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Reflection

Module 1.4 Artifact

1. **Reflect on Your Understanding:**

After learning about the impact of trauma on students, my understanding of their behavior and learning challenges has greatly evolved. I knew many of my current students suffered issues outside of school, I never knew they were categorized as ACEs until now. I looked at them being in school as more of a safe space from their home life, but I now know they suffer throughout the day, and it overflows into their ability to do well in school. I have a better understanding of the way their cognition is affected and how each student may need a different way to support them here at school. One of my current students has a parent who has recently been arrested and displaced from his home. I am unsure of all the details, but I make sure to check in with him as we are walking to class together in the morning. I ask questions like “have you had anything to eat this morning?”, or “how was your night?”. The school counselor is also meeting with him regularly and my mentor has washed some of his clothes here at the school. Another student has a lot of depression and needs to hear reassuring words. I make sure he hears “I love you” and “you are awesome” many times throughout the day.

1. **Classroom Strategies:**

The trauma-informed practice that I find most applicable to my teaching style is creating a safe and supportive environment by building relationships with my students. I am not teaching much yet, so I find myself providing care and support a lot throughout the day. I check in with my students several times throughout the day, and I often screen the hallways as I am walking from one classroom to another looking for anyone who may seem like they need support. One additional strategy I plan to implement when I have my own classroom one day will be the check-in/check-out system. Although I check-in with them now, it’s more of an informal way and not one on one when no one else is around. Another strategy I really find I like is the idea of having a few minutes to check-in one on one with students who may need that extra support. I hope this helps me achieve a stronger relationship with my students and a safe place for them. My hope is that they develop a growth mindset by providing encouraging feedback where they learn to be resilient through traumatic experiences.

1. **Self-Care Practices:**

It is extremely important to take care of yourself as a trauma -informed teacher so you do not experience compassion fatigue. Outside of the classroom, I am a big believer in proper nutrition and exercise and the positive role they play in your everyday life. If I am tired and not energized, I am not giving the best of myself as a teacher. We need to make sure we are taking care of ourselves, so we have the energy to care for others. Having a hobby or just some quiet reflection time before and after school are necessary to maintain self-care. Inside the classroom, the tap-in/tap-out system that was used in the video is a wonderful system that I plan to implement when I have my own classroom. Depending on where I teach, if there is not one already in place, I plan to at least team up with a next-door teacher or someone on the admin staff to have this available when I need it. My mentor will use me as her tap-in/tap-out person currently.

**Progress Reflection**

I feel that my progress with this course thus far is sufficient. Even though the class is self-paced and hard to judge if I am going quickly enough, I feel that I am taking ample amount of time on assignments in order to fully learn and understand them. I try to set goals to complete a section by and have been pretty much able to stay within that timeline. My goal to complete Module 1 was within 2 months, and I have so far spent 8 weeks and have Module 1.5 left to complete. With spring break beginning next week, my goal is to have that completed by next Friday. I have printed the assignments and as much of the content as possible to keep in a binder for future reference as well. I know I will not be able to remember it all, but I am sure I will need to look back at it at least in the beginning of my teaching career.