



Faculty of Education
University of Alberta

**Advanced Professional Term
(9 Weeks)
Field Experiences
Final Evaluation 2011-2012**

Student Teacher: Elizabeth Laverty

ID Number: 1263006

Course: [X] EDFX 425 – Elementary

University Facilitator: Larry Toepfer

Subjects: Science 6, LA 6, Rec. Ed. 6

Dates of Field Experience:
February 13 to April 20, 2012

School Name & Address:
Westpark Middle School
3310 55 Avenue
Red Deer, Ab T4N 4N1

School Telephone: 403 347-8911

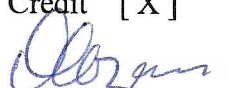
School District: Red Deer Public School Dist
#104

Mentor Teacher: David Cozens


For this field experience, it is recommended that the Student Teacher receive a grade of:

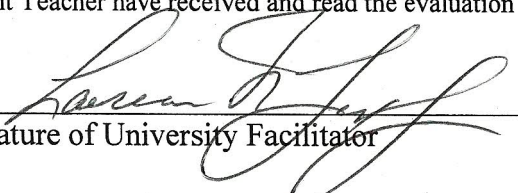
Credit [X] No Credit []

April 20, 2012
Date


Signature of Mentor Teacher

Signatures indicate that the University Facilitator and Student Teacher have received and read the evaluation report.



Signature of Student Teacher


Signature of University Facilitator

Distribution:

Students should retain the original signed Final Evaluation form for their own record. Please note that potential employers may ask for copy of this Final Evaluation.

A copy of this form will be returned by the University Facilitator to the office of Undergraduate Student Services, where it will be retained for a period of three years; no other copies will be retained by mentor teachers, university facilitators or employees of the University of Alberta without permission of the student teacher.

Mentor Teacher(s) – please initial each page of evaluation 

Description of the school and context of teaching:

Westpark Middle School is the smallest middle school in Red Deer with about 330 grades 6-8 students, 17 teaching staff and 10 Educational Assistants. Elizabeth taught science 6, LA 6, and Rec. Ed. 6. She also volunteered to teach aerobics during our Daily Activity Program for a half an hour each day.

Preparation, Planning and Organization

Elizabeth has so many strengths, and preparation is clearly one of Elizabeth's biggest strengths. She demonstrates an ability to create well developed lesson plans based on curriculum objectives and she displays a very sound understanding of the elements of a lesson in doing so. She demonstrates a familiarity with the teaching materials available and prepares or obtains materials of a suitable nature to make learning enjoyable and also meaningful for the students. She always integrates the Smart Board in her lessons and teaching where she is also able to make use of the internet and its unending resources. She also uses the school's website daily in order to post her lessons for parents to see at home. If students are finished their work early, Elizabeth has further challenging work available for them making optimal use of their extra time. Elizabeth is one of the best organized people I have ever met.

Teaching Skills and Strategies

As Elizabeth is always so well prepared for each lesson, it shows in each delivery. She uses the Smart Board for her introductions at the beginning of each lesson which gives the students clear expectations as they enter and this also helps to arouse their interest. During these transitional times, students are quickly prepared, anxious and ready to learn shortly after class begins. Elizabeth often uses the internet and Smart Board to enhance learning with practical examples of concepts taught. As a result, students see curriculum in action through real-world examples. Students are also often given hands-on experiences as Elizabeth allows for individual or group exploration with various materials. It is evident that Elizabeth recognizes the students' need for movement and change of pace. She continually circulates throughout the classroom and monitors student learning. In short, she demonstrates an amazing control of the environment, yet the students feel they have the freedom to learn and are enthusiastic in doing so. Though her lessons are well paced, students often feel that classes are over much too soon.

Communication

Elizabeth is a very good model in communication for the students. She writes or prints in a manner which sets an excellent example for students. She expresses her ideas in an age appropriate manner. Her expressions, gestures and smiles are used affectively to further communication, promote enthusiasm and to deter unnecessary behavior. She uses an expressive yet naturally calm voice evoking a like response from the children. She encourages discussion when appropriate to the objectives of the lesson and listens carefully to student responses and uses these to determine the direction of further discussion. She gives clear sequential and complete directions at the level of most students' understanding and is always prepared to rephrase directions for better understanding. When necessary, Elizabeth shares concerns and works out strategies for solving student problems with students' parents.

Management and Classroom Climate

Another one of Elizabeth's real strengths is she is able to create her own management and behavioral strategies ensuring students are responsible for their work and behavior, yet she does so in a very natural non-threatening way. Her teaching strategies keep students active and engaged from beginning to end which naturally leads to productive (not off-task) behaviour. She manages groups of students effectively and makes students personally accountable for their actions and achievement by clearly communicating behavioral and performance expectations. The students enjoy Elizabeth's teaching and learn because they know what is expected of them and they are always respected by her even when they need to be corrected or brought back on task. In short, Elizabeth treats her students as you or I would like to be treated as adults.



Understanding Students' Needs

Elizabeth has a very natural style and presence about her. She is approachable, encouraging, warm, and friendly. She establishes personal contact with the students and balances professionalism and personalism. She shows respect and concern for students and is patient in helping students to learn while respecting individual student needs and concerns. In addition, Elizabeth shows maturity in identifying students who are having difficulty and happily devotes extra time to helping them. Her never-ending patience is evident during these times.

Professional Qualities and Attributes

Elizabeth preferred to teach full time from the very first week of her practicum, and she did so very naturally. She did not disappoint. Despite having had numerous student teachers over my twenty-one-year career, I was still very surprised at her natural ability from the start. Elizabeth is always professional in her attitude, appearance, language and actions. She takes her "job" seriously and puts forth a concerted effort in everything she undertakes. She is always at school and working before me each morning demonstrating her commitment to me, the students and the teaching profession. She attends all staff meetings and professional development opportunities. As a fourth year student, Elizabeth demonstrates a confidence and ease at work which is beyond her years. She is encouraging, relaxed and friendly, yet she maintains a professional demeanor in the eyes of the students and the adults involved in the school. She always interacts professionally with staff and makes herself available to help out around the school. I have learned that Elizabeth is a very well prepared, kind, caring professional that many current teachers would do well to emulate. She demonstrates a gift for teaching and the school is a better place with her here.

Reflection and Self-Evaluation

My constructive comments were welcomed and improvement was rapid and became a natural part of her lessons early. Most improvement came within the first two weeks. Before long, I would swear that I was watching a veteran teacher in action. She engaged me in conversations about teaching and asked what literature or books she could be reading. It is obvious that Elizabeth is serious about doing the best job she can.

Other Comments

Elizabeth, I have no doubt that you are already a fantastic teacher and that the school district that hires you will be very fortunate. Best of luck in the future.

Student Teacher's Comments



Teaching at Westpark Middle School has been a wonderful experience and learning opportunity for me. During this APT placement I have had the chance to turn theory into practice. I feel as though I have learned more in the last nine weeks, than I have in the entire four years of my degree. Having the opportunity to not only create a unit plan; but to teach it from start to finish has been a very rewarding experience. I realize that I have indeed learned a lot about the *science of teaching* through my university studies; but finally getting a chance to learn about the *art of teaching* has been the best part of this practicum.

I attribute a lot of my success to the guidance and support that Mr. Cozens has given me throughout this experience. Mr. Cozens welcomed me into his classroom as a fellow teacher from the very first day. He allowed me the freedom and autonomy to make my own decisions about teaching and classroom management, while still providing me with guidance and suggestions. The feedback that I received from Mr. Cozens, my university facilitator and my students has been invaluable, and undoubtedly shaped me into the teacher that I am today.

Leaving Westpark Middle School, my grade 6 students and Mr. Cozens will not be easy for me. However, I will treasure the time I had here and mark it not as the end of my degree, but the beginning of my teaching and learning journey.

Elizabeth Lopez