



PRACTICUM OVERVIEW 2011

Purpose

After completing the 25 hour pre-practicum outlined on Form PP, candidates may begin the practicum. The practicum is an opportunity to apply what is learned in the coursework and to experience the many roles of an administrator. Each candidate must log a minimum of 300 hours in administrative activities tied to the Professional Standards for Administrators. These standards are included in the notebook and are also available online. Once 300 hours are completed and approved by the mentor, the candidate no longer needs to record hours.

Customizing the Practicum

Since each candidate enters the LLP with a different background, each practicum will be different. The goal is to gain experience in areas that have not been areas of expertise in prior professional work. In addition, candidates must log hours in two diverse settings to meet the practicum diversity requirement (Form D). There is no minimum hour requirement for practicum diversity.

First Steps

A first step is to identify with your mentor ways in which you can dedicate time to the myriad tasks of the practicum. We recommend that candidates be released from one or more duties or other responsibilities. Mentor and candidate should familiarize themselves with all aspects of the program and read the notebook carefully: course modules, assignments, readings, forms and requirements. The program supervisor will be assigned and will make contact in the summer. He or she sets up the first three-way meeting of candidate, mentor and supervisor in early fall.

Recording Activities

It is important that candidates keep an accurate, up-to-date log, Form L. It is easiest to keep the log electronically. Forms are available on the web site. Monthly review of the log by candidate and mentor will enable both to see if the activities are substantive and appropriate and if all of the standards are being addressed. The program supervisor will conduct a similar review during the three-way meetings, so the log must be printed out and signed by the mentor for these meetings.

Reflection, Reflection, Reflection

Reference is made to a journal in some documents. This journal can take any form, though instructors may assign a journal entry in a specific format. There is space in the log for reflection, but reflection is not required for every activity in the log. Substantive reflections are required for some portfolio artifacts as indicated. See the portfolio rubric, which provides the criteria for quality reflection, and the practicum conference report forms. There are also sample reflections in this notebook. Your mentor and supervisor will give you feedback on your reflections. Finally, the portfolio will serve as the ultimate "reflection" on the work of a school, program or district leader.

Completing the Practicum

Successful completion of the practicum is dependent upon completing the required hours and reflections and demonstrating all of the standards. The mentor and supervisor write final evaluations, and the mentor and supervisor certify on the Practicum Endorsement (Form E) that all standards have been met. In addition, your portfolio includes required documents, assignments, and other artifacts that, when taken together, provide clear, tangible and compelling evidence that all of the standards have been met.