<div align="center">**Competency 4: Curriculum, Instruction and Supervision**</div>

- **4.3 Related Task:** Knowledge of variety of instructional methods and skills
- **4.3.7 Specific Task:**
    o Conduct a clinical evaluation cycle including observation in a typical classroom
- **Narrative Description of Task:**
    o After reviewing state law, local policy and collective bargaining agreement regarding teacher evaluations, carry out a classroom observation and post-observation conference with a consenting colleague using the district's evaluation instrument and procedures. Prepare a written evaluation based on the classroom observation using the district reporting format. Interview the staff member after the formal conclusion of the post conference concerning his/her perceptions about administrative practices or behaviors that facilitate meaningful evaluations and promote growth by staff members. Reflect on the process and what represents good administrative practice.

Smart Goal: By April of 2016, in conjunction with Lauren Hunter and staff members, participate in the full evaluation of a consenting staff member using the Danielson Model. (Participation is based on the teacher contract.)

Specific:	Observe from start to finish the pre to post evaluation cycle.
Measurable:	Observe 1 teacher evaluation cycle.
Attainable:	Ongoing teacher improvement and self-reflection allows teachers to improve their teaching craft and practices.
Relevant:	Teacher evaluations are required by the State of Michigan. Teacher evaluations offer opportunities for teachers to check their current goals and set future ones.
Timely:	By April 2016 I will observe from start to finish the pre to post evaluation cycle of a consenting staff member.

Description and Rationale of Project:

An administrator serves many roles. They are a leader, a mediator, a disciplinarian, an advisor, a mentor, and also an evaluator. Evaluation is one major part of the job that many administrators lack the knowledge of how to properly carry out. Not many administrators enter into the profession having a vast knowledge of how to properly evaluate teachers and do so effectively. Many administrators admit they learn as they go and receive training that the district, county, or state provides based on the new state evaluation regulations for schools. The purpose of this competency is to show how an administrator can and should effectively grow and evaluate its teachers.

This competency in particular got off to a slow start because of the many pending projects and priorities facing Lauren (Principal). Gaines Elementary had just received notification that it had been nominated for the Blue Ribbon Award for excelling as a superior

academic school. With the nomination, the process to actually apply for the award is incredibly lengthy. Thus, this award application was prioritized by our school and its staff members which pushed back many other inferior priorities such as the teacher observations and evaluations. Ultimately, an administrator must realize other priorities come up and the list of things to accomplish will always be never ending. I remained focused on my priorities and assisted my building in completing the award application. At a staff meeting in February, I had announced to the staff members that the unannounced observations would be taking place soon and after gaining approval from a couple of teachers, I had finally decided on who I was going to evaluate for this project. I specifically chose Katelyn Samida, who is new to the profession and in her first year teaching. I wanted to evaluate her because I wanted the experience of evaluating a non-tenured teacher which would allow me the chance to practice my administrative skills in developing an Individual Development Plan.

Since pre-observations only happen at the beginning of the year through the announced observation cycle, the initial meeting with Katelyn was to be sure she would allow me to observe her along with Lauren during the unannounced observation window. I further explained how my observation and evaluation are specifically used to learn how to effectively evaluate teachers and that nothing I compiled would be shared with central office or placed in her teacher file. Katelyn Samida, as mentioned, is in her first year of teaching and is brand new to the Swartz Creek Community School District. She is teaching third grade. Since there was not an official pre-observation, I did specifically sit down with Katelyn after school in March and asked her, if and when I do come to observe her, what she would want me to look for and what were some great times of the day to come and observe.   I used this information to review the Danielson Model and Teachscape evaluation system to determine what things I would look for and what specific domains I would be scoring during the observation.

This observation was to happen during an unknown time to fill the requirement of it being an unannounced observation. However, with the Blue Ribbon application taking so much time and Lauren being tasked with WIDA testing and other administrative duties, she had to again push back teacher observations. Thus, with the ending of the semester less than a month away at this point, I had to be quick and responsive in order to carry out this competency efficiently. I decided I would see if I could still observe Katelyn but without Lauren by my side. Obviously, without Lauren being a part of the process, the whole observation would be specifically for me in researching how to properly evaluate teachers and would have nothing to do with her actual evaluation. Lauren approved of the idea, so I sat down with Katelyn to explain the situation. Katelyn was very receptive and still agreed to have me come into her room to observe.

At the end of March was when the observation took place. Since I am also a classroom teacher, the observation had to take place at a time when I did not have any students. Thus, I observed her during my planning time from 10:15 to 11:05. To prepare for the observation, I pulled up the Teachscape evaluation tool as well as an empty Microsoft Word document that would allow me to record any anecdotal evidence I could to later sort through when it came down to scoring the domains. Based on our earlier conversations, I knew Katelyn wanted me to look for how her students are working during their independent work time, on their transitions between activities, as well as her delivery of questions during the lessons. Based on what she

was looking for, I decided to evaluate her based on Domains 2 and 3 which focus on the classroom environment and the actual instruction.

I brought my laptop into her classroom and found a place where I could be a "fly on the wall" while still noticing and observing as much as possible. They were finishing up an activity when I walked in, but within a few minutes, the students were cleaning up and transitioning to be ready for the next part of the day. There were about to start their reading block. In this classroom, she uses a guided reading and Daily 5 approach. During the reading block, Katelyn announced it was time for reading, and that is when the classroom began to transition and prepare for it. She called for group six to meet her at the back reading table while the others either had to work on their summaries, read to someone, or read to self somewhere around the classroom. The students got to pick the activity they wanted to participate in if they were not a member of group six. All of the students transitioned fairly efficiently to the activity of their choice when Katelynn noticed a group of students still not finished with a particular classroom assignment. These students were some of the group six members, so she held off on meeting with the group in order to give them enough time to complete their task. Eventually, she had given enough time for the students to finish, and she met with the group as originally planned. This guided reading group had already started the story together in a previous day, and today they were finishing up the story. The focus of the lesson was on expanding vocabulary and making sense of unfamiliar words that authors use. Katelyn had them round robin read the story. As they would each read, she would stop them and ask them questions based on the words they witnessed on their pages. She would ask them to visualize, ask questions, and check for understanding when it came to vocabulary understanding. The students paid close attention to her questioning and eagerly participated in the group discussions. Each of them shared what they thought certain words meant, what they visualized, and what connections they made to the story that helped them understand the content and word usage. The students would speak as a part of the group, in partner pairs, and would think on their own. This was a small group as it only had 4 students. However, the students were all at similar literacy levels. It was a very cohesive group based on their reading ability. When students were questioned, they would share and then would immediately have their attention back on Katelyn for further directions. Meanwhile, the rest of the class was scattered around the classroom, incredibly comfortable, sitting on bookshelves, window sills, on the floor, at their desks, and at other various places in the room while they completed their Daily 5 choice. Most of the class seemed to choose read to self, but there were a few pairs of read to someone and a few working on their summaries.

During my time in the classroom, I tried very hard to take notes on everything I saw and heard. Some of the things I observed was the usage of the microphone to enhance the volume of instruction, the playing of music softly in the background creating a calming environment, limited restrictions on where students could read around the room, frequent questioning of the students digging deeper for understanding, constantly relating the classroom learning to the students' lives, many discussion opportunities, and constant praising of positive student behavior while also redirecting any negative behavior. Ultimately, she only met with one group during this reading block, but the rest of the students were able to rotate through two Daily 5 tasks around the room. Any students who read to someone, she would ask who they read to and what they learned during the reading which ensured accountability during the reading task. By the time the observation was over, she had the students transition back to their seats and prepare

for a quick read aloud session. During the read aloud as I was preparing to leave, I noticed she did a fantastic job of finding opportunities to question the students and engage them within the test. She also utilized the microphone to be sure everyone was hearing her effectively. Not only did she use this microphone for educational purposes of reaching all of the students, she also used it to be comedic and sing to the class when a good song came on the radio. It was evident that she takes great pride in her relationships she has built with her students, and her students reciprocate the feelings.

The following day I met with Katelyn for a post observation interview. This was the time that I used for her to clarify any misconceptions either one of us had from the time I observed, as well as to ask her any questions of things I was unsure of based on what I saw. For example, I wanted to know how often she meets with each of her reading groups as well as how she decides which students are in which groups. This post observation interview took place with just the two of us. During this time, I also took time to interview her on her thoughts on best practices for administrator evaluations.

During the interview, she explained how she loved being observed because it gave another perspective from someone regarding her classroom and the learning that is taking place. She pointed out how some teachers who have been teaching for many years become too comfortable in their rooms. She said when a new face comes in to watch a lesson, it can help bring new ideas into the already established culture of learning. Katelyn also noted she does wish there were more observations, and she feels two formal observations are simply not enough. She wished there were more chances to have face-to-face interactions, discussions, and observations. She also would prefer more chances to confer with the administrator based on what is going on in the classroom. One other thing she pointed out was that she wished teachers who were highly effective were given the chance to become evaluators themselves which could help alleviate the workload of the administrator while also helping highly effective teachers share their own wisdom with others who are trying to become highly effective. Finally, she pointed out her frustrations with only being observed, formally, twice in the school year. She mentioned that it is not fair if a teacher is ineffective or struggling in the fall to have to wait until spring to have another formal observation to see if they have truly been improving. In other words, there is a lot of pressure and high stakes on those two formal evaluations when it would be much less of a burden if there were more opportunities for other observations to take place. Ultimately, she mentions that one cannot gain complete insight to what is going on in her classroom through two observations.

After the post-conference and interview, I then compiled all of the evidence I had gathered and scored her on domains 2 and 3. Based on the evaluation, I then created an IDP because she is a brand new teacher. With the evidence I had gathered, it was certain that there were two areas I identified as a focal point for instructional growth. First, I noticed that during the reading block, students were questioned in a variety of ways, but when they were providing answers, they did not supply evidence to their reasoning in a consistent manner. This was never brought to their attention. Thus, the first area I marked for improvement was that of instruction and formative feedback in reading. Essentially, I noticed that she could improve on her differentiating of learning objectives and providing formative feedback in accordance with students' learning. I provided a variety of ways to help her grow in this area initially as well as a

list of ways we both can follow up regarding this area marked for improvement. The second area I marked for improvement was that of integrating technology into instruction. Essentially, I noticed that there could be an increase in technology usage that aligns with the students' learning objectives in reading as well as developing her own ability to teach the students how to access and use 21st century learning tools that meet the learning objectives in reading. I provided a variety of ways to help her grow in this area as well. The IDP was then shared with her right before we went on Spring Break.

Although this was not an official evaluation, she was very thankful for the opportunity and was incredibly comfortable with the entire process. When I presented the evaluation and IDP to her, she was very receptive. Of course, it helped that I pointed out many positives first and then worded the two areas of needed improvement incredibly carefully. I made sure to spin it as though it was not necessarily a weakness, but an area that if she improves, will only better her practice for many years to come.

Project Outcomes:

All of the Swartz Creek Schools are using the Danielson Model to evaluate its teachers. Each building administrator is tasked with observing and conferring with each of its teachers in an effort to promote their instructional growth. Through more face-to-face communications, the process can be much more valuable and more growth is able to take place. This promotes a more comfortable educational environment where expectations of teachers are clear, and sometimes more importantly, expectations of the administrator is clear.

Reflection:

This competency was incredibly beneficial to becoming an effective administrator. Carrying out effective evaluations of teachers is what an administrator must be able to do. They must be able to do so on a consistent basis. A truly effective administrator will also be interested in receiving feedback from teachers on the evaluation process because doing so is critical to staying current and fair in the entire process. Teachers are essentially some of the best resources for feedback. Being able to have the post observation meetings and asking them questions regarding the entire evaluation process truly helped me to see what they want out of it and what they want out of a building leader overall.

Through this project, I truly learned to have a very clear and unbiased mind when entering Katelyn's room. I did not want my personal feelings or what I have heard to persuade my evaluation, but rather let the evidence itself work itself out. An effective administrator will need to be sure to do this every day when they conduct classroom observations. They will need to remember that each classroom has various needs, various instructional styles, and various learning abilities. It is crucial not to place judgment and compare one class to the next. An administrator will need to learn how to separate their observations and truly consider the whole classroom and its needs and realize it's different than the other classrooms in the building. Essentially, in teaching, one size shoe does not fit all. An administrator needs to remember that when going from one classroom to the next.

Another thing I learned was the importance of flexibility and communication with teachers. The entire process can be overwhelming. Oftentimes, teachers just want it over with. When we had to delay the observation because of other priorities, it was imperative I communicate this with Katelyn and do so immediately in a proactive manner. When I approached her in a respectful and proactive manner, she was much more receptive to the delay of the entire process as well as understanding because of my honesty. Additionally, the entire computer evaluation process through Teachscape can sometimes limit face-to-face communications with the teacher and administrator. Realizing that being an administrator will require many hours at a computer screen, it is crucial that I find time to have face to face communications, classroom walk-throughs and conferences with teachers regarding their needs. These personal communications help to build trust and comfortability between staff members. In return, this will allow more teachers to speak up for what they believe which may help me realize what is best for our school. I think this is especially important for new teachers because it is easy to feel isolated and on your own at that point in your career. I want to be sure they do not feel like they are going to drown. Having continuous check-ins and interactions with them on a consistent basis will be helpful in promoting their growth as an educator.

Ultimately, this process brought to my attention that the evaluation system is far from perfect and that administrators need to constantly be working toward improving their evaluation practice. Teacher evaluations can and should be a positive experience for both the teacher and the evaluator. The challenge for evaluators is to make the evaluation process a meaningful experience, not simply an empty exercise or another hoop to jump through.   I truly realized that teachers do want to be heard and communicated with, more often than we may think. I also realized that sometimes being stuck behind a computer screen can make teachers feel isolated and/or unappreciated because of the lack of personal communication when in reality they want to be helped within their instructional tactics. Just as students need a routine while also being held accountable, teachers need this as well. Personal communications help to provide this sense of comfort, routine, and accountability. These face-to-face communications and reflective conversations will allow teachers to feel more comfortable within the evaluation process while promoting their own instructional growth as educators which in return will help the school grow collectively. An administrator who can help their teachers grow, will help their school grow, and thus will be deemed an effective administrator.