

Advanced Field Experience Final Assessment

This assessment is based on the first 25 days of the Advanced Field Experience. The Winter 2020 field experience was truncated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. **PLEASE NOTE: Our AFX student teachers have completed the requirements for interim certification in the province of Alberta.**

Student Teacher: Teresa Cowan	ID#: 0233890	Course: 498	Term: Winter 2020
School: A Blair McPherson	School District: Edmonton Public Schools		
Subjects: Elementary	Grade level(s): Five		
Mentor Teacher: Tammy Wildemann	University Facilitator: Gerald Kunyk		
EDFX Grade: It is recommended the student teacher receive a grade of: Credit (Mentor teacher: Please type CREDIT or NO CREDIT.)			

Description of the school and context of teaching: Suggested topics include urban / rural location, school size, focus or special programs, student demographics, class composition, etc. Suggested length is 150-200 words. If possible, do not exceed this page.

A. Blair McPherson (ABM) is a Kindergarten to grade 9 community school that offers inclusive programming. The school has an enrollment of approximately 900 students. ABM promotes inquiry based learning with a focus on literacy development.

Mrs. Cowan was assigned to a grade 5 classroom with 23 students. The classroom is in a self contained portable. There are 15 English Language Learners as well as 1 student on an Individual Program Plan for learning issues. Educational assistants are available for a minimum of one hour per week. The student population is best described as complex with reading levels that range from grade 2 to 6.

NOTE: Prior to completing this document, please carefully review the instructions for completion found in the appendix. The TQS is also available in the appendix.

Mentor Teacher Assessment Comments

Competency 1: Fostering Effective Relationships

A teacher builds positive and productive relationships with students, parents/guardians, peers and others in the school and local community to support student learning.

(Note: For reference, the sample indicators associated with this competency are available in the appendix.)

Areas of strength, and supporting examples:

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Fostering effective relationships with students was Mrs. Cowan's greatest strength and priority as a student teacher. She made an effort to learn each student's name prior to commencing her practicum. She greeted each student as they entered the classroom and made a concerted effort to inquire about their lives and personal interests. As such, the students quickly connected with her and solid bonds grew. Mrs Cowan treated all students fairly and with respect. She addressed individual issues privately, being careful to maintain the dignity and privacy of all involved. She identified children that needed extra support (children that were withdrawn) and sought creative ways to reach them, such as through art/coloring books. Mrs. Cowan was aware that she was working in a school that was culturally diverse and made inquiries to aid her in best serving the demographic of her learners. In short, Mrs. Cowan was approachable, inviting and deeply interested in supporting every student in our classroom.

Areas for ongoing growth:

Looking forward, I am certain that with time and opportunity, Mrs. Cowan will succeed when asked to collaborate with community service professionals such as mental health, social services, and law enforcement workers. She is very detail oriented and will therefore be able to offer academic information as required. Mrs Cowan will also grow in her ability to provide culturally appropriate opportunities for students and parents as she becomes a long term member of a learning community.

Competency 2: Engaging in Career-Long Learning

A teacher engages in career-long professional learning and ongoing critical reflection to improve teaching and learning. *(Note: For reference, the sample indicators associated with this competency are available in the appendix.)*

Areas of strength, and supporting examples:

Mrs. Cowan entered her practicum with a keen interest in educational research and while she was at her placement she engaged in reviewing the work of Jo Boaler and Adrienne Gear. Both authors were recommended to her as part of our communities of practice (COP) which she attended regularly. She was eager to discuss their work and to consider ways to apply their methods when teaching. Mrs. Cowan also attended a district professional development day and sought out weekend opportunities such as a 'Trauma-Sensitive Pedagogy & Practise' workshop. Needless to say, Mrs Cowan exhibits all the qualities of a life-long learner.

Mrs. Cowan also collaborated with various teachers from our school. She attended weekly grade level meetings. She also had the opportunity to team teach with another grade five teacher and a kindergarten class that we 'buddied' with on a weekly basis. This gave Mrs. Cowan the opportunity and exposure to different teaching styles and grade levels.

Areas for ongoing growth:

Mrs. Cowan has entered the teaching profession during a time in which technology is abundant and frequently changing. Mrs. Cowan was becoming increasingly comfortable engaging students with technology. She used the Smartboard, Google Docs and Chromebooks. She was being introduced to programs such as speech-to-text, video taping assessments, Mathletics and Razkids to augment differentiated instruction. As she moves through her career, I am certain that Mrs. Cowan will become more adept at troubleshooting technology issues - as they frequently occur in all of our classrooms.

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Competency 3: Demonstrating a Professional Body of Knowledge

A teacher applies a current and comprehensive repertoire of effective planning, instruction, and assessment practices to meet the learning needs of every student.

(Note: For reference, the sample indicators associated with this competency are available in the appendix.)

Areas of strength, and supporting examples:

Mrs. Cowan played a collaborative role in team teaching. She aided students in completing a Genius hour project and an inquiry unit on the Iroquois nation. It is important to note that inquiry teaching was new to Mrs. Cowan. Inquiry teaching contrasts with traditional teaching and planning (which relies heavily on the teacher to dictate content and pace) as it shifts to being student led. As such, Mrs. Cowan was very open and enthusiastic to partake in a new approach to instruction. She was able to successfully guide students through their questions, support them in collaboration with others and provide them with valuable feedback when needed. This type of instruction requires daily student assessment, clear instruction, flexibility and patience. Mrs. Cowan exhibited all of these skills.

In addition to Inquiry, Mrs. Cowan planned and delivered several independent lessons in math, health, physics and art. She began her planning by addressing the learning outcomes as stated in the program of studies. She worked on providing a variety of experiences for students that included independent, partner and group activities. She was developing an awareness of the importance of sequencing lessons so that they began at a level where all students could experience competency and then build upon that. Mrs. Cowan did not hesitate to try new instructional strategies. She engaged students with manipulatives, mini lessons, online practice, full class instruction, games and individual support.

Mrs. Cowan also had the opportunity to explore assessment. Specifically, she engaged in daily conferring during our reading block and gave students feedback on writing and researching skills. She assessed growth by administering skill checks with worksheets and Exit slips. Mrs. Cowan also helped to construct and assess a weekly quiz that reviewed all core skills taught that week.

Areas for ongoing growth:

With time, Mrs Cowan will develop specialized knowledge of the subject areas she teaches and will become more aware of timing and pace. Mrs. Cowan was aware of the need to simplify her instruction, edit her plans and limit student choice. Mrs Cowan was unable to develop her mid range plans or reach the 0.8 teaching load due to the cancellation of school. I am certain that if given the additional weeks she would have found her rhythm in the classroom while meeting the learning needs of the students.

Competency 4: Establishing Inclusive Learning Environments

A teacher establishes, promotes and sustains inclusive learning environments where diversity is embraced and every student is welcomed, cared for, respected and safe.

(Note: For reference, the sample indicators associated with this competency are available in the appendix.)

Areas of strength, and supporting examples:

Mrs Cowan demonstrated excellence in promoting an inclusive learning environment. She at all times expressed confidence in the students, letting them know that they could all learn and be successful. To ensure their growth, she planned activities that encouraged students to be engaged at their skill level. For example, Mrs. Cowan used formative assessment tools in math and then created differentiated lessons based on the students' needs. The students who were excelling were given digital enrichment activities; she then had the

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space and time to support students with small group instruction. Mrs. Cowan also modelled respect by allowing students to teach the skills they were adept at to their peers. This helped to build their confidence and reinforce that they were part of a learning community. A final quality that should be mentioned is Mrs. Cowan's attention to creating safe environments. I was impressed on several occasions by her willingness to facilitate classroom meetings that addressed behavioral or safety concerns with students. During these times, Mrs. Cowan imbued the students with a sense of responsibility for their actions and a commitment to create a plan for improvement. These skills are a result of experience and maturity, which Mrs. Cowan brought to this practicum experience.

Areas for ongoing growth:

Future growth will naturally occur as Mrs. Cowan is exposed to different learning communities and to a variety of student needs.

Competency 5: Applying Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit

A teacher develops and applies foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit for the benefit of all students. *(Note: For reference, the sample indicators associated with this competency are available in the appendix.)*

Areas of strength, and supporting examples:

Mrs. Cowan was fortunate to join us as we began an inquiry of the Iroquois people. I appreciated her humility in expressing that she did not bring a great deal of background knowledge of Aboriginal history. This reflection allowed her to be open to resources, respectful of teachings and motivated to continue her own journey as a learner. She aided the students as they built questions for inquiry and engaged in mindful discussions with myself and the students as to how to share new learnings in an accurate and respectful manner. I am also aware of Mrs. Cowan's intentions to seek out resources for herself, as offered by our district to continue her learning.

Areas for ongoing growth:

Mrs. Cowan will need to engage in all professional development activities that will help her to build and apply knowledge of First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities.

Competency 6: Adhering to Legal Frameworks and Policies

A teacher demonstrates an understanding of and adherence to the legal frameworks and policies that provide the foundations for the Alberta education system.

(Note: For reference, the sample indicators associated with this competency are available in the appendix.)

Areas of strength, and supporting examples:

Mrs. Cowan demonstrated an approach to teaching that was fair and free of discriminatory language or actions. She provided students with opportunities to voice their ideas and/or concerns. She was aware of the rules of confidentiality in that she was careful to keep student assessments and anecdotal notes away from public viewing or access. Mrs. Cowan was aware of school policies such as recess supervision, field trip procedures and student dress requirements for cold weather. She attended district instruction for epipen training and safe and respectful work environments. Mrs. Cowan conducted herself in a professional manner at all times; maintaining the honor and dignity of the teaching profession.

Areas for ongoing growth:

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Areas for growth would include learning about emergency procedures and reporting student progress to parents. Mrs. Cowan did not experience any of these situations due to the cancellation of classes. Again, I am certain that she will build her understanding of the legal frameworks and policies as she gains experience teaching.

Student Teacher Comments

My Areas of Strength

Choose any 2 out of the 6 TQS competencies and provide evidence/examples that demonstrate your strengths in these competencies.

(Note: For reference, the sample indicators associated with this competency are available in the appendix.)

Competency 1: Fostering Effective Relationships

- I created an environment where students felt safe and supported to take risks in answering questions by explaining to the students that mistakes are part of the learning experience.
- I was careful to ensure my lessons and instructions were not intimidating. I did this by calling on children who may struggle but not pressuring them to answer, or by quietly looking at what they were doing during the class to see if they were following along.
- I allowed students to sit where they were comfortable and found it easiest to focus.
- I knew that for kids to engage they needed to see value in what we were doing, so in every lesson I talked about real life applications.
- My lessons and instructions were designed to show the students I had complete confidence in their abilities.
- I expressed my interest and commitment to every student by the tone of my voice, the smile on my face, the respectful words I used, the way I met students at the door in the morning and said goodbye to them at the end of the day.
- I made sure the students knew our daily class routines by placing this on the board daily.
- I learned each of their names before I started my practicum.
- I sought to have a positive relationship with my student's families by showing enthusiasm and support for their children.
- I sought to build positive and productive relationships with my peers by asking questions about their lives and their teaching careers. I joined two extracurricular activities [running club/floor hockey].
- I was part of two Communities of Practice within the school.

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Competency 3: Demonstrating a Professional Body of Knowledge

I considered the abilities and learning styles/needs of each of my students, and then chose multiple modes of delivery to meet the diverse needs of my students.

I engaged students with hands-on learning, group learning, independent studies, pod work [i.e. For PE they were working in pods to complete a physical activity challenge and to create games.

In Math I strategically paired kids so that they could support or shine each other on. I had the groups work with manipulatives and talk/inquire about what they were seeing.

I provided manipulatives, created games/activities, modelled strategies for how to think through writing.

I utilized appropriate questioning during daily conferencing. I would check for comprehension, for engagement, for strategies they were using to decode words, and clarify meaning.

I utilized a variety of assessment strategies by providing or having students create games or creatures that required comprehension to play or complete.

In Health I started the unit talking about the overall purpose of the unit. I would start each new lesson with reflecting on the last lesson.

My lessons considered objectives across the subjects, i.e. collaboration, self-awareness, commitment to lifelong health, planning. I would do this with my other subjects like math and art.

Whenever possible I would invite kids to come to the front and model their strategies, techniques and thought processes to the other kids.

I would align strategies to student needs: For students who were doing well in a concept I would offer resources [Poly Up or in LA individual editing tools] that would enable the student to work at a higher level. For students that were struggling I would try to create support tools [in LA I created scaffold sheets that were very step by step] that would enable these students to feel safe while working through activities.

My Strategies for Ongoing Growth

Choose any 2 of the areas for growth identified by your mentor teacher(s). Describe strategies you will use for continued growth.

Competency 3: Demonstrating a Professional Body of Knowledge

Comments from mentor teacher: With time, Mrs Cowan will develop specialized knowledge of the subject areas she teaches and will become more aware of timing and pace. Mrs. Cowan was aware of the need to simplify her instruction, edit her plans and limit student choice.

The strategies I will use for continued growth: As soon as schools reopen, I will return to volunteering in the two schools I was in prior to this practicum. I will pay special attention to how other teachers pace and

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structure their lessons, how students respond, how the teacher shifts gears. I will specifically pick my teacher friend's brains about how they plan their lessons to support the student's needs, while weaving in and supporting the content of the POS. I will continue reading the books recommended by my mentor teacher [Jo Boaler, Adrienne Gear], and join an online Community of Practices that will assist me in learning how to best facilitate inquiry-based learning. I will continue working through my IXL online resource and Alberta Education resources to become reacquainted with the curriculum.

Competency 5: Applying Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit

Comments from mentor teacher: Mrs. Cowan will need to engage in all professional development activities that will help her to build and apply knowledge of First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities.

The strategies I will use for continued growth: I will continue to seek out educational opportunities to support my knowledge and appreciation of the history of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people so that I can better understand how to apply this knowledge within my classroom. During the Teacher's Convention I attended an excellent session which provided a comprehensive starting point for my understanding of the past and future desires of Indigenous people. I am particularly interested in learning respectful ways to highlight and share the rich skills and knowledge of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit people with my future class. One way I will attempt to achieve this is I will reach out to organizations and families of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people within my school's community to understand how I might be a conduit within my future school. I have a professor at the University of Alberta who taught and conducted research in predominantly Indigenous communities. My professor has offered to share her learnings with me.

There are multiple courses available at the University of Alberta that provide excellent strategies for how to apply foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit people. It is my intention to register for a course. I am a frequent visitor to the University of Alberta's Faculty of Native Studies online site.

Final Comments

Mentor Teacher Summative Comments: Considerations include organizational skills, ability to work with others, ability to reflect and self-assess, ability to engage students, involvement in the school community, adaptability, work ethic, resilience, etc.

Mrs. Cowan is a very smart and caring professional. She worked diligently to prepare herself for instruction. She was placed in a very challenging practicum and had to exhibit resilience in a constantly changing environment. I have little doubt that she will dedicate herself completely to any assignment that she is given. She will offer her whole self to the school community and take advantage of all learning opportunities. I would caution Mrs. Cowan to pace herself, reflect on the big picture and ultimately to be patient in this wonderful, complex and sacred 'call to teach'.

Student teacher reflective comments: Considerations include what you feel you can contribute to a learning and teaching environment, a challenge and how you overcame it, how you implemented feedback, any professional development opportunities in which you participated, ways in which this field experience shaped your evolving philosophy of education, etc.

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As a dedicated learner and mother who has volunteered many hours in schools, plus read countless educational books, I believe I bring a unique, real-life perspective to the profession.

A challenge I experienced was how to take everything that I needed to weave into a lesson [each child's learning style and needs, the POS, school's philosophy, and research], and roll it into an effective teaching experience? The Saturday before March 16th, I pushed pause and reflected. This enabled me to see the bigger picture, prioritize and clarify my goals and see how the end goal could be achieved.

Implementing feedback: I mentioned to my mentor that I didn't have enough time to successfully support students I knew required ongoing one on one scaffolding. My mentor explained I should *build in* one on one time. This mind shift reminded me of how I could create/structure my lessons so that there would be adequate time for unique/multiple learning experiences. I didn't need more time, I needed to structure my time more effectively.

Professional development I participated/observed:

1. A Trauma Informed workshop I attended provided excellent strategies for supporting students who struggle due to personal trauma.
2. The Teacher's Conference provided excellent resources for me as a new teacher. I attended Pivotal Response Training for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder; Top 20 Things a New Teacher Should Know, etc.
3. I participated in two Communities of Practice.

This field experience shaped my evolving philosophy of education in profound ways. From the lessons I set out to teach, to the changing face of the classroom due to Covid 19, I learned that you must be adaptable and ready for change on a dime. No matter the circumstances, the curriculum stays the same, but teachers must be flexible, creative, and adaptive to meet children's ever changing needs.

Appendix

Instructions for completion

The purpose of this final assessment is to provide evidence and communicate information regarding student teacher performance based on the Alberta Teaching Quality Standard.

Use the [Suggested Language to Support Student Teacher Development](#) document to support discussion and describe student teachers' level of growth. (This document is available on the field experiences website under the Forms / Mentor Teacher tab.)

Mentor teachers will:

- provide comments that describe the student teacher's strengths based on the TQS competencies and their indicators. Please provide 1 - 2 supporting examples to illustrate strengths.
- provide comments that describe areas for growth based on the TQS competencies and their indicators.
- Alberta Education has listed sample indicators for each competency. **Not all indicators need to be addressed and additional related indicators may be added.**
- For reference, a complete text of the TQS competencies and indicators are provided below.
- **For assistance with competencies 5 and 6**, please refer to the support documents posted on the field experience website under Forms / Mentor Teachers.
 - [Click here](#) to access the support document for competency 5.
 - [Click here](#) to access the support document for competency 6.
- Type **CREDIT** or **NO CREDIT** into the EDFX Grade field on the first page.

Student teachers will:

- choose 2 out of the 6 TQS competencies and provide evidence/examples that demonstrate their strengths in these competencies.
- choose 2 areas for growth identified by their mentor teacher(s) and provide strategies for ongoing growth in each of these areas.

Please note:

- Suggested maximum for each category is 250 words. Be concise and consider readability.
- Paragraph or point forms are both acceptable.
- This is a google doc format and may be opened as a google doc and uploaded to a google drive in order to share it between mentor teacher(s) and student teacher.

Teaching Quality Standard

[Click here](#) for complete document from the Alberta Education website.

Competency 1: Fostering Effective Relationships

A teacher builds positive and productive relationships with students, parents/guardians, peers and others in the school and local community to support student learning.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

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- (a) acting consistently with fairness, respect and integrity;
- (b) demonstrating empathy and a genuine caring for others;
- (c) providing culturally appropriate and meaningful opportunities for students and for parents/guardians, as partners in education, to support student learning;
- (d) inviting First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents/ guardians, Elders/knowledge keepers, cultural advisors and local community members into the school and classroom;
- (e) collaborating with community service professionals, including mental health, social services, justice, health and law enforcement; and
- (f) honouring cultural diversity and promoting intercultural understanding.

Competency 2: Engaging in Career-Long Learning

A teacher engages in career-long professional learning and ongoing critical reflection to improve teaching and learning.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- (a) collaborating with other teachers to build personal and collective professional capacities and expertise;
- (b) actively seeking out feedback to enhance teaching practice;
- (c) building capacity to support student success in inclusive, welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments;
- (d) seeking, critically reviewing and applying educational research to improve practice;
- (e) enhancing understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit worldviews, cultural beliefs, languages and values; and
- (f) maintaining an awareness of emerging technologies to enhance knowledge and inform practice.

Competency 3: Demonstrating a Professional Body of Knowledge

A teacher applies a current and comprehensive repertoire of effective planning, instruction, and assessment practices to meet the learning needs of every student.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- (a) planning and designing learning activities that:
 address the learning outcomes outlined in programs of study;
 reflect short, medium and long range planning;
 incorporate a range of instructional strategies, including the appropriate use(s) of digital technology, according to the context, content, desired outcomes and the learning needs of students;
 ensure that all students continuously develop skills in literacy and numeracy;
 communicate high expectations for all students;
 foster student understanding of the link between the activity and the intended learning outcomes;
 consider relevant local, provincial, national and international contexts and issues;
 are varied, engaging and relevant to students;
 build student capacity for collaboration;
 incorporate digital technology and resources, as appropriate, to build student capacity for: - acquiring, applying and creating new knowledge; - communicating and collaborating with others, - critical-thinking; and - accessing, interpreting and evaluating information from diverse sources;
 consider student variables, including: - demographics, e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, religion; - social and economic factors; - maturity; - relationships amongst students; - prior knowledge and learning; - cultural and linguistic background; - second language learning; - health and well-being; - emotional and mental health; and - physical, social and cognitive ability;
- (b) using instructional strategies to engage students in meaningful learning activities, based on:

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- specialized knowledge of the subject areas they teach;
 - an understanding of students' backgrounds, prior knowledge and experiences;
 - a knowledge of how students develop as learners;
- (c) applying student assessment and evaluation practices that:
- accurately reflect the learner outcomes within the programs of study;
 - generate evidence of student learning to inform teaching practice through a balance of formative and summative assessment experiences;
 - provide a variety of methods through which students can demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes;
 - provide accurate, constructive and timely feedback on student learning; and
 - support the use of reasoned judgment about the evidence used to determine and report the level of student learning.

Competency 4: Establishing Inclusive Learning Environments

A teacher establishes, promotes and sustains inclusive learning environments where diversity is embraced and every student is welcomed, cared for, respected and safe.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- (a) fostering in the school community equality and respect with regard to rights as provided for in the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
- (b) using appropriate universal and targeted strategies and supports to address students' strengths, learning challenges and areas for growth;
- (c) communicating a philosophy of education affirming that every student can learn and be successful;
- (d) being aware of and facilitating responses to the emotional and mental health needs of students;
- (e) recognizing and responding to specific learning needs of individual or small groups of students and, when needed, collaborating with service providers and other specialists to design and provide targeted and specialized supports to enable achievement of the learning outcomes;
- (f) employing classroom management strategies that promote positive, engaging learning environments;
- (g) incorporating students' personal and cultural strengths into teaching and learning; and
- (h) providing opportunities for student leadership.

Competency 5: Applying Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit

A teacher develops and applies foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit for the benefit of all students.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- (a) understanding the historical, social, economic, and political implications of:
 - treaties and agreements with First Nations;
 - legislation and agreements negotiated with Métis; and
 - residential schools and their legacy;
- (b) supporting student achievement by engaging in collaborative, whole school approaches to capacity building in First Nations, Métis and Inuit education;
- (c) using the programs of study to provide opportunities for all students to develop a knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, the histories, cultures, languages, contributions, perspectives, experiences and contemporary contexts of First Nations, Métis and Inuit; and
- (d) supporting the learning experiences of all students by using resources that accurately reflect and demonstrate the strength and diversity of First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

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Competency 6: Adhering to Legal Frameworks and Policies

A teacher demonstrates an understanding of and adherence to the legal frameworks and policies that provide the foundations for the Alberta education system.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- (a) maintaining an awareness of, and responding in accordance with, requirements authorized under the School Act and other relevant legislation;
- (b) engaging in practices consistent with policies and procedures established by the school authority; and
- (c) recognizing that the professional practice of a teacher is bound by standards of conduct expected of a caring, knowledgeable and reasonable adult entrusted with the custody, care or education of students

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