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NELA Cohort V Fellow
School Law
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Principal Interview: Assessing leading legal issues at the school-level

Each NELA V Cohort Fellow will schedule an interview with the school-building principal at their school to answer the following three questions:

(1.) According to the principal, what does she (he) believe are the three leading legal issues and/or concerns at their school?

Services for Exceptional Children

Placing Teachers on Plans

Allegations against teachers

(2.) Ask the principal to share with you a story based on their most challenging school-based legal experience since becoming a principal at this particular school.

“The most challenging legal experience I have faced as an administrator was investigating allegations that a teacher had physically abused a child. I immediately notified human resources so they could be involved in handling the investigation. As an administrator you have to remain professional and not involve your personal feelings towards any of the parties involved.”

(3.) Ask the principal what primary advice she (he) would give to a beginning or novice principal involving the handling of a potentially challenging and controversial legal issue(s) impacting the school?

“I would advise beginning principals to ask questions if they are unsure about a decision. No question is a dumb question. You should always do your research and visit your district policies often.”

Reflection:

I truly feel that NELA will provide me with learning opportunities that will prepare me to be a proficient instructional leader. On the other hand, it is my responsibility to make sure I understand my district’s policies and stay abreast of new policies and laws as well. It is my goal to legally do what is in the best interest of the students I will serve when making decisions. I have enjoyed your School Law class and look forward to our last session.

Site: Dawson @ Scotland Neck Primary, Halifax County

Principal/Instructional Leader : Christina Williams

Years of Experience: 4

Education of Principal: NCSU NELA Cohort I Graduate