A. Communication
1. Understand the need to develop shared understanding of and commitment to mission, vision, and core values within the school and the community;
2. Demonstrate individual and team facilitation skills;
3. Recognize and apply an understanding of individual and group behavior in all situations;
4. Demonstrate an understanding of conflict resolution and problem-solving strategies relative to communication;
5. Make presentations that are clear and easy to understand;
6. Respond to, review, and summarize information for groups;
7. Communicate appropriately, through speaking, listening, and writing, for different audiences, including students, teachers, parents, the community, and other stakeholders;
8. Understand and utilize appropriate communication technology.

Effective communication is one of the most essential tools in a school leader's toolkit. Whether addressing conflict, building trust with staff and families, or guiding the implementation of new initiatives - communication shapes how leadership is experienced by others. Throughout my internship, I have seen how strong communication builds clarity, trust, and fosters a culture of continuous improvement. From resolving student conflicts to delivering professional presentations, my goal is to ensure every stakeholder feels informed, respected, and included in the work. This reflection highlights how I've used communication as a foundation for leadership in a variety of settings.

Effective administrators must be skilled in conflict resolution among both students and staff. During my internship, and before, I've helped mediate several such conflicts. In the elementary classroom, I learned to approach student issues with an open mind, developing strategies that work across age groups. For example, managing a tense relationship between two third-grade girls required patience, empathy, and consistent communication. A key tactic I rely on is listening to all sides before making decisions. Without hearing every voice, the full picture is missing. At Deerwood Elementary, I observed this in action when Federal Designation III teachers requested the kindergarten classrooms for better bathroom access. The administrator

acknowledged their concerns and committed to a thoughtful decision, modeling leadership I aim to emulate in my own career.

A strong administrator must communicate effectively with teachers, volunteers, students, and families. During my internship, I led several staff development presentations to reinforce our school's mission, vision, and core values. As a member of Como Park Elementary's PBIS team, I co-developed this presentation on our MTSS framework to support students' social-emotional needs. I also served as an Academic Parent Teacher Teams (APTT) champion, creating a presentation for families that explained the purpose of our academic partnership. This resource was used across grades 3–5 to help families support student learning at home. Another group that I presented to was to our volunteers during a volunteer orientation that I led. In this presentation, I reminded volunteers about the importance of the confidentiality of students and the expectations I had for them in order to best serve my students. In all of these presentations you can see my clear communication to all stakeholders.

I had the opportunity to join Roseville school leaders in a Teacher Development and Evaluation two day workshop where we were asked to think about who holds power in our building either perceived or real. We were asked to think about the 'curmudgeons', adults in the building who often push back on new initiatives and poison the well of real change. After we chose our person, we were asked to think about 3 things we would like to say to these people about the new TD&E process, and then write them a note about the new process and why we need to be change makers. I chose to write my letter to a veteran teacher in my building, who is often heard complaining about equity work. In this letter I highlight the need to focus on teacher development over evaluation, student voice as data, and the need to continue the work even after

decades of not moving the needle. As a leader, I have to be able to communicate the importance of my new initiatives that I bring to the school.

Working in a diverse community—like so many school districts in Minnesota—requires school leaders to communicate clearly and effectively across language barriers. At my primary internship site, Como Park Elementary, I participated in a training on Finalsite, a mass communication platform that enables school administrators to send messages to families in multiple languages. In my classroom, I regularly use the free application TalkingPoints, which allows for two-way text communication with families in their home languages. The app translates messages from English and back again, enabling open conversations and building relationships. This tool has been indispensable in fostering open, inclusive, and consistent communication, for all families, regardless of the language they speak.

Another essential component of effective communication is the ability to receive feedback from staff and use it to guide democratic decision-making. At several points during my internship at Como Park Elementary, I was asked to survey staff to better understand the collective needs and perspectives of the building. For example, I created a survey for the Family Engagement Committee to gather input on how we could better serve our community. The results revealed two leading options, and we used that data to make a school-wide decision. I value the democratic process that survey tools support, and I now better understand how meaningful and immediate staff feedback can be when used to inform administrative decisions.

My internship experiences have shown me that communication is not just a leadership skill, it is a keystone of effective school culture. Through active listening, clear messaging, and engagement with students, staff, and families, I have learned how communication drives connection and progress. Whether navigating difficult conversations or presenting new ideas, I

strive to create a space where people feel heard and valued. As I continue developing as a leader, I am committed to using communication not just to inform, but to inspire shared purpose and collective action in service of student success.