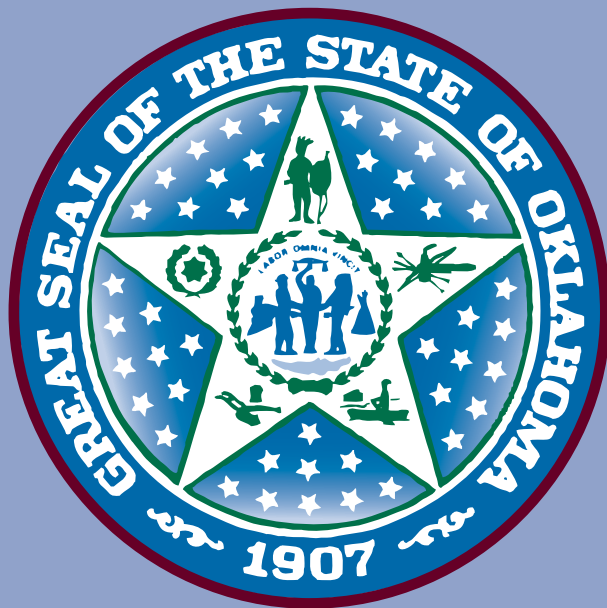


Certification Examinations for Oklahoma Educators™

Oklahoma Subject Area Tests™

STUDY GUIDE

046 Middle Level Principal Specialty Test



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 Elementary Principal, Middle Level Principal, and Secondary Principal Specialty Tests consist of selected-response questions, one Instructional Leadership Assignment that requires one written response, and one Educational Management Assignment that requires one written response.

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.

A sample response is provided immediately following the practice Instructional Leadership constructed-response assignment and the practice Educational Management 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: MIDDLE LEVEL PRINCIPAL SPECIALTY TEST

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: MIDDLE LEVEL PRINCIPAL SPECIALTY TEST

Practice Selected-Response Questions

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

Mr. Tsatoke, a middle school principal, has initiated a comprehensive review and revision of the school's curriculum in core content areas. For each of the content areas, Mr. Tsatoke organized a separate curriculum committee composed of teachers, staff, parents/guardians, a district curriculum specialist, and a student representative.

Competency 0002

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

1. Mr. Tsatoke's decision to include a variety of stakeholders in curriculum development is likely to facilitate the process of change primarily by:
 - A. fostering respect for the expertise of the school's faculty and staff leaders.
 - B. promoting a sense of ownership and trust among constituents who are affected by the change.
 - C. helping members of the school community understand the complexity of the curriculum.
 - D. allowing school administrators to share the burden of responsibility for curriculum planning.

Correct Response: B. Top-down approaches to curriculum development tend to meet resistance from teachers and other stakeholders who feel that the new curriculum is being imposed without regard for their ideas or judgment. In the situation described, the principal takes full advantage of the knowledge and experience of teachers, staff, parents/guardians, and student representatives. This approach promotes a sense of ownership and fosters creative collaboration, as stakeholders work together to develop a curriculum that effectively meets the needs of all students.

Competency 0008

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

2. Once the changes recommended by the curriculum committees have been finalized and approved, each committee prepares a brief guide to the revised curriculum for the content area. The curriculum guides include information about key concepts and skills, assessment procedures, instructional resources, and recommended timelines. Important benefits of the curriculum guides are most likely to include which of the following?
- I. reducing the variation in teaching styles among different teachers in the same content area
 - II. providing an overview of the core curriculum for all teachers in the school
 - III. serving as a basis for ongoing discussion about the effectiveness of the core curriculum
 - IV. facilitating communication with parents/guardians about the revised core curriculum
- A. I and III only
 - B. I, II, and IV only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. II, III, and IV only

Correct Response: D. When implementing a new curriculum, school leaders should clearly communicate the new guidelines to all members of the school community. In the situation described, a comprehensive process of curriculum reform is under way. Summarizing the changes for each content area in a brief curriculum guide is an efficient method of communicating the changes to stakeholders and provides a useful point of reference for any further modifications of the curriculum.

Competency 0004

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

3. Ms. Dawson has just been hired as a middle school principal in a culturally diverse community whose population is very different from the populations in the communities in which she has previously worked. She recognizes that she has had little or no personal experience with individuals from many of the culture groups represented in her school. In addressing this situation, Ms. Dawson can best ensure her effectiveness as an educational leader by using which of the following strategies?
 - A. Cultivate relationships with individuals and groups in the school and community who can help her learn more about the school's students.
 - B. Schedule a meeting with interested members of the school community to discuss her educational goals and philosophy and their applicability to all students, regardless of their cultural background.
 - C. Create and publicize guidelines for the formation of school groups and committees that emphasize the inclusion of members from all the school's culture groups.
 - D. Assign another school professional with more experience in the community to take the lead when situations arise that require working with individuals with unfamiliar cultural backgrounds.

Correct Response: A. It is important for a principal to reflect on his or her own cultural background and experiences when addressing issues of cultural diversity in the school community. In the situation described, the principal recognizes the limitations of her personal experience and seeks ways to expand her understanding of diverse cultures. This goal could best be addressed by establishing connections with diverse individuals and organizations in the local community as well as with students and their families.

Competency 0005

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

4. A middle school principal has just received word that student performance on a standardized achievement test has declined for the third year in a row. In communicating these assessment results to families and other community members, the principal should place the greatest emphasis on which of the following themes?
- A. the limitations of standardized achievement tests in providing information about all the important dimensions of student performance
 - B. the principal's determination to use the results to identify and remediate poorly performing faculty, thereby ensuring the effectiveness of all the school's teachers
 - C. the school's commitment to determining reasons for students' declining performance and developing strategies for improvement
 - D. the crucial role played by families and members of the community in supporting a strong school in which all students can learn and be successful

Correct Response: C. Responding to challenges such as declining test scores by making excuses or fixing blame is generally unproductive and often suggests poor leadership. In the situation described, the principal can best show strong, positive leadership by focusing on communicating to parents and others the school's determination to identify the causes of student performance problems and to take steps to improve student performance.

Ms. Barnes is a middle school principal. The school will soon be implementing a new faculty-student mentor program designed to support students who are considered at risk for academic failure. Approved guidelines for the program include the following:

- Faculty who serve as mentors will work individually with at-risk students (no more than five advisees per mentor).
- Faculty mentors will meet individually with each of their assigned students on a regular schedule throughout the school year. The primary purpose of these meetings will be to help students set academic goals for themselves and learn to monitor their own progress toward those goals.
- Faculty mentors also will serve as advocates and liaisons in helping their assigned students obtain whatever extra support (e.g., tutoring) they might need to reach their academic goals.

Competency 0010

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

-
5. Ms. Barnes could most effectively promote the success of the planned faculty-student mentor program by:
 - A. assigning a staff member to assist in the implementation of the new program.
 - B. organizing an initial meeting with all participating students to introduce them to the program.
 - C. offering to support faculty mentors by periodically joining them for meetings with their students.
 - D. ensuring that faculty mentors receive proper training to fulfill their responsibilities.

Correct Response: D. Whenever programs are introduced that require faculty to assume new roles, the principal is responsible for ensuring that all participating teachers receive the training necessary to prepare them for their new responsibilities. In the situation described, teachers who participate in the faculty-student mentor program should receive training in the special challenges faced by at-risk students, effective strategies for setting and monitoring academic goals, and procedures for accessing additional student support services.

Competency 0009

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

6. Which of the following strategies would be the most appropriate and effective way for Ms. Barnes to monitor the success of the program during its early stages?
- A. speaking informally with participating students and mentors about their experiences with the program
 - B. requesting that faculty mentors submit weekly progress reports on the academic performance of their assigned students
 - C. analyzing the performance of participating students on standardized tests and other assessments
 - D. distributing questionnaires to students to elicit detailed information about their reactions to the new program

Correct Response: A. New school programs should be monitored continually to judge their success in addressing students' needs. In the situation described, the new faculty-student mentor program is still in the initial stages of implementation: data on relevant outcomes, such as improvements in the test scores of participating students, would not yet be available. Conferring with students and their faculty mentors is likely to be the most effective and supportive way for the principal to monitor the program at this time.

After its first year of operation, the faculty-student mentor program is judged a success. Plans are now under way to extend the mentoring concept to include community volunteers who have been properly screened. Like the faculty mentors, community mentors will form relationships with at-risk students, providing them with individualized attention and support in a supervised school setting. In addition to providing students with academic tutoring and encouragement, a mentor may help students secure summer jobs, learn new skills, or become involved in community activities.

Competency 0003

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

7. To promote effective implementation of the community mentoring program, it would be especially important for Ms. Barnes to:
 - A. meet periodically with each community mentor for debriefing immediately after the mentor has worked with the assigned student.
 - B. ensure that effective lines of communication and supervision are established between community mentors and school personnel.
 - C. meet with participating students and their community mentors on a weekly basis for updates on the students' progress.
 - D. ensure that all community volunteers have had some past experience working with middle school students.

Correct Response: B. Whenever community volunteers are directly involved in school programs, the principal should make sure that the volunteers are fully informed and properly supervised. In this case, community members who have volunteered to serve as mentors may be unfamiliar with school policies and expectations. Establishing guidelines for regular communication between community mentors and the school personnel who supervise them would be the best way for the principal to ensure that any departures from school norms and program expectations are readily discovered and corrected.

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.

8. The community mentoring program is most likely to benefit at-risk students in which of the following ways?
- I. promoting students' awareness of connections between different academic content areas
 - II. providing students with positive adult role models
 - III. offering students meaningful opportunities to extend and apply what they learn in the classroom
 - IV. giving students and their families emotional counseling
- A. I and III only
- B. I and IV only
- C. II and III only
- D. II and IV only

Correct Response: C. All students, particularly those at risk for academic failure, are likely to benefit from individualized attention from supportive adults. In the situation described, community volunteers serve as positive adult role models for at-risk students, encouraging them to engage more fully in school and motivating them to achieve at higher levels. By helping students find summer jobs or participate in community activities, mentors may also provide students with opportunities to discover the practical value of what they learn in the classroom.

PRINCIPAL DECISION SET ENDS HERE

Competency 0011

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

9. Revenues received or collected from student clubs, organizations, and extracurricular activities at a school must be deposited into a specifically designated subaccount within the school activity fund. Which of the following are general guidelines that apply to these subaccounts?
- I. The balance in a subaccount may not exceed \$2,000 at any time during the fiscal year.
 - II. Funds in a subaccount may be spent only for the specific purposes for which the subaccount was created.
 - III. The balance in a subaccount at the end of the year must be transferred to the petty cash account.
 - IV. Funds may be transferred from one subaccount to another with the approval of the board of education.
- A. I and III only
 - B. I and IV only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. II and IV only

Correct Response: D. Section 87 of the School Laws of Oklahoma (1998) outlines rules and procedures governing deposits, expenditures, and transfers from specifically designated subaccounts within the school activity fund. According to these regulations, disbursements from a particular subaccount cannot be used for any purpose other than that for which the subaccount was created. However, the law also states that the board of education may transfer funds from one account to another under certain conditions.

Competency 0012

Understand principles of human resource planning and management.

10. A middle school principal wishes to include several critical comments in the written evaluation of a teacher's performance. This type of negative feedback is likely to be most effective if it:
- A. is phrased as a question rather than as a statement or recommendation.
 - B. focuses on behavior that the teacher is capable of changing.
 - C. is stated in general rather than specific terms.
 - D. includes suggestions about how other staff at the school have dealt with similar issues.

Correct Response: B. Critical comments about a teacher's performance are most useful if they stimulate positive change; this is best accomplished by addressing behaviors that are within the teacher's power to control. When critical feedback focuses primarily on traits that are very difficult for an individual to change, it is likely to produce mainly feelings of resentment and frustration rather than positive change.

Sample Directions for the Constructed-Response Assignments

This section of the test consists of two constructed-response assignments: an Instructional Leadership Assignment and an Educational Management Assignment. 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 each assignment carefully before you begin to write. Think about how you will organize each of your responses. 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 responses to the assignments 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 the **Instructional Leadership Assignment** in **Written Response Booklet B**.

Write your response to the **Educational Management Assignment** in **Written Response Booklet C**.

Practice Instructional Leadership Assignment

Instructional Leadership Assignment

For this assignment, you will be asked to write on an instructional leadership topic relevant to the position of a school principal.

You are a school principal. One of the school's current goals is to provide effective assistance for students who are academically at risk.

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

- identify and discuss three strategies or procedures for assisting students who are academically at risk;
- explain why each of the strategies or procedures you have identified is likely to be effective; and
- describe your role as principal in helping achieve the goal of providing effective assistance for students who are academically at risk.



FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY—*The Instructional Leadership constructed-response item is written to assess understanding in Subarea II, Instructional Leadership, which consists of the competencies listed below.*

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

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

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

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

A Very Good Response to the Practice Instructional Leadership Assignment

My school has recently completed a comprehensive school improvement plan that clearly delineates the areas we must focus on to improve student achievement and to ensure long-term success for all of our students. One of our current goals is to provide effective assistance for our students who are academically at risk. We have researched a number of existing programs for at-risk students in schools and communities whose demographics and student needs are similar to ours, so that we can select, combine, and revise various elements to suit our specific requirements. Typically, most programs include an academic component, a health and counseling component, a home/parent component, and often a community involvement component. Most also address extensive staff development for all faculty who have at-risk students in their classes.

Our program will focus on three major strategies:

1. We will use a multifaceted instructional approach, guided by assessment results and research on best-practice instructional methods. Such an approach is needed to address the individual educational needs and abilities of the extremely varied group of students whom we describe as academically at risk. Current research indicates that the most effective instructional methods for at-risk students are student-centered, inclusive of the voices and experiences of the students, and designed to accommodate their learning styles. These methods include small-group instruction, collaborative learning activities, and individual tutoring and mentoring. Instruction at all levels should involve an emphasis on higher-order thinking skills. Innovative, technology-based instruction should be an integral part of this instructional approach; it can help motivate these students and promote their active engagement in learning.
2. We will provide high-quality support services, including counseling and health services to all students who need them. Such services can play a significant role in addressing the needs of students who are academically at risk. Because a variety of factors, including physical and emotional difficulties, can contribute to weak academic performance, it is important to ensure that students have full access to support services, as appropriate, within the school building.
3. We will initiate and support a collaborative working relationship among school staff, parents/guardians, and community groups to address the needs and abilities of at-risk students. A collaborative approach helps foster commitment on the part of each of these constituencies to addressing the interrelated abilities, needs, and problems of each student who is academically at risk, including factors in the home and community as well as at school.

(continued)

A Very Good Response to the Practice Instructional Leadership Assignment (continued)

My role as principal in helping achieve these goals will include the following:

1. Enlisting the support of our district administration, including staff time and other resources.
2. Identifying sources of funding, ranging from local to federal entitlement programs, and making sure that our program meets identified needs and closely follows funding requirements.
3. Assembling a team of stakeholders, including parents/guardians and community representatives who have a commitment to equal educational opportunities for all students, to help plan and implement the program and monitor its progress. I will lead team meetings. The team's initial charge will be to formulate the mission of the program and determine its basic focus. Critical decisions will have to be made by the team about elements to include in our comprehensive at-risk program. Broadly, these might include desired academic focus; admissions criteria, including appropriate and authentic assessments; supportive elements such as tutoring or mentoring programs and related counseling and health services; type and extent of parental involvement; and appropriate instructional strategies. Regarding instructional strategies, we will want to address, for example, how to assess and provide for individual learning styles, how to adapt typical instructional approaches, how to use hands-on manipulatives, and how to use cooperative learning techniques. We must also determine how to use technology to meet program and student needs, including identifying appropriate software and ensuring adequate student access to computers.
4. Arranging for appropriate staff development relating to the program. Staff development is likely to be needed in several areas, including awareness of learning styles, awareness of and respect for diverse cultures, ways to convey high academic expectations and engage students in higher-order thinking, and ways to make the best use of technology in instruction. Collaboration among members of the teaching staff and counselors is an essential part of ongoing staff development.
5. Communicating about the program on an ongoing basis with stakeholders, especially students' families and appropriate social service agencies. It is especially important to provide opportunities for families and community groups to participate in planning, developing, and implementing the program, as well as to keep them in touch with each other so that families can be made aware of support services and other resources that are available to them.

Practice Educational Management Assignment

Educational Management Assignment

For this assignment, you will be asked to write on an educational management topic relevant to the position of a school principal.

You are a school principal. You have appointed a team to develop a plan for creating and maintaining a safe environment for all students and school personnel.

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

- identify and discuss key issues involved in creating and maintaining a safe environment for all students and school personnel;
- describe specific elements that the team should include in the plan for creating and maintaining a safe environment for all students and school personnel, and explain why these elements are important; and
- describe your role as principal in developing and implementing the plan.



FOR YOUR REFERENCE ONLY—*The Educational Management constructed-response item is written to assess understanding in Subarea III, Organizational, Operational, and Resource Management, which consists of the competencies listed below.*

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

Understand principles of human resource planning and management.

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

A Very Good Response to the Practice Educational Management Assignment

The team that I have appointed will serve as the Safe-School Committee. The plan developed by this committee should include recommendations regarding all aspects of school safety. Key issues include the following.

Maintaining a safe, orderly, healthy physical environment. The school building and grounds (including athletic fields) should be well-maintained and free of hazards that could cause accidents. The school site should be free of chemical contaminants and pollutants. Deferred maintenance should not pose a potential threat to the safety of students and staff. School leaders should make sure that children are safe on school buses and along bus routes.

Monitoring security to prevent theft and other crime. The school should have in place effective security procedures to protect school property, to prevent unauthorized persons from entering the building, and to detect the presence of weapons or other dangerous/illegal materials.

Preventing school violence and student victimization. The school's approach to discipline and conflict resolution should be effective in preventing bullying and other forms of student victimization or school violence. School counseling services and student leadership programs should provide effective support for all students. Parents/guardians should be actively engaged in working with school staff to prevent student victimization. The school also should have effective approaches to promoting students' cultural/social awareness and appreciation for diversity.

Ensuring that the school has an effective crisis management plan. The school should have procedures in place to regularly review/update the school's crisis management plan. All school staff should clearly understand their roles and responsibilities in the event of a crisis.

Promoting student wellness. The school's health curriculum should effectively educate students about issues relating to physical, mental, and emotional health, and school programs should help students learn to make healthy choices. Students should be well-informed about the dangers of substance abuse.

In addition to setting goals and monitoring progress in these areas, the school needs to have clear policies and procedures in place to maintain safety. Staff responsibilities should include supervisory duties to ensure that the school campus is properly managed and monitored at all times. Budgetary factors also should be considered, as measures to improve school safety may require supplemental funding.

I will encourage the Safe-School Committee to include a number of specific elements in the plan for creating and maintaining a safe environment for all students and school personnel.

(continued)

A Very Good Response to the Practice Educational Management Assignment (continued)

A description of the ideal environment of a safe school. Envisioning an ideal school environment can help the committee consider the "big picture" and achieve consensus about the direction of changes that are needed to enhance school safety.

A comprehensive report on current conditions at the school, reporting on all aspects of school safety. This report should be based in part on the results of a schoolwide survey of all students, staff, and parents/guardians each fall, with a follow-up in the spring regarding school safety issues. The report should clearly identify current safety measures/procedures that are working effectively as well as measures/procedures that are lacking or need improvement.

A summary of guidelines and requirements relating to safe schools. In formulating its recommendations, the committee must make sure that current and planned measures to maintain and improve school safety comply with all relevant laws and regulations.

A review of the district's Crisis Response Manual. The committee needs to verify that the specified response steps in the district's Crisis Response Manual can be implemented effectively in our school.

A plan to publish a handbook of school-safety policies and guidelines. Creating, updating, and distributing a school-safety handbook is one effective way to help inform all members of the school community about issues relating to school safety.

My responsibilities as principal in helping develop and implement the school safety plan include the following:

- enlisting the assistance and support of district staff as appropriate;
- linking safety goals to the school vision;
- communicating the school-safety plan to all stakeholders and clearly explaining the rationale for revised/new safety procedures;
- arranging for staff to research best-practice safety programs at other schools with similar demographic profiles and student needs;
- helping promote a school climate that discourages bullying/abusive behavior; and
- implementing the recommendations and decisions of the team (e.g., ensuring consistent enforcement of disciplinary policies).

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 Instructional Leadership and Educational Management 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 Instructional Leadership and Educational Management 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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