

Candidates' Manual

Cook School District Simulation

Welcome to the Cook School District (CSD) Simulation. We have designed the simulation to help you sharpen several professional skills. We hope you will find your experience with the simulation valuable. In addition, we hope you will also increase your confidence in becoming an accomplished teacher.

Purpose for the Simulation

The purpose for the *CSD* Simulation is to provide an opportunity to practice your skills in designing, implementing, and evaluating a teacher work sample. If you are not yet familiar with what a teacher work sample is, not to worry. We have included a brief listing of the components in the next paragraph. As you learn about the work sample parts during the simulation you will be asked to try your hand at designing your own teacher work sample components.

In case you need a quick explanation of a work sample, here is a listing of the components commonly used by teacher educators around the country:

- Describe the context in which the teaching will occur;
- Provide unit objectives aligned with the needs of the students as well as the state's and district's curriculum;
- Design, administer, and interpret a preinstructional assessment;
- Design instruction aligned with student needs and current academic status and the outcomes sought;
- Provide adaptations in instruction, outcomes, and assessment to facilitate student learning by all;
- Carry out instruction so that all children make achievement gains;
- Develop, administer, and interpret both formative and summative assessments;
- Display learning gain data so they are easily and accurately interpreted;
- Reflect upon the effectiveness of the unit of instruction as well as your personal growth plans for the future.

Strangely enough, the central point of this simulation is not to learn to develop a teacher work sample. The single pivotal outcome is for you to learn how to connect teaching and learning. By that we mean, we want you to know how to think about your impact on the learning of your students. If your pupils learned much less than you hoped, we want you to know how to determine how that sad state may have occurred--what role did the strategies, interactions, and materials you chose play in the lack of achievement? Conversely, if a child whose prior work indicated he was



unlikely to succeed in your class actually made great strides, we want you to know how you determined what may have impacted the child so beneficially. The *CSD Simulation* is designed to help you learn how to make such decisions carefully and thoughtfully.

That means the ultimate purpose of the simulation is not to teach you about teacher work samples. What we will do is teach you about teacher work samples as a vehicle for making insightful analyses about childrens' achievement--or lack of learning. If you learn how to develop competent work samples, you will have, ipso facto, learned to insightfully connect teaching and learning.

Additionally, the *CSD Simulation* does have as one of its goals to help you move effortlessly through the simulation. We have provided lots of suggestions about how to work through the *CSD Simulation* and to find exactly where you are within the steps you are to complete. We don't expect nor need to have you recall how to proceed through the simulation. We designed cues to help you wend your way with ease. The only goal we have is you learn to think about yourself as an agent to help students learn.

Shortly, when you read this introduction to the *CSD Simulation* you will find yourself enmeshed in becoming skillful in designing a teacher work sample. But don't forget the point. If you develop a well designed teacher work sample you will have demonstrated you know how to make those important connections between student learning and your instructional and assessment skills.

Objectives for *Cook School District Simulation*

There are two sets of outcomes we are seeking to meet from your involvement with the *Cook School District Simulation*. One set deals with developing your professional skills while the second deals with your attitudes about those professional skills. Listed below is an abbreviated set of the objectives used to organize this simulation.



Professional Skills

After completing the *Cook School District simulation*, you will be able to prepare a teacher work sample that includes the following components:

1. Context description;
2. Learning objectives;
3. Assessment plans and activities;
4. Instructional strategies and materials;
5. Adaptations;
6. Data analyses; and
7. Reflection.

Attitudes Toward Professional Skills

You will, after completing *Cook School District simulation*,

1. Feel confident in your ability to demonstrate the skills taught in the simulation.
2. Feel confident that you, across your career, will master the skills taught in the simulation.
3. Believe the skills taught in the simulation are important for teachers.

Features Within the Simulation

Help Screens

Within the simulation are help screens for each main screen. The help screens are intended to provide aid to help you complete the screens of the *CSD* Simulation. As you work through the simulation, should you encounter a problem where you need more information before you can proceed, consult the accompanying help screen.

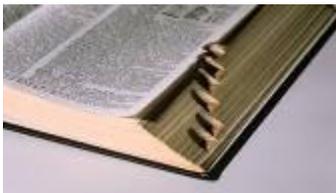


We have provided two types of support within the help screens:

1. Suggestions for responding to procedural concerns--how to best deal with the intricacies of the simulation.
2. Guidelines for making decisions about concerns raised by the simulation. For example, if you are unsure how to categorize a teaching strategy you selected for the unit using the groupings we provided, consult a help screen. We provided suggestions to help you complete the task correctly and with less difficulty.

We tried to provide enough guidance within the simulation so you won't need to consult the help screens often. But where we may have confused you, hopefully the accompanying help screen will remove the doubt.

Dictionary



dictionary.

We provided a dictionary to define many of the terms we use. We want you to know exactly what we mean when we use, for example, words like “goal” and “objective”. The blue highlighted words will, if you “hover” the cursor, pop-up synonyms for the confusing term. But if you need a definition, not just synonyms for the word, you need to consult the

Example Work Samples

We also provided a few exemplary teacher work samples. If you receive an assignment to employ a work sample with the *CSD* Simulation, if yours is not yet designed, we hope you will feel free to use ours.

Cues and Prompts

Cook School District is a practice setting. That means you are to apply knowledge and skills you are acquiring about the process of connecting teaching and learning. But you may feel your knowledge of teacher work samples and connecting teaching and learning is a bit inadequate. On many screens, you will find a box on the right side of the screen labeled **Cues and Prompts**. The content of the box will:

- provide suggestions, if you wish to see an example, of something like the design of an assessment using more than one item type or the employment of a variety of instructional strategies within a unit ;
- provide reminders of how you might want to think about the task you are to complete on that screen, such as how to interpret assessment information; or
- require you to explain a decision you made on a screen such as why you chose a specific adaptation for a specific child.

The intent of the **Cues and Prompts** box is to help you acquire the knowledge and skills you are practicing or to ask that you explain persuasively the decisions you made using your knowledge and skills about connecting teaching and learning. **Cues and Prompts** were provided to help you acquire and apply the necessary knowledge being practiced with the simulation.

The explanations you write regarding your decisions will be recorded for you, as well as the **Prompt** encouraging you to respond, by the computer. You may request that your responses and the **Prompt** be printed out for you during or at the conclusion of the simulation.

Notes

On most screens you will find a box you can use to record reminders or questions for yourself. As you read, for example, there may be pieces of information about a student you want to recall. Or, you may run across a question we ask where you need to remember to consult your professor before you respond to the simulation. The Note Box is your spot to record that information. You can print out your personal reminders at any time while working in the simulation or as a last step before you complete your journey. If all you wish is to see your questions click on the box and it will show you all your notes from this trip through the simulation.



Plan Book

As you prepare your unit objectives, select your instructional strategies, construct your assessments, and design your adaptations the computer will record all your decisions into a **Plan Book**. That document will look similar to that which you will likely employ when you are teaching in the schools. When you come to the last screen of the simulation you will be asked if you would like a copy of your **Plan Book**. We think you will find that report helpful as you describe your unit to your classmates or your professor.

Menu Bar

In the left margin is a listing of the screens you have completed. By clicking on those screens, you will be able to return to a previous screen to, for example, change a decision you made regarding the design of your unit. The menu bar also invites you about midway through the simulation to consider making an adaptation. If you click on **Adaptations** in the menu bar you will be guided through that process.

Later as you are teaching your unit, the Menu Bar will include the option **Formative**. If you wish to administer a quiz or employ a Q and A sequence or provide a practice time, select **Formative**. The screens will guide you through the steps to design and administer, your formative “test” followed by a report of student performance on that assessment.

Print and Exit Screen



The last screen of the simulation allows you to choose from a menu of options different reports you may wish to print. If you come to this screen but you are unsure which reports your instructor wants you to print, you can return to this screen at another time and to acquire copies of the documents you need. In other words, the computer will store information from your trip through the simulation for you.

Summary

We hope you find *Cook School District* helpful to you in acquiring and practicing the knowledge and skills needed by all professionals. And we hope that occurs in a way that you find to be an enjoyable experience.