



Faculty of Education
University of Alberta

**Introductory Professional Term
(5 Weeks)
Field Experiences
Final Evaluation 2010-2011**

Student Teacher: Elizabeth Laverty

Dates of Field

Experience: November 15- December 17, 2010

ID Number:

School Name & Address:

St. Francis of Assisi Middle School
321 Lindsey Avenue
Red Deer, AB T4R 3M1

Course: ☒ EDFX 325 – Elementary
(Check one) ☐ EDFX 350 – Secondary

School Telephone: 403-314-1449

University

Facilitator: Dr. Mark Ryan

School District: Red Deer Catholic Regional
Division #39

Subject(s) and/or

Grade level(s): Math 8, Foods 8, Fashions 8/9

Mentor

Teacher(s): Tammie Toeckes

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

Credit ☒ [X]

No Credit ☐ []

December 15th, 2010
Date

Tammie Toeckes
Signature of Mentor Teacher

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

Elizabeth Laverty
Signature of Student Teacher

Dr. Mark Ryan
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

[Initials]

Description of the school and context of teaching:

St. Francis of Assisi is a Catholic Middle School housing approximately 450 students from grade 6 to 9. The families in our school are predominately from middle-class to upper-middle class homes with an influx of ESL students in the last two years. Our school is run on the premise that respect is needed at all times, the expectations set for the students are high and for the most part they live up to them. Elizabeth's assignment was math, foods and fashions. Her experience was mostly in the grade 8 Math class with a dabbling into the foods and fashions labs.

Preparation, Planning and Organization

Ms. Lavery was always aware of her Programs of Study objectives and used them as the framework for her lessons. Her detailed plans were well laid out and time frames were clearly defined. All activities, materials and strategies were included as well as evaluation techniques. As her internship progressed, Elizabeth was able to vary the activities to enhance the learning of the particular group of students increasing their ability to succeed. She has the unique ability of preparing a concrete lesson and show total control through flexibility pertaining to the students' questions and comments.

Elizabeth communicated the objectives to the students at the onset of each class, by writing the agenda on the board or SMARTboard, this clearly provided the students with an understanding of the days outcomes and expectations. Even though well prepared and lesson plans were thorough, Elizabeth progressively demonstrated on the fly thinking that resulted in positive classroom management.

Teaching Skills and Strategies

Ms. Lavery demonstrated exceptional skills from day one of her practicum. Elizabeth used a variety of teaching strategies throughout the 5 weeks, including direct instruction, cooperative learning, and guided practice. She worked well with the one-to-one teaching, small group work and full class lessons. Ms. Lavery was able to think on her feet and adjust the situation to fulfill the needs of students. Through experience and teaching Elizabeth recognized the need for practice in the Math classroom and designed worksheets and games to engage the students. Ms. Lavery provided opportunities for students to experience success by asking appropriate questions, creating clear assignments and checking for student understanding. She also found creative ways for students to remember the necessary steps to be successful in math.

As the term went on, Ms. Lavery successfully developed her teacher presence. She remained friendly, but firm during lessons, seat work and hands-on learning. She became comfortable with the timing of appropriate humor within lessons and demonstrations.

 MR.

Communication

Elizabeth has developed a good rapport with the students at St. Francis. She has authentically taken an interest in the children as students as well as individuals. She greets students with a smile and enthusiasm in her voice. She tries to find time in her daily schedule to "positively chat" with the students to get to know them better and to help build their self-esteem. Her professionalism in conversation accompanied with her natural friendliness has made working with Elizabeth a fun and enjoyable experience for me. Elizabeth expresses her opinions and ideas competently and effortlessly while using correct terminology. She uses appropriate facial expressions and body language such as smiling, encouragement, signals, body contact, and proximity to enhance student learning and interaction. She is also aware she needs to adjust her naturally soft, calm voice to one of weight when working on classroom management skills. She listens carefully to student's responses and has become more comfortable in using longer wait times when asking the students questions. She is open to beneficial criticism and corrects errors when brought to her attention.

Management and Classroom Climate

Classroom management has been an area of growth and welcomed success for Elizabeth. She has worked hard to implement strategies to manage the class. Elizabeth has recognized that being firm in expectations does not necessarily translate into being perceived as being a "nag". Over the course of the practicum, Elizabeth has shown much growth in communicating behavioral and learning expectations; she has welcomed suggestions of improvement. She gained the learner's attention when needed and is working on strategies to attend to off task student's behavior and inattention for increased participation.

Ms. Lavery's consistent opening and closing routines have helped set the tone in the room. Her implementation of "the question of the day" gave the students a chance settle before the formal activity. The "final question" assisted in ending the class in a constructive manner.

As Elizabeth experiences more classroom management and teaching in her APT, this area of development will become one of strength.

Understanding Students' Needs

Ms. Lavery was cognizant of the many academic levels in the classroom. We discussed strategies to use to ensure success for all children. She included additional practice questions in her lesson for students to work on while she assisted those who struggled. Her worksheets included tips for those who required them. Elizabeth circulated during the lessons checking the understanding of the students; stopped and assisted any student who needed it. The students appreciated this and even the most timid began to put up their hand for that "little" extra help.

 MR.

Professional Qualities and Attributes

From the very beginning Elizabeth appeared confident and capable in front of the class. Both the students and staff found her willing to 'take on' any task that was presented to her. She listened carefully to the feedback given to her and readily incorporated it into the activities. It was evident that Elizabeth put the "students' needs first" by always being available and willing to assist in any way possible. She helped with the Art Club, supervised student completing homework and assisted in organizing the Friday Fun Day. No matter the request Elizabeth did it with a smile on her face and a willing attitude.

Reflection and Self-Evaluation

Ms. Laverty is exceptional at this. She sees the practicum as a time to build on her skill and to learn the necessary tools to succeed in the classroom. Elizabeth is forthright and honest in the evaluations, she is unafraid to speak plainly even if it does not show that the day or lesson was an outstanding success. This mature attitude and willingness to change will be an asset in her future teaching career.

Other Comments

I am very impressed with Elizabeth! Overall she was outstanding! Elizabeth is a quick study. This observation was made during the first week Elizabeth spent in my class before the practicum began. She listened carefully to all the feedback I gave her, took it in then worked with it to produce excellent resources, great lessons and a positive classroom atmosphere.

My vice-principal had the pleasure of stopping in the class when Elizabeth was teaching; that evening she also commented on how wonderful Elizabeth was doing.

Her positive attitude and excellent work ethic made her a pleasure to mentor.



Student Teacher's Comments

This short, five week experience has been an extremely valuable learning experience for me. I feel as though I have learned more about my own teaching style, how students learn, and the profession of teaching; than I had learned in all of my post-secondary education. I have had many insights and become more aware about certain aspects of teaching.

I believe my classroom management strategies have changed dramatically from the first week of this IPT. In the first week I didn't really have a deep understanding of the need for having a developed set of beliefs about classroom management, and implementing that. Each week I refined my techniques of getting student attention and putting a stop to undesired behaviour. Now, near the end of this experience I feel that my growth in this area has increased at an exponential rate. However, this is one area that I desire to learn more about and continue to develop my beliefs in.

Another insight that I have learned through this experience is the meaning of the phrases: "if it's not broken, don't fix it; and "don't re-invent the wheel". At the beginning of this IPT, I went into my teaching opportunities thinking that I would come up with my own rules, and management techniques to truly reflect how I feel about student learning. I soon found that I was getting 'burnt out' by trying to create all new assignments and lessons. Rather than using the resources that my mentor teacher made

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

available to me, I tried to create everything on my own. In about a week, I realized this was just not possible to put that much time and effort in to each individual aspect. I have begun to see the value in resources that we have as teachers. I have learned that text books from previous years, internet resources and other teachers are all valuable resources that can save me a lot of time and effort than can be put towards other tasks.

A final realization I would like to share, is the importance of being flexible. By nature, I am a rather structured and organized person. I like to plan out my actions before I do them, and have a very clear "big picture" with the individual steps to get to that end. In my first week of teaching I learned that to work in middle school, or any school, you must be flexible and willing to adapt and change your strategies as needed. Some events may occur that cause a loss of class time; or a particular class may take longer on a certain concept than another. All of these factors must be considered when planning lesson and deciding when to move on to the next concept.

In conclusion, these five weeks were hands down the best learning experience that I have ever had. It has given me inspiration to learn more about teaching and has re-affirmed my desire to be a teacher. I am so thankful for the guidance of my mentor teacher, Ms. Tammie Toeckes. She provided me with constructive feedback and helped me to feel confident as a teacher. The students welcomed me wholeheartedly and made me feel very comfortable working with them. St. Francis is a great school to learn in. I feel that the concepts and topics that I taught the students, are menial compared to the amount that they taught me about learning and teaching.

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

