

## **Guidance for Completing the GACE® Teacher Leader Assessment in a Virtual Learning Environment or Hybrid Model**

COVID-19 is currently affecting every aspect of daily life around the world and especially as students and faculty return to classrooms. As you head back to your school districts to prepare for the 2020–21 academic year, many of you will be responding to the COVID-19 situation by using virtual learning environments (VLEs), on-site classroom instruction, and/or a hybrid model that blends elements of in-person and online instruction. It is important to keep in mind that your experience in the building where you complete each task is best served by focusing on issues primarily related to instructional practice that directly affects student learning.

Working with your Educator Preparation Program (EPP) to determine how you will complete each task in your designated school is recommended. You as a candidate should consult with your EPP supervising instructor and mentor to determine whether facilitating in a VLE or hybrid model is both appropriate and viable for fulfilling the task requirements. All Teacher Leader candidates will still be responsible for providing all evidence necessary to meet the current GACE® Teacher Leadership task requirements and will be scored against those requirements.

**NOTE: The situational examples listed below are strictly to demonstrate the various possibilities that could exist in a virtual or hybrid learning model and are not prescriptive in any way.**

## **Task 1: Adult Learning and the Collaborative Culture**

Task 1 requires candidates to focus on a minimum of three colleagues and explain how they can apply strategies of adult learning across their teacher leadership activities with this group to promote collegiality and improve instruction and student learning.

For Step 1, candidates need to facilitate a group whose purpose is to identify a task or project that promotes collegiality and improves instruction and student learning. Some of the challenges that schools may be experiencing due to COVID-19 are being unable to sufficiently implement technology, adapting instruction for a VLE or a hybrid model, ensuring that students have the resources they need to learn in a VLE, and supporting the families of students who must be instructed at home. These are just a few examples that a group of colleagues may consider.

For Step 2, candidates need to demonstrate their ability to apply and tailor a variety of adult learning strategies. Candidates will document how they improved their colleagues' skills in a VLE, on-site classroom instruction, and/or a hybrid model. Candidates will explain how they used online video conferencing platforms, moderated an asynchronous online discussion, or facilitated group phone calls or virtual synchronous chats. Candidates will document how they scaffolded the learning for an individual by citing virtual conversations (e.g., chat, phone, video) or written correspondence (e.g., e-mail, posts in a discussion forum, letters, text messages, voice mail).

For Step 3, candidates need to reflect on their facilitation skills and their ability to apply adult-learning strategies. Candidates are encouraged to analyze and reflect on how helping colleagues in different learning environments and using different forms of communication affected their efforts and ability to establish trust and a sense of ownership and how the group's work affected student learning.

## **Task 2: Research for the Improvement of Practice**

Task 2 requires candidates to focus on a situation where they can initiate and facilitate a minimum of three colleagues' design and implementation of a curriculum-based research issue that affects student learning.

For Step 1, candidates need to demonstrate their knowledge of the research process and their ability to lead colleagues in its design and implementation. For example, one effect of COVID-19 is that many schools are experiencing challenges in how to instruct curricula in a VLE or hybrid model. As a result, there are several educational organizations providing support to help schools adapt to the new circumstances.

For Step 2, candidates need to demonstrate their skill in facilitating colleagues in the analysis and use of data collected during the research process to improve teaching and learning. Candidates will document how they guided their colleagues in analyzing data and applying data findings to a VLE, on-site classroom instruction, and/or a hybrid model. Candidates will explain how they used online videoconferencing platforms, moderated an asynchronous online discussion, or facilitated group phone calls or virtual synchronous chats. Candidates will explain how they facilitated the analysis of the data and the colleagues' application of the data findings by citing virtual conversations (e.g., chat, phone, video) or written correspondence (e.g., e-mail, posts in a discussion forum, letters, text messages, voice mail).

For Step 3, candidates are required to reflect on the results of the research process regarding its impact on student learning and their colleagues' professional practice. Candidates must analyze and reflect on the results of researching a specific curriculum-based issue and how the group's process affected each colleague's professional practice. Feedback and forms of communication between the candidate and the group members can be documented by citing virtual conversations (e.g., chat, phone, video) or written correspondence (e.g., e-mail, posts in a discussion forum, letters, text messages, voice mail).

### **Task 3: Professional Learning**

Task 3 requires candidates to focus on a situation in which they can inform and facilitate the design and implementation of a coherent, integrated, embedded and differential professional learning plan based on assessed student and teacher needs.

For Step 1, candidates must choose a group of colleagues and ask them to use information from a needs assessment to inform and facilitate the design of a professional learning plan. While these needs must be aligned with the school/district, the learning plan could focus on the various kinds of support needed to adapt instruction for a VLE or hybrid model. The goal and components for the group’s plan can focus on addressing the teachers’ needs and improving student learning in a VLE or hybrid model and using synchronous and asynchronous instruction and support.

For Step 2, candidates must demonstrate their ability to facilitate and give feedback to colleagues during the implementation of the professional development experience. Candidates who use an online platform and/or facilitate meetings via videoconference call should describe how they used technology to implement the learning plan. Candidates also need to explain how they fostered coherent, integrated, differentiated learning for their colleagues. For example, they may want to consider providing asynchronous materials or assignments prior to meeting with their colleagues. They may want to schedule small-group interactions instead of attempting to hold a large-group conference call. They may want to record small-group discussions or individual meetings and post what they learned for other colleagues to view.

For Step 3, candidates must analyze and reflect on the feedback they received while facilitating the design and implementation of the professional learning experience. Feedback and forms of communication between the candidate and the group members can be documented by citing virtual conversations (e.g., chat, phone, video) or written correspondence (e.g., e-mail, posts in a discussion forum, letters, text messages, voice mail). Candidates can also explain what supports they would advocate for an on-site experience, a VLE, and/or a hybrid model that blends elements of in-person and online instruction.

## Task 4: Observation and Use of Assessment Data

Task 4 requires candidates to focus on demonstrating two skills:

1. Their ability to demonstrate and apply their expertise in observational skills and provide quality feedback to advance the professional skills of a colleague, and
2. Their ability to inform and facilitate the selection or the design, use, and interpretation of multiple assessments, along with other available data, to make informed decisions.

For Step 1, candidates must demonstrate their ability to plan and facilitate a pre-observation meeting. In a VLE, candidates can record their exchange and submit a transcript of the conversation. Feedback and forms of communication between the candidate and the group members can be documented by citing virtual conversations (e.g., chat, phone, video) or written correspondence (e.g., e-mail, posts in a discussion forum, letters, text messages, voice mail).

For Step 2, candidates must demonstrate their ability to analyze their colleague's lesson and the choice for assessing what the students learned in the lesson. In a VLE, candidates can participate in a videoconference lesson. Colleagues can also record the lesson and then share the file with the candidates.

For Step 3, candidates must demonstrate their ability to analyze and reflect on their efforts to advance the instructional skills of other colleagues and their students' learning needs in the future. Feedback forms can be e-mailed to colleagues. Candidates can also direct colleagues to the GACE Teacher Leader website, where the colleagues can download the [Standardized Reflection Form](#). Colleagues who do not have access to a scanner can take a picture of the form and e-mail the image to the candidates from a phone or tablet.

## **Task 5: Collaboration with Families and the Community**

Task 5 requires candidates to focus on a situation in which they concentrate on improving colleagues' collaboration and interaction in their work with families and the community. Some of the challenges that schools may be experiencing due to COVID-19 are being unable to sufficiently implement technology, adapting instruction for a VLE or a hybrid model, ensuring that students have the resources they need to learn in a VLE, and supporting the families of students who must be instructed at home. These are just a few examples for the group to consider.

For Step 1, candidates must demonstrate their ability to do two things:

1. Facilitate the colleagues' efforts in the process of identifying a target area of need that will improve the educational system and student learning, and
2. Identify opportunities to improve their colleagues' collaboration, communication, and understanding of family and community culture.

If working in a VLE, candidates can conduct meetings virtually (e.g., chat, phone, or video) and document these conversations in their responses to the guiding prompts. The needs assessment also can be posted in a secure discussion forum where colleagues can share their questions and comments.

For Step 2, candidates must demonstrate their facilitation skills in applying adult-learning strategies and their ability to describe how the group considered the various backgrounds, ethnicities, and cultures within the school and community while developing and implementing their plan to improve the educational system. Candidates can capture evidence and document evidence from virtual conversations that addresses all the guiding prompts.

For Step 3, candidates must demonstrate their ability to analyze and reflect on their own efforts to improve the identified colleagues' ability to collaborate and communicate with the family and the community. Feedback is a key component for reflecting on this experience, and candidates are required to submit artifacts that document the following:

- Of the persons selected, one must be a colleague involved in the plan, and one must be someone in a supervisory or leadership role in the candidates' setting who may or may not have been involved in the plan.
- Feedback should include specific examples of how work with colleagues improved the quality of their collaboration and interactions with families and the community.

Feedback and forms of communication between the candidate and the group members can be documented by citing virtual conversations (e.g., chat, phone, video) or written correspondence (e.g., e-mail, posts in a discussion forum, letters, text messages, voice mail).

## Task 6: Collaborative Teams and Advocacy

Task 6 requires candidates to focus on a situation in which they are able to do two things:

1. Identify and assess opportunities for educational improvement; and
2. Advocate effectively for this improvement by developing and supporting a collaborative team and promoting collegial interactions that improve the effectiveness of practice.

For Step 1, candidates must demonstrate their ability to build and lead a collaborative team that creates an advocacy plan targeting an educational improvement. Candidates also must understand how educational policies and trends affect the team's work. Some of the challenges that schools may be experiencing due to COVID-19 are being unable to sufficiently implement technology, having enough resources to help the staff successfully adapt instruction for a VLE or a hybrid model, ensuring that students have the resources they need to learn in a VLE, and supporting the families of students who must be instructed at home. These are just a few examples for the team to consider.

For Step 2, candidates need to demonstrate their leadership ability to collaboratively implement procedures to advocate for a selected educational improvement. Meetings can be conducted virtually (e.g., chat, phone, or video), and candidates can document these conversations in their responses to the guiding prompts. The team can involve stakeholders and develop a range of activities by encouraging the team members to share their questions and comments in a secure discussion forum.

For Step 3, candidates must demonstrate their ability to evaluate the effectiveness of an advocacy plan and to evaluate the professional growth of the team. Feedback is a key component for reflecting on the outcome and future of the plan and how this experience affected collegial interactions and practice. Candidates must submit two types of artifacts that document the following:

Professional growth evaluation from a minimum of two colleagues involved in the advocacy plan (maximum of three pages)

- The evaluation can be but is not limited to the following:
  - a survey form completed by involved colleagues
  - a written response from an involved colleague
  - a chart created by a group of involved colleagues

Stakeholder feedback (maximum of two pages)

- The feedback can come from either of the following sources:

- communication showing interactions between colleagues and stakeholders
- print media showing involvement with advocacy efforts. (e.g., screen shots of articles, VLOGs, blogs, or social media posts that show the involvement)

Feedback and forms of communication between the candidate and the group members can be documented by citing virtual conversations (e.g., chat, phone, video) or written correspondence (e.g., e-mail, posts in a discussion forum, letters, text messages, voice mail).