GACE® Teacher Leadership Assessment

Task 2, Textbox 2.1: Leading the Research Process

Guiding Prompt e

Examples of How a Candidate Can Involve an Educational Organization in the Research Process

Example 1

2.1. e Our school continued to be the lowest in our county for Physical Science with no significant increases for the past five years. Other areas of science indicated a decline in scores as test questions had evolved over the past few years to more applicable questions as opposed to recall. I chose to guide my team to seek methods, data, and proven strategies that could be researched and then utilized to improve instruction and student achievement in this subject area. During this time, we brainstormed educational organizations and agencies that have already established a reputation of having researched this issue. From this brainstormed list, I encouraged the team to divide the agencies that they thought would prove beneficial to contact among themselves so that they were able to get a preliminary discussion going; and then bring in the rest of the team members. For example, one of the agencies that my team established a collaborative relationship with was the National Science Board in which, through our discussion and data, they highlighted the types of professional development that was received by teachers and the effect it had on their practice. Once this data was brought back to the team; they followed up with that agency to ask about the other determining factors such as working conditions/school environment, curriculum, parent involvement and poverty level. This organization was able to provide my team additional points of contact for us to obtain and discuss various pertinent data and graphics. One take-away from this agency and this experience, for example, was relevant information and guidance to suggest that problem-based inquiry needed to be implemented in all curricular areas to encourage students in the application process of new concepts in order to obtain 21st century skills needed to compete globally.

Example 2

2.1 e During the literature review phase of our research, I reached out to a contact at the National Council for the Social Studies, with whom I had previously emailed regarding ideas for bringing history classrooms into the 21st century. This contact agreed to speak with our research team over the phone in order to answer questions about new testing methods and types of resources we should be looking into. This was an outstanding first step as the NCSS member was able to speak about additional data and resources beyond just their organization. After taking notes of the suggestions, each team member agreed to contact a different organization in order to get a diverse sampling of assessment methods and rationales. Colleague 1 worked with a representative with the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE); Colleague 2 reached out to a staff member at the American Educational Research Association (AERA); and Colleague 3 chose to work with a representative from the American Educational Studies Association (AESA). They used a set of questions we developed as a group after the initial NCSS call so as to get comparable information. Some of these questions included: What is the current best practice for adapting tests to various learning styles? What are some examples of hands-on or tactile assessments that you have seen utilized in the classroom? In your estimation, should we be anticipating a positive or negative impact of including new testing methods? During the next research meeting, most of the team reported that they had been able to get meaningful suggestions from individuals within their chosen organizations. We spent the remainder of the team meeting collecting the data presented by each individual based on their conversations. Expanding our "partnership" beyond traditional research means will definitely aid in transforming teaching and learning in our Social Studies curriculum.