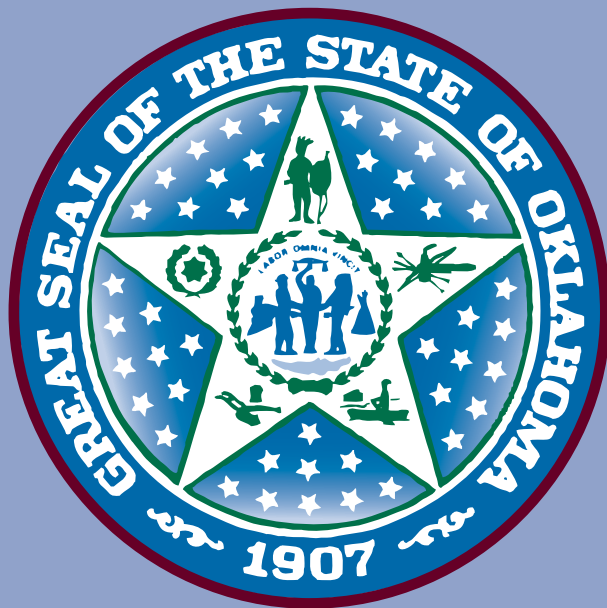


Certification Examinations for Oklahoma Educators™

Oklahoma Subject Area Tests™

STUDY GUIDE

048 Superintendent



Oklahoma Commission
for Teacher Preparation

OK-SG-FLD048-03

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STUDY GUIDE INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY GUIDE.....	1-1
KEY FEATURES OF THIS STUDY GUIDE	1-1
FOR OTHER CEOE STUDY GUIDES.....	1-1
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION	1-1

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS FOR OKLAHOMA EDUCATORS

AN OVERVIEW OF THE TESTING PROGRAM.....	1-2
Test Development Process	1-2
Characteristics of the CEOE Tests.....	1-3
Test Descriptions	1-3
Test Administration	1-7
Score Reports	1-8
HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE TEST	1-8
Study the Competencies	1-8
Identify Resources	1-8
Study Techniques	1-8
Review the Practice Test Questions	1-8
SAMPLE TEST DIRECTIONS	1-9
Sample General Test Directions.....	1-9
Sample Constructed-Response Assignment Directions	1-10
THE DAY OF THE TEST.....	1-11
Preparation	1-11
At the Test Site.....	1-11

FIELD-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION.....	2-1
Test Competencies	2-1
Practice Test Questions	2-1
TEST COMPETENCIES	2-3
PRACTICE TEST QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	2-10
Practice Selected-Response Questions	2-10
Sample Directions for the Case Study Assignments.....	2-20
Practice Case Study	2-21
Practice Case Study Assignment 1	2-22
A Very Good Response to Practice Case Study Assignment 1	2-23
Practice Case Study Assignment 2.....	2-25
A Very Good Response to Practice Case Study Assignment 2.....	2-26
Sample Directions for the Instructional Leadership and Educational Management Assignments	2-28
Practice Instructional Leadership Assignment	2-29
A Very Good Response to the Practice Instructional Leadership Assignment	2-30
Practice Educational Management Assignment	2-32
A Very Good Response to the Practice Educational Management Assignment	2-33
CONSTRUCTED-RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT SCORING.....	2-35
Sample Performance Characteristics for the Case Study, Instructional Leadership, and Educational Management Assignments	2-35
Sample Scoring Scale for the Case Study, Instructional Leadership, and Educational Management Assignments	2-35

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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 Superintendent test is an all-day test that includes both selected-response questions and two constructed-response assignments in **both** the morning and afternoon sessions.

The morning session has one case study that requires two written responses.

The afternoon session has 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 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: SUPERINTENDENT

SUBAREAS:

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

SUBAREA I—DISTRICT VISION AND LEADERSHIP

Competency 0001

Understand how to facilitate the development and articulation of a district 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 the school board, other administrators, teachers, students, parents/guardians, community members, and social agencies to develop a district 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 and resources) to develop a district vision of learning.

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

Apply theories of educational leadership that are relevant to the development of a district vision of learning.

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

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

Competency 0002

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

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

Apply knowledge of leadership processes necessary to implement and support the district vision, including strategies for motivating all stakeholders.

Identify procedures for implementing the district vision by initiating district-level changes and overcoming obstacles to change.

Describe how to align and redesign administrative policies and practices required for full implementation of the district vision.

Demonstrate knowledge of procedures for setting educational goals based on the district vision.

Identify procedures for evaluating the district's progress toward achieving its educational goals and vision of learning.

Examine how to use appropriate research methods, qualitative and quantitative data, technology, and information systems to monitor district improvement and ensure educational accountability.

Competency 0003

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

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

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

Identify procedures for promoting collaboration and communication within the district in supporting the district vision.

Identify strategies for drawing on the diversity of the community to improve student achievement and support the district vision.

Describe strategies for involving district stakeholders in the process of aligning resources and priorities to support the district vision.

Identify strategies for collaborating with community agencies to integrate health, social, and other services in the schools to address student and family factors that affect learning.

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

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

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for encouraging communities to provide new resources to address emerging student needs.

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

Competency 0004

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

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

Explain how to use the experiences and perspectives of those with diverse backgrounds to help achieve the district vision and meet the learning needs of all students.

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for creating an atmosphere in the district that encourages respect, sensitivity, and appreciation for everyone.

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

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

Analyze the implications of diversity for education.

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

Competency 0005

Understand how to support the district 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 promote the district vision.

Demonstrate knowledge of techniques for facilitating communication with and among stakeholders.

Describe the development of staff communication plans for engaging school personnel.

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

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

Demonstrate knowledge of basic statistical, data-collection, and data-analysis techniques in contexts involving educational decision making and problem solving.

Competency 0006

Understand how district leadership and the district 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 impacts the development of effective policies and practices to benefit a district and its students.

Explain the importance of communicating regularly with all segments of the district community concerning trends, issues, and policies affecting the district.

Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative process and its relationship to public school governance.

Demonstrate knowledge of effective strategies for working with political leaders at the local, state, and national levels.

Demonstrate knowledge of the system for financing public schools and its effects on the equitable distribution of educational opportunities within the district.

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

Describe 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.

Recognize how to demonstrate honesty, integrity, impartiality, fairness, sensitivity to student diversity, respect for confidentiality, and ethical behavior in interactions with district stakeholders.

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 principles 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.

Identify strategies for collaborating with school personnel 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.

Apply research-based knowledge of student development, theories of learning, and best-practice instruction to optimize learning for all students.

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 relationships between child/adolescent/adult development and the curriculum.

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

Analyze issues and procedures in creating and modifying curricula to meet the needs of all students.

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

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

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 promoting the use of 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 for assessing student learning and achievement, and examine the role of student assessment in instruction and program evaluation.

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

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

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

Describe how to effectively use technology and information systems to enrich district curriculum and instruction.

Competency 0010

Understand strategies for promoting professional growth and development and creating a positive district 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 ensuring the use of new knowledge and skills in the workplace.

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

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

Recognize the role that 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.

Recognize how to create a personal development plan that reflects commitment to lifelong learning and best practices and takes advantage of varied resources for continuing professional development.

Describe methods for motivating and empowering district staff to initiate and implement district improvement.

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

SUBAREA III—ORGANIZATIONAL, OPERATIONAL, AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Competency 0011

Understand how to apply principles of organizational management to work effectively with the school board and other groups.

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

Demonstrate knowledge of group dynamics, process skills, organizational development, systems theory, and formal and informal power structures and relationships within the district and community.

Identify strategies for applying knowledge of organizational development and data management to optimize learning for all students.

Demonstrate knowledge of the functions of the school board and the superintendent in policy development and school district governance.

Analyze strategies for working with school board members to develop a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities.

Examine the role of the superintendent in working with the school board in specified contexts (e.g., helping board members make decisions, serving as a liaison between the board and various constituencies, providing guidance to board members about legal and other issues, making recommendations for change).

Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for working effectively with key groups within and beyond the district (e.g., employees' organizations, businesses, the state education department).

Demonstrate knowledge of the use of current technologies to facilitate management, business, and scheduling practices.

Competency 0012

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

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

Demonstrate knowledge of public school financing at the federal, state, and local levels, including issues involving sources of funding, political factors, restrictions on the use of funds, and equitable allocation of funds.

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.

Demonstrate knowledge of district budgeting processes and fiduciary responsibilities, including types and characteristics of budgets (e.g., site-based, activity, zero-based) and stages in the budgeting process.

Examine procedures for working with stakeholders in the development of district budgets.

Demonstrate knowledge of applications of technology in educational management and procedures for developing and implementing plans for school and district technology and information systems.

Apply knowledge of effective procedures for managing scarce resources and creative strategies for seeking new resources to support student learning.

Identify procedures for obtaining and utilizing grant money.

Demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles of the Oklahoma Cost Accounting System (OCAS) and methods for financial record keeping and reporting.

Competency 0013

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 for recruiting, screening, selecting, and retaining 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 federal, state, and local laws and regulations pertaining to the skills and procedures necessary for supervising and evaluating district personnel.

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

Identify requirements and effective practices in situations involving negotiations and management.

Competency 0014

Understand how to manage the district's physical plant and auxiliary services to ensure safe and effective learning environments.

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, district and community use, maintenance, and efficiency of district facilities.

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

Demonstrate knowledge of regulations, issues, and procedures related to district purchasing, child nutrition services, transportation services, information management services, and health services.

Demonstrate knowledge of factors and procedures for planning, funding, and implementing capital improvements.

PRACTICE TEST QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: SUPERINTENDENT

Practice Selected-Response Questions

Competency 0001

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

1. A superintendent has begun working with a group of faculty, staff, families, and community members to formulate a new vision for the district. The group can best accomplish this task by taking which of the following steps *first*?
 - A. Survey a broad cross-section of the district community to determine current attitudes toward the general idea of district change.
 - B. Use available budget information to analyze the potential for and limitations on district change.
 - C. Conduct a districtwide needs assessment to identify key issues and stakeholder priorities for change.
 - D. Brainstorm a list of district policies, programs, and other features that group members believe should be changed.

Correct Response: C. An important initial step in formulating a new vision for a district is to identify particular areas (e.g., administrative organization, curriculum, discipline policies) that may benefit from change. This is best accomplished by using needs assessment procedures that give all stakeholders opportunities to communicate their specific concerns. A districtwide needs assessment gives all segments of the community a chance to be heard and thus helps create in all stakeholders a sense of ownership in regard to improvement efforts.

Dr. Jerry Tomahsah is in his second year as superintendent of a mid-sized school district. Last year he led the district community in rearticulating its educational vision and goals and developing a strategic plan for district improvement. This year he wants to focus attention on two goals in particular: strengthening site-based decision making and valuing cultural diversity.

Competency 0002

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

2. Dr. Tomahsah observes that some faculty and staff seem reluctant and apprehensive about assuming greater responsibility for school decision making. He responds by offering to hold a meeting with school personnel to discuss misgivings they may have about planned changes relating to decentralization. During the meeting, Dr. Tomahsah can probably best help reluctant individuals overcome their resistance by:
 - A. assuring them that individuals and schools in the district will to a great extent be free to set their own agenda and time line for change.
 - B. pointing out how the planned changes support the vision and educational goals agreed on by district stakeholders.
 - C. assuring them that the district will evaluate the outcomes of the planned changes and make further modifications, as necessary.
 - D. pointing out that not all faculty and staff will be expected to play an equal role in organizing and implementing change.

Correct Response: B. Superintendents should expect that any changes introduced into a school system will meet resistance from some stakeholders. In this situation, an appropriate first step by the superintendent is to meet with the staff and listen to their concerns. Then at some point during the meeting, the superintendent should focus on the responsibility of school personnel to advance the vision and goals agreed to by all stakeholders. By discussing how the proposed changes will help achieve these goals, the superintendent may help shift staff members' attention from their own apprehensions about change to their responsibility to ensure a quality education for all students.

Dr. Tomahsah convenes a diversity task force to discuss strategies for promoting understanding and appreciation of diversity within district schools. The task force also focuses on ways to promote equity and ensure equal educational opportunity in school programs.

Competency 0004

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

3. Dr. Tomahsah and the task force discuss the importance of encouraging parents/guardians and other community members with diverse cultural backgrounds to be involved in the schools. Which of the following steps would be most important for the task force to take initially in addressing this goal?
 - A. Publish a monthly newsletter for the district that highlights the contributions of diverse groups.
 - B. Create procedures to help ensure that diverse groups are represented in school and district advisory and decision-making groups.
 - C. Organize a district lecture series featuring local speakers with diverse cultural backgrounds.
 - D. Urge the parents/guardians of students from diverse groups to visit their children's classrooms on a regular basis.

Correct Response: B. District leaders should make sure to encourage parents/guardians and other community members with diverse cultural backgrounds to be involved in the schools. Such involvement helps promote equity and equal educational opportunity as well as greater understanding and appreciation of diversity. In the situation described, the best first step for the diversity task force to take in addressing these goals would be to empower diverse constituents by ensuring that they have a voice in school and district decision making.

Competency 0013

Understand principles of human resource planning and management.

4. The task force discusses how human resource policies and procedures can reinforce or undermine equity in education. Which of the following screening/hiring guidelines would be most effective and appropriate for school and district personnel to use to promote equal educational opportunity for all students?
- A. Place a high priority on identifying candidates for faculty and staff positions who have demonstrated their commitment to equity as a core value.
 - B. Inform all candidates for faculty and staff positions that the district is committed to upholding federal and state regulations prohibiting discrimination.
 - C. Set aside a predetermined percentage of open faculty and staff positions for candidates whose cultural backgrounds are currently underrepresented in district schools.
 - D. Provide an accurate and complete description of the district's diversity policies during all job interviews with candidates for faculty and staff positions.

Correct Response: A. Superintendents should ensure that all aspects of district management support equal educational opportunity. In the situation described, the diversity task force is considering how screening/hiring practices address this goal. When evaluating candidates for faculty and staff positions, district and school officials should look beyond personal statements of commitment to equity, analyzing the candidate's record to determine whether his or her professional actions have served to promote equal educational opportunity.

SUPERINTENDENT DECISION SET ENDS HERE

Competency 0009

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

5. A school district is considering whether to increase the district's emphasis on the use of an inquiry approach in instructional programs. Decision makers in the district should be aware that the primary benefit of using an inquiry approach is that this method:
- A. organizes learning as a progressive, systematic process.
 - B. enhances students' interpersonal skills.
 - C. focuses student efforts on predetermined, clearly defined learning objectives.
 - D. encourages students to be active learners.

Correct Response: D. In classrooms that use an inquiry approach, students formulate key principles and discover relationships for themselves by questioning, exploring, experimenting, and drawing conclusions. While more traditional approaches to learning tend to assign students a relatively passive role as recipients of knowledge imparted by the teacher, discovery learning encourages students to engage more actively in the learning process.

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

Dr. Adams, a newly hired superintendent, is aware that two members of the district board of education did not support her application for this position. She is also aware that the previous superintendent experienced considerable difficulty working with the board. Dr. Adams recognizes the importance of building and maintaining positive working relationships with individual board members as well as the need to promote effective two-way communication with the board as a governing body. During her first months as superintendent, Dr. Adams carefully considers ways to exercise strong leadership in working with the board to promote district improvement while still acknowledging and respecting the board's authority.

Competency 0011

Understand how to apply principles of organizational management to work effectively with the school board and other groups.

6. Which of the following general guidelines should Dr. Adams always be sure to follow in her interactions with the district's board of education?
- A. Rely on the board president to generate support among board members for the superintendent's recommendations.
 - B. Be assertive with the board in exercising authority as the chief administrative officer of the district.
 - C. Prepare for board meetings by conferring individually with board members who have been supportive of the superintendent's agenda.
 - D. Work with all members of the board as equals and ensure that they all have access to the same information.

Correct Response: D. It is essential for a superintendent to establish an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust when working with the district board of education. In order to achieve this goal, the superintendent should communicate openly and honestly with all members of the board. By treating board members as equals and ensuring that all members have equal access to relevant information, the superintendent demonstrates that she values the opinion of each individual and is committed to maintaining a positive professional relationship with the board.

Competency 0005

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

7. Dr. Adams understands the importance of working productively with the local media to communicate the district's goals and plans. She observes, however, that one member of the board of education frequently makes statements to the media that are inaccurate or misleading. Dr. Adams could address this problem most appropriately and effectively by:
- A. asking the board president to reprimand the board member for lack of judgment in dealing with the media.
 - B. meeting with the board member to address the inaccuracies and to discuss ways of preventing such errors in the future.
 - C. working with the board to develop a written plan for media relations that includes specific guidelines on communicating with the press.
 - D. requesting that board members have all statements made to the media preapproved by the superintendent.

Correct Response: C. It is important that a superintendent and the board of education use the media to communicate effectively with the surrounding community. However, dissemination of inaccurate, conflicting, or misleading information can create misunderstandings between district leaders and community members. For this reason, it is generally useful for the superintendent and the board to agree on procedures for communicating with the media. In this case, developing a set of written guidelines for dealing with the media may reduce the possibility that board members will give inaccurate or conflicting statements to the press.

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 board of education is currently considering whether to revise the district's student discipline policy. Several board members advocate stronger penalties for disciplinary infractions, while other members feel the current system is already too strict. Which of the following roles would be most appropriate for Dr. Adams to play in this debate?
- A. sharing with the board research findings about the effects that various discipline policies may have on student learning
 - B. advocating on behalf of district students to oppose restrictive discipline policies
 - C. recommending that the board replace the districtwide policy with individual school policies developed by district staff
 - D. summarizing statistics about discipline-related trends in other school districts in the state

Correct Response: A. A superintendent must be able to work effectively with all members of the board of education; for this reason, the superintendent should not become identified with any particular faction in policy debates between board members. However, as a professional educator, the superintendent can play an important advisory role to the board. In this case, while the superintendent should refrain from advocating either increased or decreased disciplinary penalties, she can help keep the board focused on the district's first priority, which is to promote the educational achievement of all students. One way to address this goal is to provide board members with results of research on the relationships between discipline policies and student learning.

Competency 0012

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

9. The construction of a new elementary school was recently completed after 90 percent of the revenue from a bond issue had been spent. The district's board of education asks the superintendent for advice on what to do with the money remaining in the bond fund. The superintendent could best respond by:
- A. suggesting that the funds be used to upgrade and repair older school buildings, as needed.
 - B. explaining that state law requires that the money be transferred to the sinking fund to pay outstanding district obligations.
 - C. suggesting that the funds be used to purchase school furnishings and fixtures, as needed.
 - D. explaining that state law requires that the money be transferred to the general fund to pay salaries and other staff costs.

Correct Response: B. According to Oklahoma school law, when a board of education determines that the projects for which a bond issue was voted have been completed, the money remaining in the bond fund *must* be transferred to the sinking fund, which would normally be used to pay off the outstanding obligation on the bond or to pay judgments against the school district, in compliance with further statutory requirements. There is no provision in Oklahoma school law for any other application of funds remaining in a bond fund after the completion of the project funded by the bond issue.

Competency 0014

Understand how to manage the district's physical plant and auxiliary services to ensure safe and effective learning environments.

10. A superintendent is leading a districtwide effort to identify and assess school violence and discipline problems and to develop strategies for solving these problems. As a first step, the superintendent has asked the Safe School Committees at all district schools to conduct school safety and violence prevention reviews. Which of the following additional steps would be most important in creating a comprehensive school safety program for the district?
- I. Ensure that all district schools have fencing or other barriers that are adequate and in good repair.
 - II. Coordinate district efforts with law enforcement, judicial, social service, and other agencies in the community.
 - III. Ensure that all district schools use a uniform set of safety measures (e.g., metal detectors, security guards).
 - IV. Establish and communicate a clear plan for responding to crisis or emergency situations in the schools.
- A. I and II only
 - B. I and IV only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. II and IV only

Correct Response: D. Different schools in a district frequently confront different discipline and violence problems, so it may often be inappropriate to assume that a single set of highly specific measures (e.g., barriers, security guards) would be effective for all district schools. On the other hand, certain general procedures and policies are likely to be equally useful for all schools. For example, a general policy of coordinating district efforts with other community institutions is likely to enhance all schools' safety and violence prevention programs in various ways (e.g., by avoiding duplication of effort, increasing response efficiency and effectiveness). Similarly, developing and communicating a districtwide crisis response plan should improve coordination and decrease confusion in response to emergency situations in any school.

Sample Directions for the Case Study 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 activity that occurred in the situation described.

Case Study

Pinecrest School District is a small rural school district that serves a diverse population. Traditionally, the district's schools have had a strong reputation, but in recent years student achievement levels have begun to decline. In her first year as superintendent, Dr. Janelle Wyatt has worked with members of the district's educational community to develop a new district vision. Based on this vision, a primary goal for the district is to improve the academic performance of all students.

During the spring semester, Dr. Wyatt meets individually with district principals to discuss school plans for addressing this goal. The principal of the district's high school is especially concerned about the weak academic performance of many students who participate in school sports, including many members of the school's top-ranked varsity football team. "Success in athletics should go hand in hand with academic learning, not substitute for it," he says. "I know this is something new for our district, but I want to make student participation in varsity sports contingent on maintaining grades of C+ or above." Dr. Wyatt commends the principal for creative thinking and indicates her support for the strategy.

In November, Dr. Wyatt receives a call from Frank Rogers, a member of the school board. "Are you aware that the principal has benched some of our best football players just because their first-quarter grades were a little low?" he asks. When Dr. Wyatt explains the rationale for the new policy, Mr. Rogers suggests that she has a lot to learn about managing a school district. "Authority for such policies," he says, "properly rests with the school board, not the principal." Dr. Wyatt responds by reiterating her commitment to decentralized decision making and her support for school policies that enhance student achievement.

The next day, Dr. Wyatt receives a call from the high school principal, who says he had a very upsetting phone conversation with Mr. Rogers. The principal says that Mr. Rogers criticized the new sports guidelines in a personally insulting way and threatened to keep "tightening the screws" until the principal agreed to reverse the policy. After reassuring the principal that she still supports his position, Dr. Wyatt contacts the president of the school board to ask for his help in resolving the situation. "Oh, that's just Frank," says the board president, "a real football fanatic! He's quick to fly off the handle, but he'll cool down soon enough. Just lie low until he forgets about this and moves on to something else."

Two days later, the superintendent's secretary shows her a front-page article in the local newspaper with the headline "Kiss of Death for High School Sports?" The article quotes Mr. Rogers as saying, "Everyone knows that high school athletics are tremendously important in building character and generating school spirit. But our fine young athletes are being held hostage by a principal who just doesn't get it." The quotation ends with Mr. Rogers's assertion that the board will be taking a look at this issue.

An hour later, the high school principal calls the superintendent, telling her he is receiving intense criticism and needs her to make good on the promise to endorse the new sports policy and defend the principal's reputation. Dr. Wyatt again affirms her support and assures him she will be in touch when the dust settles. Later in the day, the superintendent's secretary says the news media have been asking to interview Dr. Wyatt as a follow-up to the article about high school sports. "Tell them I have no comment at this time," she replies.

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 superintendent did well in this situation, citing specific evidence from the information provided; and
- describe what the superintendent 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, District Vision and Leadership, which consists of the competencies listed below.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

Case Study Assignment I

KEY ISSUES:

The key issues involved in this situation are the importance of basing major decisions on sound data and the need for clear communication and consensus among all stakeholders. Dr. Wyatt should have defined the problem of declining levels of student achievement through the use of criteria such as state tests, teacher-issued grades, and graduation rates. Longitudinal studies and disaggregated data are crucial to the process of defining the parameters of the student achievement problem and should serve as the basis of any proposed solutions.

Dr. Wyatt should have presented evidence of the problem she perceived in a clear and open manner to all stakeholders. In this situation, proper procedures should have been observed in involving the school board in the process of defining the problem of declining student achievement, with ample opportunity for community input and discussion. The board and the district's principals should have been closely involved in defining short-term and long-term goals to address the problem once it was clearly outlined. Any major policy changes, such as the new guideline on grade requirements for sports participation, should have been preapproved by the board before the superintendent publicly expressed her support of the change. The superintendent's role of district educational leader should be one of facilitating change among all constituents. Anticipating and planning for resistance to change is an important step in the process, requiring an understanding of the community's culture and power structures. Communicating openly with the media is also an important factor in generating community support for any proposed changes.

In this situation, the superintendent made incremental decisions based on changing daily events, rather than staying focused on the big picture. She attempted to address the district problem of declining student achievement by adopting a single recommendation made by the high school principal. The issue of improved student achievement needs to be addressed at every level, including Pre-K. Holding students accountable for learning and penalizing them for poor academic performance once they reach high school misplaces the district's responsibility for promoting the academic success of all students at all levels.

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WHAT THE SUPERINTENDENT DID WELL:

Dr. Wyatt did well to establish the primary goal of increased student achievement in her first year as superintendent. She correctly identified this objective as a common goal that could have served as a focal point for all members of the community. Dr. Wyatt exhibited strong leadership skills in her willingness to address a major problem rather than maintaining the status quo.

Dr. Wyatt also displayed good leadership in her willingness to empower the principals to devise creative problem-solving strategies, as shown by her support of the high school principal's proposal for grade requirements for school sports. Although the execution of this strategy was not well planned, Dr. Wyatt maintained her support of building-level leaders despite the opposition of the board member, Frank Rogers. Dr. Wyatt's attempt to enlist the help of the board president in defusing Mr. Rogers's attack on the principal was also well intended, although poorly timed and unsuccessful.

WHAT THE SUPERINTENDENT DID POORLY:

Dr. Wyatt's lack of planning and attention to detail prevails throughout the case study. Although she identified a worthy goal in increased student achievement, she failed to exercise good organizational skills in studying the problem. There is no evidence that her assessment of the need for improved student achievement is based on solid data or research. Dr. Wyatt should have established a strong basis of evidence that the problem of declining academic performance existed before attempting to formulate solutions.

Dr. Wyatt failed to build consensus of the board and the community in formulating a new district vision. Her decision to meet individually with principals in the spring to discuss school plans for addressing the new student achievement goal was a mistake. She should have convened building leaders as a group early on in the process, involving them first in identifying the problem, then in establishing short- and long-term goals and districtwide strategies for achieving them.

It is not clear whether Dr. Wyatt had the authority to empower principals to exercise site-based decision making without the approval of the board. She failed to take Mr. Rogers seriously when he informed her that a major policy change such as the new sports ruling properly rested with the board and not with principals. During that conversation, she also showed poor judgment in shifting responsibility for the new sports policy to the high school principal instead of taking responsibility herself for allowing the policy to be announced prematurely.

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 superintendent 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, District Vision and Leadership, which consists of the competencies listed below.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

Case Study Assignment 2

The superintendent needs to make procedural decisions that will allow all stakeholders to come away from this event with their dignity intact and move forward with plans to address the key issues involved in this situation. At this point, the superintendent should plan to take three important actions: (1) meet with the high school principal to support his intentions and to collaborate on the development of a memo that temporarily suspends the new sports guidelines, pending further study; (2) work with district principals to conduct a study of students' academic performance over the past five years and to review best-practice guidelines for sports participation; and (3) keep the school board informed about these actions and present the results of the study to the board, using research-based data to support recommendations for a new policy regarding academic requirements for student participation in school sports.

First, Dr. Wyatt should meet with the high school principal to discuss the immediate situation and agree upon an interim solution to suspend the new sports participation guidelines. The superintendent needs to reassure the principal that she continues to support him in making academic achievement a top priority and will publicly express this support to the board and to the media. Dr. Wyatt and the principal should work together to compose a memo to the school board and to district staff explaining their rationale for suspending the new sports participation policy, pending further study. Prior to releasing the memo, the superintendent should consult with the board president about its content and possible reverberations throughout the school community. Once Dr. Wyatt has the approval of the board president, she should release the memo to the board, school staff, and public media. This should be done as quickly as possible, preferably within 24 hours of her refusal to speak to the local paper. This approach should be effective in strengthening the confidence/reputation of the principal, restoring the credibility of the superintendent, and improving communication with district stakeholders.

Second, the superintendent should plan to work with district principals to analyze the academic performance of students over the past five years and to review best-practice criteria for high school sports participation. It is vitally important that each principal and leadership team use the same research-based procedures for documenting patterns of academic achievement. The high school leadership team also should be responsible for surveying other area districts to learn how they determine academic requirements for extracurricular activities. When the five-year retroactive analysis of student performance and the survey of extracurricular guidelines are

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

complete, the results should be published in a comprehensive study to be submitted to the school board. Collaboration with the district principals to reframe the issue of sports participation in terms of academic improvement goals will be effective in clarifying the key considerations and in building trust among the superintendent and building leaders.

Third, the superintendent should seek the board's approval for these planned actions and keep the board informed throughout the process. Ongoing communication with the board will be effective in restoring board support for academic improvement goals and trust in the superintendent's competence. The superintendent should confer with the school board president about the administration's plans to proceed with the development of the student achievement study. Dr. Wyatt should request the permission of the board president to place the proposed study on the next board meeting agenda as an information item in order to keep the entire board informed. At the next meeting, board members should receive a brief description of the planned student achievement study to be conducted by the principals. Dr. Wyatt should let the board know that a detailed report on the results of the study will be available to them within four months, since some of the report recommendations may require budgetary support for the following school year. This administrative action will be effective in lending credibility to the goal of improving the academic performance of all students.

When the full report on students' academic performance and the survey of best-practice sports participation guidelines are available, the superintendent should seek the approval of the board president to place the report on the next board agenda as an action item. Submitting the report to the board for their consideration before any action is taken will also be effective in demonstrating Dr. Wyatt's respect for proper procedure. The report should include five-year academic performance statistics for each grade level, each individual school, and for different groups of students participating in extracurricular programs at the high school level. Only at this point should the superintendent submit for board consideration recommendations on a new policy establishing academic requirements for student participation in sports. The use of research-based data will be effective in helping the superintendent stress the importance of integrating academics and extracurricular activities. Including information about other districts' sports participation policies will also be effective in lending credence to the superintendent's and principal's recommendation for instituting a similar policy in the Pinecrest School District.

Sample Directions for the Instructional Leadership and Educational Management 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 superintendent.

You are a superintendent. One of the district's current goals is to promote the development of school-business partnerships.

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 promoting the development of school-business partnerships;
- explain why each of the strategies or procedures you have identified is likely to be effective; and
- describe your role as superintendent in helping achieve the goal of promoting the development of school-business partnerships.



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 creating a positive district culture for learning.

A Very Good Response to the Practice Instructional Leadership Assignment

My first strategy to promote development of school-business partnerships will be to recruit local business contacts to work with career and technology teachers in the district who have volunteered to participate in such partnerships. Once I have identified a pool of interested business representatives, I will urge them to collaborate with district faculty in reviewing and updating the district's career and technology education curriculum, refocusing student learning priorities as appropriate. Businesspeople know what skills are needed in today's workplace, and they also have opportunities to observe the skills that high school graduates bring or fail to bring to the workplace. Working collaboratively, business representatives and faculty can identify areas of need in our students' career and technology education. We can then take steps to make curricular improvements that address those needs. Business representatives can help the district work toward this goal by making presentations at faculty workshops, serving on advisory committees, and providing informational materials.

These efforts should be effective in enhancing our career and technology education program in a variety of ways. The input of local business leaders will help our schools stay abreast of evolving business-world demands and trends, and should help ensure that our students gain the skills they need for a productive future in a rapidly changing economy. Students will benefit by becoming more aware of the real-world applications of their learning. They will also learn about the various challenges and opportunities that await them in the business world.

My second strategy will be to form a team of parents/guardians and business and community leaders to develop mentoring and tutoring programs aimed at augmenting students' career and technical learning opportunities. Working with school district stakeholders who have ties to the business community will increase our chances of success in identifying businesses willing to provide onsite learning opportunities for students through close mentoring relationships. Ideally, some businesses will commit a certain number of paid employee hours per week to work with students in an internship environment. Having professional adults work directly with students in a mentor relationship will be very effective in enhancing student motivation to succeed. This type of one-on-one relationship will also effectively prevent individual students from "falling through the cracks" and dropping out of internship programs because they are unsure of what is expected of them.

Ultimately, businesses can expect to benefit from successful student internships/apprenticeships through a more solid local base of well-prepared potential employees. Once businesses realize the actual gains they will experience through school-related programs, they will be much more likely to continue working with the district in offering these partnerships in the future.

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

My third strategy will be to compile information about successful school-business partnerships in other districts to share with all stakeholders. Disseminating information about "real life" internship success stories is likely to be effective in motivating businesses, faculty, students, and parents to work toward developing similar programs in our community. Research has shown that all students learn more readily when they receive individual or small-group instruction. Translating this into a workplace setting will be even more effective in motivating students to learn and succeed in a meaningful way that will enrich their lives after school.

Businesses that are initially reluctant to form school-business partnerships will also be more effectively motivated by seeing concrete examples of successful student internship/apprenticeship programs in other communities. Actual case studies of school-business relationships that benefit all parties over time will be more likely to encourage companies to participate than simply appealing to them for charitable donations of employee time. Examples of how student interns can fit into a wide variety of business settings will help all stakeholders envision similar opportunities in our community. Relevant research will encourage teachers to participate in school-business partnerships, once they learn how such programs can be effective in improving student attendance, lowering dropout rates, and even raising test scores.

As superintendent, one of my primary roles in promoting school-business partnerships will be to represent the district in making presentations about the proposed program to stakeholder groups. I will convey both in writing and in group forums the benefits of successful programs in other districts, tying in the goals of the school-business partnership program with specific educational objectives associated with our district's vision of learning.

I will also take the lead in personally recruiting community business representatives, helping organize business-faculty teams, and providing central oversight of programs that are developed. When contacting business leaders, I will describe various models that have been successful in other districts, such as internships and apprenticeships. Staff will assist me in identifying key personnel in local companies and will send informational materials about the prospective programs once I have made the initial contacts. I will then personally meet with interested employers to further discuss and solidify the details of school-business partnerships. Once I have gained commitments from the business community, I will facilitate the formation of business-faculty teams to design internship programs. Finally, I will monitor the activities of all programs once they are established, meeting on a regular basis with constituents, including principals, teachers, business liaisons, parents/guardians, and students to ensure that programs are in alignment with our original goals and are proving successful for all those involved.

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 superintendent.

You are a superintendent. You have appointed a team to develop a plan for improving the cost-effectiveness of district schools.

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

- identify and discuss key issues involved in improving the cost-effectiveness of district schools;
- describe specific elements that the team should include in the plan for improving the cost-effectiveness of district schools, and explain why these elements are important; and
- describe your role as superintendent in helping develop and implement 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 how to apply principles of organizational management to work effectively with the school board and other groups.

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

Understand principles of human resource planning and management.

Understand how to manage the district's physical plant and auxiliary services to ensure safe and effective learning environments.

A Very Good Response to the Practice Educational Management Assignment

As superintendent, I must consider a number of important issues when appointing a team of district stakeholders to develop a plan for improving the cost-effectiveness of our schools. These issues include: (1) personnel costs; (2) instructional costs; and (3) alternative funding sources.

Personnel costs have far-reaching effects on a district's financial planning. Salaries/wages and employee benefits for school personnel—including teachers, paraprofessionals, educational specialists, administrators, administrative support staff, student services staff, custodial staff, food service staff—obviously account for a large proportion of the district's total expenditures. It is critical, however, that district leaders and team members clearly understand the need for compliance with established agreements and past practices with regard to collective bargaining and other personnel agreements. Staffing decisions also must take account of student enrollment trends and optimal class sizes as well as cost constraints.

Other expenses associated with the delivery of instruction (e.g., instructional materials, equipment, and supplies) also should be analyzed to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of district schools. Again, before exploring ways to cut instructional costs, the team must be properly informed about legal mandates regarding educational services for students, including time on task requirements, curriculum guidelines, and special education services.

A plan to improve the cost-effectiveness of district schools should consider strategies for increasing income as well as limiting expense. Alternative funding sources can help reduce shortfalls in the district budget. When seeking such funds, the district must take care to comply with the strict guidelines governing alternative funding sources such as entitlements and private or public grants.

When developing the plan for improving the cost-effectiveness of district schools, the team should make sure that the plan includes the elements outlined below.

Analysis of district budget data for recent years. Understanding how district funds have been generated and allocated in the past can help the team identify strategies for limiting expense (including personnel and instructional costs, as appropriate) and increasing revenue from alternative funding sources.

Review of school maintenance needs and necessary capital outlays. It is essential to identify the level of investment needed to prevent school buildings and grounds from deteriorating, which could cause unsafe conditions for district students. Addressing such needs promptly can also help avoid the higher costs that typically are associated with deferred maintenance.

(continued)

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

Review of current costs for custodial supplies and equipment. Significant savings for the district may be achieved by ensuring best-cost sources and quantity purchasing of custodial supplies and equipment for all schools in the district.

Comparative analysis of budget data for comparable districts. Comparing our district's budget to those of comparable districts in the state can help identify areas in which our district may be able to curtail excessive spending.

Alignment of recommended budget changes with district vision, goals, and objectives. Any cost-containment strategies recommended by the team should not undermine, or conflict with, the district's vision and goals for student learning and school improvement. The plan developed by the team should include a clear statement of this alignment and a reaffirmation of the district's commitment to achieve its educational vision and goals.

As superintendent, I am responsible for helping the team develop and implement the plan to improve the cost-effectiveness of district schools. As the team is developing the plan, I can assist by identifying contacts at other school districts that have a demographic profile similar to that of our district, and requesting relevant budget information to facilitate comparative analyses. Throughout the planning process, I need to serve a central oversight function by ensuring that the team's recommendations are in compliance with federal and state regulations regarding educational expenditures for student services. As the plan is implemented, I will assume responsibility for proper administration and reporting related to external funding, such as grants. Finally, I will ensure that the team's plan to improve cost-effectiveness is fair, ensuring fiscal equity among all schools in the district.

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, 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 Case Study, 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.

**CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS FOR OKLAHOMA EDUCATORS
NATIONAL EVALUATION SYSTEMS
AMHERST, MA 01004-9007**

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