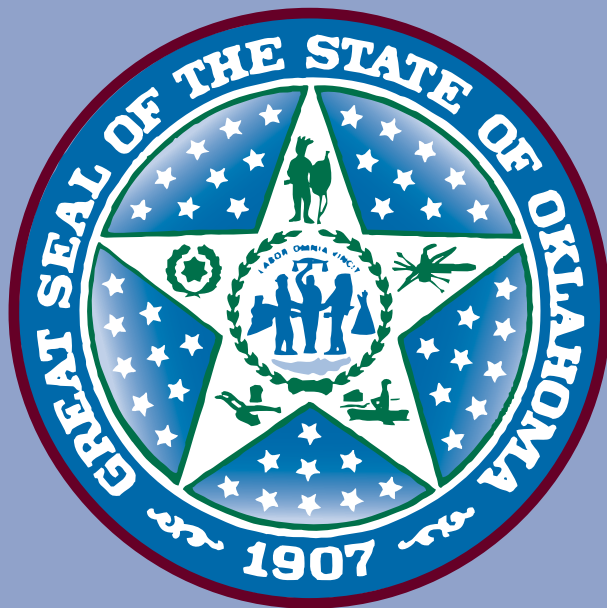


Certification Examinations for Oklahoma Educators™

Oklahoma Subject Area Tests™

STUDY GUIDE

044 Principal Common Core



Oklahoma Commission
for Teacher Preparation

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STUDY GUIDE INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS FOR OKLAHOMA EDUCATORS

The first two sections of the study guide are available in a separate PDF file. Click the link below to view or print these sections.

[Study Guide Introduction and General Information About the Certification Examinations for Oklahoma Educators](#)



FIELD-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

- Test Competencies
 - Practice Test Questions and Answers
 - Constructed-Response Assignment Scoring
-

INTRODUCTION

This section includes a list of the test competencies, as well as a set of practice selected-response (multiple-choice) questions and practice constructed-response assignments, for the test field included in this study guide.

Test Competencies

The test competencies are broad conceptual statements that reflect the subject-matter skills, knowledge, and understanding that an entry-level educator needs to teach effectively in Oklahoma public schools. The list of test competencies for each test field represents the **only** source of information about what a specific test will cover and therefore should be reviewed carefully.

The descriptive statements that follow the competencies are included to provide examples of possible content covered by each competency. These descriptive statements are neither exhaustive nor exclusionary.

Practice Test Questions

The Principal Common Core test consists of selected-response questions and one case study that requires two written responses.

The practice selected-response questions and practice constructed-response assignments included in this section are designed to give you an introduction to the nature of the questions included in this OSAT test field. The practice test questions represent the various types of questions you may expect to see on an actual test; however, they are **not** designed to provide diagnostic information to help you identify specific areas of individual strengths and weaknesses or to predict your performance on the test as a whole.

Decision Set Questions. Some of the questions on the OSAT School Administrator tests will appear in decision sets. The decision set format helps simulate situations that school leaders encounter and in which they must make decisions that affect staff, students, and the larger school community. A typical decision set includes two or more stimuli and six to nine questions that address a range of competencies. Each decision set begins with stimulus material that sets the scene and provides information to use in answering the questions that follow. The stimulus may include the level of the school (elementary, middle, or high school); a description of the community served by the school; information about the staff in general or one or more particular staff members; or data, such as survey or test results. Each decision set stimulus describes a situation that the school administrator is facing. As you proceed through the decision set, additional stimulus material is provided at one or more junctures. This stimulus material typically provides additional information or a subsequent development that you will need to consider in answering the questions that follow.

To help you prepare for your OSAT, each practice selected-response question in this section is preceded by the competency it measures and followed by a brief explanation of the correct response. On the actual test, the competencies, correct responses, and explanations will **not** be given.

For the case study, sample responses are provided immediately following each practice constructed-response assignment. The sample responses in this guide are for illustrative purposes only. This component of the test assesses your ability to prepare a reasoned response to a specific prompt. Your written responses should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

A description of the process that is used for scoring the constructed-response assignments is provided in addition to the OSAT performance characteristics and score scales.

When you are finished with the practice test questions, you may wish to go back and review the entire list of test competencies and descriptive statements for your test field.

TEST COMPETENCIES: PRINCIPAL COMMON CORE

SUBAREAS:

- I. School Vision and Leadership
- II. Instructional Leadership
- III. Organizational, Operational, and Resource Management

SUBAREA I—SCHOOL VISION AND LEADERSHIP

Competency 0001

Understand how to facilitate the development and articulation of a school vision that promotes learning for all students.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Demonstrate knowledge of techniques for collaborating with other administrators, teachers, students, parents/guardians, community members, and state and federal agencies to develop a school vision of learning that promotes the success of all students.

Analyze the use of data-based research strategies (e.g., analysis of student assessment results, student and family demographic data, and data on community needs) to develop a school vision of learning.

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for developing a school vision based on relevant educational theories, models, and practices, including an understanding of the goals for learning in a pluralistic society, the needs of diverse learners, the nature of schools as interactive social and cultural systems, and the dynamics of social and organizational change.

Recognize the value of reflecting on the current status of the school and using that knowledge to inform the process of defining educational goals.

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies and procedures for ensuring that the school vision addresses the diversity of learners and community needs.

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for articulating the school vision throughout the development process.

Demonstrate knowledge of communication techniques, including the use of technology, symbols, ceremonies, stories, and other activities, for conveying the school vision to staff, parents, students, and community members.

Competency 0002

Understand how to facilitate implementation and stewardship of a school vision that promotes learning for all students.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Demonstrate knowledge of leadership processes necessary to implement and support the school vision, including effective communication strategies and strategies for motivating staff, students, and families.

Identify procedures for implementing the school vision, including procedures for initiating change and for overcoming obstacles to change.

Demonstrate knowledge of procedures for defining educational goals related to the school vision.

Analyze the use of data-based research strategies to monitor school improvement efforts, evaluate the school's progress toward achieving its goals and vision, ensure accountability, and make needed adjustments.

Analyze the use of management techniques and group processes to define roles, assign functions, delegate effectively, facilitate teamwork and collegiality, encourage innovation and autonomy, and determine accountability for attaining goals related to the school vision.

Competency 0003

Understand how to promote community collaboration and involvement in supporting the school vision of learning.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Analyze varied strategies for encouraging the involvement of staff, students, parents/guardians, and community members in supporting the school vision.

Identify strategies for drawing on the diversity of the community to improve educational programs, meet diverse student needs, and support the school vision.

Identify strategies for collaborating with community agencies to integrate health, social, cultural, and other services in the schools to address student needs.

Demonstrate knowledge of community relations techniques that make effective use of varied media to help support the school vision.

Identify outreach strategies for involving business, religious, political, and service organizations in supporting the school vision.

Analyze the use of community relations models, marketing strategies, and data-driven decision making to develop educational partnerships among schools, businesses, community organizations, government agencies, and higher education institutions.

Describe ways to support the involvement of families in the education of their children.

Describe ways to acknowledge that families have the best interests of their children in mind.

Competency 0004

Understand the significance of diversity for the school's vision of learning and ways to exercise leadership in supporting and valuing diversity.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Examine ways to use the experiences and perspectives of members of the school community with diverse backgrounds to help achieve the school vision and meet the learning needs of all students.

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for creating an atmosphere in the school that encourages respect, sensitivity, and appreciation for all people.

Analyze factors involved in working effectively with diverse groups within the school and community.

Examine cultural, social, and economic factors affecting students and society.

Analyze the implications of diversity for education.

Demonstrate knowledge of ways to work with others in the school community to address prejudice and ensure that all students have an equal opportunity for educational success.

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for infusing diversity awareness into the curriculum.

Identify policies and strategies to help students and staff learn how to function effectively in a multilingual, multicultural, and economically diverse society.

Competency 0005

Understand how to support the school vision by using human relations skills and communication skills to solve problems and facilitate decision making.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Analyze the use of communication skills and public relations techniques in disseminating information to the public and engaging the community in dialogue to support the school vision.

Demonstrate knowledge of techniques for facilitating communication with and among members of the school community.

Apply knowledge of skills for listening and speaking effectively in small- and large-group contexts.

Identify procedures to promote collaborative decision making and creative problem solving in various school situations.

Demonstrate knowledge of various theories of conflict resolution and appropriate application of these models to specific communities.

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for applying group process skills and for using research-based data to build consensus and resolve conflicts.

Competency 0006

Understand how school leadership and the school vision relate to the larger political, social, economic, cultural, legal, and ethical context of education.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Examine how an understanding of the larger political, social, economic, and cultural context of education informs the development of effective policies and practices to benefit the school and its students.

Recognize how economic and political factors shape a community and affect the opportunities available to children in particular schools.

Recognize the importance of communicating regularly with all members of the school community, including representatives of diverse community groups, concerning trends, issues, and policies affecting the school.

Identify ways to advocate for policies and programs at the local, state, and federal levels that promote equitable learning opportunities and success for all students, regardless of socioeconomic background, ethnicity, gender, disability, or other individual characteristics.

Analyze community norms and values and explain how they relate to the role of the school in promoting social justice.

Recognize how the Oklahoma and U.S. Constitutions; district policies; and statutory, common, and case law regulate the behavior of students, staff, and administration in the schools.

Demonstrate knowledge of the system of public school governance and strategies for working effectively with local governing boards.

Recognize how to demonstrate honesty, integrity, impartiality, fairness, sensitivity to student diversity, respect for confidentiality, and ethical behavior in interactions with members of the school community.

SUBAREA II—INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Competency 0007

Understand how to use knowledge of human development, learning and teaching theories, educational research, and best practice to promote the success of all students.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Recognize the characteristics and stages of physical, cognitive, and social/emotional development and their educational significance.

Analyze how sociological, linguistic, cultural, and other factors may affect students' development and needs and the implications of these factors for instruction.

Examine ways to apply research-based knowledge of human development, learning, motivation, and best-practice instruction to optimize learning for all students.

Identify strategies for collaborating with counseling staff, teaching staff, and community agencies to address student needs and ensure student access to adequate counseling, guidance, and other services.

Evaluate the implications of various behavior management practices.

Examine strategies for promoting successful learning experiences for students with disabilities and ensuring that these students have access to appropriate resources.

Recognize the role of various types of activity programs in meeting all students' developmental, social, cultural, athletic, leadership, and academic needs.

Competency 0008

Understand how to apply principles of curriculum planning, development, and evaluation to promote the success of all students.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Identify basic principles of curriculum design and recognize relationships between child/adolescent/adult development and the curriculum.

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for designing and implementing curricula that fully accommodate learners' diverse needs.

Identify appropriate criteria for use in evaluating, modifying, and integrating curricula.

Apply knowledge of procedures for involving and leading stakeholders in curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation.

Demonstrate knowledge of the relationships between Oklahoma's Priority Academic Student Skills and local curricula.

Analyze issues and procedures related to the development of curricula to meet the needs of all students.

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for infusing diversity awareness into the curriculum.

Apply knowledge of current research in curriculum development and strategies for developing an inclusive curriculum that reflects the diversity of the classroom, the community, the nation, and the world.

Competency 0009

Understand how to apply principles of instruction and instructional leadership to promote the success of all students.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Apply knowledge of strategies for helping school personnel apply best practices and sound educational research to improve instructional programs.

Demonstrate knowledge of principles and techniques associated with various instructional methods, including technology-based methods.

Examine the significance of student differences (e.g., in regard to learning styles, cultural background, home language, disabilities) for instructional planning and implementation.

Describe methods of assessing student learning and achievement and examine the role of student assessment for instruction and program evaluation.

Examine how various staffing patterns, student grouping arrangements, behavior management practices, class scheduling formats, school organizational structures, and facility designs affect teaching and learning.

Identify strategies for using resources within the community (e.g., school-business partnerships) to enhance education and promote achievement.

Describe how to use technology and information systems to enrich the school's curriculum and instruction.

Competency 0010

Understand strategies for promoting professional growth and development and strategies for creating a positive school culture for learning.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Demonstrate knowledge of research-based professional development that includes authentic problems and tasks, mentoring, coaching, conferencing, and other techniques for promoting adult learning and developing new knowledge and skills in the workplace.

Identify procedures for working collaboratively with school personnel to develop and implement comprehensive professional growth plans.

Recognize how to evaluate professional development programs to ensure that they advance the school's vision of learning.

Recognize the importance of encouraging reflective practice for one's self and staff, including reflection on the role that one's own attitudes, biases, and preconceptions play in interactions with students, colleagues, and others.

Demonstrate knowledge of principles and procedures for effective personnel evaluation and developmental supervision.

Describe how to create a personal development plan that reflects commitment to life-long learning and best practices and that takes advantage of varied resources for continuing professional development.

Analyze strategies for creating and maintaining a positive school culture that draws on the diversity of the school community and fosters the belief that all children can learn and succeed.

SUBAREA III—ORGANIZATIONAL, OPERATIONAL, AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Competency 0011

Understand principles of organizational management, budgeting, resource utilization, financial management, and technology use.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Examine ways to apply knowledge of organizational development and data management to optimize learning for all students.

Analyze ways to apply long-range planning procedures and problem-solving skills to promote effective and equitable resource allocation that focuses on teaching and learning.

Identify characteristics of school budgets, stages in the budgeting process, and strategies for working effectively with stakeholders to develop the school budget.

Apply knowledge of effective procedures for managing scarce resources and creative strategies for seeking new resources to support student learning, including grant money and other nonbudgetary resources.

Identify basic principles of financial and cost accounting, methods for financial record keeping and reporting, and effective procedures for managing activity funds.

Demonstrate knowledge of current technologies and information systems designed to facilitate management, business, and scheduling practices.

Competency 0012

Understand principles of human resource planning and management.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Demonstrate knowledge of procedures and legal requirements (e.g., EEOC, ADA) for recruiting, screening, and selecting personnel.

Analyze issues of equity and diversity in human resource management.

Examine the relationship between personnel practices and quality and justice in the workplace.

Apply knowledge of skills and procedures for supervising and evaluating school personnel.

Apply knowledge of procedures for disciplining and dismissing staff in accordance with due process.

Identify requirements and effective practices in situations involving contract negotiation and management and employee grievances.

Competency 0013

Understand how to manage the school's physical plant and auxiliary services to ensure a safe and effective learning environment.

The following topics are examples of content that may be covered under this competency.

Identify the features of a safe and effective learning environment.

Examine strategies for ensuring the safety of students and school personnel and for addressing suspected problems related to safety.

Identify procedures for crisis planning and for responding to crises.

Demonstrate knowledge of public school safety, security, and emergency procedures.

Identify procedures for monitoring and evaluating the operation, use, maintenance, and efficiency of school facilities.

Identify legal issues related to the operation and maintenance of school facilities (e.g., providing access for individuals with disabilities).

Demonstrate knowledge of regulations, issues, and procedures related to purchasing, food services, transportation services, information management services, and health services in the school.

PRACTICE TEST QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: PRINCIPAL COMMON CORE

Practice Selected-Response Questions

Competency 0002

Understand how to facilitate implementation and stewardship of a school vision that promotes learning for all students.

1. A principal reminds site-based team members about the importance of generating goals that are measurable in order to facilitate periodic assessment of the school's progress in achieving each goal. Which of the following is the best example of a measurable goal?
 - A. Encourage the belief that all children can succeed regardless of their background or current achievement level.
 - B. Foster a spirit of cooperation among students, staff, and administration.
 - C. Foster all students' ability to use computers to engage in research and other lifelong learning skills.
 - D. Provide a stimulating learning environment that challenges all students to do their best.

Correct Response: C. School leaders can best assess their school's progress in achieving a goal if the goal is defined in concrete, measurable terms. Of the options given, only the ability of students to use computers for various purposes can be readily measured and assessed (e.g., through teacher observation, performance, and other informal assessments).

Use the information below to answer the two questions that follow.

A principal is working with a committee of stakeholders to develop a multicultural curriculum for the school. The committee is also developing recommendations for classroom strategies that promote equal educational opportunity for all students.

Competency 0004

Understand the significance of diversity for the school's vision of learning and ways to exercise leadership in supporting and valuing diversity.

2. Which of the following recommendations to teachers would best promote equal opportunity in the classroom?
 - A. Ensure that verbal and nonverbal messages convey the expectation that all students can learn.
 - B. Make frequent use of open-ended questions to stimulate student thinking and promote classroom discussion.
 - C. Establish classroom management routines that minimize disruptions and maximize learning time for all students.
 - D. Take students' interests and preferences into account when planning classroom instructional activities.

Correct Response: A. It is important for principals to understand how instructional methods and teacher behaviors may influence equal opportunity in the classroom. In the situation described, the committee should ensure that teachers are made aware of the verbal and nonverbal ways in which they communicate expectations for student success or failure. When students consistently receive the message that teachers expect them to learn successfully, they are more likely to believe in their own ability to learn and achieve.

Competency 0008

Understand how to apply principles of curriculum planning, development, and evaluation to promote the success of all students.

3. The committee is most likely to develop an effective multicultural curriculum if committee members adhere to which of the following guidelines?
 - A. Incorporate student learning related to diversity into the core curriculum rather than adding it on as a separate component.
 - B. Rely on consultants and other diversity specialists to identify appropriate content for diversity-related coursework.
 - C. Focus mainly on characteristics, trends, and traditions that are shared by various cultures rather than those that are unique.
 - D. Use the holidays and celebrations of diverse cultures as a unifying theme for multicultural units of instruction.

Correct Response: A. One of the primary goals of multicultural education is to help students learn that there are many ways of understanding and appreciating a given area of knowledge (e.g., history, literature, science) when the subject is viewed from various cultural perspectives. In the situation described, the committee should therefore plan to infuse multicultural content and perspectives throughout the curriculum rather than relegate multicultural topics to discrete courses that are separate from core areas of study.

Ms. Cruz, a newly hired principal, receives a call from Mr. Langston, the president of the school's parent organization. Mr. Langston tells the principal that a number of parents/guardians have been expressing uneasiness about some of the books in the school library. He cites several examples of potentially offensive books that have been the subject of discussion and concern among parents/guardians.

Mr. Langston asks Ms. Cruz about the school's policy regarding library acquisitions. He also asks about procedures for lodging complaints or requesting removal of particular books in the school library. Ms. Cruz promises to check on relevant school and/or district policies and report back to him. After making some inquiries, Ms. Cruz discovers that neither the school nor the district has any written policies that address the concerns raised by Mr. Langston.

Competency 0005

Understand how to support the school vision by using human relations skills and communication skills to solve problems and facilitate decision making.

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4. Ms. Cruz provides Mr. Langston with an update and assures him that she will continue to look into the issues he has raised. Which of the following steps would likely be most helpful for Ms. Cruz to take next?
- A. Call a special faculty meeting to solicit feedback from teachers about the school library.
 - B. Meet with the library-media specialist to familiarize herself with current practices relating to the library's holdings and acquisitions.
 - C. Write a memo to the board of education to document the complaints from parents/guardians.
 - D. Arrange a meeting with interested parents/guardians to discuss their concerns about the holdings of the school library.

Correct Response: B. A principal should be knowledgeable about the holdings of the school library. In the situation described, a new principal must respond to parent/guardian questions and concerns about the school library. Having determined that there are no written policies to address these issues, the principal should prepare for further discussion with stakeholders by gathering information about the school library and its holdings. The best source for such information is the library-media specialist, who has direct responsibility for library holdings and acquisitions.

Competency 0006

Understand how school leadership and the school vision relate to the larger political, social, economic, cultural, legal, and ethical context of education.

5. Ms. Cruz learns that some parents/guardians plan to request removal of particular books from the school library. She can best prepare for this situation by taking which of the following steps *first*?
- A. Initiate a policy requiring parental permission for students to check out books that the parent organization has identified as controversial.
 - B. Create a list of controversial books that are currently available in the school library and invite community feedback on whether to retain them.
 - C. Contact the district's legal counsel to discuss any legal constraints on the removal of books from a school library.
 - D. Suggest that the school's site-based decision-making team establish procedures for reviewing complaints about library books.

Correct Response: C. School principals should be aware of legal constraints relating to school library policies and practices. Courts have upheld the authority of school boards to exercise broad discretion in adding books to a school library, but removal of books may be interpreted as an abridgement of students' First Amendment rights. In the situation described, the principal is aware that some parents/guardians plan to request removal of certain texts from the school library. Her first step in preparing for this possibility should be to consult with the district counsel to determine the specific legal considerations that apply in this situation.

In a meeting with the school's site-based decision-making team, Ms. Cruz suggests that a task force be appointed to develop a formal library acquisitions policy specifying criteria and procedures for selection of new texts. The site-based team agrees and asks Ms. Cruz to begin organizing the task force.

Competency 0003

Understand how to promote community collaboration and involvement in supporting the school vision of learning.

6. In a meeting of the school's parent organization, Ms. Cruz listens to the concerns of parents/guardians regarding the school library and shares her findings with them. Several parents are especially critical of the previous administration's failure to monitor the school library. Ms. Cruz's best initial response to these parents would be to:
- A. invite them to serve on the newly created library acquisitions task force.
 - B. advise them to seek further input regarding their concerns by writing a commentary for publication in the local newspaper.
 - C. suggest that they discuss their concerns with the school's library-media specialist.
 - D. recommend that they prepare for the school's site-based decision-making team a written statement describing their concerns.

Correct Response: A. School principals should encourage parent/guardian involvement in decisions about school library policies and practices. In the situation described, the principal must respond to criticism from parents/guardians about the school library. Rather than attempting to deflect the criticism, the principal should seek to involve the parents/guardians in the work of the task force, thereby strengthening eventual consensus on an effective library acquisitions policy.

Competency 0007

Understand how to use knowledge of human development, learning and teaching theories, educational research, and best practice to promote the success of all students.

7. Ms. Cruz and the library acquisitions task force meet to discuss their responsibilities for establishing selection criteria for new texts. During this discussion, Ms. Cruz should emphasize the importance of selecting texts that:
- I. avoid potentially controversial topics.
 - II. are developmentally appropriate for students at the various grade levels in the school.
 - III. help promote the school's vision of education.
 - IV. contain no information that could be construed as inappropriate by any member of the school community.
- A. I and II only
- B. I and IV only
- C. II and III only
- D. III and IV only

Correct Response: C. School principals can help prevent divisive controversies about school library acquisitions by applying broadly accepted criteria of educational merit. In the situation described, the principal can best accomplish this goal by encouraging the task force to consider whether particular texts are developmentally appropriate and how the texts relate to the school's educational vision.

PRINCIPAL DECISION SET ENDS HERE

Competency 0011

Understand principles of organizational management, budgeting, resource utilization, financial management, and technology use.

8. Compared with an incremental method of budgeting, an important advantage of a zero-based budgeting method is that it:
- A. involves the teaching staff more actively in the budget process.
 - B. is more responsive to changing economic conditions.
 - C. is based on careful scrutiny of the previous year's budget.
 - D. calls for a reevaluation of program expenditures each year.

Correct Response: D. With incremental budgeting, a department or program budget is increased or decreased by a certain percentage each year. With zero-based budgeting, expenditures for a department or program are determined based on an annual review of department/program effectiveness and needs. This type of annual reevaluation can help promote overall accountability and enhance awareness of a department's/program's strengths and weaknesses.

Competency 0012

Understand principles of human resource planning and management.

9. To conduct an effective teacher appraisal, it is most important for a principal to adhere to which of the following guidelines?
- I. When communicating results, make every effort to emphasize teacher strengths over areas of need.
 - II. Involve the teacher in formulating his or her own goals for improved performance.
 - III. Offer the teacher options in regard to the focus and format of the appraisal.
 - IV. Base the appraisal on objective criteria that are communicated to the teacher before the appraisal.
- A. I and III only
 - B. I and IV only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. II and IV only

Correct Response: D. One goal of an effective teacher appraisal is to promote the professional growth and development of the teacher being appraised. Involving a teacher in formulating goals for his or her own improved performance helps ensure that the goals will be personally meaningful and thus tends to enhance teacher motivation to achieve the goals. Basing appraisals on objective criteria that are communicated to the teacher before the appraisal can give teachers a sense of control in regard to the appraisal process and also helps protect the right of teachers to fair and unbiased appraisals.

Competency 0013

Understand how to manage the school's physical plant and auxiliary services to ensure a safe and effective learning environment.

10. A recent inspection of a school revealed several violations of fire safety rules. The school principal now wishes to undertake a thorough review and analysis of all the school's safety-related rules. The most effective *first* step for the principal to take in this process would be to:
- A. review all relevant state and local safety procedures and mandates.
 - B. determine the origins of the school's current safety code and how it has evolved over time.
 - C. meet with principals of other local schools to learn how they have addressed safety issues.
 - D. hire local contractors to inspect the school's facilities and offer suggestions for changes in the safety code.

Correct Response: A. A school's safety rules should be grounded in state and local mandates related to safety. Reviewing relevant state and local rules and regulations would help a principal understand what is required by law while providing a basis for assessing the adequacy of current school safety rules. Therefore, in the situation described, the principal's first step should be to identify and review all mandated safety rules and procedures.

Sample Directions for the Constructed-Response Assignments

This section of the test consists of a case study followed by two constructed-response assignments. The case study provides a hypothetical scenario of a situation relevant to the position of a school administrator. You will be asked to respond to the scenario in two assignments. Your response to each assignment should be of sufficient length to cover the topic in depth (up to four pages). You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your responses to the assignments.

Read the case study scenario and each assignment carefully before you begin to write. Think about how you will organize each of your responses.

The first assignment asks you to analyze the key issues involved in the situation. **Your response to the first assignment must be written in Written Response Booklet B.**

The second assignment asks you to propose and defend a plan of action for addressing the situation. **Your response to the second assignment must be written in Written Response Booklet C.**

You may use any blank space provided following each assignment to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response to that assignment. However, your final response to each assignment must be recorded in the appropriate answer document.

Your response to each assignment will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- **PURPOSE:** the extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment
- **CONTENT KNOWLEDGE:** accuracy and appropriateness in the application of content knowledge
- **SUPPORT:** quality and relevance of supporting details
- **RATIONALE:** soundness of argument in relation to the assigned topic

As a whole, your responses must demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge and skills of the field. In your responses to the assignments, you are expected to demonstrate the depth of your understanding of the content area through your ability to apply your knowledge and skills rather than merely to recite factual information.

The constructed-response assignments are intended to assess content knowledge and skills, not writing ability. However, your responses must be communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgment of the scoring criteria. Your responses should be written for an audience of educators in this field. The final versions of your responses should conform to the conventions of edited American English. Your written responses must be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

Be sure to write about the assigned topics. Please write legibly. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Remember to review what you have written and make any changes you think will improve your responses.

Write your response to **Case Study Assignment 1** in **Written Response Booklet B**.

Write your response to **Case Study Assignment 2** in **Written Response Booklet C**.

Practice Case Study

Read the case study below; then write a response for each of the two assignments that follow. The case study provides information about all relevant activities that occurred in the situation described.

Case Study

Three years ago, Katherine Scott became principal of Mill River Middle School, a small school that serves 384 students in grades six through eight. She spent much of the first year getting to know faculty and staff, familiarizing herself with district procedures, encouraging community involvement, assessing educational needs, and developing a new school vision of learning. As the school year drew to a close, she announced a three-year plan to enhance instructional quality through a comprehensive program of professional development for all teachers.

After two years of intensive professional development, the strategy seems to be paying off. All teachers have participated in hands-on workshops, state and local conferences, visits to other schools, self-assessment activities, and faculty mentoring arrangements. Ms. Scott is pleased to note that student achievement levels, as well as faculty morale, have risen. There is greater collaboration between teachers and across grade levels, and more parents are involved in classroom activities.

Ms. Scott remains concerned, however, about Mr. Lockwood, a sixth-grade teacher who has been at Mill River for 20 years. Strongly resisting the new professional development initiatives, he has pointedly refrained from incorporating recommended approaches, such as cooperative learning, into his classroom. Observing Mr. Lockwood's classes at regular intervals, Ms. Scott feels that his teaching is actually growing worse instead of better. Students appear bored and restless during class and frequently talk among themselves when Mr. Lockwood is lecturing. Mr. Lockwood assigns little homework, and class time is largely taken up with lectures, drills, and worksheets.

The principal repeatedly tries to engage Mr. Lockwood in honest discussion about needed changes in his instructional methods. In response, he either deflects the criticism with a joke ("My wife's always telling me that our old dog learns new tricks better than I do") or becomes defensive ("My methods have worked for 20 years"). Ms. Scott has heard that Mr. Lockwood is often uncooperative during professional development activities and argumentative with colleagues who offer suggestions. "I have to start from scratch with kids who were in his class," confides a seventh-grade teacher. "They have to relearn positive attitudes as well as appropriate study habits."

Every spring when class assignments for the following year are announced, Ms. Scott receives at least two or three phone calls from parents requesting that the principal transfer their children from Mr. Lockwood's group to the other sixth-grade class. This year five parents call to request transfers for their children.

Ms. Scott decides that it is time to talk the problem over with the district's assistant superintendent for personnel. "Basically, you have three options," says the assistant superintendent. "Under the terms of Mr. Lockwood's contract, you could begin termination procedures on the grounds of gross incompetence, but that could be a drawn-out process. You could also reassign him to an administrative position. I notice, for example, that your assistant principal is leaving next year. Or you could just do your best until he retires three years from now." After reviewing the pros and cons of each strategy, Ms. Scott decides that the most compassionate as well as expedient approach is to allow Mr. Lockwood to finish out his contract, while continuing to seek ways to motivate improvement.

Several weeks into the fall semester, Ms. Scott meets with a group of six parents of children in Mr. Lockwood's class. They say that his teaching is intolerable, and they demand that he be replaced immediately. "Here's a great school with all these great teachers," says one parent, "and we're stuck with Mr. Lockwood. This man is making a mockery of all of your talk about excellence in education."

Practice Case Study Assignment I

Case Study Assignment 1

Write a response of up to four pages for an audience of Oklahoma educators. In your response:

- identify and discuss key issues involved in this situation;
- describe what the principal did well in this situation, citing specific evidence from the information provided; and
- describe what the principal did poorly or failed to do in this situation, and explain your reasoning.



FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY—*The Case Study constructed-response items are written to assess understanding in Subarea I, School Vision and Leadership, which consists of the competencies listed below.*

Understand how to facilitate the development and articulation of a school vision that promotes learning for all students.

Understand how to facilitate implementation and stewardship of a school vision that promotes learning for all students.

Understand how to promote community collaboration and involvement in supporting the school vision of learning.

Understand the significance of diversity for the school's vision of learning and ways to exercise leadership in supporting and valuing diversity.

Understand how to support the school vision by using human relations skills and communication skills to solve problems and facilitate decision making.

Understand how school leadership and the school vision relate to the larger political, social, economic, cultural, legal, and ethical context of education.

A Very Good Response to Practice Case Study Assignment I

The overriding issue in this scenario is how to manage problems typically brought about by major changes in required teaching practices. In this instance, the principal must address problems of ineffective teaching, parent complaints, and an evident lack of student achievement, with minimum disruption to students, staff, and community.

More specifically, questions arise regarding the following:

1. how to determine whether Mr. Lockwood's performance warrants support and assistance for professional improvement, or whether his performance is so deficient that he cannot or will not improve to a satisfactory level within an acceptable time frame;
2. how to set in motion a timely, appropriate, legal, and ethical plan to improve a deficient teacher's performance, at the same time laying the groundwork for termination, if necessary; and
3. how to determine the extent to which parents should be involved in this process and evaluating what information would be appropriate to share with them.

The steps that Ms. Scott took to develop and implement a plan for enhancing instructional quality at the school appear to have been comprehensive and generally successful. By initiating a faculty mentoring program, intensive professional development, and collaborative techniques for staff planning, Ms. Scott has evidently built a high level of trust and credibility regarding her ability to achieve real school improvement. Evidence that the program is working is visible in improved student achievement and staff morale. These successes should give weight and validity to whatever actions she might have to take in dealing with problems she may encounter as her school improvement plan unfolds.

Ms. Scott, having chosen to implement a staff development plan requiring participation by all staff members, evidently understood her responsibility to motivate and assist her staff to achieve her school-improvement goals, and also to monitor their efforts to improve. Ms. Scott did well to observe Mr. Lockwood's classes on a regular basis, and she did try repeatedly to engage him in discussion about needed changes in his instructional methods. However, it is clear that she was not as persuasive in these discussions as she needed to be.

When all staff are asked to adopt new teaching practices within a given time line, one can almost always expect negative reactions from some staff members; unfortunately, there are "Mr. Lockwoods" on virtually every staff. Ms. Scott's failure to fully anticipate this kind of problem, which is common in any major change effort, has allowed Mr. Lockwood's problem to reach crisis proportions before Ms. Scott is prepared to deal with it effectively. Had Ms. Scott properly anticipated a problem of this type, she could have researched relevant district personnel policies before

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A Very Good Response to Practice Case Study Assignment I (continued)

beginning to implement the change effort; she would then have been in a strong legal and ethical position to act in case personnel problems arose. It appears that three years have elapsed, during which time Ms. Scott has been aware of Mr. Lockwood's unsatisfactory teaching practices and increasingly negative attitude, yet she has taken no steps to deal with the problem other than ineffectual attempts to engage him in discussions about her concerns. Mr. Lockwood apparently is unaware of the seriousness of his situation. Ms. Scott should have documented her concerns during the normal evaluation process; she also should have examined assessment data on Mr. Lockwood's students in order to provide quantitative evidence of his impact on student achievement. Had she done so, and had she made Mr. Lockwood aware of these concerns, she would be in a position to authoritatively bring about change in Mr. Lockwood's teaching or be in a strong position to move for his dismissal if her best efforts to assist him failed.

Ms. Scott wisely takes seriously the concerns of parents about the quality of Mr. Lockwood's teaching. Indeed, it was the large number of parents requesting transfers for their children that impelled her to seek advice from the district office. She is clearly aware of the problems Mr. Lockwood has created for her program. His continued intransigence has not only created a crisis for Ms. Scott because of parental concerns, but also poses a potential morale problem with the staff if he is allowed to continue to be openly critical.

Had Ms. Scott acted sooner in moving to correct Mr. Lockwood's deficiencies, she would not have had to react to the parents' concerns from a defensive position, possibly causing them to view her as unaware of or accepting of Mr. Lockwood's problems, and she would have helped improve the quality of instruction sooner, which, of course, is the most important issue. Much of Ms. Scott's ability to effect lasting change is based upon her credibility as a strong and effective leader, and the more support she can garner from all quarters, the more influence she can bring to bear in her efforts to improve her school.

Practice Case Study Assignment 2

Case Study Assignment 2

Write a response of up to four pages for an audience of Oklahoma educators. In your response:

- identify and discuss three important actions that the principal should take to resolve this situation; and
- explain why each of the three actions you have identified is likely to be effective.



FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY—*The Case Study constructed-response items are written to assess understanding in Subarea I, School Vision and Leadership, which consists of the competencies listed below.*

Understand how to facilitate the development and articulation of a school vision that promotes learning for all students.

Understand how to facilitate implementation and stewardship of a school vision that promotes learning for all students.

Understand how to promote community collaboration and involvement in supporting the school vision of learning.

Understand the significance of diversity for the school's vision of learning and ways to exercise leadership in supporting and valuing diversity.

Understand how to support the school vision by using human relations skills and communication skills to solve problems and facilitate decision making.

Understand how school leadership and the school vision relate to the larger political, social, economic, cultural, legal, and ethical context of education.

A Very Good Response to Practice Case Study Assignment 2

With parents voicing concerns and making demands and with evidence mounting of Mr. Lockwood's poor teaching practices, Ms. Scott must act quickly and firmly. It is essential that she plan to take three actions. First, she must create a situation that motivates Mr. Lockwood to demonstrate a positive attitude and to adopt acceptable teaching practices. She must also put herself in a sound legal and ethical position for action to remove Mr. Lockwood should all efforts to make him successful fail. Second, when meeting with the concerned parents, Ms. Scott should show that she takes their concerns seriously and assure them that she will make a thorough evaluation of the situation in Mr. Lockwood's classroom and that she will contact each of them as soon as this is done. Third, Ms. Scott should follow up with Mr. Lockwood through ongoing observations and close supervision.

Ms. Scott should immediately have a conference with Mr. Lockwood. She should be both candid about possible consequences of the situation and assuring to Mr. Lockwood that a plan can be mutually agreed upon whereby he can be assisted to address concerns. Ms. Scott should share her concerns about Mr. Lockwood's teaching practices, as observed during her regular visits. She should also make clear to Mr. Lockwood that the issue of his teaching practices has grown and has caused a vocal group of parents to demand his removal. Ms. Scott must be careful in sharing the information about the parent group to avoid the impression that she is just reacting to pressure from disgruntled parents. Mr. Lockwood should know about the parent problem, but it should be presented within the larger context of Ms. Scott's observations and viewed simply as further evidence of the need for change. At this juncture, Mr. Lockwood will likely come to view Ms. Scott as either "enemy" or "ally." Therefore, Ms. Scott must reach out to Mr. Lockwood, offering her full support and assuring him that her goal is for Mr. Lockwood to be successful. This is an opportunity for Ms. Scott to work with Mr. Lockwood on a personal level that was not possible before, and with the proper encouragement and assistance, this situation could provide the impetus for a real self-evaluation and change for Mr. Lockwood.

At this conference, Ms. Scott should present a written summary of her observations to Mr. Lockwood to ensure that there is no misunderstanding about areas of unsatisfactory performance. A growth/improvement plan should be created--again, in writing--and immediately implemented. The plan should be collaborative to the fullest extent possible, with activities tailored to specific areas needing improvement. A time line should be established to address the concerns in order of their importance, with Ms. Scott establishing the areas to be addressed and providing as many options as possible for Mr. Lockwood to select workshops, district specialists, selected peers, etc., to assist him.

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A Very Good Response to Practice Case Study Assignment 2 (continued)

As soon as Ms. Scott has evidence that Mr. Lockwood has accepted and is satisfactorily following the growth/improvement plan, she should contact each of the concerned parents, acknowledge their concerns, and let them know, in general terms, that a plan has been initiated to address those concerns. However, information about Mr. Lockwood's performance should be handled in a professional manner, and every effort should be made to emphasize the positive.

Generally, it is inadvisable to remove a group of students from a classroom based solely on parental request. Removing students should occur only after careful investigation of the issues and only on the basis of the principal's judgment after such an investigation has occurred. Removing students without carefully investigating the situation could be premature and could cause a possibly avoidable negative reaction by Mr. Lockwood and unwarranted negative conclusions on the part of other parents and staff. If Ms. Scott assures the parents that she will devote intensive personal time and resources to ensure that their children receive good instruction, she may be able to alleviate their concerns. Ms. Scott must assure the parents that she will keep them apprised of the situation and must keep this commitment as she monitors Mr. Lockwood's progress.

Ms. Scott must conduct frequent observations after the growth plan is developed to ensure that needed improvement is occurring and to provide assistance where needed. She must make every effort to encourage Mr. Lockwood, compliment him for positive steps, and build on positive aspects of his teaching, both past and present. Close supervision, and an appreciation of the seriousness of his situation, will increase the likelihood that Mr. Lockwood will make a good-faith effort to improve. If he does not, frequent observation provides the documentation that will be necessary for a defensible termination process. To the extent possible, Ms. Scott should prepare for that worst-case scenario by continuing to consult with the district office about disciplinary procedures and legal options. A thorough knowledge of these procedures is needed to avoid mistakes that could be costly to the district or result in adversarial legal proceedings.

CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT SCORING

All responses to OSAT constructed-response assignments (written and oral) are scored using scoring scales that describe varying levels of performance. These scales were approved by committees of Oklahoma educators who reviewed both the performance characteristics and the scoring scales.

Each response is scored by multiple scorers according to standardized procedures during scoring sessions held immediately after each administration of the CEOE. Scorers with relevant professional backgrounds are oriented to these procedures before the scoring session and are carefully monitored during the scoring sessions.

A constructed-response assignment response is designated unscorable if it is blank, not on the assigned topic, illegible or unintelligible, not in the appropriate language, or of insufficient length to score. If you do not provide a scorable response for each constructed-response assignment on your test, you cannot pass the test regardless of your scores on the other section(s) of the test.

Sample Performance Characteristics for the Case Study Assignments

Purpose	the extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment
Content Knowledge	accuracy and appropriateness in the application of content knowledge
Support	quality and relevance of supporting details
Rationale	soundness of argument in relation to the assigned topic

Sample Scoring Scale for the Case Study Assignments

SCORE	SCORE POINT DESCRIPTION
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved. • There is a substantial, accurate, and appropriate application of content knowledge. • The supporting evidence is strong; there are high-quality, relevant examples. • The response reflects an ably reasoned argument in relation to the assigned topic.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects a general knowledge and understanding of the content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved. • There is a generally accurate and appropriate application of content knowledge. • The supporting evidence generally supports the discussion; there are some relevant examples. • The response reflects a reasoned argument in relation to the assigned topic.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a partial knowledge and understanding of the content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved. • There is a limited, possibly inaccurate or inappropriate application of content knowledge. • The supporting evidence is limited; there are few relevant examples. • The response reflects a poorly reasoned argument in relation to the assigned topic.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects little or no knowledge and understanding of content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is not achieved. • There is little or no appropriate or accurate application of content knowledge. • The supporting evidence, if present, is weak; there are few or no relevant examples. • The response reflects little or no reasoning in relation to the assigned topic.
U	The response is unscorable because it is illegible, not written to the assigned topic, written in a language other than English, or of insufficient length to score.
B	There is no response to the assignment.

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