

VANCOUVER ISLAND UNIVERSITY - TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

Summary of Year 6 Final Practicum

Student: Martine Balderston

Practicum Dates: 14/10/2013-13/12/2013

School: Uplands Park Elementary School

District: 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith)

Grade: 3

Analysis By: Bob Padgham

Supervising Teacher: Jane Aspen

Received and Discussed

Signatures:

Date: December 12, 2013

Student:

Sponsor:

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Supervisor:

This report includes: School/class context statement and evaluative comments based on the eight BC Teachers' Council Standards.

School/Class Context

Uplands Park elementary school is located in School District 68 in north Nanaimo. Most students at this school belong to middle income families, although there has been an increase of lower income families moving into the area due to a large rental property market. Martine Balderston's practicum assignment was in a grade three classroom. The class was comprised of 24 students: 16 boys and 8 girls. Some of the students exhibited characteristics of children having special needs although none had been formally designated and there was no education assistant time attached to the class.

Value and Care for Students

Martine created a safe and supportive learning environment in her practicum classroom this semester. She treated her students with respect and quickly developed a positive rapport with them. Her students saw her as "the teacher" and enjoyed learning from her. She was very kind, positive, and patient and used self-control to avoid an authoritarian approach when dealing with inappropriate behaviour. She calmly dealt with unforeseen circumstances when they cropped up. She took advantage of opportunities during the school day to interact with individual and small groups of her students to better to know their interests, likes and dislikes. She spoke to students at their level and engaged them in problem solving. She encouraged class discussion and due to the non-threatening atmosphere in the classroom, students felt comfortable in providing their input. She fostered cooperation among her students by emphasizing team work and allowed them to make choices through voting. She incorporated student interests into her lessons to increase relevance and explained to them why she did things the way she did. She spent time with students before and after school and during recesses to assist them with their work. Martine made a point of displaying student work.

Role model acting ethically and honestly

Martine provided her students with a positive role model. She is an ethical person who possesses a high degree of integrity. She believes in and models an active, healthy lifestyle. She is active in the local community. She participated in class runs to encourage her students to participate. She is well aware of the importance of maintaining a positive reputation both at and away from the workplace and understands the need for confidentiality when dealing with student information.

Understands and applies knowledge of student growth and development

Over the course of her practicum, Martine developed a good understanding of the growth and development of children at the primary grade level. Her lessons incorporated a variety of instructional approaches in order to engage students with diverse learning styles. She continued to broaden her knowledge of accommodating special needs within the classroom. She very quickly ascertained the academic strengths and weaknesses of the individual children in her class and as a result differentiated her instruction.

Involves parents, guardians, families in the school

Martine valued the involvement of parents in the education of her students. She communicated with parents as they dropped off and picked up their children and exchanged written messages as well. She participated in parent/teacher conferences and discussed student progress with several parents. She sent home catch up work with students who had been absent for an extended period of time.

Effective practices in planning, instructing, assessing, evaluating and reporting

During her practicum, Martine taught a structure unit in science, a poetry unit in language arts, a geometry unit in math and parachute and cooperative games units in P.E. For instruction of these units, Martine prepared lesson plans, matrices, worksheets, booklets, flipbooks, PowerPoint presentations, posters, art examples and downloaded video clips. During the science unit, Martine collected a variety of household materials so that students could get hands-on experience learning about stability, material, strength and design. In preparation for art, Martine created a matrix that incorporated geometry concepts and exposed students to a variety of artists. Martine planned interesting and meaningful learning experiences for her students. Lesson materials were well designed. Martine integrated subject areas leading to a more natural way of presenting content. Educational technology was effectively employed. Learning activities were designed to be fun and engaging. Lessons unfolded in a well-paced, sequential manner and were appropriate to the students' level of development. Instructions were clear and broken down into manageable chunks for ease of understanding by all. Martine made good use of exemplars to give students a clear idea of what was expected of their finished products. Effective questioning techniques lead to meaningful discussions. There were frequent hands-on activities such as using geoboards and manipulatives in math and building straw structures in science. Guided practice led to students successfully completing their assigned tasks during the independent work phase of lessons. As the practicum unfolded

activities. She also was able to hone her classroom management skills. She strove for 100% of class focus during instruction and to maintain an appropriate noise level in the classroom during student work periods. She employed verbal and visual prompts to cue students back on task and increasingly used proximity as a management strategy. Martine employed a variety of assessment strategies in order to determine her students' acquisition of the concepts presented. She provided students with self-assessment forms and made them aware of the criteria used for marking various assignments. She kept track of students' assignments and required them to complete unfinished work. She kept accurate records for evaluation and reporting purposes.

Knowledge and understanding of subject areas being taught

Martine has a very good knowledge of the subject areas taught at the grade 3 level. She demonstrated particular strength in the areas of art, science, math and P.E. She used the Internet, as well as library and personal resources to research the content for her lessons. She read a wide variety of books to her students on specific subject matter.

Engaged in professional growth/contribution to the profession

Martine reflected on her performance after each lesson with a view to improving instruction. She incorporated feedback from her sponsor teacher and field experience supervisor into subsequent practice. She attended a professional development day and staff and other professional meetings. She reviewed and reflected on the proposed provincial curriculum changes. She discussed educational practices with teachers on staff and endeavoured to learn new teaching strategies and to expand her knowledge of the curriculum. She read several articles posted in the staff room written by experienced teachers. Martine made a substantial effort to develop relationships among colleagues. Martine worked with a fellow student teacher during shared gym classes, collaborated with a kindergarten teacher to organize buddy time and observed instruction in several classrooms.

Martine also contributed to the life of the school beyond her practicum classroom. She attended a drop-in yoga program, was involved in fundraising, loaned resources to another teacher on staff, and helped in a grade 1 classroom when additional adult supervision was needed. Martine arranged for a member of the RCMP to attend the Remembrance Day ceremony and to come to her classroom. She also organized an extensive demonstration by RCMP and search and rescue personnel of their vehicles on the school grounds for students and staff. At this event police brought a motorcycle, a van, two bicycles and a cruiser. Nanaimo Search and Rescue brought both of their new rescue vehicles. Her contributions were appreciated by the school community.

Concluding comments

Martine worked hard and enjoyed a successful final practicum this fall at Uplands Park School. She offered her students a rich and varied educational program and created a caring and supportive environment in her classroom. Aside from her instructional practice, she also learned how to juggle the myriad administrative tasks of running a classroom, such as collecting forms, handing out notices, writing reminders in planners and taking attendance. She also contributed greatly to the school as a whole. Martine is well prepared to begin her teaching career and will prove to be an asset to any school fortunate to have her on staff.

Martine Balderston has successfully met the outcomes for the Vancouver Island University Teacher Education program Year 6 final practicum.