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Creating the Licensing Portfolio

The Portfolio-

“....the portfolio is a powerful tool for promoting self-analysis and professional growth aimed at improved practices, which can positively affect student achievement.” Brown, G. & Irby, B. (1997), viii.

The purpose of the portfolio is to demonstrate skill/knowledge in each of the competencies identified by the Minnesota Department of Education for administrative licensing.

I. Process:

1. Compile potential exhibits for the behaviors specifically identified in each of the competencies. An expandable file is helpful to serve as a collection and sorting tool.

SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT MAY BE COLLECTED FOR A PORTFOLIO

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• professional vita• transcripts
• workshop and training verification forms• listings of committee memberships• phone log• minutes of meetings facilitated or serving as a participant | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• awards• examples of completed projects
• letters of reference or commendation• newsletters or other correspondence• observational evaluations• reflections or notes on conferences held with parents, staff, students, and others | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• pictures, videos or one's own presentation• brochures• one's yearly calendar• professional diary• copies of district test data• listings of books and professional articles read |
|---|--|---|

2. Analyze all the examples gathered in step one considering the connection between the task and the competencies. Determine which competency areas, for the license desired, are missing, underdeveloped or simply not represented in your portfolio examples. Create a plan for compiling portfolio based on the “holes” identified as result of this process.

3. Assemble the portfolio.

II. *Assemble the portfolio:*

1. Decide on your presentation format.

A. A three ring binder with plastic pockets is generally used but an expandable folder or other options may also work. Sections should be clearly divided.

B. Select font size and type style to use throughout. Portray a professional image of yourself through the appearance of your portfolio. Create a product that allows you to invite review.

2. Select the “best” of the examples collected for each competency.

3. Include a Reflection Sheet with each exhibit or grouping of similar exhibits.

III. *A suggested format for the portfolio is:*

EXAMPLE OF A TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page

Table of contents

Resume (one page including personal objective, certification, education, employment/experiences, and areas of concentration or strength, e.g. it may be a special award or office)

Summary of your beliefs and attitudes as an administrator

Transcripts

Competencies and listing of demonstrations

Exhibits and reflections

Vita (details, at length, a professional career).

The license Portfolio and Evaluation Form must be included, but not attached, to the license portfolio.

IV. *The summary of your beliefs and attitudes* is included as it presents one’s leadership framework. The length could be one of to two pages, if formatted in a narrative, or it may be presented in a bullet fashion as briefly as in the following example:

EXAMPLE OF BELIEF STATEMENT

Professional Beliefs and Attitudes

Schools are a community of learners with all students, staff, parents, community members and administration having a role and responsibility to educate as well as further one’s own learning.

It is my responsibility to lead with purpose of breaking barriers to successful learning.

Teachers, students, parents, community members, and administrators are collaborative partner in the education process with the goal of reaching full potential for **ALL**.

Brown and Irby, The Principal's Portfolio (1997), 15-16, suggest seven components in creating One's leadership framework:

- 1.) Philosophy of education
- 2.) Philosophy of leadership
- 3.) Vision of learners
- 4.) Vision of teachers
- 5.) Vision for the organization
 - √Climate
 - √Community
 - √Collaboration
 - √Communication
- 6.) Vision for professional growth
- 7.) Method of vision attainment
 - √Decision making
 - √Encouragement, initiation, and facilitation of change
 - √Support during change

All of these components are included in the essence of the three brief statements for the example included above.

The portfolio, whether used for licensing or as a tool in applying or interviewing for a job, has many purposes. Three of the most important in this case are:

- 1. An assessment tool in itself-an exhibit, as a stand alone without verbal backup, must communicate attainment of a competency. Hence the importance of the reflection sheet is to make the connection between the knowledge/skill, task performed and competency.**
- 2. It is a tool to stimulate questions from the review panel or interview team.**
- 3. It serves as an outline or organizer for the candidate to highlight one's strengths during the oral segment of the interview.**

Though the belief statement example provided is brief it makes all the necessary points and can be expanded upon, if desired, either through questions from the panel or with follow-up comments by the candidate. The same is true for the "Competencies and Listing of Demonstrations" section, explained in greater detail in IV.

V. Transcripts

At least one copy of the transcript must be an original copy. It will be stamped "issued to the student." That is accepted. This is included with the materials sent to the state department. They will not accept a copy of the original issued by the college or the university. PLEASE HAVE COPIES SENT DIRECTLY TO US. We must receive transcripts in sealed envelopes.

VI. Competencies and listing of demonstrations example (other formats are acceptable if preferred):

A COMPETENCY AND AN EXAMPLE OF A FORMAT THAT MAY BE USED TO SHOW ITS ATTAINMENT

I. Leadership

Related work experience:

Member of district strategic planning committee
Facilitator of site strategic plan development and implementation
Co-developer of “Principles of Ethical Behavior” program
Facilitator of the development of the site mission and goals
Certified in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and presenter of numerous training sessions and workshops on the topic
More examples....

Related coursework (transcripts included on pages 5-7).

EDPA 5272	Problems: Educational Policy and Administration	U of MN
EDPA 8264	Secondary School Principalship	U of MN
CPSY 5555	Community School Partnerships	Michigan State U

More examples....

Related training, conferences and workshops:

Standards Workshops
Practitioners Paradise Conferences
ASCD National Convention
More Examples....

Portfolio exhibits and reflections:

Building strategic plan and reflection, exhibit 3, page 12
MBTI professional article and reflection, exhibit 4, page 15
Process used to develop site mission and goals, exhibit 5, page 20
Vita-employment in a variety of leadership positions, page 30

There may be more exhibits or there may only be one per competency. Also, the same exhibit may be an example of more than one competency. The reflection sheet makes the connection between the competency, the exhibit (task performed), and the knowledge/skill.

VII. Reflection sheets are used in two ways:

1. To assist the panel in determining if the candidate actually knows, is able to do, or be like, the competency required by law. Many times simply including a exhibit of a skill will not communicate that information to the reviewer . The reflection sheet makes the connection between the competency, the actual task performed and the knowledge/skill necessary to consistently perform this competency at a high level.
2. The reflection sheet can be used as an exhibit in itself. Many excellent examples, such as facilitating a special education meeting, mediating a conflict between staff members or departments, disciplining a staff member, or showing sensitivity to a student experiencing a loss, may not be documented in a visual format. In these cases use the reflection sheet to describe the example performed.

The reflection sheet provided is an example of one that may be used. The candidate may modify the sheet to meet individual thought processes. However, the reflections should contain the following elements:

- the number of the exhibit
- the competency(ies) demonstrated
- description of the artifact
- the significance of this exhibit as a demonstration of the competency(ies) in terms of the results, your skills, values and beliefs
- what was the value of this experience or task...if you did it again would you do it the same way.

COMPLETED EXAMPLE OF A REFLECTIONS SHEET ATTACHED

Length of portfolio: Comprehensive but succinct are the parameters to follow. If the portfolio is too lengthy the reviewer may not read it carefully.

EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETED “PORTFOLIO EVIDENCE” SECTION OF THE FROM TITLED LICENSURE PORTFOLIO AND EVALUATION FORM

SKILL/KNOWLEDGE	PORTFOLIO EVIDENCE
I. Leadership A. provide purpose and direction for individuals and groups.	Listing of demonstrations-pg. 6 Belief statement-page 4 Building strategic plan and reflection, Exhibit 3, pg.12
B. shape school culture and values;	Building strategic plan and reflection, exhibit 3, pg. 12 Process used to develop site mission and goals, exhibit 5, pg. 20

This process provides the candidate with something that will be dynamic and ongoing. One can continue to build the portfolio with each new experience and with minor changes the writer will have both a license and application portfolio!

Sources:

Brown, Genevieve, & Irby, Beverly J. The Principal Portfolio. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc., 1997. E-mail address: order@corwin.sagepub.com

National Policy Board for Educational Administration. Principals for our Changing Schools. Lancaster, PA: Technomic Publishing Company, Inc., 1993.

**COMPLETED EXAMPLE OF A REFLECTION SHEET ADDRESSING THE
COMPETENCIES REQUIRED FOR A K-12 PRINCIPAL'S LICENSE**

PORTFOLIO REFLECTION SHEET

EXHIBIT 4

Competencies:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Leadership | 8. Student Guidance |
| 2. Information Collection | 9. Staff Development |
| 3. Problem Analysis | 10. Measurement and Evaluation |
| 4. Organizational Oversight | 11. Motivation |
| 5. Delegation of Authority | 12. Sensitivity |
| 6. Instruction and Learning Environment | 13. Oral and Nonverbal Communication |
| 7. Curriculum Design | 14. Written Expression |

1. Describe the artifact.

This artifact is an article titled Transforming the Paradigm of Leadership, Teaching and Learning Using the MBTI and Type Concepts, authored by this applicant. It describes research by the applicant and the conclusions regarding the importance of understanding student psychological preferences and learning styles to improve education. The study was done with tenth graders at a high school and compared the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) preference of each student with various factors at the school, such as quartile rank at the end of the senior year, and learning style.

2. Why is this exhibit representative of the identified competency and what makes it significant?

This exhibit is significant as it represents a study that has tentacles that wrapped around almost all principal competencies as well as all aspects of the functioning and philosophy of the organization. As a result of learning about the MBTI, information was collected and analyzed that showed lack of equity in educational opportunity, regarding instructional strategies, for the students in that school. As a result, members of the school began to look at policies, procedures, and practices, in curricular and non-instructional areas, from the lens of the variety of learners. A core of staff were trained as examiners to facilitate the ethical use of the instrument. All staff were in-serviced in the concepts of type theory and practice using a tool, authorized by this candidate, called Pearls of Wisdom, which were daily staff development bites, generally 7 lines in length. Those who became proficient in the concepts of type theory also became more successful in communicating with colleagues and students.

3. Appraisal of the experience as it relates to your values and beliefs.

All students and staff have the right to interactions that honor and reinforce their abilities to reach optimum potential. In order to do this individuals must have an understanding of their own psychological preference or learning style and how to help others maximize theirs. The knowledge and skills gained from learning more about type helped to improve the effectiveness of this school in multiple ways. Two examples are:

A. A team of all intuitives worked for months to develop the mission statement for the school. When it was brought before the whole staff there was a large group dissenting. The committee reassembled and studied their presentation of the statement by learning style and discovered that they had not spoken to the "sensing" side of the audience. They broke the mission into segments, defined and presented each in a step-by-step fashion through inter-school mail, then brought it back to the full staff for a vote. This time it was approved unanimously!

B. The school had a drop-out problem. A new school-within-a-school was developed with learning styles as one of its core components. As a result of this program (recognizing that learning styles was only one factor in its success) the school went from the one with the highest drop-out rate to the lowest of four high schools in the district.

4. Can this experience help you improve current practice? How?

This study has reaffirmed the need to continue to provide professional development for staff on inclusion techniques for all learners. It has resulted in a deepened commitment to recognize opportunities that align with individual strengths.

PORTFOLIO REFLECTION SHEET

Competency: 11. Staff Development

1. Describe the artifact:

- Related Courses: Parent-Professional Relationships, and Clinical Supervision-Murray State University
- Clinical Supervision Program and Evaluation Form
- Professional Development Planning
- Professional Development Plan
- School Based Decision Making Council Training Agenda and Roster
- Personal Development Opportunities
- Teacher Observation Tips
- Personal Teaching Evaluations
- Principal Recommendation (Exhibit I-9, pg. 4)

2. Why is this exhibit representative of the competency and what makes it significant?

The activities included in this section demonstrate a thorough knowledge of working with staff, planning for professional development, and observing classroom instruction.

Additionally, evidence is presented for personal improvement opportunities and observations of classroom expertise.

3. Describe the experience(s) and relate to my values and beliefs.

The courses provide background and conceptual theory on which to base practical application.

Participating in evaluating the needs of teachers through assessing and developing a program to meet the teacher's needs offer the skill application to the Staff Development Competency.

As a member of the SBDM Council, we made recommendations for hiring of girls basketball coach.

While serving as Assistant Principal, I observed teachers in their classrooms and provided feedback from my notes.

4. How can this experience improve my current practice?

Staff development is essential for a school to grow and meet the rapidly increasing demands of the community and the workplace. My experiences support my continued belief of the important role teachers and staff play in the overall development of the student, and I will make staff development a priority in the school I lead.

PORTFOLIO REFLECTION SHEET

Competency: Delegation of Authority

Sub-behavior: A-C

1. Describe the artifact (the who, what, when, where of the example).

I have served as the Team Leader of our five person interdisciplinary team for the last two years. We teach a common group of 150 students, and we meet daily for 45 minutes. We use this time to develop interdisciplinary units, group activities, and schedules. During this time, we also discuss student problems, share referrals, and meet with counselors, special education staff, and parents. As Team Leader my responsibility is to develop and notify members of the daily agenda, and then to assign tasks. (Sub-behavior B) I also remind the team members of due dates, send materials to be copied, attend bimonthly Team Leader meetings, file referrals, balance the team budget, and serve as the contact person for the administration, counselors, and special education teachers. (Sub-behavior C). As artifacts I have included a typical agenda, a copy of the schedule that we developed, a letter to parents about conferences, a revised schedule used for an interdisciplinary unit, and a spreadsheet listing all of our students with their study hall teacher and identification number. These artifacts were all produced by different teachers on our team. (Sub-behavior A).

2. Why is this exhibit representative of the identified competency and what makes it significant?

We have had interdisciplinary teams operating in our school for three years. Very quickly, the team leader learned that he/she needed to delegate tasks and responsibilities in order to survive. In the last three years, we have discovered our individual strengths and utilized them to produce the forms, spreadsheets, and other documents. Another team member often assumes the responsibility of writing the referral forms necessary for special education. Another member serves as our Site Council representative. We have created interdisciplinary units that none of us could have envisioned or produced alone. At first, no one wanted to be the team leader as the position was viewed as one with an enormous work load with no added compensation. What is significant is that we have discovered that the team leader fills only one role on our team as we all share the tasks.

3. Appraisal of the experience as it relates to your values and beliefs.

I believe that every teacher has special talents to share. Working with four other teachers has allowed me to grow in my own teaching as they have shared their skills and knowledge with me. Serving as their leader has taught me to listen and restate ideas for clarity. I have also learned to document decisions, the importance of timelessness, and the value of well-organized meetings. I also have come to believe that groups should make decisions by consensus, so that every member feels valued. Being a team leader has allowed me to put my leadership beliefs to practice, and I am deeply indebted to my team members for all they have taught me.

4. Can this experience help you improve current practice? How?

Serving as a Team Leader has allowed me to practice leadership daily. I have learned how to listen, create agendas, and restate ideas, and bring a group to consensus. I have also learned how to recognize the skills, talents, and abilities of others and to delegate tasks according to those strengths and comfort levels. Although leadership of a team of five is much different than a faculty of 100. similar skills are used in both environments.

Adapted from Brown, Genevieve, & Irby, Betty J. The Principal Portfolio. Thousand Oaks. CA: Corwin Press, Inc. 1997.

PORTFOLIO REFLECTION SHEET

Competency: Policies and governance

G *Sub-behavior:* Understanding labor relations and collective bargaining

1. *Describe the artifact (the who, what, when, where of the example).* This exhibit contains language for the implementation of SAGE in the Superior Public Schools, language which relates to teacher transfer and calculations relating to the QEO which is now part of Wisconsin law. Two of the three are the fruits of negotiations with teacher bargaining representatives. The third is statutory requirement.

2. *Why is this exhibit representative of the identified competency and what makes it significant?* I have been significantly engaged in bargaining, directly and otherwise, with teacher representatives in this district. That experience includes formal bargaining with respect to the establishment of new contracts. It also includes less formal bargaining sessions held in effort to resolve problems and conflicts which arise between contracts. Understanding the law, being familiar with bargaining and its related techniques and manipulating the language of a contract are all requirements for effective governance in school district.

3. *Appraisal of the experience as it relates to your values and beliefs.* Of these exhibits, the language relating to teaching assignment and duties most closely exemplifies my beliefs and values. I authorized this language to replace old language which severely restricted the ability of principals to assign teachers within the building. Such restrictions were in place in response to past abuses of that authority. I was successful in gaining agreement to significantly liberalize that process and to return authority to the principals (collaborative in nature) so that staffing assignments could be made in a way that benefits students at least as much as it benefits staff.

4. *Can this experience help you improve current practice? How?* This experience has improved current practice by changing the atmosphere in which job assignments are made in the district. Now collaborative discussions are held between staff members and the principal and assignment decisions are made in relationship to program and students needs and not on the basis of seniority.