

2008 Minnesota Director of Special Education Competencies

Subp. 1. Core Leadership Competencies for all Minnesota Administrative Licenses

A person who serves as a Superintendent, Principal, Director of Special Education, and/or Director of Community Education will demonstrate competence in the following core areas:

A. Leadership

1. Demonstrate leadership by collaboratively assessing and improving culture and climate;
2. Demonstrate leadership by providing purpose and direction for individuals and groups;
3. Model shared leadership and decision-making strategies;
4. Demonstrate an understanding of issues affecting education;
5. Through a visioning process, formulate strategic plans and goals with staff and community;
6. Set priorities in the context of stakeholder needs;
7. Serve as a spokesperson for the welfare of all learners in a multicultural context;
8. Understand how education is impacted by local, state, national, and international events;
9. Demonstrate the ability to facilitate and motivate others;
10. Demonstrate the ability to implement change or educational reform.

B. Organizational Management

1. Demonstrate an understanding of organizational systems;
2. Define and use processes for gathering, analyzing, managing and using data to plan and make decisions for program evaluation;
3. Plan and schedule personal and organizational work, establish procedures to regulate activities and projects, and delegate and empower others at appropriate levels;
4. Demonstrate the ability to analyze need and allocate personnel and material resources;
5. Develop and manage budgets and maintain accurate fiscal records;
6. Demonstrate an understanding of facilities development, planning and management;
7. Understand and use technology as a management tool.

C. Diversity Leadership

1. Demonstrate an understanding and recognition of the significance of diversity, and respond to the needs of diverse learners;
2. Create and monitor a positive learning environment for all students;
3. Create and monitor a positive working environment for all staff;
4. Promote sensitivity of diversity throughout the school community;
5. Demonstrate the ability to adapt educational programming to the needs of diverse constituencies.

D. Policy and Law

1. Develop, adjust and implement policy to meet local, state and federal requirements and constitutional provisions, standards and regulatory applications;
2. Recognize and apply standards of care involving civil and criminal liability for negligence, harassment and intentional torts;
3. Demonstrate an understanding of state, federal and case law governing general education, special education and community education.

E. Political Influence and Governance

1. Exhibit an understanding of school districts as a political system, including governance models;
2. Demonstrate the ability to involve stakeholders in the development of educational policy;
3. Understand the role and coordination of social agencies and human services;
4. Demonstrate the ability to align constituencies in support of priorities and build coalitions for programmatic and financial support.

F. Communication

1. Formulate and carry out plans for internal and external communications;
2. Demonstrate facilitation skills;
3. Recognize and apply an understanding of individual and group behavior in normal and stressful situations;
4. Facilitate teamwork;
5. Demonstrate an understanding of conflict resolution and problem solving strategies;
6. Make presentations that are clear and easy to understand;
7. Respond, review, and summarize information for groups;
8. Communicate appropriately (speaking, listening and writing) for different audiences—students, teachers, parents, community and other stakeholders;
9. Understand and utilize appropriate communication technology.

G. Community Relations

1. Articulate organizational purpose and priorities to the community and media;
2. Request and respond to community feedback;
3. Demonstrate the ability to build community consensus;
4. Relate political initiatives to stakeholders, including parental involvement programs;
5. Identify and interact with internal and external publics;
6. Understand and respond to the news media;
7. Promote a positive image of schools and the school district;
8. Monitor and address perceptions about school-community issues;
9. Demonstrate the ability to identify and articulate critical community issues which may impact local education.

H. Curriculum Planning and Development for the Success of All Learners

1. Demonstrate the ability to enhance teaching and learning through curriculum assessment and strategic planning for all learners, including pre-k-elementary, middle/junior high school, high school, special education and adult levels;
2. Demonstrate the ability to provide planning and methods to anticipate trends and educational implications;
3. Demonstrate the ability to develop, implement and monitor procedures to align, sequence and articulate curriculum and validate curricular procedures;
4. Demonstrate the ability to identify instructional objectives and use valid and reliable performance indicators and evaluative procedures to measure performance outcomes;
5. Appropriately use learning technologies;
6. Demonstrate an understanding of alternative instructional designs, curriculum, behavior management and assessment accommodations and modifications;
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the urgency of global competitiveness.

I. Instructional Management for the Success of All Learners

1. Demonstrate an understanding of research of learning and instructional strategies;
2. Describe and apply research and best practices on integrating curriculum and resources to help all learners achieve at high levels;

3. Demonstrate the ability to utilize data for instructional decision making;
4. Demonstrate the ability to design appropriate assessment strategies for measuring learner outcomes;
5. Demonstrate the ability to implement alternative instructional designs, curriculum, behavior management, and assessment accommodations and modifications;
6. Demonstrate the ability to appropriately use technology to support instruction;
7. Demonstrate the ability to meet the enrichment, remediation, and special education needs of all students;

J. Human Resource Management

1. Demonstrate knowledge of effective personnel recruitment, selection and retention;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of staff development to improve the performance of all staff members;
3. Demonstrate the ability to select and apply appropriate models for supervision and evaluation;
4. Describe and demonstrate the ability to apply the legal requirements for personnel selection, development, retention, and dismissal;
5. Demonstrate understanding of management responsibilities to act in accordance with federal and state constitutional provisions, statutory and case law, regulatory applications toward education, local rules, procedures and directives governing human resource management;
6. Demonstrate understanding of labor relations and collective bargaining;
7. Demonstrate understanding of the administration of employee contracts, benefits and financial accounts.

K. Values and Ethics of Leadership

1. Demonstrate understanding of the role of education in a democratic society;
2. Demonstrate understanding of and model democratic value systems, ethics and moral leadership;
3. Demonstrate the ability to balance complex community demands in the best interest of learners; and
4. Help learners grow and develop as caring, informed citizens;
5. Demonstrate understanding and application of the Minnesota Board of School Administrators Code of Ethics for Administrators.

L. Judgment and Problem Analysis

1. Identify the elements of a problem situation by analyzing relevant information, framing issues, identifying possible causes and reframing possible solutions;
2. Demonstrate adaptability and conceptual flexibility;
3. Assist others in forming opinions about problems and issues;
4. Reach logical conclusions by making quality, timely decisions based on available information;
5. Identify and give priority to significant issues;
6. Demonstrate understanding of and utilize appropriate technology in problem analysis;
7. Demonstrate understanding of different leadership and decision-making strategies, including but not limited to collaborative models, and model appropriately their implementation.

M. Safety and Security

1. Demonstrate the ability to develop and implement policies and procedures for safe and secure educational environments;

2. Demonstrate the ability to formulate safety and security plans to implement security procedures including an articulated emergency chain of command, safety procedures required by law, law enforcement assistance, communication with the public, and evacuation procedures;
3. Demonstrate the ability to identify areas of vulnerability associated with school buses, buildings and grounds and formulate a plan to take corrective action;
4. Demonstrate understanding of procedural predictabilities and plan variations where possible;
5. Demonstrate the ability to develop plans that connect every student with a school adult, eliminate bullying and profiling and implement recommended threat assessment procedures.

Subp. 4. Director of Special Education Competencies

A person who serves as a Director of Special Education will demonstrate all core competencies as described in Subpart 1 as well as competence in the following specific areas:

A. Policy and Law

1. Demonstrate an understanding of state and federal laws, rules, and procedures governing special education finance, budgeting and accounting;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of state and federal regulations governing the monitoring of special education programs.

B. Organizational Management

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the role policy and procedure play in school district governance and administration;
2. Demonstrate knowledge of statutory regulations affecting Board meetings, communications, procedures, and practices that affect special education governance;
3. Demonstrate an understanding of special education administrative models used in Minnesota.

C. Resource Allocation

1. Demonstrate an understanding of special education program development including needs assessment, design and evaluation;
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the resources available, along with the agencies and organizations that serve students with a disability and their families.