ELPS 667: Leadership at the School District Level
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Catalog Description

Study the leadership responsibilities of school district administrators, with special emphasis on the knowledge, skills and values needed by effective superintendents.

Course Meeting Dates

TBD – Weekly meetings using Google Video Hangouts

Course Meeting Location

Online

Relationship with Program Knowledge Base

Students who enter study in educational leadership at UNC are exposed to four domains in which they (1) develop a personal vision for educational leadership and examine modes of inquiry for problem solving; (2) understand organizational culture, communication, and change; (3) explore educational leaders’ roles in professional development; and (4) examine social, political and economic influences from the external environment.

Nine belief statements guide the program’s courses and activities. Learning experiences in Leadership at the School District Level give particular emphasis to the following belief statements:

- Human growth and development are lifelong pursuits;
- Organizations are artifacts of a larger society;
- Learning, teaching, and collegiality are fundamental activities of educational organizations;
Validated knowledge and active inquiry form the basis of practice;

Moral and ethical imperatives drive leadership behavior;

Leadership encompasses a learned set knowledge, skills, and attitudes;

Effective leadership in education organizations depends on the individuals and team efforts;

Leaders’ behaviors and actions model their beliefs and values;

Leaders effect positive change in individuals and organizations.

Colorado Department of Education Standards

Learning activities of this course focus on the following selected licensure strands for principals established by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the State Board of Education. A complete list of standards can be found on the CDE website at http://www.cde.state.co.us. At the time of this printing, CDE is working adapting Principals standards for District Level Administrators.

Standard 1 – Principals Demonstrate Strategic Leadership

Standard 2 – Principals Demonstrate Instructional Leadership

Standard 3 – Principals Demonstrate School and Cultural Equity Leadership

Standard 4 – Principals Demonstrate Human Resource Management Leadership

Standard 5 – Principals Demonstrate Managerial Leadership

Standard 6 – Principals Demonstrate External Development Leadership

Course Objectives

Students of Leadership at the School District level will focus upon acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes to enhance awareness that district level leaders exist in a dynamic environment requiring a systemic perspective.

Course activities are designed to enable student to:

1. Understand the importance of setting high standards for the district staff;
2. Acquire the knowledge and skills to lead and support a school community that is committed to and focused on learning;

3. Distinguish between managing the operation of schools and leading the organization, including an understanding of the role of conflicts among the different segments of the organization;

4. Understand the importance of communication with various constituents and identify a variety of means for sharing information;

5. Develop an understanding of the role of the district administrator as it relates to organizational change.

These knowledge bases, skills and behaviors, and attitudes will be developed using individual readings, group activities, class discussions, role plays and other assignments. As a result students will be able to be able to see, think, explain and act like a superintendent and/or a district level leader.

Coursework

The following attachments describe the course work:

1. Tentative Schedule of Classwork--Presents tentative plans for each class meeting.

2. Possible Segments/Topics--Presents some of the content possibilities.

3. Guiding Questions--Presents questions that focus on what superintendents need to know and be able to do.

The primary classroom approach will be a role play where all class members will function as district level administrators. This approach will include assignments developed as a result of the role play. For the online version, the role play will be set up by video recordings and then facilitated by the instructor.

Students will be divided into teams of five (no more than six). Each member of a team will assume a cabinet role: Learning Services (Curriculum and Instruction), Human Resources, Finance, Operations, Technology (and maybe Special Education, which could be under Learning Services or separated out). Teams will convene weekly in Google Video Hangouts to engage with the instructor. Teams will be given tasks and are expected to engage with tasks while the instructor switches to the next group to facilitate. Participation will be judged on progress, engagement and observable contributions to group activities.
Assignments and Grading

The following assignments are required:

1. Develop a District Level Leadership Platform--15%
2. Develop a District Level Leadership Entry Plan--15%
3. Create an Equity Action Plan--Closing the Achievement Gap--15%
4. Create a BOE Development Plan--15%
5. Class participation including assignments related to role play content--40%

3.50 - 4.00= A range
3.45 - 3.49= A- range
3.40 - 3.44= B+ range
3.00 - 3.39= B range
2.95 - 2.99= B- range
2.90 - 2.94= C+ range
2.00 - 2.89= C range
1.95 - 1.99= C- range
1.00 - 1.94= F

Separate attachments describe assignments 1-4.

Evaluation

The final grade for this course is a letter grade, with expectations for performance consistent with Graduate School expectations as stated in the University Catalog. Final grades will be derived from assessments of each student’s oral and written performance.

Accommodations Statement

Students who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services, Voice/TTY (970) 351-2289, or fax (970) 351-4166, or visit www.unco.edu/dss as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.
Inclusivity Statement

The College of Education and Behavioral Sciences (CEBS) supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength. We expect that students, faculty, administrators and staff within CEBS will respect differences and demonstrate diligence in understanding how other peoples’ perspectives, behaviors, and worldviews may be different from their own.

Please visit the CEBS Diversity and Equity Committee website for more information on our commitment to diversity (http://www.unco.edu/cebs/diversity).

No Required Texts

Selected Articles will be provided throughout the class.

All students are required to set up a Google Account (freely available or use on provided by your district if Google Apps has been adopted).