

LI 876

School Library Media Elementary Practicum

Student Self Evaluation Form

This form is to be completed by the practicum student and submitted to your professor.

Discuss your strengths and areas for improvement as evidenced in your practicum experiences. (It is expected that all students are likely to have both strengths and areas for improvement. Please use additional pages as necessary.)

Student Name: Megan Kohlman

The elementary practicum was a great learning experience for me as I begin to think about a career as a school library media specialist. Despite what I have previously thought, I have several strengths in addition to areas in which I need to improve.

One of my strengths is my organization. This will aid me as a librarian because one of the main tasks of the librarian is collection management, which means that I will have to know the collection that I have, what it is I want to order, and make the best use of my funding. After the books arrive, I have to process them and put them out in the collection. I really do enjoy the nuances of cataloging and processing library materials, so this will be a task that, while sometimes tedious, I am able to do without frustration.

Another strength I have is my experience teaching. Though I have spent much time teaching elementary students, there are many skills that translate or can be adapted to working with students of all ages. I am familiar with many different online resources and places to search for lesson planning ideas. Classroom management may be a little different, but it can be adapted to children of younger ages; they are easier to manage with small reminders than older students. I am also very used to collaborating and working with other teachers, so working with classroom teachers to plan lessons that meet current student needs will be natural.

A final strength is my desire to learn things by trial and error. I like to experiment, play around with programs, and explore on my own, then look up or ask about what I cannot figure out. I find it easier to learn this way than by lecture or even reading. This will be a strength of mine, especially in a library setting because I will be in charge of the collection and circulation. I am also looking for a job in a smaller school, which could mean that I am the only library media specialist with no one to teach me or show me the ropes; in this case, my trial and error learning style is a definite asset.

I have also identified several areas for improvement. One of those areas relates to the possibility of having a library clerk or other employee who, essentially, works for me. Although I spend most of my days in charge of students, I have never been in charge of someone else's tasks during a day; the thought makes me a little uncomfortable. I would need to sit down by myself to sort out which tasks I need my clerk to complete regularly and then teach him or her. It would be good to have a list of tasks that they complete regularly as well as some expectations for special circumstances.

Another area in which I feel unsure is the different library circulation systems. Although I did some cataloging and checking in and out of materials, I do not have much experience with the ins and outs of how systems work and how to troubleshoot when issues come up. This makes me a little nervous, especially since there is obviously a possibility that the system available to me is one I have not used at all before. I know that there will be a manual and support, and this makes me a little more comfortable. Still, it will take quite a bit of work in advance of the school year starting to become familiar with the system.

One last area for improvement I can see is learning what to order. I feel hesitant about this because a library budget is a big responsibility. In order to spend the funds wisely, I will need to know both my collection and my patron demographics. I do not want to spend money on materials that will not be used; I know that it is something that is, to an extent, trial and error. I think that before making any orders, I will spend time looking through the circulation statistics and learning the collection in order to make the best decisions I can.

Megan Koheman

Student's Signature

Date