July 24, 2013

Dear Loren,

I have read your self-evaluation and concur with your list of accomplishments and agree with your goals for next year. One of the goals that I think could be particularly important is to conduct the survey we discussed to find out the types of programs and systems your fellow field placement officers use. With that information, you might find there are ways to make your work easier. Your self-evaluation is included in my files to make sure that your accomplishments and goals are captured.

I think one of your most successful endeavors this year was securing more Tacoma placements (which we really needed) by entering into a partnership with AVID. All in all, I think the addition of the AVID experience to the practicum experience was good for most of the candidates. They learned a set of skills that will be a useful addition to their CV’s and were able to gain more insight into adolescents outside of the regular classroom setting. The Tacoma school district administrators clearly thought it was a successful experiment given that they now want to require that practicum students from all programs include AVID in their training. Really nicely done, Loren.

I think as a result of that partnership, Tacoma invited you to participate in their recruitment and retention committee. You were diligent about attending those meetings and offering feedback about possible strategies for employing and retaining more teachers of color. I know that your regular contacts with Tacoma school district personnel can only help our relationship with them.

Our plan to extend winter/spring practicum placements into fall student teaching placements worked well the first year but not so well this year. I think Tacoma’s all-or-nothing approach to placing student teachers tripped us up. Hopefully, next year with more placements in Olympia and North Thurston, we can return to our original plan. According to mentors and candidates, it’s a good system so I encourage you to cultivate it again this year.

As was true in the last three years, I want to thank you for guiding the work study students, overseeing the completion of three delightful and informative newsletters, and persevering with me in getting all the handbooks, guidelines, and web pages updated and accurate. It is a tedious job but an important one and I really needed and appreciated your collaboration.

After we were successful in setting up our central data sheet (thanks again for your important work in this area), we were informed by PESB that we needed to create and maintain several new data charts with specific ways of noting and entering data. Your set of charts related to practicum and student teaching experiences contains important information that you have brought up to date this summer. As I said during our conference, I strongly recommend that you set aside 30 minutes to an hour each week to review the Central Data Table and your field experiences charts to ensure that any mistakes are noted and that the charts are always up to date.

I think your goals related to pursuing relationships with public schools, continuing to supervise the work study students, and explore moving the placement file/application process to an electronic platform are excellent. If there are classes you need to take to support the work with electronic platforms, let me know and let’s see what can be arranged.

As has been true every year we’ve worked together, I thank you again for your dedication to the students with whom we work, your honesty as a colleague, and your genuine compassion.

Sherry Walton, Director

Evergreen Teacher Education Programs