



Gwen Burke
EPPSP Group 40
Butler University

The Experiential Program for Preparing School Principals

STANDARD 4: Learning and Instruction

Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to evaluate, develop, and implement coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, data systems, supports and assessment.

4.1 Program completers understand and can demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, develop, and implement high-quality, technology-rich curricula programs and other supports for academic and non-academic student programs.

STANDARD 7: Building Professional Capacity

Candidates who successfully complete a building-level leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to build the school's professional capacity, engage staff in the development of a collaborative professional culture, and improve systems of staff supervision, evaluation, support, and professional learning.

7.3 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to personally engage in, as well as collaboratively engage school staff in, professional learning designed to promote reflection, cultural responsiveness, distributed leadership, digital literacy, school improvement, and student success.

18. High Quality, Technology-rich Curricula Programs. Develop a research-informed training program that provides guidance to educators on how to evaluate, develop, and implement high-quality, technology-rich curricula programs and other supports for academic and non-academic student programs. (NELP 4.1, 7.3)

Summary: Every Summer, Butler University EPPSP students put on the “Butler Way Leadership Academy.” This is a summer program for high school students in grades 9 through 12. EPPSP students develop the curriculum and act as mentors for students. The first half of the day, EPPSP students teach lessons and facilitate small group discussions. In the afternoons, EPPSP students act as mentors to help guide students through developing a community project and presentation about their school. The plans written for this camp were written with teachers in mind: at the conclusion of the camp, each lesson plan was published and distributed to schools.

For the summer of 2021, the Butler Way camp had to be virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The EPPSP students formed small groups to develop curriculum on different topics relating to “Future Focused Leadership.” These skills were determined based on the points raised in Jamie Meristotis’s book, “Human Work in the Age of Smart Machines,” regarding the things that make humans unique from Artificial Intelligence and machines. The groups created lesson plans, activities, and discussion questions that they then presented to the students. A selection of topics include critical thinking, human skills, and digital literacy.

My group focused on the topics of “Imagination and Innovation”. We specifically wrote our lesson to engage students on how these skills are often associated with specific careers but are essential in all areas of our lives. Our lesson and activities engaged several aspects of flexible thinking, imagination, and innovation through collaborative problem-solving. I was able to lead our lesson and activities during the Butler Way camp this year.

Reflection: This project allowed me to collaborate with three other individuals in my own cohort and the cohort before me - Emily Supergan, Peter Lucht, and Jordan Johnson. It was important to us to model the thinking that we were teaching about in a scaffolded and supported manner.

As an introduction, we had students solve brain puzzles to begin to demonstrate flexible thinking. We also showed a clip from *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* where students at Hogwarts had to use their imagination to change images of things that they feared into something funny and manageable. This was the bridge to begin talking about the importance of imagination and innovation throughout our lives. These multi-sensory puzzles and videos created high engagement at an appropriate level that could be easily differentiated for different grade levels.

The teacher-directed lesson focused on the meaning behind these skills themselves and introduced the guiding question: “What if you could change one thing to make the world better?” We used this question at various points throughout the lesson and activities to stimulate thinking and bring us back to the overarching topic. Conversation, stop and jots, and a brief video created many opportunities for thought, discussion, and engagement during the ten minute lesson. This was incredibly effective as it was brief yet clear. The students were engaged and interested, while still expanding on a topic that they are familiar with.

The activities themselves promoted self-reflection and digital literacy through the focus on imagination and innovation. Within the three parts, students find themselves imagining they were in a boat crash onto a deserted island. In each part, students receive more information about items that they can use for survival or challenges that they may face. Their job was to use the thin limitations and constraints presented to save themselves and get themselves off the island. I believed it was important to tell students that there were no wrong answers - this is one of the biggest parts of learning to be a flexible thinker: realizing that you have to think outside of the

box and not worry too much about rules. While structure is provided, it is intentionally vague to encourage students to ask questions, imagine, and innovate to solve the problems presented.

Our lesson plan was built in a way that it gives teachers all of the resources that they need to engage their students. Research is present to explain why and how these skills are important, as well as ways to engage learners of different age groups. Each activity and lesson plan contains worksheets (printable and digital), closing questions, step-by-step instructions, and differentiation for younger students.

Overall, these lessons are implementation ready and packaged in a way that will elevate future-focused skills for educators at any grade level.

Artifacts:

Link to lesson plan [here](#)

Link to slide deck presentation materials [here](#)

Link to digital note-taking sheet [here](#)

