



GACE® Teacher Leadership Assessment

Library of Examples

Task 5, Step 3: Overall Analysis and Reflection

Textbox 5.3.1: Successes and Challenges with Colleagues

Below are two examples of written responses to Textbox 5.3.1 as excerpted from the portfolios of two different candidates. The candidate responses were not corrected or changed from what was submitted. One response was scored at the Met/Exceeded Standards Level (3-4), and the other response was scored at the Did Not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level (1-2). This information is being provided for illustrative purposes only. These excerpts are not templates for candidates to use to guarantee a successful score. Rather, they are examples that candidates can use for comparison purposes to see the kinds of evidence that they may need to add to their own work.

Guiding Prompts for Textbox 5.3.1

- a. Analyze the successes and challenges you encountered with your colleagues during the planning and implementation process.
- b. How did the process improve your colleagues' understanding of the needs of the educational system and students as well as the strategies for collaboration and communication with families and the community?

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

- a. Even though the fundraiser was a success, we encountered some challenges. To start, the successes are largely due to the dedication and enthusiasm displayed by my two colleagues, Priya and Evelyn. I tried my very best to tap into their mutual desire to become more a part of the community to drive this process. I think they knew that is where I was coming from and, in turn, they pushed themselves that much harder to meet our end goal of the staff vs. student basketball fundraiser. The three of us pushed ourselves much harder once we realized that could address a community need, the needs of the drought victims while simultaneously involving Evelyn and Priya's. There were countless hours logged after the normal working day to secure donations, organize the basketball game, get other teachers involved, get the word out that we were doing something special, developing a mini-unit, reserving and setting up the gym, and getting all of the proper clearances. All of this had to be done in just over a month, and I think the collective enthusiasm drove this success. Giving the students input as to the event and the recipient of the money we raised, made it all the more special to them. As a result, they were more eager to learn about Somalia and many parents told us how their children spoke more enthusiastically than normal about what they were learning in school. In the end, I feel that collaboration and the sense of a common goal led directly to our successes. As mentioned, there were some challenges we encountered along the way. We received pushback from a number of teachers, and some parents, that the event we chose

Example: Met/Exceeded Standards Level (cont'd.)

was exclusionary in that there were some students who simply could not play basketball. When I said that donating to the cause and attending were just as important as playing, I was told that we needed to pick an event that was more accessible. Priya and Evelyn, as newcomers, found it hard to respond but saw merit to the criticisms. We said that in the future we would create a more inclusive event. Priya pointed out how we can have students make signs for advertising, or recruit students for cheering section. We also received pushback from parents, teachers, and students around the fact that the eighth grade decided on the event and the cause. Again, there was a sense of people being excluded from the process. It also would be wise to include representatives from all grades in the school when planning major events. I think we might have made better, more inclusive decisions had we more time to implement our plans.

- b. I do feel that the process we went through to plan and host this fundraiser improved my colleagues' understanding of the needs of our educational system, students, and strategies for collaboration and communication with families and the community in a number of ways. There was a collaborative nature about the planning of this fundraiser, and it showed each of us that, through inquiry, we could really tap into the pulse of our students, their families, and the community at large. The whole project started with conversations around anxieties felt by my colleagues and we found ways to address them. By asking questions, we discovered that there was an area of need around empathy among our students. From there we realized that we were not the only people in the school and larger community who felt this way. We used this sentiment to broaden our students' educational horizons through the mini-unit. Further, we rallied a number of community members around the idea of building empathy through action. Priya and Evelyn used the strategy of easing their way into the fabric of the community by first approaching more accessible members of it. However, from there, I think they learned what I learned, which is that active participation in the community leads to better communication and collaboration with community members. While I learned this through going to my students' recitals, games, tournaments, etc., Priya and Evelyn created an event that brought members of the community together. As with any relationship, when people see that you are actively trying to further or improve the relationship, they are likely to respond in kind. Instead of waiting for a relationship with the community to develop, Priya and Evelyn pursued one. Given what we've learned, we look to include more students, teachers and community members in the planning and execution.

Refer to the Task 5 Rubric and ask yourself:

In the candidate's analysis, where is there evidence of the following??

- The successes and challenges that the group encountered with colleagues during the planning and implementation process
- How the process improved colleagues' understanding of the needs of the educational system and students
- How the process improved the colleagues' understanding of the strategies for collaboration and communication with families and the community

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

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

- a. As we began the school year we came across our first hurdle with our new system of communication. Although our signup during our schools back to school night was successful, we still only had about 15% of parent participation. We needed more parent participation for the system to be effective. My team and I decided to go on an aggressive campaign for parent sign up. We could perform mass emails to the entire team and began encouraging parent signups in our weekly newsletters. Our Science teacher went so far as to offer student prizes for those signed up. Additionally, I discussed the idea of stapling our remind information to the first nine weeks report cards. This is normally a time when parents are receptive to ideas that could improve students' achievement.
- b. Another hurdle was getting the participants to truly use the system. The Social Studies teacher was a little less inclined to make daily messages. However, I repeatedly explained to her that parents would look for information from all 4 teachers. Again, I was able to bring her back into the benefits of the system. Around the time of the 7th grade reality check she was able to easily send out requests for parent volunteers. Everyone found successes with using the system and they are still using the system now. The most powerful response to the system came from my students. "Mrs. Martin I liked that you sent out the homework information through text!" "Mrs. Martin that was a bad joke you sent out!" "Mrs. Martin you sent the wrong homework assignment!" These are a few examples of student responses. On major exam days I would often text students 3 times, around the time they arrived home, around 6, and again around 8. They began to look forward to these messages and parents knew that major tests were coming up because they were receiving so many messages. The final success came during parent conferences. We could ask parents if they were signed up to receive the notifications. If they were not, we hand the pre-printed fliers with our information on them and parents could instantly sign up and know about upcoming homework and assignments. They repeatedly thanked us. Parents who were not signed up for the program were still called when students were not completing work, however, these were few.

Refer to the Task 5 Rubric and ask yourself:

In the candidate's analysis, where is there evidence of the following?

- The successes and challenges that the group encountered with colleagues during the planning and implementation process
- How the process improved colleagues' understanding of the needs of the educational system and students
- How the process improved the colleagues' understanding of the strategies for collaboration and communication with families and the community

Why is the candidate's response **partial** or **ineffective**?

Suggestions for Using These Examples

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

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