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About the Assessment

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<td>Grade Level</td>
<td>P–12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test Code</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Number of Selected-response Questions</td>
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<td>Question Format</td>
<td>The test consists of a variety of short-answer questions such as selected-response questions, where you select one answer choice or multiple answer choices (depending on what the question asks for), questions where you enter your answer in a text box, and other types of questions. You can review the possible question types in the Guide to Taking a GACE Computer-delivered Test.</td>
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The GACE Educational Leadership assessment is designed to measure the standards-relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities of school and district-level educational leaders in the state of Georgia.

The testing time is the amount of time you will have to answer the questions on the test. Test duration includes time for tutorials and directional screens that may be included in the test.

The questions in this assessment assess both basic knowledge across content areas and the ability to apply principles. Questions present scenarios and content appropriate for school-level (e.g., assistant principals and principals) and system or district-level educational leaders (e.g., associate superintendents and superintendents).

The constructed-response section of the assessment contains questions that require you to listen to an educational leadership situation and respond in writing. You are permitted to replay the audio portion, if needed. An ETS-approved headset will be provided at the test center.
The total number of questions that are scored is typically smaller than the total number of questions on the test. Most tests that contain selected-response questions also include embedded pretest questions, which are not used in calculating your score. By including pretest questions in the assessment, ETS is able to analyze actual test-taker performance on proposed new questions and determine whether they should be included in future versions of the test.

Note: The Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) was signed into law and replaces the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Materials are currently being updated to reflect this change. During this transitional period, you may see references to NCLB in assessment materials and questions.

Content Specifications

This assessment is organized into content subareas. Each subarea is further defined by a set of objectives and their knowledge statements.

- The objectives broadly define what a school or district educational leader in Georgia public schools should know and be able to do.
- The knowledge statements describe in greater detail the knowledge and skills eligible for testing.
- Some tests also include content material at the evidence level. This content serves as descriptors of what each knowledge statement encompasses.

See a breakdown of the subareas and objectives for this assessment on the following pages.
### Test Subareas

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<thead>
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<th>Approx. Percentage of Test</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Educational Vision</td>
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<td>II. School Culture and the Instructional Program</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Managing the Organization, Operations, and Resources</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>IV. Collaborating and Communicating with Stakeholders</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td>V. Professionalism and Ethics</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Analysis (constructed response only)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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### Test Objectives

#### Subarea I: Educational Vision

**Objective 1: Organizes and supports key stakeholders to develop the district’s vision, mission, and goals**

The educational leader:

A. Works with key stakeholders, including governing entities, to develop an educational vision that promotes the success of all students

B. Identifies possible barriers and applies strategies for initiating change in the educational environment (e.g., working closely with students, school and district leaders, and community members; anticipating resistance; resolving conflicts)

C. Gathers support for change and builds both internal and external alliances to support the change process

D. Uses data-based research strategies and strategic planning processes to inform the development of a vision

E. Aligns the educational vision with the policies and goals of governing entities (e.g., local board of education, state programs, federal programs, charter schools’ governing boards)

F. Applies relevant knowledge in the development of the educational vision (e.g., group dynamics, team building, process skills, organizational development theory, formal and informal power structures in school and community contexts)
Objective 2: Utilizes multiple data sources to monitor and evaluate progress toward the educational vision

The educational leader:

A. Leads the implementation of a shared vision of learning that promotes the success of all students
B. Uses multiple sources of data (e.g., student assessment results, student and family demographic data, analysis of community needs, perception/process data) to conduct a needs analysis to identify unique strengths, needs, gaps, and areas for improvement for students and teachers
C. Identifies strategies for evaluating financial policies, practices, and outcomes in terms of the district’s educational vision
D. Collects, organizes, and analyzes information, including student performance data, to assess progress in achieving a district’s vision, mission, and goals
E. Uses the educational vision as a benchmark for analyzing the needs and accomplishments of the district and its schools

Objective 3: Engages stakeholders to promote progress toward identified school and district goals

The educational leader:

A. Collaborates with district stakeholder groups to identify goals, objectives, and methods for achieving the district’s educational vision
B. Collaborates with stakeholder groups outside the district (e.g., businesses, legislators, state education department, institutions of higher education, media) to achieve the district’s educational vision
C. Promotes the implementation and ongoing support of the educational vision among district constituencies and stakeholders
D. Uses a variety of data to help stakeholders understand the progress that will result from implementation of the educational vision
E. Promotes continuous and sustainable progress toward meeting identified goals

Subarea II: School Culture and the Instructional Program

Objective 1: Develops and sustains an environment that promotes high standards for all staff and students

The educational leader:

A. Facilitates the development of a positive school culture that promotes excellence to achieve student progress
B. Communicates high standards and expectations for oneself, staff, and students
C. Supports collaborative decision making and shared leadership
D. Applies strategies for providing a safe, secure, healthy, and supportive learning environment
E. Fosters positive student behavior through various proactive behavior management strategies (e.g., addressing behaviors that negatively affect the learning environment)
F. Responds to the warning signs and risk factors of violence and implements strategies for ensuring school safety
G. Creates a supportive learning environment that encourages mutual respect, concern, and empathy for students, staff, parents, and the community

**Objective 2: Plans and implements an instructional program that aligns research-based principles with Georgia’s curriculum standards**

The educational leader:

A. Applies major principles of curriculum and instructional development, learning theories, developmentally appropriate instruction, and instructional best practices
B. Applies the principles and methods of standards-based curriculum planning and development to meet Georgia’s learning and performance-based standards
C. Uses a systematic process for monitoring, evaluating, and adjusting instruction to ensure the effectiveness of the instructional program
D. Uses research methods, technology, and information systems to gather and analyze data to enhance curriculum and instruction
E. Leads the planning and implementation of programs to meet students’ needs (e.g., academic, athletic, cultural, developmental, leadership, social, career readiness)
F. Develops the instructional leadership capacity of the staff (e.g., coaching, mentoring, leadership teams)
G. Collaboratively develops, implements, and monitors a school improvement plan aligned to the district educational vision that results in increased student learning and meets the needs of diverse populations

**Objective 3: Designs and assesses effective instruction that reflects research-based practices**

The educational leader:

A. Facilitates the use of research-based practices to design, enhance, and assess instruction
B. Applies human development, learning, and motivational theories to the teaching and learning process
C. Monitors and assesses instruction and the instructional organization of schools and classrooms
D. Knows the guiding principles for developing a master schedule and adjusts classroom structures, schedules, and grouping approaches based on existing factors to positively affect student achievement
E. Promotes the integration of technology to enrich curriculum and instruction

*Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.*
F. Implements instructional programs that address the needs of diverse learners (e.g., special education students, English-language learners, students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds, students who are homeless)

G. Provides constructive, meaningful, and timely feedback to faculty and staff (e.g., classroom and school visits and observations)

H. Plans and implements assessment practices for continuous improvement of students, subgroups of students, and the school as a whole

I. Communicates goals, expectations, performance results, and assessment results to internal and external stakeholders

J. Involves stakeholders in establishing a culture of shared responsibility for student achievement

**Objective 4: Encourages continuous improvement through school and district professional development**

The educational leader:

A. Uses various strategies (e.g., adult learning, data analysis, reflective practice) to support the design and implementation of professional development programs to best improve instruction

B. Uses a variety of supervisory models to monitor and improve instruction (e.g., clinical supervision, coaching, developmental)

C. Knows strategies for supervising school support personnel (e.g., paraprofessionals, food service, custodial staff) for continuous improvement

D. Engages staff and stakeholders in using strategies to bring about sustained school improvement and high student achievement

E. Uses a variety of strategies to encourage leadership, innovation, creativity, and collaboration in all staff

F. Allocates time, funding, and other resources for developing, implementing, and evaluating professional development

G. Develops and maintains a personal plan for self-improvement and continuous learning

**Subarea III: Managing the Organization, Operations, and Resources**

**Objective 1: Manages operations, programs, and services to ensure a safe and efficient environment**

The educational leader:

A. Implements procedures for managing school and district operations within Georgia public education rules, regulations, and laws

B. Knows the legal and regulatory requirements for providing services to students (e.g., health, transportation, food service)

C. Develops and implements procedures for managing and tracking inventories, equipment, and capital assets

**Note:** After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
D. Is familiar with Georgia’s legal requirements and procedures associated with procurement, bidding, and vendor relationships and understands the use of requisitions, purchase orders, and invoices
E. Uses current technologies for school management, business, and scheduling
F. Promotes a safe school environment by developing emergency, disaster preparedness, and recovery plans and by training staff for their efficient application

Objective 2: Understands the fundamental elements of a budget and manages facility maintenance

The educational leader:
A. Understands how to plan, develop, monitor, and manage a budget according to the elements of Georgia public school finance
B. Uses a variety of data (e.g., student enrollment, staffing needs, stakeholder input) to project budget needs
C. Develops short-term and long-term budget goals aligned with school needs
D. Is familiar with accepted government accounting procedures and practices, cash management procedures, internal controls, and internal and independent auditor processes
E. Communicates financial information regularly and accurately to appropriate stakeholders
F. Works with appropriate personnel to develop multiyear facilities development and maintenance plans based on relevant data (e.g., enrollment projections, program needs, condition of physical plants)
G. Promotes cost effectiveness and energy conservation in the operation of all facilities
H. Works with appropriate staff to ensure the facility and school environment is well maintained, functions properly, and meets appropriate regulations to best support quality instruction
I. Knows the steps in school renovation and construction from planning to completion, including legal requirements and financing (e.g., establishing need, developing specifications)
J. Ensures a safe school environment in relation to environmental, safety, and security issues, including emergency, disaster preparedness, and recovery plans and staff training

Objective 3: Manages personnel to maintain the highest level of performance

The educational leader:
A. Implements processes for recruiting, screening, and selecting personnel
B. Applies strategies for inducting, assigning, developing, evaluating, remediating, terminating, and advancing personnel
C. Applies district and legal requirements related to human resources administration (e.g., Family and Medical Leave Act [FMLA], Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA], Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act [COBRA], Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC])

D. Is familiar with employee benefits programs (e.g., retirement system, workers’ compensation, health insurance)

E. Knows strategies for succession planning (e.g., identifying potential leaders, mentoring and coaching programs)

F. Applies strategies for fostering productive relationships to encourage the retention of quality personnel and to advance student learning (e.g., building morale, motivating, recognizing staff diversity)

Subarea IV: Collaborating and Communicating with Stakeholders

Objective 1: Promotes stakeholder involvement through varied and effective collaboration

The educational leader:

A. Applies evidence-based strategies for collaborating with community members, groups, and organizations

B. Collects data from internal and external stakeholders to inform educational decision making

C. Uses proactive strategies to interact with and accommodate diverse groups in the community (e.g., cultural groups, citizens’ groups, groups with conflicting perspectives)

D. Collaborates with community agencies to identify and integrate community resources (e.g., businesses, services groups, higher education organizations) to support school goals and address school and community issues

E. Promotes stakeholder involvement to include parent-teacher-student organizations

F. Promotes parent-student-teacher partnerships to support instruction and student learning

Objective 2: Utilizes effective communication techniques when working with stakeholders

The educational leader:

A. Communicates with parents/guardians and other stakeholders by a variety of means (e.g., websites, printed media, translators) and addresses possible barriers

B. Uses the media (e.g., marketing, public relations, local media outlets) to communicate expectations and information about organizational performance to the community in accordance with district policy

C. Uses technology appropriately for communication

D. Communicates to appropriate stakeholders the effect of policies, laws, and demographic trends on communities and special populations

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
E. Uses effective writing, speaking, and listening skills in interactions with stakeholders
F. Maintains effective visibility and accessibility to students, parents, staff, and other stakeholders

Subarea V: Professionalism and Ethics

Objective 1: Models and maintains a fair, ethical, and equitable learning environment

The educational leader:

A. Models and communicates the importance of behaving with integrity, ethics, and respect for the rights of others
B. Maintains professional relationships with students, staff, parents, central office staff, and community members
C. Makes and articulates the rationales for decisions based on ethical and legal principles and maintains transparency in all decision making, as permitted
D. Knows how to locate and interpret policies, laws, and regulations that affect schools (e.g., school board polices, Georgia Board of Education rules and regulations, federal acts, Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators) and can apply those rules to specific situations
E. Follows Georgia laws, policies of the Georgia Board of Education, and policies of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission in all matters related to school administration (e.g., filing of academic progress reports, human resources management, employee rights)
F. Follows local, Georgia, and federal law related to identifying and reporting suspected child abuse, neglect, and bullying
G. Promotes and safeguards equity for students and staff (e.g., diversity, socioeconomic status, achievement levels)

Subarea VI: Analysis

Objective 1: Promotes continuous and sustainable progress toward the district’s educational vision

The educational leader:

A. Works with key stakeholders to develop an educational vision that promotes the success of all students to include applying strategies for initiating change

Objective 2: Monitors instructional programs and develops a shared culture of success

The educational leader:

A. Develops, monitors, and assesses instructional programs to include the school culture and professional development programs
Objective 3: Uses effective communication skills

The educational leader:

A. Uses effective writing, speaking, and listening skills in interactions with stakeholders

Objective 4: Models ethical and equitable decision-making skills

The educational leader:

A. Models professionalism in all interactions and promotes educational equity for students and staff
Practice Questions

The practice questions in this study companion are designed to familiarize you with the types of questions you may see on the assessment. While they illustrate some of the formats and types of questions you will see on the test, your performance on these sample questions should not be viewed as a predictor of your performance on the actual test. Fundamentally, the most important component in ensuring your success is familiarity with the content that is covered on the assessment.

To respond to a practice question, choose one of the answer options listed. Be sure to read the directions carefully to ensure that you know what is required for each question. You may find it helpful to time yourself to simulate actual testing conditions. A correct answer and a rationale for each sample test question are in the section following the practice questions.

Keep in mind that the test you take at an actual administration will have different questions, although the proportion of questions in each subarea will be approximately the same. You should not expect the percentage of questions you answer correctly in these practice questions to be exactly the same as when you take the test at an actual administration, since numerous factors affect a person’s performance in any given testing situation.
1. A few weeks after being hired, a new principal finds that several minor district procedures for money management are not being followed at the school. Which of the following is the most appropriate step for the principal to take to address the problem with faculty and staff?

A. Training all staff on implementing proper accounting controls, procedures, and records for school funds
B. Requesting that the district assign an accountant to the campus to provide daily support on procedures
C. Reviewing the campus, district, and state guidelines and procedures that outline rules for handling funds
D. Communicating regularly with the district’s business office to ensure use of proper accounting procedures

Answer and Rationale

2. Which of the following best creates conditions for effective data use in schools to facilitate sustainable school improvement results?

A. Allowing teachers access to a variety of data
B. Providing teachers explicit norms and expectations for data use
C. Supporting individual teacher professional development plans
D. Increasing classroom visits to evaluate teacher effectiveness

Answer and Rationale
3. The principal of a high school has been approached by a parent group that wants to fund the purchase of artificial turf for the school’s athletic field. A reporter from the local paper has called for a statement regarding whether the school would accept such a gift. Which of the following actions should the principal take before proceeding further on the group’s offer?

A. Apprise the district superintendent of the situation
B. Act according to the district’s policy on receiving gifts from outside agencies
C. Issue a statement to the reporter that no decision has been made
D. Discuss the pros and cons of artificial turf with the school’s coaches

Answer and Rationale

4. During the investigation of a teacher for possible drug abuse, school district officials search the teacher’s desk. Which of the following is the standard required of school districts in this situation?

A. The existence of probable cause
B. A current board policy
C. An active search warrant
D. The existence of reasonable suspicion

Answer and Rationale
5. A high school principal meets with the school improvement council to review progress toward achieving campus goals. During the data session, the team identifies an upward trend in the percentage of students who drop out of school. Which of the following is the most effective first step for the council to take to address the situation?

A. Examining the school’s academic program to identify the areas that are the most challenging to students at risk of dropping out
B. Diagnosing the reasons for the change observed in order to develop a specific plan to address the issue
C. Developing a system for identifying students at risk of dropping out and assigning a faculty mentor to each student
D. Sharing the data with teachers and asking them to develop individual dropout prevention strategies for classroom use

Answer and Rationale

6. Which of the following strategies best engages stakeholders in the process of creating a shared vision?

A. Asking parents to draft a preliminary vision statement for the administrative leadership to review
B. Offering parent meetings where the superintendent presents the developed vision and goals
C. Assessing the district’s readiness through input from employees early in the development process
D. Involving employees and community members directly in the process so each has a voice

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
7. Ms. Jazmine, a new school leader, sets a goal to establish strong collaboration with faculty and staff during her first year. A few weeks into the school year, she learns that on two different occasions, a teacher has encouraged other teachers to undermine her efforts to implement a new district-wide teacher evaluation process. Which of the following is the school leader’s best initial action for addressing the situation?

A. Offering the teacher an opportunity to express an opinion about the new evaluation process directly to her
B. Meeting with the teacher to document the incidents and communicate her expectations to the teacher
C. Placing a letter of reprimand for insubordination in the teacher’s personnel file
D. Ignoring the situation at present and waiting to see whether the negative talk stops on its own

Answer and Rationale

8. A school district is introducing a new reading program that requires teachers to change their approach to reading instruction. Which of the following strategies would best obtain the support of teachers for the new reading program?

A. Modifying the reading program so that it aligns with the teachers’ current instructional strategies
B. Increasing the number of observations during the school year to hold teachers accountable for the program’s implementation
C. Scheduling a series of voluntary after-school workshops throughout the school year to support teachers’ ability to use the program
D. Identifying teachers who will pilot the program and basing the program’s implementation on their feedback

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
9. A middle school principal works with language arts teachers to ensure that students can analyze different interpretations of a literary work. Which of the following activities best achieves the goal?

A. Providing a variety of short stories at different reading levels  
B. Incorporating student drama activities into literary units  
C. Using multiple resources to compare and contrast a text  
D. Limiting the informational texts used in the pacing guide

Answer and Rationale

10. A school administrator best fosters cohesion among staff members by doing which of the following?

A. Facilitating regular conversations on common goals  
B. Basing decisions on majority opinions and views  
C. Sharing reminders on organizational procedures  
D. Creating teams of teachers to evaluate each other

Answer and Rationale
Questions 11-13 refer to the following passage.

Last year, Pinewood High School decided to pilot a new schedule, changing from the traditional 45-minute class periods to two-hour blocks. As the school year ends, the administration must decide whether to adopt the new schedule permanently or return to its original schedule.

Given the mixed reviews from various stakeholders, the principal, Mr. Jackson, has set up a series of meetings to gather information and elicit feedback to help make a decision. Some faculty members have expressed concerns that it is difficult to maintain student interest with the increased instructional periods, while others report that the extended time allows them to try a variety of instructional strategies the previous schedule did not.

Parents also are divided in their opinions. Some favor the block schedule because students have fewer classes to prepare for and, as a result, are more focused. Other parents argue that the new schedule is too rigorous and students are stressed.

11. A number of parents and community members with strong opinions about the scheduling changes have been present and vocal at recent board meetings. The superintendent, who is in favor of continuing block scheduling, has asked Mr. Jackson to speak on its behalf at the next board meeting. Which of the following strategies is most likely to help Mr. Jackson build consensus with these parents and community members?

A. Present research that block scheduling improves instructional practice
B. Emphasize how local school districts with similar demographics have benefited from block scheduling
C. Offer a compromise by presenting alternate models of block scheduling
D. Show data supporting the positive impact block scheduling has had on student achievement in the past year

Answer and Rationale
12. In response to the concern shared by some faculty members regarding the length of class periods and the attention span of students, Mr. Jackson should first

A. remind teachers that the longer preparation periods should allow for planning of more complicated lessons.
B. offer faculty members professional development on instructional approaches that engage learners.
C. structure common planning periods so that content teachers can collaborate on interdisciplinary units.
D. provide supplemental materials that enhance the curriculum and appeal to students.

**Answer and Rationale**

13. When facilitating the faculty meeting, Mr. Jackson resolves to remain neutral in the discussions and listen carefully to each viewpoint. The primary purpose of this strategy is most likely to

A. create an environment for innovative thinking.
B. allow faculty members to work through issues without administrative guidance.
C. establish a forum where faculty members feel their opinions are valued and the discussions are fair.
D. identify faculty members who will hinder the process.

**Answer and Rationale**
14. Which of the following is the most important reason for school leaders to be visible and involved during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal of students?

A. To provide opportunities for daily interactions with students, staff, and parents
B. To supervise the transportation staff
C. To ensure that students exit and enter the buses in an orderly fashion
D. To verify that teachers are performing their assigned duties

Answer and Rationale

15. Stage 1: Identify desired results
   Stage 2: Determine acceptable evidence of learning
   Stage 3: Design learning experiences and instruction

The three stages of planning listed above are most closely associated with which of the following approaches to curriculum design?

A. Strategic planning
B. Backward planning
C. Performance-based planning
D. Unit planning

Answer and Rationale
16. A superintendent provides training to district principals on strategies for building professional capacity in their schools. Which of the following best identifies an action by the principals that would most likely build professional capacity through collaboration within their schools?

A. Requiring teachers to generate solutions to school-based problems  
B. Delegating to teachers the responsibility of monitoring progress toward district goals  
C. Inviting teachers to participate in a book study to investigate the benefits of shared decision making  
D. Establishing professional learning communities to promote shared inquiry among teachers

Answer and Rationale

17. The best way to engage key stakeholders in fulfilling the school’s vision and mission is by

A. meeting with key stakeholders once a year to discuss progress toward school improvement goals.  
B. sending an annual report on the school’s academic progress to community members and parents.  
C. asking key stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of the current vision and mission regularly.  
D. distributing copies of the school’s vision and mission to community members.

Answer and Rationale

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select “Previous View” to go back to original text.
18. To best ensure that students, families, and community members receive pertinent information about the school, a school leader should

   A. provide email addresses for all stakeholders
   B. supply information in a variety of digital and print formats
   C. attend parent-teacher organization meetings monthly
   D. ask teachers to contact every parent weekly with school updates

**Answer and Rationale**

19. According to the Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators, verbally abusing any student is a violation of which of the following standards?

   A. Conduct with students
   B. Legal compliance
   C. Honesty
   D. Remunerative conduct

**Answer and Rationale**
20. The Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES) is designed for use with

A. building-level administrators.
B. classroom teachers.
C. district-level leaders.
D. noncertified support staff.

**Answer and Rationale**

21. At a recent staff meeting, teachers asked the school leader to purchase a color printer for each grade level. Which of the following questions should the school leader initially ask to determine whether to purchase the color printers?

A. To what degree do color printers support advancement toward the goals outlined in the school improvement plan?
B. What is the estimated impact to the school budget if color printers are purchased and maintained for each grade level?
C. How will teachers use color printers to improve the efficacy of planning for instruction and assessment?
D. Can refurbished color printers be acquired instead of purchasing new equipment from approved vendors?

**Answer and Rationale**
22. Which of the following is a best practice when using the Leader Assessment on Performance Standards (LAPS) process to evaluate a leader?

A. Holding two conferences with the leader being evaluated each year
B. Having the leader write one performance goal using specific criteria
C. Using the totality of evidence and consistency of practice to rate the leader
D. Utilizing the indicators individually to rate the leader’s performance

Answer and Rationale

23. Which of the following is the primary benefit of a school leader using an inclusive process when developing or updating the school vision?

A. Building leadership capacity in staff members by sharing administrative responsibilities
B. Promoting the investment of stakeholders in achieving and sustaining positive outcomes for students
C. Complying with state and federal policies mandating the involvement of families in educational planning
D. Increasing opportunities for forming relationships with local organizations and businesses

Answer and Rationale
24. A school leader is preparing a school improvement plan. Which TWO of the following are the most valuable data to use for identifying the academic needs of students when setting goals for the plan?

A. Average teacher income in the city and county
B. Findings of a survey of local businesses regarding perceptions of the school
C. Performance data by grade level and subject
D. Results of parent questionnaires on school programs
E. The number of students who participate in before- and after-school extracurricular programs

**Answer and Rationale**

25. A school leader in an urban high school is working with the leadership team to consider disciplinary consequences that better support student achievement and build a positive school culture. Which of the following actions has the best potential for achieving the school leader’s goal?

A. Integrating character education in academic curriculums
B. Introducing retributive strategies that match the severity of misbehavior
C. Examining programs that provide alternative solutions to suspensions
D. Implementing detailed discipline-tracking practices

**Answer and Rationale**
26. Which TWO of the following actions by school leaders support the effective use of formative assessment data for improving student achievement?

A. Equipping classroom and lab computers with response software that allows teachers to view students’ answers to teacher-posed questions
B. Purchasing software that assists teachers in creating and customizing rubrics, checklists, and other evaluation instruments
C. Establishing a shared database where teachers can access state and national standards and the district’s lesson-planning template
D. Updating the school improvement plan to focus on training teachers to locate and evaluate digital resources for instruction
E. Introducing a student information system that facilitates teachers’ ability to track the progress of individual students or groups of students

Answer and Rationale

27. Which TWO of the following actions by an educational leader best support teachers’ active participation in the planning of professional learning?

A. Encouraging mentors and subject matter experts to model effective instructional strategies
B. Using monthly faculty meetings to discuss teacher-selected articles from academic journals
C. Including teachers in debriefing sessions following professional learning sessions
D. Scheduling time for teachers to identify professional learning needs based on student data
E. Ensuring that professional learning goals align with the district’s mission and vision statements

Answer and Rationale
28. A new school leader reviews district policies and procedures related to crisis and emergency management. The most appropriate next step in crisis-management leadership is to

A. identify specific safe zones within the community and establish routes to them.
B. elicit feedback from emergency responders and law enforcement about the school crisis plan.
C. ensure that students are ready to respond to crises by carrying out practice drills.
D. create a school crisis team and develop a tailored crisis plan that includes a clear chain of command.

Answer and Rationale

29. When creating a plan for the safety of students during a tornado, a school leader should include steps for

A. sheltering all students in the school gym or auditorium during an emergency.
B. placing portable buildings near the main building, away from wind drafts.
C. evacuating students on buses to a predesignated area after a tornado warning is issued.
D. surveying the structural stability of each part of the building in order to isolate any hazardous areas.

Answer and Rationale
30. To play an effective role in supporting the teacher-induction process, an educational leader at the school level should

   A. coordinate the selection and assignment of mentor teachers.
   B. model lessons that exemplify current instructional best practices.
   C. gather stakeholder feedback on district support of new teachers.
   D. meet with each new teacher for an hour each week to discuss professional goals.

**Answer and Rationale**

31. Which of the following is the best initial action for a school leader to take when building a partnership with a community group?

   A. Developing a shared vision to support student success
   B. Implementing a means for assessing the effects of the partnership
   C. Establishing roles and responsibilities for joint activities
   D. Training group members to work effectively with students

**Answer and Rationale**
32. Which of the following is the best way for a school leader to support two-way communication with parents and stakeholders about school programs and activities?

   A. Implementing an electronic calling system
   B. Using district-supported social media tools
   C. Posting information on the school website
   D. E-mailing a weekly school newsletter

Answer and Rationale

33. Which TWO of the following are the best methods an educational leader can use to ensure that the appointment of a new social studies chairperson is fair and ethical?

   A. Offering the position to the most senior teacher in the social studies department
   B. Reviewing professional credentials and evaluations for each interested candidate
   C. Asking the social studies faculty to recommend candidates for the position
   D. Allowing the retiring department chairperson to select the new chairperson
   E. Rotating the chairperson position among all the members of the social studies department

Answer and Rationale
34. According to Georgia law, a local board of education may refuse enrollment to a student if

A. the student owes fees to another school.
B. enrollment paperwork is completed by a grandparent.
C. the student’s current report card indicates failing grades.
D. a disciplinary order from the previous school is active.

**Answer and Rationale**

35. Which of the following is a primary benefit of teachers using technology such as e-mail, student information systems, and instant messaging to communicate with parents?

A. The amount of time teachers will need to meet with parents will decrease
B. The maintenance of Internet-based communication is easier than that of other types
C. Parents will be more likely to acquire access to Internet technology
D. Parents can monitor their child’s performance and give feedback to teachers

**Answer and Rationale**
# Answer Key and Rationales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Correct Answer</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Option A is correct. The principal should clarify expectations by providing specific training to all staff to address the money management errors identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Option B is correct. Creating explicit norms and expectations for data use fosters an institutional culture in which teachers utilize data to guide instructional decisions and assume responsibility for results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Option A is correct. Since the media has inquired about the situation, the principal should ensure that the superintendent, and thus the board, is aware of the situation to best ensure effective communication and a decision-making process supported by district policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> While the requirement for police officers is usually probable cause, a lesser standard of reasonable suspicion of drug abuse is needed for a district official to search a teacher’s desk. Generally, the courts acknowledge that school boards have the authority to support a search of employees or students and their belongings when there is evidence or reasonable suspicion of drug activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>B</td>
<td><strong>Option B is correct.</strong> After finding a trend in the campus data, the next appropriate step is to probe deeper into the problem to better diagnose the reasons for the change before any type of action plan is initiated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> Because the strategic planning process seeks to identify core beliefs and values and describe what the school seeks to become, schools should involve stakeholders from both within and outside the school in the process. This work cannot be done effectively without active, authentic, shared participation by a diverse group of stakeholders representing the school community.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> The new school leader wants to increase collaboration during her first year, and talking with the teacher who is undermining her efforts best aligns with this goal. Discussing concerns before taking other actions will be a positive step toward better understanding the teacher’s concerns, and it will help in seeking solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> District leadership can best obtain the support of teachers by asking those interested in the program’s success to pilot it first. Then the district can create buy-in by sharing results and success stories and initiating changes based on feedback from the pilot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>Option C is correct.</strong> Using multiple resources to compare and contrast a text enables students to analyze and identify specific claims, points of view, and supporting evidence.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> Regular conversations about the goals that school staff members are pursuing can encourage the entire staff to join forces in support of those goals. Staff conversations should be more productive than a review of the school’s procedures, and they should probe deeper than making decisions based on majority opinions. To achieve cohesion, each member of the team should have a clear understanding of his or her role and a deep sense of responsibility to achieve common goals. Through this process, authentic relationships are built that help teachers see the value in their collective work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> The principal can help build consensus by helping stakeholders understand the progress that will likely result from the continuation of the new schedule. The principal can be most convincing by displaying a variety of data that convey the positive impact achieved at the school during the new schedule’s first year of implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>B</td>
<td><strong>Option B is correct.</strong> Since some faculty members expressed concern regarding the length of the class period and student attention spans, the principal should recognize that offering professional development on instructional approaches that engage learners is the most appropriate step to take first. This action will better ensure that all teachers have a common understanding of what instruction should look like within the longer instructional period. Then teachers will be better equipped to utilize common planning time and supplemental resources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>Option C is correct.</strong> In the role of facilitator, Mr. Jackson is responsible for taking actions that help the group process the issues to reach resolution. By refraining from influencing the group with his opinions and replacing that action with effective listening, Mr. Jackson can help create a safe forum for teachers to comfortably share their thoughts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> The school leader’s presence when students arrive and depart gives students, teachers, and parents an opportunity to interact informally with the leader and increases the leader’s ability to gain information from various stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>B</td>
<td><strong>Option B is correct.</strong> The essence of backward planning design is to “begin with the end in mind.” Instructional planning then starts with identifying what concept, idea, or knowledge a student needs to master; determining what evidence best conveys understanding of this objective; then designing a learning situation or experience that best leads students to an understanding of the desired objective.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> The hallmark of a collaborative school culture is teachers working together to improve student learning. When teachers work together with a sense of personal responsibility for student learning, a synergy develops as they support one another’s journey to better instruction and the achievement of school goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>Option C is correct.</strong> During the school improvement process, the school council, composed of key stakeholders, will engage in regular and periodic sessions to assess the effectiveness of the current vision and mission as its most authentic and engaging activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>B</td>
<td><strong>Option B is correct.</strong> The school leader is most likely to establish effective communication with stakeholders if information is presented to them in a variety of formats from which they can choose.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> The George Code of Ethics for Educators addresses, in the section titled Conduct with Students, committing any act of child abuse, including verbal abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> According to the Georgia Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES) handbook, LKES is designed for use with school leaders, including principals and assistant principals, who are full-time or part-time leaders for a given school year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> Purchases should relate to the school vision and goals to best support student success.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>Option C is correct.</strong> According to the Georgia Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES), when using the Leader Assessment on Performance Standards (LAPS) process, an educational leader evaluating another administrator should look at the data as a whole, not at individual pieces or parts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>B</td>
<td><strong>Option B is correct.</strong> Stakeholders are committed to the success of an organization in achieving its goals. It is vital for the school leader to include stakeholders in developing or updating a school vision because they have the investment, capacity, and authority to promote the positive outcomes set forth in the vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>C, D</td>
<td><strong>Options C and D are correct.</strong> A school leader forms the most complete picture of student needs by examining both quantitative and qualitative data. Test scores provide measurable data about student performance, and parent surveys identify perceptions or beliefs that may be hindering the success of school efforts to meet student needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>C</td>
<td><strong>Option C is correct.</strong> Research supports that suspension is ineffective in improving student behavior. Examining programs that provide alternative solutions to suspensions allows the principal to address student misconduct while keeping students moving toward their academic and behavioral goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>A, E</td>
<td><strong>Options A and E are correct.</strong> Both actions promote teacher use of formative assessment, an essential element of the teaching process. Option A, response software, provides teachers with an immediate and effective means of monitoring student comprehension of lesson content. Option E, a student information system that tracks progress, facilitates teachers’ ability to quantify student rates of improvement and the effectiveness of instruction for individual students or groups of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>C, D</td>
<td><strong>Options C and D are correct.</strong> A debriefing, Option C, is a discussion conducted after an event for the purpose of gathering information about what was done successfully and what was not. Including teachers in debriefing sessions provides valuable information for planning future professional learning sessions. Examining student data, Option D, involves teachers in identifying the gaps in student achievement that drive the selection and planning of professional learning activities.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> After reviewing district policies and procedures on crisis and emergency management, the school leader should create a crisis team and develop a plan tailored to school needs with a clear chain of command.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> Awareness of the structural stability of the building is important to understand when determining where to shelter students because flying debris is one of the biggest hazards during a tornado.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> Educational leaders at the school level are responsible for recruiting, selecting, and assigning mentors to new teachers.</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>A</td>
<td><strong>Option A is correct.</strong> The school leader must first ensure that the group shares a similar vision. A shared vision sets the course for the partnership by defining the focus of all discussions and actions and directing the partners’ energy and efforts toward achieving the common goal of student success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>B</td>
<td><strong>Option B is correct.</strong> Social media tools present the greatest opportunity for interaction between school leaders and stakeholders because they allow for timely two-way communication between the participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>B, C</td>
<td><strong>Options B and C are correct.</strong> To be fair and ethical, the principal should apply a combination of quantitative and qualitative criteria, in this case evaluations, credentials, and colleague recommendations, to objectively select the most suitable candidate.</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> Georgia law 20-2-751.2 states that a student may be denied admission if a disciplinary order from another system is active.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>D</td>
<td><strong>Option D is correct.</strong> Using multiple types of technology to communicate with parents allows parents to access student information at their convenience using their preferred method, while also providing up-to-date information on their child’s academic progress.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Constructed-response Questions

The purpose of this section is to describe the constructed-response questions that appear on the GACE Educational Leadership assessment and to explain the criteria used to score each constructed-response question.

Unlike the selected-response questions, the constructed-response questions require you to demonstrate your knowledge in a subject area by providing in-depth written responses. The assessment includes four constructed-response questions. These questions require you to listen to an educational leadership situation and respond in writing. You are permitted to replay the audio portion, if needed. An ETS-approved headset will be provided at the test center.

Preparing for the Constructed-response Questions

When preparing for the constructed-response questions, read the sample questions and scoring guide carefully. You may wish to draft a response to each sample question by reading the question and planning, writing, and revising your essay. You should use a total of about 15 minutes for each constructed-response question. Also, because no reference materials will be available during the test, it is recommended that you refrain from using a dictionary, a thesaurus, or textbooks while writing your practice responses.

Once you have written your practice responses, reread the scoring guide, and then read the sample responses provided for each score level. Rationales that explain how the responses characterize the score point description are provided for each of the responses. After you have read through these materials, review your own responses in light of the score point descriptions. You may also wish to review your responses and the score scale with staff in your preparation program.

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Scoring Guide

Readers will assign scores based on the following scoring guide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</table>
| 3     | Demonstrates a thorough understanding and response to the issues presented in the documents and/or scenario. The response is well-developed and synthesizes important information.  
• Demonstrates detailed, specific, and convincing evidence that shows an understanding of the issues presented and provides reasonable strategies for resolution  
• Responds appropriately to all parts of the question  
• Applies appropriate knowledge of underlying processes involved when addressing various points of view or conflict in a situation  
• Prioritizes, outlines, or organizes steps or actions in a logical and insightful manner  
• When required, provides a strong explanation and rationale for the response |
| 2     | Demonstrates a basic/general understanding of the important information in the scenario. The response demonstrates an application or resolution to the issues presented in the scenario.  
• Demonstrates basic evidence of an understanding of the issues presented in the materials and reasonable, basic ways to resolve the issues  
• Responds appropriately to most parts of the question  
• Applies general knowledge of the process to address the different points of view and resolve conflict in a reasonable way  
• Prioritizes, outlines, or organizes steps or actions in a general manner  
• May contain minor errors in terminology or process that detract from the demonstration of an overall understanding of the educational leadership role  
• When required, provides an adequate explanation or rationale for the response |
Scoring Guide (continued)

<table>
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<th>Description</th>
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</table>
| 1     | Demonstrates a limited understanding of the scenario and supporting documents. The response analyzes the situation in a manner that is clearly limited or flawed.  
       • Demonstrates limited evidence of an understanding of the issues presented in the materials and presents unreasonable ways to resolve the issues  
       • Fails to respond appropriately to some parts of the question  
       • Applies weak knowledge of the process to address the conflicting points of view  
       • Prioritizes, outlines, or organizes steps or actions unclearly or with gaps in logic  
       • Applies weak knowledge to resolve conflict in a reasonable way  
       • May contain serious misconceptions in terminology or process that detract from the demonstration of an overall understanding of the role of an educational leader  
       • When required, provides a simplistic explanation or rationale for the response |
| 0     | Demonstrates little or no understanding of the scenario presented. The response fails to address essential components of the question.  
       • Demonstrates little or no evidence of an understanding of the issues presented in the question or materials and provides unreasonable ways to resolve the issues  
       • Fails to responds to any part of the question or rephrases the question  
       • Applies little or no knowledge of the process to address the conflicting points of view  
       • Fails to prioritize, outline, or organize steps or actions  
       • Applies little or no knowledge to resolve conflict or understand various points of view  
       • May contain mostly serious misconceptions in terminology or process that detract from the demonstration of an overall understanding of the role of an educational leader  
       • When required, provides no explanation or no rationale for the response |

Note: The mere presence of leadership-specific words or phrases that might be used in an adequate response does not, by itself, indicate knowledge.
Constructed-response Question 1: Promoting Continuous and Sustainable Progress toward the District’s Educational Vision

The first constructed-response question illustrates the kind of question in the test. It is not, however, representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. Sample answers with commentary follow the question.

General Directions

Plan to use approximately 15 minutes to complete this question.

Read the constructed-response question carefully before you begin to write your response to ensure that you address all components. Think about how you will organize what you plan to write.

The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of standard written English. Your written response should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. You may, however, use citations when appropriate.

Sample Question

A new principal in a suburban school district with six elementary schools has been asked to support the continuing implementation of a non-traditional math program at the school. The program was implemented district wide three years ago amid considerable concern from parents and staff. Frequent evaluation of the program has shown that students’ conceptual understanding is exceptional, but their computation performance varies from year to year and consistently falls below their conceptual understanding. While significant concerns still linger among parents and staff, parent satisfaction has increased by 20 percent in the last year and dissatisfaction has declined by one-third. The site evaluation team has established several recommendations, including improving communication with parents and providing professional development for teachers.

- Identify at least THREE steps the principal can take to gain further support for the program and decrease the dissatisfaction level.
- For EACH step, explain why it is necessary.
Sample Responses and Rationales for Question 1

Sample Response Earning a Score of 3

As the new principal, there are several steps that I would take to gain further support and decrease the level of dissatisfaction with the new math program. First, I would establish monthly math nights. These events would allow parents to attend with their children and participate together in a lesson presented by the teacher. The parents would get a better understanding of the math program and learn how they can help their children at home.

Second, I would also establish a math homework hotline. This hotline would be staffed by teachers each evening and would be a resource for both students and parents to call with questions and assistance. Besides helping with a particular assignment, this would also be a great way to lessen parents’ frustrations with the new program and, as a result, decrease their dissatisfaction.

Third, I would survey staff to see whether they need additional professional development. After the survey results are analyzed, there are many types of professional development that I would use, such as assigning mentors, attending conferences, bringing in outside resources, and visiting nearby schools that have successfully implemented the same math program.

Finally, I would require teachers to increase communication with parents. This could be done by having the teacher write a newsletter called a math gram to parents at the beginning of each new unit. The newsletter would explain the concepts of the new unit and give parents ideas about how to do fun math things at home.

Rationale for the Score of 3

This response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the complexity of the situation and the need to bring key stakeholders on board for the program to ultimately succeed. It begins by acknowledging that the problem will take multiple steps to solve and that the most pressing need is to increase overall familiarity with and support for the program. The principal seeks to develop shared commitments and responsibilities by establishing math nights and a math homework line. These two actions will bring key stakeholders (parents, teachers, and students) together in ways that will foster greater acceptance of the math program. To increase support for the program among staff, the principal recommends using a professional development survey and identifies several activities that would increase teacher knowledge of the new math program. Finally, the principal will use teachers to communicate the direction of the math program with parents by implementing a regular newsletter. Stakeholder-to-stakeholder communication will strengthen support for the math program. Holistically, the response is detailed, specific, and presents reasonable strategies for resolution. All parts of the question are addressed in a clear, organized, and convincing manner. Overall, this response demonstrates a thorough understanding of how to increase support for a program by developing a shared commitment among stakeholders.

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Sample Response Earning a Score of 2

When addressing the needs of various stakeholders for a new program, communication is the key.

Parents need to know what the program looks like and how it will affect their student’s learning success. I would meet this need by sending home regular newsletters on the program and its implementation as well as support activities for home.

Parents’ frustrations with the program will likely stem from any struggles their students have with homework or classwork. So it is important to ensure that students feel successful with the structure of the lessons and assignments. I would ask teachers to explain assignments clearly in class. To help with the clarity of math homework, I would create an after-school tutorial time twice weekly that is staffed by a teacher knowledgeable about the program. Together these actions would meet the needs of students in the program and their parents supporting them.

When addressing the needs of teachers, I would offer a series of staff development opportunities that focus on aspects of the program that teachers are lacking.

Rationale for the Score of 2

The response demonstrates general evidence that the candidate recognizes three different stakeholders (parents, students, and teachers) affected by the new math program and offers actions to address their needs in a manner that builds support for the program. The response provides three recommendations: 1) asking teachers to provide clear directions for class assignments to avoid student confusion; 2) creating an after-school tutorial time to assist students and parents and reduce parent frustration; and 3) offering a series of staff development opportunities that focus on the aspects of the program that teachers are lacking. The response does not provide strong explanations, particularly for the third step. Holistically, the response organizes the steps in a general manner, but it doesn’t provide the insight and depth of overall understanding desired to increase support for a program.
Sample Response Earning a Score of 1

Moving from a traditional computation-based math program to a nontraditional concept-based math program can be very divisive. Teachers can be resistant to change, especially experienced staff who feel they have been successful using the traditional approach. Parents want to be able to help their children with homework and class assignments and expect assignments to reflect how they were taught. As a result, the biggest challenge facing the principal is getting parents to understand and support the new math program. The principal can improve parent support and understanding by providing the following opportunities for training. A parent workshop or a math fun night could be arranged at the beginning of the school year to explain the math program and to allow parents to view the materials and learn some ways to help their children.

Rationale for the Score of 1

This response focuses on why high dissatisfaction among stakeholders can occur when new math programs are used. This is not the focus of the question. The question asks for the identification and description of at least three steps that a principal can take to decrease dissatisfaction for the new math program. By listing only one step that the principal could take (a parent workshop or math fun night and the potential activities that would go on at that event), the response demonstrates a limited understanding of the need to develop shared commitments and responsibilities among stakeholders.

Sample Response Earning a Score of 0

The principal should outline the differences between a traditional computation-based math program and a nontraditional concept-based math program. Showing parents how the two programs differ will help them see the strengths and weaknesses of each one.

Rationale for the Score of 0

The response does not appropriately address the scenario but rather focuses on the need to explain the differences in the two types of programs. It also does not address the need to build stakeholder commitment to the new math program. The response demonstrates little to no understanding of the steps needed to resolve the conflict.
Constructed-response Question 2: Monitoring Instructional Programs and Developing a Shared Culture of Success

The second constructed-response question illustrates this kind of question in the test. It is not, however, representative of the entire scope of the test in either content or difficulty. Sample answers with commentary follow the question.

General Directions

Plan to use approximately 15 minutes to complete this question.

Read the constructed-response question carefully before you begin to write your response to ensure that you address all components. Think about how you will organize what you plan to write.

The final version of your response should conform to the conventions of standard written English. Your written response should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work. You may, however, use citations when appropriate.

Sample Question

A principal observes Mr. Kang, an experienced teacher, and finds that his lessons do not reflect the district and campus focus on alignment with state standards. The teacher is resistant to the mandated curriculum standards and considers them an infringement on his control of the classroom. The principal wants to help the teacher better understand how to align his lessons to the Georgia Performance Standards.

- Describe THREE actions the principal can take to help Mr. Kang better understand how to align his lessons with the performance standards.
- For EACH action, identify the participants involved in the action and the timetable for implementation.
Sample Responses and Rationales

Sample Response Earning a Score of 3

To address the situation, I would take the following actions:

1. Meet with Mr. Kang to explain my understanding of the situation.
   a. Participants: Principal, Mr. Kang
   b. Timetable: Within 24 hours of the observation

   During the meeting, I would review the data I have to support my observation that his lessons are not aligned with the state standards. I would provide a strong rationale for the need to align his lessons as required by district/campus policy. I would discuss with him how textbooks are not state specific, and how tracking student progress helps assess grade-level mastery of state standards. We would utilize student results by competency on a recent state-mandated assessment as a starting point to see gaps that may be apparent.

2. Create an action plan for addressing the situation, because addressing the situation will take time.
   a. Participants: Principal, Mr. Kang, supervisor of instruction or grade-level chairperson
   b. Timetable: Within a week of the first meeting

   When creating the plan, I will want to discuss with Mr. Kang the different possible supports to consider for the plan. Together we will consider: staff development on understanding state standards, selecting staff development on analyzing the parts or verbs in each standard, creating standards-based lessons, providing him a mentor to provide support, setting specific goals, monitoring lesson plans for compliance and progress toward goals we establish.

3. Monitor the action plan created collaboratively
   a. Participants: Principal, Mr. Kang, curriculum coordinator/grade-level chairperson
   b. Timetable: monitor progress toward goals regularly until goals are met

   To best ensure that the teacher learns to align lessons with the state standards, the principal will need to monitor progress toward the goals and ensure that the teacher uses the standards when creating his lessons and creates a checklist to monitor gaps and overlap and ensure thorough coverage and student mastery until this practice becomes a standard part of the teacher’s planning process.

Rationale for the Score of 3

The response presents a thorough understanding of the steps needed to address the situation. The response is detailed, specific, and clearly defines the role of the principal and other support personnel when changing teacher behavior to improve classroom instruction. The response also outlines an effective plan that proposes a logical and reasonable course of action. The plan shows the principal’s depth of understanding of the various strategies needed to improve instructional change, such as clearly presenting the problem and helping the teacher understand the rationale for the needed change, including the teacher in the development of the plan to address the situation, using other support personnel, and monitoring the plan until the goals are achieved.
Sample Response Earning a Score of 2

Since state standards are a core and essential component of ensuring that schools provide the instruction students need to progress through the grades with the knowledge and skills the state has deemed important, the principal needs to work with Mr. Kang to change his practice.

Within a couple of days of observing his class and reviewing his lesson plans to find this lack of alignment, the principal needs to meet with Mr. Kang and discuss the situation.

The principal needs to call on the help of the district curriculum and instruction coordinator to provide staff development in the next couple of weeks to Mr. Kang so he can better understand why this change is important and how to actually make the change in his practice.

The principal needs to go back into Mr. Kang’s classroom in a couple months to see whether he has changed his practice.

Rationale for the Score of 2

The response presents a general understanding of the important information in the scenario. The response demonstrates awareness, rather than clear recognition, of the actions needed to help Mr. Kang understand the situation and change his practice. The three steps presented respond to most of the parts of the question, but they do so without strong rationales, logic, or insight. One action presents a response that is contrary to effective practice (waiting several months to visit Mr. Kang’s classroom again). Holistically, the answer is general with minor errors in process that detract from a demonstration of an overall understanding of the educational leader’s role.

Sample Response Earning a Score of 1

Within a couple of days of the observation of Mr. Kang, the principal is going to have to request help from the curriculum coordinator to change Mr. Kang’s practice and beliefs about what is important when lesson planning. Mr. Kang must understand the importance of developing lessons that ensure he teaches the correct content to his students without gaps. Additionally, he must monitor students’ progress toward closing these gaps. The principal should ask the curriculum coordinator to review Mr. Kang’s textbook for alignment with the state standards and teach him the process of aligning his lessons and documenting this alignment.

Rationale for the Score of 1

The response demonstrates some competence in analyzing the situation, but it is weak in organizing the three steps the principal should take. The response is incomplete because it does not clearly identify who should be involved in each step and the timeline for the steps. Overall, the organization of the response is unclear, which makes it difficult to understand the steps needed.
Sample Response Earning a Score of 0

Teachers have a responsibility to teach students the state-adopted standards. This is basic and essential to their job. The principal has to hold Mr. Kang accountable to teach what is being assessed by the state. After all, Mr. Kang is not going to be pleased with his evaluation at the end of the year if he doesn’t improve in this area.

Rationale for the Score of 0

The response demonstrates little or no understanding of the situation and fails to address the components of the question. It focuses on the teacher’s responsibility to change his practice rather than on providing specific actions the principal can take to ensure Mr. Kang adjusts his practice.
Preparation Resources

The resources listed below may help you prepare for the GACE assessment in this field. These preparation resources have been identified by content experts in the field to provide up-to-date information that relates to the field in general. You may wish to use current issues or editions of these materials to obtain information on specific topics for study and review.

Guide to Taking a GACE Computer-delivered Assessment

This guide explains how to navigate through a GACE assessment and how to answer different types of test questions. This free download is available in the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare.

Reducing Test Anxiety

This guide provides practical help for people who suffer from test anxiety. Designed specifically for GACE test takers, but useful to anyone who has to take tests, this guide reviews the major causes of test anxiety and offers practical advice for how to counter each one. Download this guide for free from the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare.

Study Tips: Preparing for a GACE Assessment

This document contains useful information on preparing for selected-response and constructed-response tests. The instruction, tips, and suggestions can help you become a better-prepared test taker. See the Test Preparation Resources section of the GACE website at www.gace.ets.org/prepare for this free download.

Journals

American Journal of Education, University of Chicago Press
American School Board Journal, National School Boards Association
ASCD Education Update, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
ASCD Express Yearbooks, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Comparative Education Review, University of Chicago Press
Educational Leadership, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Educational Researcher, American Educational Research Association
Equity and Excellence in Education, Routledge
Georgia Educational Researcher, Georgia Educational Research Association
International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership (IJEPL), ASCD
International Journal of Research and Method in Education, Routledge

Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Journal of Education, Boston University School of Education

New Superintendents E-Journal, American Association of School Administrators

Phi Delta Kappan, Phi Delta Kappa

School Administrator, American Association of School Administrators

Other Resources


Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.


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**Note:** After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.
Online Resources

Education Commission of the States — www.ecs.org

Education Law — www.hg.org/edu.html

Georgia Department of Education — www.gadoe.org

National Center on Educational Outcomes — www.cehd.umn.edu/nceo


Note: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.