

Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL) Library of Examples – Task 3

PASL Task 3, Step 4, Textbox 3.4.1

Below are two examples of written responses to Textbox 3.4.1 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, and the other response was scored at the Did Not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level. 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.

The work you submit as part of your response to each task must be yours and yours alone. Your written commentaries, the student work and other artifacts you submit, and your video recordings must all feature teaching that you did and work that you supervised.

Step 4: Reflecting on the Collaborative Team and the School Culture

Textbox 3.4.1: Self-Reflection and Feedback

Met/Exceeded Standards Level

a. The result of this task for our school was an extremely high-functioning collaborative team. The team collectively created the plan, implemented the plan, and then assessed the plan's effectiveness. In the Zoom video, I asked each team member how they wanted to grow professionally over the next year and each team member shared a candid response. As leaders, we are charged with continuous professional growth and development as we constantly seek ways to improve our practice. The artifacts for this task show feedback from one of our teachers who implemented the plan, and she was very impressed with the common formative assessment process to improve instruction and increase student learning. Another artifact shows an example of the effectiveness of this strategy as a student used this process to improve their understanding of fractions. Our teachers appreciated being included in the school improvement process, and they truly took collective ownership of the project to improve their instruction and to increase student learning.

b. The biggest challenge that arose was the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic forced our team to use online meeting platforms for all correspondence for this project. In order to facilitate excellent communication, we conducted several online meetings, exchanged dozens of emails, and made ourselves available to talk if an issue arose. I know that this team was highly successful, despite COVID-19, because each team member described their professional growth during this time; teachers who implemented the CFAs described their usefulness; and, we are positioned to continue to improve instruction and increase student learning next year. Each member of our collaborative team experienced tremendous professional growth as a result of this team and this experience. Based on the information from the video, teacher B grew in her confidence related to trying new instructional strategies. She has also grown as a leader in her department related to the implementation of professional learning communities and utilization of common formative assessment. Teacher C, in her self-reflection, describes the effectiveness of a book study that our collaborative team has been completing on implementing formative assessment and best practice for teaching in the block schedule. Teacher C also discusses a researcher who we reference consistently about most effective instructional practices for improving student learning. Teacher C, a doctoral candidate, he grown in her capacity to self-reflect and to embrace research-based strategies to improve her instructional practice and increase student

learning in her classroom. Teacher A will be transitioning into the role of school instructional coach next year. She will do a fantastic job in this new role. Her self-reflection was related to wanting to find ways to be highly effective in her new position including relevant professional learning. The work that this collaborative team completed (related to formative assessment), will be re-delivered by teacher A to the entire faculty next school year through professional learning. Upon reflection, we will use this colleague to help develop future school improvement initiatives. She will also be very strategic to our implementation as she will be delivering most of the professional development next year.

c. Prior to the video-recorded conversation, I sent an email to the collaborative team and asked them to self-reflect on their professional growth. I wanted reflection on their professional growth related to the collaborative team process and their professional growth related to the individual practice as educators. In the Zoom video, I specifically asked each member of the team how they wanted to grow as professionals and leaders in the coming year. Next, I listened to the response. Finally, I asked clarifying questions to gain a greater understanding of what their professional goals are in the short term and long term. Moving forward, this team will continue to work together to meet in order to achieve the mission of our school, improve instruction, and increase student learning.

d. The feedback from our team members will absolutely influence the process of building future collaborative teams. One consistent theme that I heard from each member of the collaborative team is that they had enjoyed working on this task and they enjoyed the collaborative team process. Several times in the Zoom video, each teacher stated how they wanted our students to find success, how the teacher wanted to improve their differentiated instruction, and how we have to build trust between our students and faculty. Therefore, when building future teams, I must be mindful of finding members who are open to working collaboratively and who are open to compromise. As leaders in a collaborative team, we must always be willing to put our personal feelings aside and allow the team to take ownership of the given task. Additionally, when building future teams, I will identify educators who are willing to take chances. In the Zoom video, one of my teachers clearly states that she had not been very comfortable with group activities. She happens to teach math and hasn't found these types of instructional strategies to be beneficial in her class; however, the collaborative team process has significantly changed her views. In the Zoom video, she states that she has really benefited from some new teaching strategies that she has tried as a part of our team. She continues to say that these strategies have changed her instructional practice and that she will be willing to continue using these strategies.

e. The creation of this collaborative team will serve as a vehicle for positive change in our school culture because collaborative teams promote shared leadership and ownership. This team, comprised of teacher leaders, evaluated data, found an issue, created a plan to fix the issue, implemented the plan, assessed the plan, and reflected on the plan. After all of that, we reflected on our professional growth as leaders. This process promotes shared leadership because we all created every step of the plan together. There was never a directive from myself or my principal. Rather, we brainstormed together and devised a plan that we all believe will work to improve instruction and increase student learning. This shared leadership promotes improved school culture and satisfaction amongst the faculty. Collaborative teams foster ownership of the school for the very same reason. The team decided how we wanted to improve our school; therefore, these leaders will be tasked with the responsibility to explain and promote the improvement plan with the teachers in their respective departments. When all members of a faculty understand why we are doing the things that we are doing to improve instruction and increase student learning, they are more likely to "buy-into" the plan.

Ultimately, as a result of this "buy-in", school culture will be vastly improved because the adults in the building play a pivotal role in driving the positive culture of the school.

Refer to the Task 3 Rubric for Textbox 3.4.1 and ask yourself:

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

- Examples from the plan, artifacts, and/or video that support the candidate's ability to foster a collaborative team
- Examples from the video that support an evaluation of the team members' professional growth as partners in the collaborative team
- Examples from the video taken before and during conversations that encourage discussion about the team members' self-reflection related to their involvement in a collaborative team
- Examples from the artifacts and/or the video of feedback from the team members and how the feedback will influence the candidate's work with other colleagues in the future
- Examples from work with the collaborative team to reflect on the collaborative team as a vehicle for positive change in the school culture
- Why is the candidate's response informed and effective?

Step 4: Reflecting on the Collaborative Team and the School Culture

Textbox 3.4.1: Self-Reflection and Feedback

Did not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level

a. During the very unusual and swift transition to online instruction due to COVID-19, I found myself collaborating with my colleagues to design effective instruction to engage and challenge our students. It was not difficult to create the collaborative environment because each team member brought different expertise to the table. We had previously completed a professional development seminar that I led with the instructional staff using the Compass Activity (https://www.nsrffharmony.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/CompassPoints-N_0.pdf) to gain a deeper appreciation of the diversity of the group and the value to that diversity. Ever since this activity, we have had fewer staff misunderstandings and fewer communication conflicts. Appreciating how each member contributes to seeing the full 360-degree view of an issue has helped the staff work more proactively together.

b. My biggest take away from the collaborative experience has been realizing how resilient the instructors are within adverse environments and how positively they responded to significant time constraints. I felt that all team members already possessed some base knowledge of embedding technology into their instruction, but I also felt that the weekly meetings helped all members add to their knowledge. Where one member may have been consistently using Nearpod in their classes, they now were using a variety of technology in addition to Nearpod to promote student engagement and gather a variety of formative assessment data. All instructors learned new ways to use Zoom to poll students, use the Zoom chat box feature, and were able to promote small group discussions using Zoom breakout rooms. A consistent addition to all instruction was the use of the short starter reviews which for many instructors was a completely new addition to the flow of their lessons.

c. In my focused communication with one instructor, I videotaped our initial meeting to plan action items and the calendar of activities for the seminar for student teachers. Prior to the videotaping with my colleague, I asked for her feedback about agenda items to discuss so that we both came prepared to be the most productive during the time we met. During the meeting, I made a specific goal for myself to pause and ask for

input whenever I made a suggestion and to pause and paraphrase her suggestions to ensure I was understanding her ideas (Artifact VIDEO first five minutes). The second portion of the video transitions to the action items for who will take responsibility in leading the upcoming activities. I specifically asked for clarification when I did not feel I could paraphrase her idea and to be very clear I wanted to understand her thoughts. I shared my screen and typed as we developed activities and designated who would take the lead in the creation of the activity. At the end of the video, I summarized what had been discussed (Artifact VIDEO last 10 minutes). After the meeting, I sent an electronic follow-up to further summarize the meeting and clarify responsibilities.

d. At the end of the semester, the instructional staff met to discuss the impact the changes in their instruction had on student learning. I collected video testimonials from students, mentor teachers, and university instructors and I shared the feedback at the beginning of our semester debriefing through a large Zoom meeting presentation. The first hour of the meeting was attended by not only the instructional staff, but administrators, staff, and school stakeholders. The presentation I shared was a positive first hour of the six-hour end of semester debriefing. We used the information shared to inform everyone about what we had accomplished in a short span of time to maintain a rigorous learning environment for our students during remote instruction. It further provided material for discussion during breakout room discussions about how the instructional enhancements will continue in the summer and the future regardless of whether we are in a remote learning environment or in person. The intense collaborative experience was empowering for instructors and the feedback indicated that they wished to continue to collaborate in similar ways in the future.

e. As we hire new instructors in the future, I believe activities like the Compass Activity will be critical to maintain a cohesive and supportive team of teachers who value the diversity on the staff. Providing structure further helps the instructors see the role they play in accomplishing the goals of the team. Eliciting input, paraphrasing ideas, and ensuring all participants have a voice in the creation and implementation of the plan is also essential in having an effective collaborative team. At the end of the year, I feel it is also important to have a summary meeting that shares the impact on student learning and teacher growth. This final step helps show appreciation of and validation for the work completed.

Refer to the Task 3 Rubric for Textbox 3.4.1 and ask yourself:

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

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- Examples from the video taken before and during conversations that encourage discussion about the team members' self-reflection related to their involvement in a collaborative team
- Examples from the artifacts and/or the video of feedback from the team members and how the feedback will influence the candidate's work with other colleagues in the future
- Examples from work with the collaborative team to reflect on the collaborative team as a vehicle for positive change in the school culture
- Why is the candidate's response limited and incomplete?

Suggestions for Use

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.