasant speaking voice, and a likable personality. The more things employees can find to commend, the better the working relationship. Effective communication relies on the ability of the supervisor, especially the school principal, to project a positive self-image and to instill in others the feelings that foster self-esteem.

Self-concept (a person's concept of what he or she is within the organization or social structure) results from personal perceptions of what the individual would like to be, what he or she wants others to think, and what he or she thinks others already think about him or her. A mature employee must have an awareness and control of self to satisfy the psychological need for acknowledgment of worth. The supervisor contributes to this satisfaction by modeling positive behaviors that create respect and trust. He or she enhances the staff's individual and group self-concepts through encouragement, constructive criticism, and nonthreatening discipline.

Encouragement

Use the techniques of successful coaches:

- Demonstrate patience and caring. When you are introducing new ideas or information, give staff members the sense that you are constantly considering what is best for the school, the teachers, the support staff, and the students. Referring often to the school's mission, vision, and objectives will keep team efforts focused and give staff members a sense of their role in the organization.
- Take time to explain and demonstrate and give learners ample time to practice. Even professionals cannot be expected to grasp and master new concepts until they have had sufficient time to implement the new skills. To support growth, suggest that those who have learned a new concept observe teachers who have already mastered the expected skills.
- Offer praise and advice. Be sure that praise is sincere and understand that advice is best received when it is warranted and wanted.
- Provide support and positive reinforcement. During the improvement process note specific elements of success and focus on these, not on mistakes.