GACE® Teacher Leadership Assessment

Library of Examples
Task 2, Step 1: The Research Process
Textbox 2.1.1: Leading the Research Process

Below are two examples of written responses to Textbox 2.1.1 as excerpted from the portfolios of two different candidates. The candidate responses were not corrected or changed from what was submitted. One response was scored at the Met/Exceeded Standards Level (3-4), and the other response was scored at the Did Not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level (1-2). This information is being provided for illustrative purposes only. These excerpts are not templates for candidates to use to guarantee a successful score. Rather, they are examples that candidates can use for comparison purposes to see the kinds of evidence that they may need to add to their own work.

Guiding Prompts for Textbox 2.1.1

a. Based on your knowledge of your discipline and structure of the curriculum, what specific steps did you take to initiate the research process with your colleagues? What did you do to guide your colleagues in identifying and clarifying the curriculum-based subject of this research?
b. What was the design of the plan for the research, and how did you guide your colleagues to collaborate in its creation?
c. How did you guide your colleagues in the process of accessing and using research?
d. How did you facilitate analysis and decision making during the research process with both individuals and the group?
e. How did you guide colleagues to collaborate with educational organization(s) that have researched related educational issues?

Example: Met/Exceeded Standards Level (3-4)

The process of determining a research discipline, analyzing prior research on the topic, and gathering and analyzing data on the topic took place over the course of a year. The research team, led by myself, initially met with our administrators and analyzed our School Improvement Plan (SIP) to determine that the new Early Intervention Program (EIP) implementation was an area of concern and needed further research. The SIP showed weaknesses in the areas of small group Math and Reading scores which would be impacted by the EIP. I then guided my team in deciding the discipline we needed to research further was how to properly implement the new EIP Pull-out delivery model to benefit the student learning needs in our school. I led my team in the development of a research process. After determining the area of study and the significance of our problem, the research process began with reviewing previous literature on the Pull-Out Model implementation, benefits for minority and low socioeconomic students, and student perceptions of the model. Because our SIP

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showed the needed improvement would be fostered by the teachers, our literature review continued with adult learning, Professional Learning Communities, teacher leadership, and professional development. As educational researchers, I felt it was imperative for us to consult educational organizations. Our first consult began with the Georgia Department of Education. I encouraged my colleague to email the Director concerning the EIP implementation in Georgia. We then consulted numerous educational journals to ensure our analysis would be saturated with current trends. My role in leading the group during the literature review of the problem involved: dividing the responsibilities of the research topics, guiding the researchers in their delivery of their information, editing their work, and compiling the information. The next step of the process involved determining the research design as well as data collection and analysis. I led my colleagues in developing three research questions that would be used to guide our research process. These questions included: (1) What is the effect of the implementation of the pull-out delivery model on student achievement in the areas of reading and math (3-5)? (2) How do teachers respond to the implementation of the Pull-Out delivery model? and (3) How do administrators respond to the implementation of the Pull-Out delivery model? I researched the different types of data collection and analysis and determined we needed both qualitative and quantitative data to answer our research questions. After determining the questions to be answered by our research and the needed data, I formulated a data shell that my research team would follow to access and guide the research process. (see artifact 1) The following step in the research process involved data collection. Quantitative data was collected by comparing archival county benchmark assessments during the reign of the Parallel Block model with current benchmark assessments utilizing the EIP Pull-out model. Due to privacy protocol, I had to email the county's testing coordinator to release both sets of scores to our team. Qualitative methods were utilized in evaluating teacher and administrator feelings. I led my team in the discussion of how to collect this data. We determined as a group to conduct focus groups and I helped my team formulate the questions that would be asked in each group. I then oversaw my colleagues in leading the focus groups. Finally, I led my team in the tremendous task of analyzing the data. I was able to organize my team according to individual strengths in order to reach this goal. I am highly aware that one of my colleagues is talented in the area of math and number sense. I was able to recognize that and utilize her abilities to lead the team in analyzing the quantitative data. The two consecutive years' benchmark data sets were compared using descriptive statistics to determine the success of the EIP Pull-out implementation. We then moved to the qualitative data. I worked with my team to determine themes from the transcribed focus group discussions. Three themes were revealed from transcribing the focus groups discussions: communication, time, and accountability. I then assigned a theme to each of my colleagues to delve in to. I wanted to ensure our school personnel was aware of strengths and weakness. Dividing the found themes gave each member a sense of ownership in not only the research process, but in the increasing student success in our entire school process. After uncovering more information on each theme, we came together as a group to discuss strategies to combat weaknesses. We uncovered that one particular grade level and EIP teacher needed to focus on the area of accountability in order to reach greater student success. Although it was a collaboration of work between my three colleagues and myself, I took on the responsibility as leader. As editor, I was able to approach colleagues individually when further research needed to be conducted or when the data was not analyzed correctly. I ensured all parties met to discuss the process and had input in the research. Each decision was purposefully made to coordinate the groups' individual efforts. It was imperative to me that each individual felt as though they were intellectually encouraged in the research process, as well as impacted positively as an educator.

Refer to the <u>Task 2 Rubric</u> and ask yourself:

In the candidate's description of how he or she led the research process, where is there evidence of the following?

- Specific steps to initiate the research process, based on the knowledge of the discipline and the structure of the curriculum, with colleagues
- Guiding colleagues to identify and clarify the curriculum-based research subject
- Guiding colleagues to collaborate in the design of the plan for research
- Guiding colleagues in the process of accessing and using research
- Facilitating analysis and decision making during the research process with both individuals and the group
- Guiding colleagues to collaborate with educational organizations that have research-related educational issues

Why is the candidate's response ***informed*** and ***logical***?

Example: Did Not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level (1-2)

My knowledge of the 7th grade science curriculum lead me to make a choice of which unit would lend itself the best to a project-based instruction unit. The cells unit was chosen becuase real world problems could be infused into the cirriculum to help students learn through inquiry based learning. I initiated the research process with my colleagues through identifying real world problems that could be used from the cells unit of 7th grade life science and with examples I was able to justify to them why this would be a good choice for the reasearch. The design for the research was to work during a 6 week unit on cells, to create two groups from the 120 students on my team that could be placed into a traditional instruction group or a project-based learning group. These two groups would be composed of 24 students and would learn in two distinctly different ways. The traditional instruction group would be taught using lecture, worksheets, and quizzes that would follow the instruction. The project-based learning group would be taught using inquiry based learning using real world problems that would drive their learning. These students would work collaboratively in groups to determine the solutions to these problems, and then would create projects to explain their work that would count as their summative grades. Both groups would be tested for academic achievement using pretest and a posttest. Students would be checked for engagment using a questionnaire, and students would be checked for their attitudes through a survey. The data would then be compared to determine if project-based learning could have an affect on students in any of these three ways. I guided my colleagues in this work through taking a lead role in the work. I am very passionate about this work and I was able to come to the table with examples, ideas, and interviews and surveys already created that just needed to be reviewed an critiqued. I was asking the colleagues working with me to help me with this work on top of their already busy schedules so in order to get buy in from them, I brought most of the work to the table completed. They helped in the final creation of work since they were able to critique and adjust the work. We also met altogether once every other week throught the process during our planning period of the day to discuss the work. I used a teacher survey following this week to document our communication after the project was over. I compiled research from several sources so that my colleagues could help me to determine what reserach organizations who had previously completed research on the same topic could be

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- Guiding colleagues to identify and clarify the curriculum-based research subject

- Guiding colleagues to collaborate in the design of the plan for research

- Guiding colleagues in the process of accessing and using research

- Facilitating analysis and decision making during the research process with both individuals and the group

- Guiding colleagues to collaborate with educational organizations that have research-related educational issues

Why is the candidate's response *sketchy* and *limited*?

Suggestions for Using These Examples

After writing your own rough draft response to the guiding prompts, ask the question, "Which parts of these examples are closest to what I have written?" Then read the 4 levels of the matching rubric (labeled with the textbox number) and decide which best matches your response. Use this information as you revise your own written commentary.

Lastly, using your work and/or these examples as reference, consider what you believe would be appropriate artifacts for this textbox.