

UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON

COLLEGE of EDUCATION
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

Practicum Guide

2025-2026

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Practicum Overview

Introduction

Students seeking the Standard Principal Certificate must complete a structured, field-based practicum focused on actual experiences with each of the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) standards. The established (3) practicum courses are not a checklist of activities, but an opportunity to plan, participate in and **reflect** upon campus leadership. By building a productive environment for meaningful opportunities, students learn how to self-analyze their strengths and weaknesses throughout these critical developmental stages. The design of the field-based experiences enhances the **knowledge, skills**, and other **attributes** and **attitudes** (KSAs) emphasized in the Principal Certificate program. This collaborative design encompasses the students, campus mentors, field supervisors, school community, and university instructors to assimilate the organization and leadership essential to a schools' success.

The practicum is limited to students enrolled in the M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision or the certificate program and is taught in conjunction with the students taking courses. The practicum provides students with a deepened understanding of the total commitment a principal makes to a school community. The practicum is intended to serve as both a formative and summative set of experiences in the Principalship program. It will conclude at the end of the fifth semester with a capstone and electronic portfolio that will include a complete log of hours/activities. A copy of the logged hours must be provided to the professor who, in turn, must keep a copy on file for at least five years.

For this document, the term Practicums may be synonymously referred to as a practicum or clinical residency.

Practicum Requirements

Working with the Site Supervisor (Campus Mentor) and members of the campus leadership team, the candidate will:

- Accumulate at least 160 clock hours of clinical residency experience during the year-long practicum as follows:
 - Eighty (80) clock hours while enrolled in ELCS 6320 Instructional Leadership I, and
 - Eighty (80) clock hours while enrolled in ELCS 6391 Practicum in the Principalship.
- Submit at the end of each practicum course semester a cumulative log documenting your practicum clock hours to the university instructor, field supervisor, and Director of Certification. The activity log should include the following completed activity:
 - Signatures
 - date and time,
 - number of completed clock hours,
 - description of the activity, and
 - competency

During each practicum semester (ELCS 6320, and ELCS 6391), the site supervisor will complete an intern progress report of the candidate's progress toward mastery of the Texas competencies for principal certification. During each practicum semester, the candidate will complete an intern self-progress report of their own progress toward mastery of the Texas competencies for principal certification. During the beginning, middle, and end of the practicum, a field supervisor will complete a field observation. The three field observations must total a minimum of 135 minutes.

TEXES Principal Certification Assessment Framework

Under the direction of a university instructor, field supervisor, and campus mentor, the student will demonstrate proficiency in the following SBEC Principal Domains, Competencies, and supporting standards that represent the knowledge, skills, and dispositions principal candidates should master as practitioners. Texas requires principal certification candidates to complete two examinations.

TEXES 368, Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL)

The TEXES 368 consists of three performance assessments. Preparation for these assessments is embedded in degree coursework. PASL #1 is embedded in ELCS 6302, PASL #2 is embedded in ELCS 6320, and PASL #3 is embedded in ELCS 6321.

TEXES 268, Principal as Instructional Leader

The content assessed by the TEXES Principal as Instructional Leader (268) exam is provided below. The bolded priority statements noted with the asterisk focus on the most critical aspects of school leadership that can influence student outcomes. Therefore, these priority statements are assessed with higher frequency.

Domain I—School Environment (School and Community Leadership)

Competency 001—The entry-level principal knows how to establish and implement a shared vision and environment of high expectations for all stakeholders (students, staff, parents, and community).

- A. *Creates a positive, collaborative, and collegial campus environment that sets high expectations and facilitates the implementation and achievement of campus initiatives and goals**
- B. Uses emerging issues, recent research, knowledge of systems (e.g., school improvement process, strategic planning, etc.), and various types of data (e.g., demographic, perceptive, student learning, and processes) to collaboratively develop a shared campus vision and a plan for implementing the vision
- C. Facilitates the collaborative development of a plan that clearly articulates objectives and strategies for implementing a campus vision
- D. Aligns financial, human, and material resources to support implementation of a campus vision and mission
- E. Establishes procedures to assess and modify implementation plans to promote achievement of the campus vision
- F. Models and promotes the continuous and appropriate development of all stakeholders in the school community, to shape the campus environment
- G. *Establishes and communicates consistent expectations for all stakeholders, providing supportive feedback to promote a positive campus environment**
- H. *Implements effective strategies to systematically gather input from all campus stakeholders, supporting innovative thinking and a positive environment**
- I. *Creates an atmosphere of safety that encourages the social, emotional, and physical well-being of staff and students**

- J. Facilitates the implementation of research-based theories and techniques to promote a campus environment and environment that is conducive to effective teaching and learning and supports organizational health and morale

Competency 002—The entry-level principal knows how to work with stakeholders as key partners to support student learning.

- A. Acknowledges, recognizes, and celebrates the contributions of all stakeholders toward the realization of the campus vision
- B. Implements strategies to ensure the development of collegial relationships and effective collaboration
- C. ***Uses consensus-building, conflict-management, communication, and information-gathering strategies to involve various stakeholders in planning processes that enable the collaborative development of a shared campus vision and mission focused on teaching and learning**
- D. ***Ensures that parents and other members of the community are an integral part of the campus environment**

Domain II—Leading Learning (Instructional Leadership/Teaching and Learning)

Competency 003—The entry-level principal knows how to collaboratively develop and implement high-quality strategies and practices to meet the academic, grade-appropriate, and social needs of students.

- A. ***Prioritizes instruction and student achievement by understanding, sharing, and promoting a clear definition of high-quality instruction based on best practices from recent research**
- B. ***Facilitates the use of sound, research-based practice in the development, implementation, coordination, and evaluation of campus curricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular programs to fulfill academic, development, social, and cultural needs**
- C. ***Facilitates campus participation in collaborative district planning, implementation, monitoring, and revision of the curriculum to ensure appropriate scope, sequence, content, and alignment**
- D. ***Implements a rigorous curriculum that is aligned with state standards, including college and career-readiness standards**
- E. Facilitates the use and integration of technology, telecommunications, and information systems to enhance learning

Competency 004—The entry-level principal knows how to monitor and assess classroom instruction to promote teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

- A. ***Monitors instruction routinely by visiting classrooms, observing instruction, and attending grade-level, department, or team meetings to provide evidence-based feedback to improve instruction**
- B. ***Analyzes the curriculum collaboratively to guide teachers in aligning content across grades and ensures that curricular scopes and sequences meet the particular needs of their student populations (considering sociological, linguistic, and other factors)**
- C. ***Monitors and ensures staff use of multiple forms of student data to inform instruction and intervention decisions that maximizes instructional effectiveness and student achievement**
- D. ***Promotes instruction that supports the growth of individual students and student groups, supports educational ethics, and works to reduce the achievement gap**

- E. ***Supports staff in developing the capacity and time to collaboratively and individually use classroom formative and summative assessment data to inform effective instructional practices and interventions**

Domain III—Human Capital (Human Resource Management)

Competency 005—The entry-level principal knows how to provide feedback, coaching, and professional development to staff through evaluation and supervision, knows how to reflect on his/her own practice, and strives to grow professionally.

- A. ***Communicates expectations to staff and uses multiple data points (e.g., regular observations, walk-throughs, teacher and student data, and other sources) to complete evidence-based evaluations of all staff**
- B. ***Coaches and develops teachers by facilitating teacher self-assessment and goal setting, conducting conferences, giving individualized feedback, and supporting individualized professional growth opportunities**
- C. ***Collaborates to develop, implement, and revise a comprehensive and ongoing plan for the professional development of campus staff that addresses staff needs based on staff appraisal trends, goals, and student information/data**
- D. ***Facilitates a continuum of effective professional development activities that includes appropriate content, process, context, allocation of time, funding, and other needed resources**
- E. Engages in ongoing and meaningful professional growth activities, reflects on his or her practice, seeks and acts on feedback, and strives to continually improve, learn, and grow
- F. Seeks assistance (e.g., mentor, central office) to ensure effective and reflective decision making and works collaboratively with campus and district leadership

Competency 006—The entry-level principal knows how to promote high-quality teaching by using selection, placement, and retention practices to promote teacher excellence and growth.

- A. ***Invests and manages time to prioritize the development, support, and supervision of the staff to maximize student outcomes**
- B. ***Facilitates collaborative structures that support professional learning communities in reviewing data, processes, and policies in order to improve teaching and learning in the school**
- C. ***Creates leadership opportunities, defines roles, and delegates responsibilities to effective staff and administrators to support campus goal attainment**
- D. ***Implements effective, appropriate, and legal strategies for the recruitment, screening, hiring, assignment, induction, development, evaluation, promotion, retention, discipline, and dismissal of campus staff**

Domain IV—Executive Leadership (Communication and Organizational Management)

Competency 007—The entry-level principal knows how to develop relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including selecting appropriate communication strategies for particular audiences.

- A. ***Understands how to effectively communicate a message in different ways to meet the needs of various audiences**
- B. ***Develops and implements strategies for systematically communicating internally and externally**
- C. Develops and implements a comprehensive program of community relations that uses strategies that effectively involve and inform multiple constituencies
- D. Establishes partnerships with parents, businesses, and other groups in the community to strengthen programs and support campus goals

Competency 008—The entry-level principal knows how to focus on improving student outcomes through organizational collaboration, resiliency, and change management.

- A. Demonstrates awareness of social and economic issues that exist within the school and community that affect campus operations and student learning
- B. Gathers and organizes information from a variety of sources to facilitate creative thinking, critical thinking, and problem solving to guide effective campus decision making
- C. *Frames, analyzes, and creatively resolves campus problems using effective problem-solving techniques to make timely, high-quality decisions**
- D. Develops, implements, and evaluates systems and processes for organizational effectiveness to keep staff inspired and focused on the campus vision
- E. *Uses effective planning, time management, and organization of work to support attainment of school district and campus goals**

Domain V—Strategic Operations (Alignment and Resource Allocation)

Competency 009—The entry-level principal knows how to collaboratively determine goals and implement strategies aligned with the school vision that support teacher effectiveness and positive student outcomes.

- A. *Assesses the current needs of the campus, analyzing a wide set of evidence to determine campus objectives, and sets measurable school goals, targets, and strategies that form the school's strategic plans**
- B. *Establishes structures that outline and track the progress using multiple data points and makes adjustments as needed to improve teacher effectiveness and student outcomes**
- C. *Allocates resources effectively (e.g., staff time, master schedule, dollars, and tools), aligning them with school objectives and goals, and works to access additional resources as needed to support learning**
- D. Implements appropriate management techniques and group processes to define roles, assign functions, delegate authority, and determine accountability for campus goal attainment

Competency 010—The entry-level principal knows how to provide administrative leadership through resource management, policy implementation, and coordination of school operations and programs to ensure a safe learning environment.

- A. Implements strategies that enable the physical plant, equipment, and support systems to operate safely, efficiently, and effectively to maintain a conducive learning environment**
- B. *Applies strategies for ensuring the safety of students and personnel and for addressing emergencies and security concerns, including developing and implementing a crisis plan**
- C. *Applies local, state, and federal laws and policies to support sound decisions while considering implications related to all school operations and programs (e.g., student services, food services, health services, and transportation)**
- D. *Collaboratively plans and effectively manages the campus budget within state law and district policies to promote sound financial management in relation to accounts, bidding, purchasing, and grants**
- E. Uses technology to enhance school management (e.g., attendance systems, teacher grade books, shared drives, and messaging systems)
- F. Facilitates the effective coordination of campus curricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular programs in relation to other school district programs to fulfill the academic, grade-appropriate, and social needs of students

- G. Collaborates with district staff to ensure the understanding and implementation of district policies and advocates for the needs of students and staff
- H. ***Implements strategies for student discipline and attendance in a manner that ensures student safety, and consistency, and that legal requirements are met (e.g., due process, SPED requirements)**

Domain VI—Ethics

Competency 011—The entry-level principal knows how to provide ethical leadership by advocating for children and ensuring student access to effective educators, programs, and services.

- A. Implements policies and procedures that require all campus personnel to comply with the Educators' Code of Ethics (TAC Chapter 247)
- B. Models and promotes the highest standard of conduct, ethical principles, and integrity in decision making, actions, and behaviors
- C. ***Advocates for all children by promoting the continuous and appropriate development of all learners in the campus community**
- D. ***Implements strategies to ensure that all students have access to effective educators and continuous opportunities to learn**
- E. ***Promotes awareness and appreciation of varied backgrounds throughout the campus community**
- F. ***Facilitates and supports special campus programs that provide all students with quality, flexible instructional programs and services (e.g., health, guidance, and counseling programs) to meet individual student needs**
- G. ***Applies legal guidelines (e.g., in relation to students with disabilities, bilingual education, confidentiality, and discrimination) to protect the rights of students and staff and to improve learning opportunities**
- H. Articulates the importance of education in a free, democratic society

Suggested Practicum Log Activities

The candidate's practicum log must document activities demonstrating proficiency with a variety of competencies. Noted below are suggested activities organized by competency. These activities, along with the critical areas designed in the practicum course, will guide the intern, Site Supervisor, Field Supervisor, and University Instructor to create meaningful experiences throughout the three embedded practicum courses. It is essential that each experience, task, activity, or observation is documented to secure the completion of all competencies necessary for certification.

TExES Competencies	Possible Activities
Competency 001—The entry-level principal knows how to establish and implement a shared vision and environment of high expectations for all stakeholders (students, staff, parents, and community).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Use emerging research and data to collaboratively develop a shared campus vision</i> • <i>Participate in the collaborative development of a school plan, implementing the vision</i> • <i>Participate in the selection and survey of campus culture</i> • <i>Assist in leading efforts for the professional development of all stakeholders</i> • <i>Assist in efforts to create a safe and positive campus environment.</i>
Competency 002—The entry-level principal knows how to work with stakeholders as key partners to support student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assist in the creation of a process for recognizing faculty and students</i> • <i>Help facilitate efforts to establish collegial relationships and effective collaboration</i> • <i>Assist in efforts to ensure that families and the community are an integral part of the campus environment</i> • <i>Help plan activities to increase parent involvement</i> • <i>Prepare a monthly newsletter to staff and parents</i>
Competency 003—The entry-level principal knows how to collaboratively develop and implement high-quality strategies and practices to meet the academic, grade-appropriate, and social needs of students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assist in professional development efforts to promote high-quality instruction based on best practices and current research</i> • <i>Assist in the development or coordination of curricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular programs to meet student needs</i> • <i>Help facilitate the use and integration of effective technology to enhance student learning</i> • <i>Assist in organizing and supervising a school event</i>
Competency 004—The entry-level principal knows how to monitor and assess classroom instruction to promote teacher effectiveness and student achievement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Observe, participate in, or lead classroom visits to monitor and assess instruction</i> • <i>Participate in grade-level, department, or school team meetings to provide feedback to improve instruction</i> • <i>Assist in efforts to analyze curriculum used to guide instruction</i> • <i>Observe, participate in, or lead efforts to use student data to improve instruction and student outcomes</i>
Competency 005—The entry-level principal knows how to provide feedback, coaching, and professional development to staff through evaluation and supervision, knows how to reflect on his/her own practice, and strives to grow professionally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assist in the coaching and development of faculty and staff</i> • <i>Assist in developing and implementing a professional development plan that addresses current instructional and student needs</i> • <i>Shadow observation and feedback cycles of faculty and staff</i>

<p>Competency 006—The entry-level principal knows how to promote high-quality teaching by using selection, placement, and retention practices to promote teacher excellence and growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assist in efforts that support effective professional learning communities</i> • <i>Participate in interview and selection activities for new faculty and staff</i> • <i>Participate in efforts to recruit and retain effective educators and administrators to support campus goal attainment</i> • <i>Review resumes for selection of new teachers</i>
<p>Competency 007—The entry-level principal knows how to develop relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including selecting appropriate communication strategies for particular audiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Participate with administration in meetings with parents, faculty and staff</i> • <i>Assist with school-community programs and projects</i> • <i>Attend PTO and booster meetings where appropriate</i> • <i>Participate in efforts to establish partnerships with parents, businesses and the community to support campus goal attainment</i> • <i>Prepare news releases or articles for various media</i>
<p>Competency 008—The entry-level principal knows how to focus on improving student outcomes through organizational collaboration, resiliency, and change management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assist in gathering data from a variety of sources to inform school improvement efforts</i> • <i>Serve on school committees and teams to focused on improving student outcomes</i> • <i>Attend meetings of the curriculum committee or school leadership team</i>
<p>Competency 009—The entry-level principal knows how to collaboratively determine goals and implement strategies aligned with the school vision that support teacher effectiveness and positive student outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Participate in efforts to revise and implement the school improvement plan</i> • <i>Assist in development or revision of the school schedule, processes, or procedures</i> • <i>Participate in development of data collection systems of the collection of data to improve teaching and learning</i>
<p>Competency 010—The entry-level principal knows how to provide administrative leadership through resource management, policy implementation, and coordination of school operations and programs to ensure a safe learning environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Participate in a school team walkthrough to ensure school plant and environment safety</i> • <i>Assist with school discipline data reviews to help maintain an environment conducive to learning</i> • <i>Serve on committees that review school attendance and support systems</i> • <i>Shadow an administrator for an extracurricular event</i>
<p>Competency 011—The entry-level principal knows how to provide ethical leadership by advocating for children and ensuring student access to effective educators, programs, and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Advocate for and promote the appropriate development of all learners in the campus community</i> • <i>Assist with efforts to ensure that all students have access to opportunities to learn</i> • <i>Participate in efforts that promote the awareness and appreciation of varied backgrounds throughout the campus community</i> • <i>Review and provide feedback on school and district policies and procedures</i>

Mentoring, Coaching, and Support

The M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision program provides a strong foundation of knowledge, skills, real-world experience, and innovative research intended to prepare students to serve as effective equity-centered educational leaders and local change agents. Graduates fill an essential need in the community, serving in diverse positions in both public and private educational institutions. The degree fulfills requirements for the Texas Standard Principal Certificate.

Successful progress through the program requires expertise and support from experienced administrators in the field. Candidates should be paired with a Site Supervisor or one full year to ensure intensive professional guidance.

It is of primary importance that the candidate and the site supervisor administrator develop a relationship based on trust and non-judgmental support. The site supervisor serves as a learning facilitator, a model, a guide, and a counselor.

Responsibilities of the Site Supervisor

Site Supervisors are responsible for working with the University Instructor, the Field Supervisor, and the student to design and oversee a series of contextually relevant and mutually beneficial activities. In other words, activities should be purposefully developed to provide the student with contextually appropriate educational experiences, while also aiding the site supervisor in performing campus tasks and objectives. The site supervisor is responsible for evaluating the student's accomplishments at various points throughout each practicum experience.

Site Supervisor Selection

The site supervisor (campus mentor) is most often the principal of the school; however, an assistant principal (or a Director of Instruction) may also serve in the role. If the principal does not serve as the site supervisor, the student should have regular access to the principal as needed. ***In all cases, mentors must hold Texas Certification as a principal and be trained in the principles and practices of supervision.***

Support provided by the Site Supervisor can include, but is not limited to:

- offering guidance to the student in the practical aspects of highly effective school leadership and administration;
- providing students with an opportunity to refine their understanding of the demands of the highly effective principal; and,
- assisting Field Supervisors and University Instructors ascertain if a student's growth is consistent with their professional goals, their personal goals, and the goals of the district (Standard Indicator: 12.2)

Site Supervisors Qualifications:

- Documented record of successful administration
- Possess an administrative license
- Possess a Master's degree or equivalent
- Recognized as exemplary role model and leader
- Demonstrate continuing educational and professional growth as well as a commitment to professional responsibility

Responsibilities of the Field Supervisor

The Field Supervisor serves as a field-based coach, and thus provides cognitive coaching support throughout each practicum. Support provided by the field supervisor can include, but is not limited to:

- assistance in the negotiation of appropriate intern activities;
- provision of academic resources and other supports;
- coaching (cognitive and differentiated) during the completion of practicum activities;
- supervision of intern activity log completion;
- participation in site visits to ensure students' progress toward their professional goals, personal goals, and the goals of the district;
- one formal observation for each assigned intern per semester,
- completion of *Field Supervisor Observation Protocol* for each formal and informal observation,
- provide direction as students attempt to follow the guidelines necessary for the development of the professional portfolio

Responsibilities of the University Instructor

The University Instructor provides well-designed, well-balanced, and research-informed coursework that blends theory and practice. Support provided by the University Instructor can include, but is not limited to:

- assessing and grading the performance of the student;
- maintaining regular communication with the Site Supervisor and the Field Supervisor;
- coordinating field supervisors to ensure students receive quality coaching throughout the semester;
- evaluating the effectiveness of field supervisor's;
- ensuring each student receives a minimum of one site visit to ensure student progress; and,
- ensuring students have a quality experience while engaging in the requirements of the syllabus.

Certification Services and Application

The COE Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) administers all certification matters for graduate and post-baccalaureate students seeking initial educator certification and professional educator certifications.

The TExES *Principal as Instructional Leader* certificate is offered through the M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision degree program. Students are expected to complete all pre-requisite courses and benchmark requirements for the degree and certification. Students should consult with the Program Certification Director and the UH COE Certification Officer - for details about degree plan progress and obtaining certification. Information is available at the [Certification Office](#).

It is important to remember the TExES Principal (268) Certification exam is used as the M.Ed. comprehensive exam. As such, students are required to pass this examination. Per university rules, students are allowed two (5) attempts to pass comprehensive exams before being removed from their program of studies. If a student fails the examination on the first attempt, candidates must provide a copy of their exam scores with a study plan to address areas of needed improvement. The study plan must include attending an intern or external test preparation workshop.

Texas Principal Exam Approval

To be eligible to take the TExES 268 Principal Certification Exam, a University of Houston candidate must have scored 70% or higher on the program qualifying exam and have completed:

- a bachelor's degree,
- two creditable years of teaching as defined by TEA,
- twelve (12) course hours toward completion of a principal certification program,
- eighty (80) principal practicum hours,
- one (1) successful field supervisor's observation, and
- hold a valid Texas teaching certificate.