



Unit 4 – The Role of the Administrator

Key Topic 2: Leadership

Focus Statement

Students explore several effective leadership qualities required of administrators in early care and education programs.

Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP) Student Learning Outcomes

The Curriculum Alignment Project's (CAP) lower division eight courses, CAP expansion courses, and student learning outcomes are mapped onto each instructional guide learning experience. See Appendix A for the specific student learning outcomes, objectives, and examples of course content and topics for the courses listed below.

- Introduction to Curriculum
- Practicum-Field Experience
- Adult Supervision and Mentoring in Early Care and Education
- Administration I: Programs in Early Childhood Education
- Administration II: Personnel and Leadership in Early Childhood Education
- Curriculum Strategies for Children with Special Needs

Instructional Methodologies

- Class discussion
- Jigsaw reading
- Notetaking outline or tool
- Pairs or small groups
- Reflective discussion
- Short paper or report
- Video observation



California Early Childhood Educator Competency Areas to Consider

These competency areas are from the California Department of Education, Early Education and Support Division's *California Early Childhood Educator Competencies* (CDE 2011). The "Competency Areas to Consider" below are listed in this instructional guide as a preliminary exploration of how particular competency areas might be addressed through these learning experiences.

- Observation, Screening, Assessment, and Documentation
- Special Needs and Inclusion
- Learning Environments and Curriculum
- Leadership in Early Childhood Education
- Professionalism
- Administration and Supervision



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Key Topic 2: Leadership

Before You Start

This key topic focuses on the content in Chapter 4 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines* related to qualities of effective leadership in preschool programs. Management functions are explored in Key Topic 3 of this instructional guide unit. Although these categories of administrative practice are divided for student considerations, it will be important to remind students that they are not discrete and both are necessary for quality outcomes for children.

The following sections in Chapter 4 are included in the active learning of this key topic:

- Reflective Curriculum Planning (pp. 53–56)
- Integrating Reflective Practice, Reflective Supervision, and Mentorship (pp. 59–61)

Though addressed here as qualities of effective leadership, these sections relate to effective management functions as well. These topics are addressed separately in this key topic to focus on some aspects of practice that are especially important in effective leadership across program elements.

The first paragraph in the section of Chapter 4 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines* titled “Reflective Curriculum Planning” (p. 53) calls attention to the administrator’s role in aligning a choice of curriculum approach with the *California Preschool Learning Foundations* and the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework*. In the *Instructional Guide for the California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*, Key Topic 1 of Unit 5 provides “three lenses” for students to use in viewing curriculum approaches that are off-the-shelf or have been developed within a program. These three lenses use three key features of the California curriculum framework—overarching principles, the curriculum-planning process, and integrated learning—as a way to see if and how a curriculum approach might be aligned with the foundations and framework. That key topic could be used to support the active learning suggested in this key topic.

There is a piece of this key topic that suggests having students view a segment of Disc 2 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines DVD Set*, two DVDs that accompany the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*. Handout 1 is provided as a viewing guide with this key topic to focus students’ attention on certain leadership topics in the discussion on the DVD segment. This viewing is also suggested for Key Topic 3 in Unit 4 of this instructional guide, but that key topic’s handout focuses on management functions. The



California Preschool Program Guidelines DVD Set can be ordered through CDE at www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/rc or contact the CDE Press sales office at (800) 995-4099.

Electronic versions of the handouts for Key Topics 2 and 3 will be available when this instructional guide is online at <http://facultyinitiative.wested.org/> (accessed January 20, 2016). If students do not have copies of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*, the Portable Document Format (PDF) version can be downloaded from the California Department of Education Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/preschoolproggdlns2015.pdf> (accessed January 20, 2016).

Information Delivery

Let students know that they will be exploring a series of related topics that are important for effective leadership in early childhood settings. These include leadership in decisions relating to curriculum, the administrator's role in staff development through reflective practice and mentoring, and reflective supervision. This is not an exhaustive exploration of these topics but will support students in understanding the context of policies and practices that undergird the approach to leadership in California's Preschool Program Guidelines.

Explain to students that they will begin this exploration by looking at the administrator's role in decisions relating to curriculum.

Active Learning

Getting it started

If class size allows organizing students into four groups, faculty will be able to ask each group to address one of four sets of questions provided later in this section. That would work best if a group size of four or fewer can be maintained. Students could also work in pairs, with one of the question sets assigned to each pair. If using pairs, there may be more than one pair addressing each of the four sets of questions. This could result in interesting discussions as pairs report their responses to the whole group for discussion.

The initial question of each of the following sets of questions can be addressed through a search of text in the section titled "Reflective Curriculum Planning" on pages 53–56. The second question can be found in that text as well, though it is not as clearly laid out.

Ask each group or pair to review the text for responses to the following questions. This is not meant to be an extensive review of possibilities for each of the questions. Remind students that this is a way for them to become familiar with the content of Chapter 4 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines* regarding these questions.



Slides 2-3

- What factors influence the selection of a curriculum approach?
What is the administrator's role?
- What does a well-designed curriculum provide?
What is the administrator's role?
- What needs to be included for young dual language learners?
What is the administrator's role?
- What needs to be included for children with special needs?
What is the administrator's role?

When students have had some time to explore the text regarding these questions, convene the pairs or groups into a whole group for discussion. Ask each team or group to briefly share their findings for both questions they explored.

Online Options

Students could post online their responses to the four sets of questions and then review the other students' responses.

Keeping it going

Next, direct their attention to page 52, where there are some traits and dispositions shared by many effective leaders:



Slides 4-5

- A passion for their work and a focus on goals
- Willingness to take risks and consider different perspectives
- Unwavering commitment to their core values
- Capacity to understand and manage their own emotions
- Capacity to support others in managing their emotions

Online Options

Students could write short paragraphs about each of the traits in relation to an administrator's role in selecting a curriculum approach, ensuring a well-designed curriculum, and including young children who are dual language learners and children with special needs. Students could post these paragraphs to share with their classmates in preparation for an in-class or online discussion.

Ask students to return to their pairs or groups and consider how each of these traits or dispositions would support the administrator's role



in the questions they previously explored. This might seem more obvious in some areas than others, but the intent is to stimulate thinking about the qualities of effective leadership in early childhood education and how they might play out across multiple program elements.

Taking it further

Remind students that another crucial piece of the administrator's role is that of staff development and supervision. Let students know that you will now be carrying the previous conversations forward to some considerations relating to reflective practice and reflective supervision. Ask students to keep in mind the traits and dispositions that were just discussed, as they are important to the administrator's role in implementing reflective practice and reflective supervision.

Direct students' attention to the following text on page 59:



Slides 6-7

The goal is to encourage reflective practice—approaching the educational setting with the intention to observe mindfully, respond thoughtfully, and take time afterward to share reflections, thereby deepening one's own understanding and improving one's own work. Reflective supervision is a way of guiding teachers to draw lessons from their own experiences that will influence their next steps (Heffron and Murch 2010).

In other words, reflective supervision is a way of guiding staff to use reflective practice throughout the program. The text describes two means of supporting staff to be reflective practitioners. The first is reflective supervision as described by Heffron and Murch. The second is mentoring.



Slide 8

Mentoring is described on page 60 as “. . . a more experienced teacher or administrator serves as a learning partner in the work setting as a newer teacher strives to grow in expertise.”

Ask students to consider the next list of questions while still working in their pairs or groups. Let them know that they will consider these questions in relation either to reflective supervision or mentoring. Each pair or group could consider one of these topics or both, depending on their familiarity with the topics. Because this is a way for them to become familiar with Chapter 4 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines*, suggest that they can respond to these questions using the text on pages 59–61. However, if there are



students with experience in early childhood settings, they will likely come up with some responses relating to their experiences. Ask them to note their responses and be ready to report to the whole group.

Here is the list of questions that students are to consider regarding either reflective supervision or mentoring or both:



Slides 9-10

- What is the value of this approach to staff development?
- When or how can it be done in a work setting?
- What can it address?
- What special traits or dispositions listed previously would support this approach?
- What special considerations might influence the decision to use this approach?
- Are there any cautions to consider in using this approach?

When students have had time to consider these questions and develop some responses, ask them to report back to the whole group. This can be in the form of a discussion that addresses each of the questions above individually, or it can be done by preparing a chart paper for each of the questions for each of the two approaches and posting them around a classroom. Give students large sticky notes on which to record their responses, and ask them to attach their responses to the appropriate paper.

Online Options

If there is online-discussion capability, faculty could facilitate a discussion of the six questions in the “Taking it further” section. A separate discussion thread could be used for each topic—reflective supervision or mentoring.

Putting it together

This review of the role of the administrator in effective leadership can be supported by viewing some current and former administrators as they discuss their work. These discussions can be found on Disc 2 of the *California Preschool Program Guidelines DVD Set*. There is a chapter on that DVD titled “Administration and Supervision,” which runs approximately 13 ½ minutes. This chapter can be accessed by



Disc 2



Slide 11

opening the disc to the main menu and clicking on “Select Chapters.” Then choose the chapter titled “Administration and Supervision.”

A viewing guide, Handout 1, accompanies this key topic and can be used while viewing this chapter to focus students’ attention on some of the issues and topics covered in this key topic.

After students have watched the DVD segment, faculty may ask the students to individually write a brief reflection paper or conduct a class discussion. The following reflection questions could be used for either approach:



Slide 12

- What stood out for you as you viewed this DVD segment?
- What was most interesting to you?
- What was familiar to you?
- Where did you find yourself wanting to know more?
- How could you follow up on learning more about that?

Online Options

If online-discussion capability is available, faculty could facilitate a discussion of the DVD based on the questions in the “Putting it together” section.

Reflection

The following set of more general reflective questions can be used in this and other key topics for additional class discussion or to guide individual student journaling.



Slides 13-15

- Which ideas or part of this class session stood out most for you?
- What seemed familiar or reinforced what you already know or have experienced? What gave you a new perspective or insight that causes you to think differently about teaching preschool children and/or engaging their families?
- Why do you think the content of this class session was presented the way it was? How did this approach help you understand the content? What else would have helped? What does this tell you about how you learn?
- How will you decide what to apply from this class session in your work with preschool children and families? What will you do to ensure you will implement what you have decided to use?



Unit 4: The Role of the Administrator
 Key Topic 2 – Leadership
 Handout 1: Viewing Guide for “Administration and Supervision” – Leadership

Viewing Guide for “Administration and Supervision” – Leadership	
California Preschool Program Guidelines DVD Set	
DVD Disc:	2
DVD Chapter:	“Administration and Supervision”

This viewing guide is based on the leadership qualities listed throughout Key Topic 2 of this instructional guide unit. There is a segment in Disc 2 of the set of two DVDs that accompany the *California Preschool Program Guidelines* that relates to much of the content of Chapter 4, but this viewing guide directs attention specifically to leadership roles and qualities that have been discussed in Key Topic 2. As you hear examples of these qualities, check them in the appropriate column. Note that some of what is discussed in this segment will apply to more than one of the roles or qualities, and you might have some that are not discussed.

The segment to view can be accessed by going to the main menu on Disc 2, clicking on “Select Chapters,” and then clicking on “Administration and Supervision.” Because it is difficult to write and view at the same time, it might be helpful to have the capacity to pause and restart the video.

Leadership Roles and Qualities Discussed in Key Topic 2	Place a checkmark here if discussed	Notes, Thoughts, Questions
The administrator’s role in the selection of a curriculum approach		
The administrator’s role in including young dual language learners		
The administrator’s role in including children with special needs		



Leadership Roles and Qualities Discussed in Key Topic 2	Place a checkmark here if discussed	Notes, Thoughts, Questions
Passion for their work and focus on goals		
Willingness to take risks and consider different perspectives		
Unwavering commitment to their core values		
Capacity to understand and manage their own emotions		
Capacity to support others in managing their emotions		
Reflective supervision		
Reflective practice		