The College of St. Benedict and St. John's University
Professional Dispositions for Preservice Teachers

Introduction

The Education Department at the College of St. Benedict/St. John's University is committed to preparing future teachers with the dispositions necessary to becoming highly effective educators. Our dispositional goals reflect our departmental conceptual framework, the missions of our colleges, relevant literature, and the expectations of external accreditors.

During the creation of this document, we considered the importance of professional reflection for growth in all dispositional areas. For this reason, we did not separate professional reflection into its own category but rather wove it throughout all of the dispositional domains. We felt this reflected our Teacher as Reflective Decision Maker model. Additionally, we believe that dispositions do not operate in isolation from one another but rather come together in complex and interrelated ways during learning and development.

Defining Dispositions

Dispositions are the attitudes, values, and beliefs that influence commitments, professional ethics, and behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities. Positive dispositional development supports student learning, motivation, development, and flourishing as well as the educator's own professional growth (adapted from caepnet.org)

CSB/SJU: Dispositions for Reflective Practice

1. **Positive Outlook**

2. **Intellectual Integrity**

3. **Advocacy for Diversity and Equity**

4. **Effective Communication and Collaboration**

5. **Ethical Outlook**

6. **Professionalism**

<u>Positive Outlook</u>: The candidate has a positive outlook toward students, learning, challenges, collaboration, and colleagues.

This includes, but is not limited to the following: the candidate believes that all children can learn and flourish; embraces a holistic orientation toward learning and development; values creativity; appreciates students as individuals; values authentic and positive interactions; sees challenges as positive opportunities for learning and growth; has a positive attributional outlook; and embraces a dispositional growth mindset.

Possible Behaviors for Assessment Purposes:
- Makes positive statements about students, colleagues, and parents
- Makes statements that support a holistic orientation
- Supports creative expression and growth in students
- Shows interest in students as individuals
- Knows students' names
- Demonstrates authentic positive regard toward students, colleagues, and parents
- Perseveres at tasks to a high degree of competency
- Makes statements about behaviors on which students can improve.
- Makes statements indicating the belief that all students can learn

Reflects on one's own dispositional development and has a plan for self-improvement

<u>Intellectual Integrity:</u> The candidate values important intellectual and reflective thinking practices, believes that he/she can always improve upon his/her thinking and skills, and is devoted to the truth in his/her work as a learner and teacher.

This includes, but is not limited to the following: the candidate is eager to learn and committed to the pursuit of wisdom; assumes a reflective orientation toward decision-making; believes learning is an ongoing and incremental process; sees opportunities for learning through interactions with others; possesses the conviction needed to stand up for one's beliefs and the courage to accept the limitations of one's own thinking; values creativity and mindfulness; and is committed to critical thinking and building enduring understandings.

Possible Behaviors for Assessment Purposes
- Seeks new and deeper knowledge by asking questions
- Seeks and uses critical feedback to improve learning and teaching
- Engages in opportunities to learn with and from classmates
- Prepares fully for all learning opportunities
- Applies data-based decision making skills
- Examines own assumptions
- Respectfully states personal ideas and positions
- Admits and learns from mistakes
- Uses new information to recognize flaws in one's own thinking and to update one's perspectives
- Perseveres when faced with intellectual challenges
- Considers alternate perspectives and solutions to problems
- Affirms creative approaches and endeavors
- Submits work that evidences thoughtfulness and effort

Advocacy for Diversity and Equity: The candidate appreciates learner differences, promotes equitable outcomes within inclusive environments, and respects the dignity of all students.

This includes, but is not limited to the following: the candidate believes that all students possess funds of knowledge that are assets for learning based on individual experiences, abilities, talents, prior learning, and peer and social group interactions, as well as language, culture, family, and community values; believes all students should feel cherished and valued by teachers and peers; values diverse languages and dialects and their integration into instructional practice; resists deficit views; recognizes and values the positive adaptations and developmental processes of students experiencing adversity and disadvantage; is committed to deepening understanding of his/her own frames of reference, the potential biases in these frames, and their impact; and is committed to creating and sustaining an equitable learning environment for all students.

> Possible Behaviors for Assessment Purposes:
> - Accesses information about the values of diverse cultures and communities
> - Incorporates learners' experiences, cultures, and community resources into instruction
> - Understands students with exceptional needs, including those associated with disabilities and giftedness
> - Knows how to use strategies and resources to address the needs of students with exceptionalities
> - Learns all students' names
> - Builds relationships with students
> - Strives to know and understand students
> - Communicates with parents utilizing culturally inclusive skills
> - Seeks and provides culturally relevant materials
> - Uses the community of the child as a resource for classroom learning events
> - Is attentive to the use of language that affirms cultures and genders; avoids generalizations
> - Disburses resources equitably
> - Advocates for justice
> - Reflects on own assumptions and biases
> - Appropriately integrates diverse languages and dialects into his/her instructional practice to engage students in learning

<u>Effective Communication and Collaboration:</u> The candidate values effective communication and collaboration with important stakeholders, including students, colleagues, peers, professors, and parents.

This includes, but is not limited to the following: the candidate values clear, honest, respectful, and compassionate communication; values developing skills for meaningful communication in multiple cultural contexts; believes in the importance of listening and the value of others' perspectives; is open to multiplicity of ideas and beliefs; believes in the value of disagreement as an opportunity for transformation and to avoid group think; values the mutuality of contributions; and believes in the importance of reflecting on self-contributions to communication and collaboration.

Possible Behaviors for Assessment Purposes:
- Is able to articulate ideas and beliefs
- Models effective verbal and non-verbal communication
- Uses non-judgmental professional discourse, especially in relation to the candidate's (and/or student's) progress (e.g., in the field)
- Seeks to understand communication praxes for diverse contexts
- Identifies areas for self-development in communication
- Actively practices developing communication skills
- Carefully listens to others
- Practices and encourages taking multiple perspectives
- Identifies moments for peace building
- Respectfully challenges alternate perspectives
- Carries equitable load of group work
- Reflects upon her/his own communication and collaboration

Ethical Outlook: The candidate values and engages in reflective practices, ethical thinking, and strives for ethical behavior.

This includes, but is not limited to the following: the candidate has a growth mindset in areas of ethical sensitivity, judgment, motivation, and character; has a reflective orientation; values autonomy and the dignity of each human being; is motivated by good will; strives for literacy and integrity of character including but not limited to truthfulness, genuineness, and mindfulness; values a caring community and social justice; has high professional reliability and integrity; cherishes wonder, imagination, joy, and creativity; and has a sustained commitment to the greater flourishing of youth and families and the common good.

Possible Behaviors for Assessment Purposes:
- Engages in activities to create a caring community
- Reflects on teaching and learning events, strategies, and outcomes
- Reflects on encounters with others
- Praises creativity
- Makes efforts to build a wide repertoire of teaching practices
- Respects students' autonomy
- Empowers youth to direct their own learning
- Promotes social responsibility
- Responds to students in ways that help them believe in themselves and each other
- Models an ethics vocabulary, e.g., responsibility, respect, fairness, honesty, trustworthiness, etc.
- Models "what if?" thinking
- Engages in academic honesty, including but not limited to citing others' work
- Honors and maintains confidentiality
- Is cautious to do no harm
- Articulates faith in humanity and its future
- Listens carefully to others and seeks to understand
- Treats each person with kindness

Professionalism: The candidate recognizes professional responsibility for engaging in and supporting professional practices for self and colleagues.

This includes, but is not limited to the following: the candidate values others' time and efforts; respects the professional environment; is committed to academic integrity and honesty; and values professional confidences.

Possible behaviors for Assessment Purposes:
- Attends and arrives on time for class, meetings, and other important events
- Turns in work on time or requests an extension
- Creates environments conducive to effective, equitable and safe learning
- Advocates for the learning needs of students
- Maintains the trust of students, parents and families
- Follows through on agreed expectations
- Engages in academic honesty
- Engages in practices of legal and ethical confidentiality
- Meets professional standards in written products and oral communication, including using correct grammar and careful proofreading
- Dresses professionally
- Seeks opportunities for professional growth

Bibliography

Benson, Peter L. and Eugene C. Roehlkepartain (2011) "When 'Good Enough' Isn't Really Good Enough: Aiming for the 'Best' for All Young People." In Timothy P. Jackson, *The Best Love of the Child: Being Loved and Being Taught to Love as the First Human Right.* p. 19 – 46. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.: Grand Rapids, MI.

Brown, Brené. (2010). "The Power of Vulnerability." TED.com. Available at https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability?language=en

Carroll, David (2007) "Developing Dispositions for Ambitious Teaching," *Journal of Educational Controversy*: Vol. 2: No. 2, Article 7.
Retrieved from: http://cedar.wwu.edu/jec/vol2/iss2/7

The College at Brockport State University of New York. (2011). Policy on the Assessment of Professional Dispositions for Teacher Education Candidates. Retrieved from
https://www.brockport.edu/policies/docs/assessment_of_professional_dispositions_for_te acher_education_candidates.pdf

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation. (2015). *Glossary.* Retrieved from http://caepnet.org/glossary?letter=D

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2011, April). Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards: A Resource for State Dialogue. Washington, DC: Author.

Dweck, Carol. (2006) *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success.* Ballantine Books: New York.

Freire, Paulo. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* The Continuum Publishing Company: New York. (1993 edition).

Gorski, P. (2013). *Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap.* New York: Teachers College Press.

hooks, bell. (2010). *Teaching Critical Thinking.* Routledge Taylor and Francis Group: New York.

Houston, John. Personal conversation. I want to give credit to John for the phrase "literacy of character."

Lederach, John Paul. (2003). *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation.* Good Books: Intercourse, PA.

Price-Mitchell, Marilyn. (2015). "Creating a Culture of integrity in the Classroom." *Edutopia.* Retrieved from http://www.edutopia.org/blog/8-pathways-creating-culture-

integrity-marilyn-price-mitchell

Price-Mitchell, Marilyn. (2015). "Cultivating Creativity in Standards-Based Classrooms." *Edutopia.* Retrieved from http://www.edutopia.org/blog/cultivating-creativity-standards-based-classrooms-marilyn-price-mitchell

Rest, James R. and Daria Narvez (1994). Moral Development in the Professions: Psychology and Applied Ethics. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers: Hilldale, New Jersey.

Search Institute. (2015). 40 Developmental Assets. Retrieved from http://www.search-institute.org/research/developmental-assets

Swalwell, K. (2014). *Educating activist allies: Social justice pedagogy with the suburban and urban elite.* New York: Routledge.