

Performance Assessment for Teacher Leaders (PATL)

Library of Examples

Task 3, Step 1: Professional Learning Plan

Textbox 3.1.1: Facilitating the Design

Below are two examples of written responses to Textbox 3.1.1 as excerpted from the portfolios of two different candidates. The candidate responses were not corrected or changed from what was submitted. One response was scored at the Met/Exceeded Standards Level (3-4), and the other response was scored at the Did Not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level (1-2). This information is being provided for illustrative purposes only. These excerpts are not templates for candidates to use to guarantee a successful score. Rather, they are examples that candidates can use for comparison purposes to see the kinds of evidence that they may need to add to their own work.

Guiding Prompts for Task 3, Textbox 3.1.1

- a. How did you use the information from the needs assessment to inform and facilitate the design of a professional learning plan within your school/district? Explain how you involved colleagues?
- b. What is the goal of the plan? How is it aligned with the school/district goals and/or improvement plan? Why is the goal significant?
- c. What are the components of the professional learning plan, and how do they connect to the teachers' needs and student learning?
- d. How is the professional learning plan embedded within the school/district culture?

Example 1: Met/Exceeded Standards Level (3-4)

- a. Based on the needs assessment, 82 students would need remediation prior to the September administration of the Georgia High School Writing Test (GHSWT) because they were not currently enrolled in an English class or receiving writing instruction. Looking at the rosters and test results for all eligible students, the principal, counselor and I drafted a list of the students needing to test. Some students had previously failed the GHSWT, while some students were not eligible to test previously due to lack of credits. After identifying the 82 students, we pulled score reports from the students tenth grade mock writing test and identified their needs based on the four domains of scoring: ideas (40%), organization (20%), style (20%), and conventions (20%). Then, based on these results, I met with the English department teachers to review past writing samples of those students and determine their areas of weakness. Based on the needs, students were divided into four

Example 1: Met/Exceeded Standard Level (cont'd.)

groups to represent each of the four domains. Students who needed support in each area were grouped together with the ideas group. It was determined that the remediation would occur during the English teacher's planning periods of Tuesdays, and that on Mondays I would provide strategies to each teacher to assist in their review with the students. Additionally, Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) teachers received instruction on the RAFT (Role-Audience-Format-Topic) strategy to use with students in class and were emailed a persuasive writing topic to use in a class discussion each week.

- b. The goal of the professional learning plan for teachers and students is to provide the necessary instruction needed for students, not currently enrolled in an English class, to pass the GHSWT. This goal is aligned to the school and district plan for 96% of first time test takers to pass the GHSWT and directly impacts the district's graduation rate goal. This goal is significant as the GHSWT was, at this time, the only state assessment requiring a passing score in order to graduate from a public high school in Georgia.
- c. The professional learning plan impacts teachers and students by providing necessary writing remediation to students in small groups. The four other English teachers and special education teacher, and I worked together to divide students by their areas of weakness among the four writing domains used in scoring. I worked directly with the special education teacher serving the English department to provide instruction to the ideas group, while the other three teachers worked with the organization, style, and conventions groups. To prepare the teachers for their remediation lesson, I researched strategies and graphic organizers that were most effective for each domain. I provided each teacher with a lesson plan, copies of resources, differentiated strategies for higher or lower ability students, and a digital presentation each week to use for review with their group. I also provided the CTAE teachers with a hard copy and a digital presentation of the RAFTT format, and weekly persuasive writing topics for discussion. I used the Georgia Department of Education GHSWT website for previously released exam topics and rubrics to use with both sets of teachers. If teachers needed more instruction, I provided additional support before and after school, and through email when requested.
- d. The school and district culture is one that promotes excellence amongst a high percentage of students who live in poverty, who have parents who earn a living as migrant workers and/or have special learning needs. Additionally, the district believes in that reading and writing should occur daily in all classes. This expectation is what led to the inclusion of the CTAE department teaching writing skills and discussing persuasive writing topics in class. Ultimately, the feedback from students, teachers, administrators and parents was positive when the test was over and the results came in. The school achieved a 98% pass rate, exceeding both the State and Regional Education Service Agencies (RESA) expectations and all previous pass rates at our school.

Refer to the Task 3 Rubric and ask yourself:

In the candidate's description of the design of the professional learning plan, where is there evidence of the following?

- The design of a professional learning plan, based on a needs assessment, that involves colleagues and school administrators in the design process
- A goal that is significant and aligned with the school/district goals and/or improvement plan
- How the components of the professional learning plan connect to teachers' needs and student learning

- How the plan is embedded within the school/district culture

Why is the candidate's response **appropriate** or **effective**?

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

The school's leadership team was carefully selected to represent all areas of our staff. It contained representatives from all grade levels, all 4 core-content areas, administrators, and a district representative whose focus is on school improvement. Leadership teams are responsible for creating a School Learning Plan, including specific academic and student well-being goals. Based on the district's newest performance target centered around writing, our leadership team wrote one of our three academic goals as follows: "All students will complete one piece of writing (formally or informally) in every course once per semester." This writing goal was created with the intent that all courses actively implement more writing strategies and demonstrate that writing is a cross-curricular skill. At that time, the leadership team placed emphasis on the act of writing and would later focus on the quality of student writing by using the Six-Traits of Writing model. In order to meet this goal, professional development needed to be implemented. The need for instructional strategies around literacy was clear. Our leadership team perceived a need for teacher instruction and through informal feedback, the team learned that the staff felt the same way. The performance target on WICR (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Reading) and a School Learning Plan academic goal of completing a piece of writing in every class overwhelmed some teachers. Those with a communication arts background and those who were already using writing strategies in the courses felt comfortable with the goal; many were prepared to share their strategies with others and help guide our school to meet the set expectations. Our leadership team created the 2010-2011 professional development plan to meet the varied of staff members and utilize those with strengths in the area of literacy instruction. For one specific professional development session, the team began by brainstorming a list of topics that would most benefit all staff members within the broad category of literacy instruction.

It became evident that one large-group professional development session on literacy would not meet the needs of our diverse staff. There would need to be multiple topics addressed within the broad scope of literacy instruction. The team decided to create 4 breakout sessions for small groups of teachers to rotate through. Groups of 12-15 teachers of various content areas would encourage discussion. In the planning process, emphasis was placed on ways for teachers to use these breakout session strategies in their classroom as soon as possible, so time to brainstorm application into one's own classrooms was built into each rotation. The topic list was eventually narrowed down to the 4 sessions that would be most applicable for all grade levels and content areas. These sessions were: differentiating reading and writing within a lesson, using poetry and quick writing across curricular areas, foldable-paper graphic organizers, and the use of levels of questions (students writing questions and responding), cues, and advanced organizers. Members of the leadership team volunteered to help facilitate these sessions. However, since the purpose of the professional development was to share strategies of literacy applicable to all contents and some staff members had expressed confidence in sharing strategies themselves, the team decided that each session should involve a leadership team member and a non-leadership team teacher. This enabled more teachers to plan and facilitate professional development, as well as have a variety of content presented to our varied staff. Topics weren't to be centered around a reading or communication arts classroom. These decisions all helped to create more "buy-in" from teachers attending the rotations and encouraged discussion for different uses of strategies in various classrooms.

Example 1: Did Not Meet/Partially Met Standards (cont'd.)

The goal of the plan was to engage teachers in meaningful, active training to improve instructional practices for students learning in multiple areas of literacy. These research-based strategies were actively used within each rotation by the teachers in attendance. Staff left each rotation with a sample lesson plan, a sample product, and brainstormed ideas of how to implement the strategy in their classroom. Part of the professional development plan was for teachers to use these learning strategies in their classroom to promote students writing in every course. The rotations would address teachers' extreme range of literacy development, so the professional development would meet the needs of all learners. This goal was significant because it addressed the district's newest literacy objective and helped our staff meet our school's academic goal of all students writing (formally or informally) in all courses once per semester. This goal is also significant because it directly impacts student learning.

Refer to the Task 3 Rubric and ask yourself:

In the candidate's description of the design of the professional learning plan, where is there evidence of the following?

- The design of a professional learning plan, based on a needs assessment, that involves colleagues and school administrators in the design process
- A goal that is significant and aligned with the school/district goals and/or improvement plan
- How the components of the professional learning plan connect to teachers' needs and student learning
- How the plan is embedded within the school/district culture

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

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.