August Experience Observation Reporting Form

Spend two days (one day before and one day after students arrive) in the school of your choice. Use the following outline to document the information you gathered from your school visits about gearing up for school. Some of the information will be gleaned from interviews with the classroom teacher while some will come from attendance at meetings and classroom observations.

Before the Students Arrive:
- In what activities was the teacher engaged prior to the students arriving at school?
- Describe the types of meetings and trainings attended by the classroom teacher (district-wide, school-wide, grade level, subject level/content-related…).
- Ask the classroom teacher if he or she is required to update or compile a professional growth plan? If so, find what is required and how the teacher goes about deciding where to focus professional development.
- How did the classroom teacher prepare his or her room?
- “School Improvement Plan and Analysis of Individual Student Standardized Test Scores” (LEAP, ILeap, Dibels, District Benchmark Tests, Teacher-made learning target tests, etc.) Ask the teacher how he/she utilizes information from the above sources in order to guide/plan his/her instruction.
- What steps did the classroom teacher take to learn about his/her incoming students? Was any contact made with the potential students prior to the start of school? Find out how the teacher is informed about students with special needs and how he/she accommodates those needs.
- Inquire about the teacher’s classroom management plan (routines, procedures, protocol, rewards, and consequences).
- Ask the classroom teacher to share with you the facets of curriculum used/required in preparing lessons (lesson plan format, LA Comprehensive Curriculum, State GLEs and benchmarks, district-required curriculum…)
- Have the classroom teacher share with you his/her week-one agenda/lessons. Be sure to find out how materials are collected and distributed and how students are apprised of expectations/rules.

After the Students Arrive:
- During your observation of the class while students are in attendance, document what occurs throughout the day. Comment on what your teacher did to help things run smoothly. Make a list of things to remember for the first day of school when you begin as a classroom teacher.
Principal Letter for August Experience

Dear Principal,

As part of the teacher preparation programs at Louisiana State University, we require teacher candidates to complete a focused observation entitled “The August Experience.” This fieldwork allows pre-service teachers the opportunity to experience the beginning of a school year activities in which a teacher engages and to learn how a teacher plans for and carries out the first day of school.

Please help this teacher candidate to identify a teacher who would be willing to be shadowed by a pre-service teacher on a day prior to the first day and on the first day of school. The university student can also assist the teacher in the preparation and the first day activities. The observation directions provided to the teacher candidate can be found attached. Should you have questions about this assignment, please feel free to contact my office.

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