

Competency 1.2 was demonstrated by identifying challenges/weaknesses and creating action plans to turn them into strengths.

The first challenge that I have noticed is being in a degree field where I am the person or one of the people that is there for everyone throughout the day...every day. However, at the end of the day I come home and there is nobody there for me. This has been manageable, but it has been something that I have been aware of. I realize that if I do nothing to address this, it will turn into compassion fatigue and burnout. My action plan to address this is to look into going to counseling again to continue working on myself and having a designated person that is there for me. Another way that I am going to turn this into a strength is by utilizing my self-awareness of the situation to promote self-care for myself such as going to church and spending time with my horses.

A second challenge that I have noticed is when teaching whole classroom lessons, I often tend to skip calling on students where I am unsure of how to say their name. I do not want to say any names wrong and get embarrassed which results in me skipping students. But I realized that this was not giving every kid a fair chance. I recognized that not wanting to get embarrassed was from a childhood of getting laughed at if I said something wrong but had to separate the past from the present. My action plan to turn this into a strength is to ask the teacher how to say the names that I am unsure of. Additionally, I am more intentional to review the student roster beforehand and strive to remember students' names and how to pronounce them. This helps me to not feel embarrassed by saying the name wrong but also still gives every kid a fair chance.

A third challenge that I have faced is that I tend to find it easier to get to know the female students rather than the male students. Because of past life experiences, I have a hard time with men and sometimes that even transfers to boys. I don't have confidence around guys and tend to feel more judged than I should allow myself to feel. I am aware of this and strive to not let it impact my work at the schools. However, I noticed that I have more of the girls' names memorized than the boys which is partly because the girls are more likely to come talk to me at Standifer Gap, but it is also probably partly because it is easier for me to just focus on the girls. This also translates to meeting with students individually. I noticed I was more likely to schedule the girls before the boys rather than based on priority of need. My action plan to turn this into a strength is first to be self-aware that I have that tendency and be intentional to connect with every student. Additionally, I will be intentional to double check that I am scheduling students by priority rather than by gender.