



Candidate Assessment Handbook

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Introduction

Overview

School leaders have the ability to create a school with meaningful achievement goals and expectations, respectful and trusting relationships among the adults and the students, and effective programs and practices—a place where all students can learn and feel safe and supported. Leaders base their work on their leadership knowledge, skill and dispositions, evidence and research, and the commitment of staff, families, and the community. To help ensure that school leaders are effective, all candidates seeking principal/assistant principal licensure in Massachusetts must meet state performance assessment requirements.

Toward that end, the Commonwealth has supported the development and implementation of the Massachusetts Performance Assessment for Leaders (PAL). The PAL assessment system is designed to produce clear evidence of a candidate's readiness for an initial school leadership position. It is aligned with other Commonwealth leadership development efforts to prepare, support, and evaluate principals and assistant principals. (A summary of the assessment development process is provided at the end of this Introduction.)

The system is also aligned with the Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval regulations (60 CMR 7.00), which were amended and approved by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education on June 26, 2012. PAL

Further, PAL is aligned with the national performance assessment requirements of the Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC), as enumerated in its national accreditation program standards (<http://www.ncate.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=zRZI73R0nOQ%3d&tabid=676>), and with the national educational leadership policy standards, the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) 2008.

More specifically, the four tasks that comprise the PAL system are aligned with the revised Professional Standards for Administrative Leadership, approved by the Board in December 2011.

The PAL Assessment Tasks

The Massachusetts Performance Assessment for Leaders (PAL) allows candidates to demonstrate their leadership knowledge and skills by setting the direction for improved student achievement, creating professional learning culture among school staff, supporting individual teacher professional development, and engaging families and community in improving student learning. The work for each task is to be undertaken in school setting with guidance and direction from supervising practitioner or school leader. Tasks can be completed as part of the principal candidates' coursework or field work/internship experiences. Accomplishing the following four specific tasks allows candidates to exhibit their leadership competency:

Task 1: Leadership through Vision for High Student Achievement.

Task 2: Instructional Leadership for a Professional Learning Culture.

Task 3: Leadership in Observing, Assessing, and Supporting Individual Teacher Effectiveness.

Task 4: Leadership for Family Engagement and Community Involvement.

These four tasks are intended to focus on a student learning priority area for improvement in the school. A Figure shows, the tasks are expected to overlap and be complementary, centered on common priority student learning area. Thus, optimally, candidate will select one priority area as the basis for completing all four tasks.

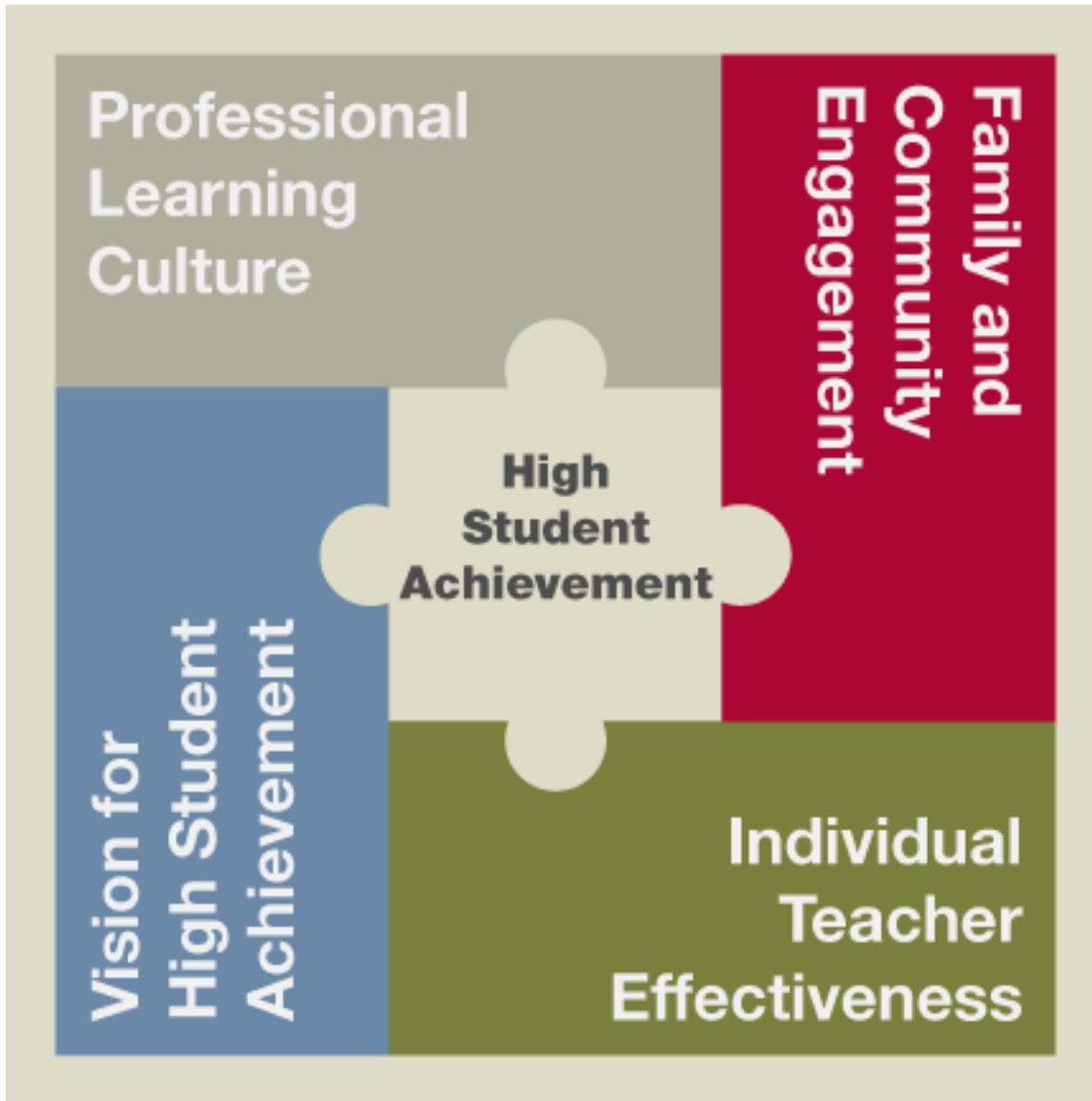


Figure 1. Relationship of the Four MA-PAL Tasks

Each task is designed to require leadership work whose goal is the creation of a school where all students, particularly members of federally-designated priority student groups¹ or other groups that are a priority locally, can improve their academic performance and reach ambitious learning targets. While each task can be completed independently, they are best undertaken as an integrated set of actions to improve student learning in a priority academic area.

¹ Students with disabilities; English language learners; African American, Hispanic, and Native American students; low-income students; and students performing below state proficiency levels.

As you select a priority area, consider the differences in student performance, based on federally-designated priority student group (students with disabilities, English language learners, African American, Hispanic, and Native American students, low-income students, and students performing below state proficiency levels) or other group that are a priority in your school.

As shown in Figure 2, we recommend that candidates begin with Task 1 to investigate a priority academic area and a target group of students that needs special support to improve achievement. Based on identification of gaps and opportunities to improve student learning within this group, candidates develop a plan for action strategies. This priority area and plan can be the basis for engaging a group of teachers to explore ways to improve student learning by working together as a professional learning group. The candidate’s work to facilitate this learning group is the basis for Task 2: Observing and providing feedback to an individual teacher as he or she tries out new content or instructional practices to promote student achievement is the basis of candidates’ activities for Task 3. Finally, for Task 4, candidates form a work group with family and/or community members to plan how to improve family and community engagement in relation to the priority academic area or to address student health, emotional, or social needs that impact student learning. This is to be connected to the priority academic area but may be broader than the teachers’ focal area for professional learning and work.

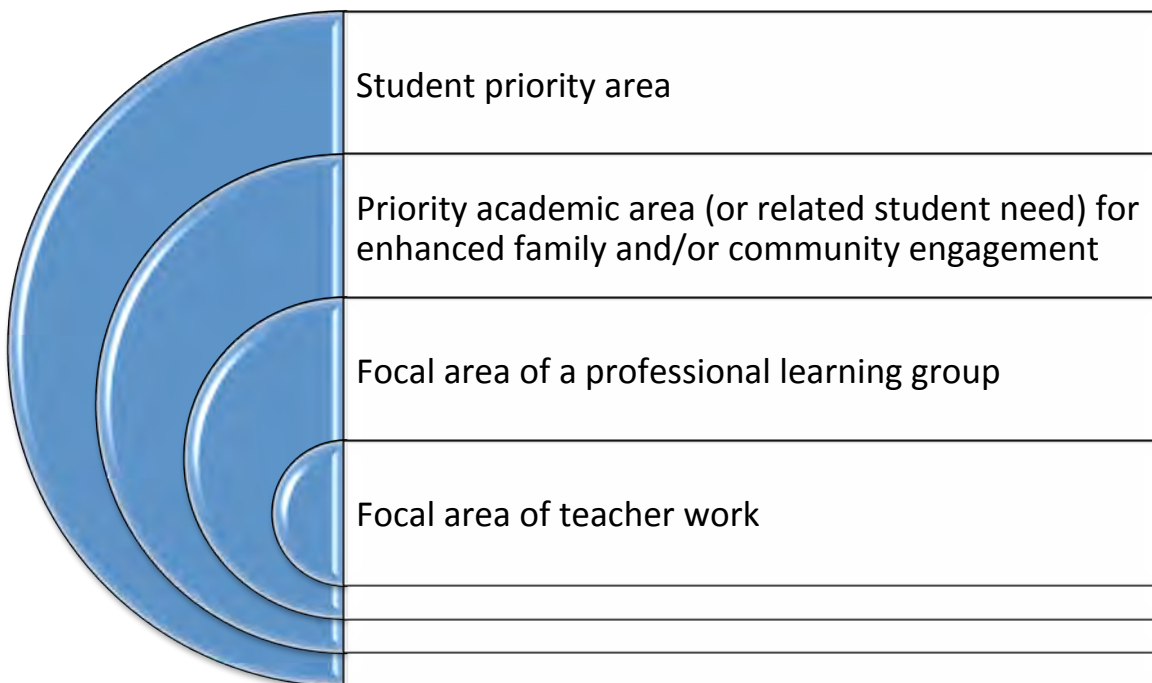


Figure 2. Nested Relationship of Priority Areas

Each task is divided into four components of leadership action that reflect the cycle of leadership inquiry and learning, as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. The Components of Leadership Action

Artifacts, Documents, and Commentary

For each task, candidates submit artifacts, documents (by category), and a commentary as evidence of planning, implementing, and analyzing leadership practices and engagement of others in improving student learning. Considered part of the assessment for school leader licensure, all the work product submissions will be assessed by trained scorers who have educational leadership expertise.

Artifacts

The artifacts submitted represent authentic work completed by candidates and members of the working groups formed for three of the tasks. They include plans, reports, video recordings of interactions with teachers, and memos related to candidates' activities while undertaking each task to demonstrate their efforts, as well as samples of group work and other related evidence. The following four chapters on

the tasks indicate specifically what kinds of materials the candidate should provide for each task.

Documents b Category

Documents that must be submitted are supporting materials used by the candidate and working groups to complete each task, such as student performance data, school and district demographic information, observation guides and rubrics, meeting agendas and minutes, school vision statements, strategic plans and improvement plans, curriculum guides, and program information. These documents provide supporting evidence pertaining to the task work and are necessary to inform scoring. Again, the chapters on the tasks list what documents are required for each task and how these are to be grouped by category to facilitate submission.

Commentary

Lastly, candidates submit clearly presented and well-focused written commentary that explains how they accomplished the task. In it, they indicate what artifacts they submitted and why they are important. They also describe the choices and decisions they made, and the analyses and reasoning underlying them, in order to successfully complete the task. Further, candidates reflect on their leadership skill and analyze what they learned from undertaking the tasks and how they might improve their work on a similar task in the future.

Guidelines for Each Task

The following five questions indicate the core requirements for successfully completing the four tasks.

- 1) What do you need to do to complete the task?
- 2) What do you need to think about in order to complete the task?
- 3) What materials do you need to prepare?
- 4) What evidence will you need to submit when you complete a task?
- 5) How will the evidence of your leadership practice be assessed?

The answers to each question are described fully in the sections on the tasks that follow this Introduction.

Evaluation Criteria

The evidence submitted will be judged according to five primary components of leadership practice for each candidate:

- 1) Setting direction for high student achievement.
- 2) Creating professional learning culture among staff.
- 3) Supporting individual teacher development.
- 4) Engaging families and community in improving student learning.
- 5) Analyzing leadership practices.

Candidates provide evidence for the first four components of leadership practice when they complete the corresponding tasks and through the artifacts they produce and other relevant documents. Candidates provide evidence for analyzing leadership practices, the last component, in their commentaries.

Candidates' submitted work products are maintained confidentially and scored online by trained scorers, using the rubrics that are presented at the end of each task section in this *Handbook*. Candidates' scores are submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) for principal licensure decisions.

Organization of this *Handbook*

The tasks, instructions for their completion, work product submissions, and the rubric that will be used to score candidate performance on the task are presented in the four sections, one per task, that follow the next section on how to prepare a submission. The *Handbook* concludes with a section on logistical information for video recording access and use and a section on next steps in the candidates' submissions review process and results.

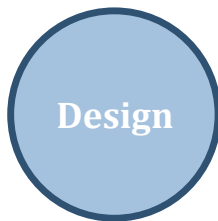
The Development Process of the Massachusetts Performance Assessment for Leaders

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) worked in partnership with Bank Street College of Education to design and develop PAL. To support this effort, lead project staff from Bank Street College and key consultants formed the PAL development leadership team. The team in turn brought together a group of national leadership and performance assessment experts, representatives from

number of Massachusetts preparation programs and pathways and K-12 education leaders to work with (ESE) to develop PAL. Team members serve on one of four committees: design, content validity, bias review, and technical advisory.

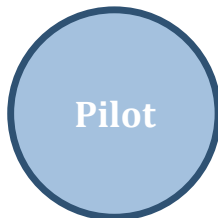
The development of the PAL system consists of the following four-stage process:

Stage 1



The first stage comprised the drafting of possible performance assessment tasks, work products, and rubrics that reflect the authentic work of school leaders. It involved the review of state and national leadership preparation standards and current research on principal effectiveness and school improvement. The design committee then generated possible tasks and work products and reviewed the nature, quality, and feasibility of each. The content validity committee and bias review committee reviewed the draft tasks and work products to ensure their relevance and fairness. The design committee then created draft rubrics to score candidate work products and created a web-based system for candidates to upload their completed work products and for scorers to evaluate them.

Stage 2



The PAL pilot study was conducted from September 1, 2013 through May 15, 2014. School leadership candidates were asked to complete just one task to test its feasibility and usefulness, and to generate results to help set scoring benchmarks and exemplars. Candidates were recruited through their preparation programs or through website enrollment. The one task they were assigned to complete was scored by scorers who were recruited and trained throughout the pilot study period. Candidates, scorers, preparation program faculty, and the three review committees provided feedback on the tasks, work products, and rubrics and assessment infrastructure. After the pilot was completed, the performance tasks, work products, and rubrics for scoring, as well as the assessment system and materials, were revised.

Stage 3



For the field trial, which began on September 1, 2014 and will be completed by the end of October 2014 with score setting, candidates are asked to complete all four tasks. The field trial enabled the development team to evaluate and refine the task and assessment system for statewide implementation. Candidates using all three routes to licensure were to participate: preparation program, panel review, and administrative apprenticeship/internship. The development team continued to recruit and train scorers for the completed tasks. The development team analyzed the task outcomes, solicited feedback from candidates, pathways, and scorers; and completed a content analysis of the task products for quality, relevance, and rigor, as well as made an assessment of feasibility, ease of use, and reliability. The team will also evaluate the results to identify possible bias among candidates, programs, and preparation routes. The three review committees as well as a Technical Advisory Committee will be convened to review the results and provide final recommendations for PAL implementation starting November, 2015.

Stage 4



For the implementation phase, called Program Year 2015-16 and begun on September 8, 2015, candidates continue to be asked to complete all four tasks. In this phase, candidates will now be required to pay a fee (\$500) to complete the assessment and must produce submissions that meet score requirements set by the Technical Advisory Committee at the end of the field trial. For an additional fee, candidates will have the opportunity to revise and resubmit any submissions that do not meet minimum passing score requirements.

Candidates using all three routes to licensure will be required to participate in the PAL Assessment System: preparation program, panel review, and administrative apprenticeship/internship.

The development team will continue to recruit and train scorers for the completed tasks. To continue refining PAL as an assessment system, the development team will analyze the task outcomes, solicit feedback from candidates, preparation pathways, and scorers; and will complete content analysis of the task products for quality, relevance, and rigor, as well as make an assessment of feasibility, ease of use, and reliability. The team will also evaluate the results to identify possible bias among candidates, programs, and pathways.

Preparing a Submission

There are several common steps and considerations to preparing submissions for all four tasks. Candidates are strongly encouraged to review and adhere to the task submission instructions, some of which are clarified here

Clarifying the Candidate's Role in the Performance Assessment

The purpose of these tasks is to enable candidates to demonstrate their leadership skills and practices as evidence of their readiness for an initial school leader position. In preparing their submission, candidates must clearly explain their role and responsibilities. In the absence of any explanation, scorers will assume that the work was completed by others and score the work as only beginning to be done.

Blinding a Submission

Candidates are required to submit all artifacts, commentary, and relevant documents without information that would identify them, their school or district, individual students, staff, and others who were part of task completion. Candidates are strongly urged to use either generic labels (e.g., principal, school) or recognizable pseudonyms (e.g., Teacher A). Work that is not blinded will be returned to the candidate to remove the identifying information and the submission will go to the end of the scoring queue when returned.

To confirm that the work has been appropriately blinded, candidates are asked to submit a completed confidentiality assurance form with each task submission in which they have confirmed that they have removed all personally identifying information and the names of their school, district and staff and others. A copy of this Confidentiality Form is included at the end of this *Handbook*.

Submission Length

At least three written artifacts and one commentary are to be submitted for each task. The instructions in each task section provide required word and page lengths. The aim of the word count guidelines reflects the fact that school leaders must be adept at preparing focused arguments, plans, and reports; their communications must be concise but well detailed. Scorers are not required to read artifacts and commentary or view

video submissions that exceed the requirements. Submissions that fall far short of the required word length (or minute length) are likely to lack sufficient information and detail which would adversely affect how the scorers evaluate the work products and thus the candidate's potential score.

Use of Feedback Evidence

Throughout the four tasks, candidates are asked to collect, analyze, and use feedback on plans, strategies, and collaborative work. In written submissions and supporting documents, candidates must demonstrate that feedback was collected; report on the number and roles of people interviewed, surveyed, or consulted; present analyses; and draw conclusions about the feedback. It is insufficient to present only the candidate's conclusions about feedback received.

Preparation of Artifacts

Candidates are to cite supporting documents, submitted for each task, in the relevant artifacts for the same task. Candidates are to check their work to ensure that they do not upload duplicate artifacts and documents.

Candidates are to proofread all artifacts before uploading to:

- Remove all identifying names of schools and individuals.
- Correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Candidates are strongly encouraged to crosswalk each artifact against the instructions and rubrics before submission to ensure relevance and completeness.

Preparation of Documents by Category

Submitted documents should be specific to the task and discussed and referenced in the relevant artifact(s). Complete school report card, school improvement plan, or school handbooks should not be uploaded as a document. Only relevant tables of information or plan and handbook excerpts should be uploaded as category documents and discussed and referenced in the appropriate artifacts.

Documents must be legible. Handwritten agendas and minutes, for example, must be readable.

Preparation of the Commentary

The commentary is intended for candidates to analyze their leadership skills in performing each task, with the focus on skills developed and used, and how and in what ways they might be improved. The commentary is not to be used to evaluate the work completed by others or the impact of the work on others. The focus is on the candidate and provides evidence that will be scored as part of the last rubric in each task.

Rubrics

The rubrics will be used to score candidates' work. In preparing materials for submission, candidates are strongly encouraged to review the rubric expectations, and on each rubric indicator and dimensions.

Glossary

Some terms used in the task guidelines and instructions may have multiple meanings. For purposes of task preparation, we present the following definitions to clarify their use.

Artifact. An **Artifact** is an authentic piece of material produced by candidates alone or while collaborating with a work group or others for three of the four tasks. Artifacts include plans, reports, video recordings of interactions with other professionals, and memos related to the candidates' activities to demonstrate work completed, based on the instructions for each task.

Document. A **Document** is supporting data or printed matter that candidates and their work groups created or used to complete each task. It can consist of student performance data, school and district demographic information, observation guides and rubrics, meeting agendas and minutes, school vision statements, strategic plans and improvement plans, curriculum guides, feedback forms, and program information. The document may already exist or it may be material created as part of performing the task. Each document serves as background or evidence related to one of the artifacts produced by the candidates.

Data source. A data source is the entity supplying the data, such as the Massachusetts Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) website for performance and demographic data, or individuals, such as teachers, parents, students and school leaders who provide information through surveys, interviews and other types of data collection.

Data element. A data element is the specific component that is collected, reviewed and examined, such as measures of student performance in MCAS scores, attitudes and experiences as reported in survey responses, attributes of classroom practices identified from observations, participation rates or attributes of student work. One or more data elements can be gathered from one data source.

Data analysis. Data analysis is a systematic process used to organize and evaluate data using analytic and logical reasoning for the purpose of uncovering useful information and gaining insights to solve a problem.

Federally-designated priority student group members. Federally-designated priority student group members are students with disabilities; English language learners; African American, Hispanic, and Native American students; low-income students; and students performing below state proficiency levels.

Feedback. Feedback consists of information elicited from stakeholders and other relevant individuals about specific attributes of a plan, strategy or experience, such as its quality, feasibility and relevance to achieving the desired outcome. Feedback is not just an endorsement of or agreement with a plan, strategy, or experience. The purpose of collecting feedback is to make use of it to inform revisions to the plan, strategy or experience to improve the likelihood that it will accomplish the desired outcome.

Priority academic areas. Priority academic areas are subject area disciplines for which the federal and/or state require districts to test students and then report the results to the public annually or on a regularly scheduled basis. The disciplines include English language arts, mathematics, science, history and social science or and possibly other subjects that the district has targeted for improvement.

School Context. School context comprises the characteristics of the school and district. Context includes such attributes as school or district demographics, culture, values, vision, and policies regarding student education.

School Culture. School culture has three components: (1) the professional learning culture (teacher-teacher relationships), (2) the student culture (teacher-student and student-student relationships), and (3) the culture of family and community engagement (school staff, family, and community relationships). A positive school culture that promotes learning requires that all three components be actively promoted and maintained.

Stakeholder. Stakeholder is a person, group or organization that has a vested interest in or concern about the school or that can be affected by the school's actions or policies.

Strategy. A strategy is a new approach or modification of an existing approach aimed at achieving a desired outcome. Strategies are designed to address one or more specific measurable objectives that quantify the desired level of change. Strategies are comprised of a series of **steps** that specify the actions needed to be taken for complete and effective implementation.

Team-based learning. Team-based learning is the use of groups of educators to enhance member engagement and learning. It combines individual and collective responsibility for learning and incorporates developmental learning strategies, such as peer-mediated learning, coaching, and review of lessons learned. Assuming that team members have different skills and experiences to share and learn, it promotes member learning while working together on a task or project.

Theory of Action. A theory of action is an explanatory map describing how identified strategies (practices, programs, and/or policies) will improve specific student learning outcomes and why they are likely to do so.

Task 1

Leadership through a Vision for High Student Achievement

What Do School Leaders Need to Think about When Realizing a Vision for Student Achievement?

School leaders have the ability to create a school where all students, particularly federally-designated priority student group members,² can improve their academic performance and reach ambitious learning targets. Central to the realization of a universally-shared vision of high student achievement is the establishment of meaningful achievement goals and expectations; respectful and trusting relationships among and between the adults and the students; and effective programs and practices based both on evidence and research and on the commitment of staff, families, and the community. Leaders can act to ensure that this vision is reflected in both the school's instructional program (curriculum, instruction, and assessment) and its culture.

School culture has three components: (1) the professional learning culture (teacher-teacher relationships), (2) the student culture (teacher-student and student-student relationships), and (3) the culture of family and community engagement (school staff, family, and community relationships). For positive school culture that promotes learning, all three components must be actively promoted and maintained, and are to be addressed in this Task.

Task 1 assesses the capacity of school leadership candidates to develop a vision of high quality student achievement and a plan for improving student learning in a priority academic area. To begin this task, you must analyze relevant student performance and school context and culture data to identify (1) a priority academic area where student learning needs to improve and (2) an underperforming student group to target. Then you will solicit additional information from students, teachers, staff, families, and other stakeholders in order to acquire explicit information and knowledge about factors

² Students with disabilities; English language learners; African American, Hispanic, and Native American students; low-income students; and students performing below state proficiency levels.

contributing to the student group's low performance in the priority academic area. Consider the following:

- The ways that performance in a school experiences may differ among students within and across grade levels and, in particular, for federally-designated priority student group(s).
- The school's context and culture.
- Existing school practices and programs for improving the performance of all students and evidence of fidelity in their implementation and effectiveness.

You should also review Massachusetts Professional Standards and Indicators for Administrative Leadership (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html?section=10>) and the Massachusetts Conditions for School Effectiveness (see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/general/>).

What Do You Need to Do to Complete this Task?

- Access, collect, and analyze three to five years of quantitative student performance data, qualitative data on school culture and student learning, and overall school context information.
- Identify a priority academic area where improved student performance is needed, with attention to federally-designated priority student groups, based on the information collected and analyzed.
- Collect additional quantitative and qualitative information about the student group's performance in the priority academic area that clarifies factors contributing to the performance problem, including findings from observations and staff and student interviews, focus groups, and/or surveys pertaining to student and teacher cultures and to the school culture overall. Select a target student group.
- Document existing school programs, services, and practices that are relevant to the target student group's performance in the priority area and identify the gaps in effectiveness and opportunities for improvement.
- Solicit input from school leaders, teachers, and other relevant stakeholders throughout the inquiry and planning process about the student learning needs, priorities, gaps, and opportunities for improvement. Also solicit proposed improvement strategies.

- Develop a vision, set of action strategies, and a proposed plan to improve the target student group's learning in the priority academic area, based on the data and input you collected and analyzed.
- Solicit feedback about the need for addressing the target student group's performance in the proposed priority area and the relevance and feasibility of the proposed plan from school leaders and key stakeholder groups in the school and its community.
- Evaluate the feedback and make appropriate revisions to the plan to reflect the feedback.
- Examine the leadership skills and practices that you used or developed in completing this task.

What Questions Do You Need to Consider to Complete this Task?

- What school and district data exist about student performance, school context, and school culture?
- What student subgroup should be targeted for improved instruction and support?
- Which individuals at the school and district level are best informed to advise you on the selection of a priority academic area?
- What clarifying information, relevant to the selection and improvement of the priority academic area, can be obtained from observations and interviews with stakeholders?
- What sources of evidence make an argument compelling when advocating for educational changes on behalf of targeted student group(s)?

Each school has a unique set of attributes that defines its context, including grade span, size, staffing composition, resources, attrition rates, and the demographic characteristics of students and staff. Consider the elements of the school context that are relevant to the priority academic area and targeted student group you select and the school vision and plan you develop.

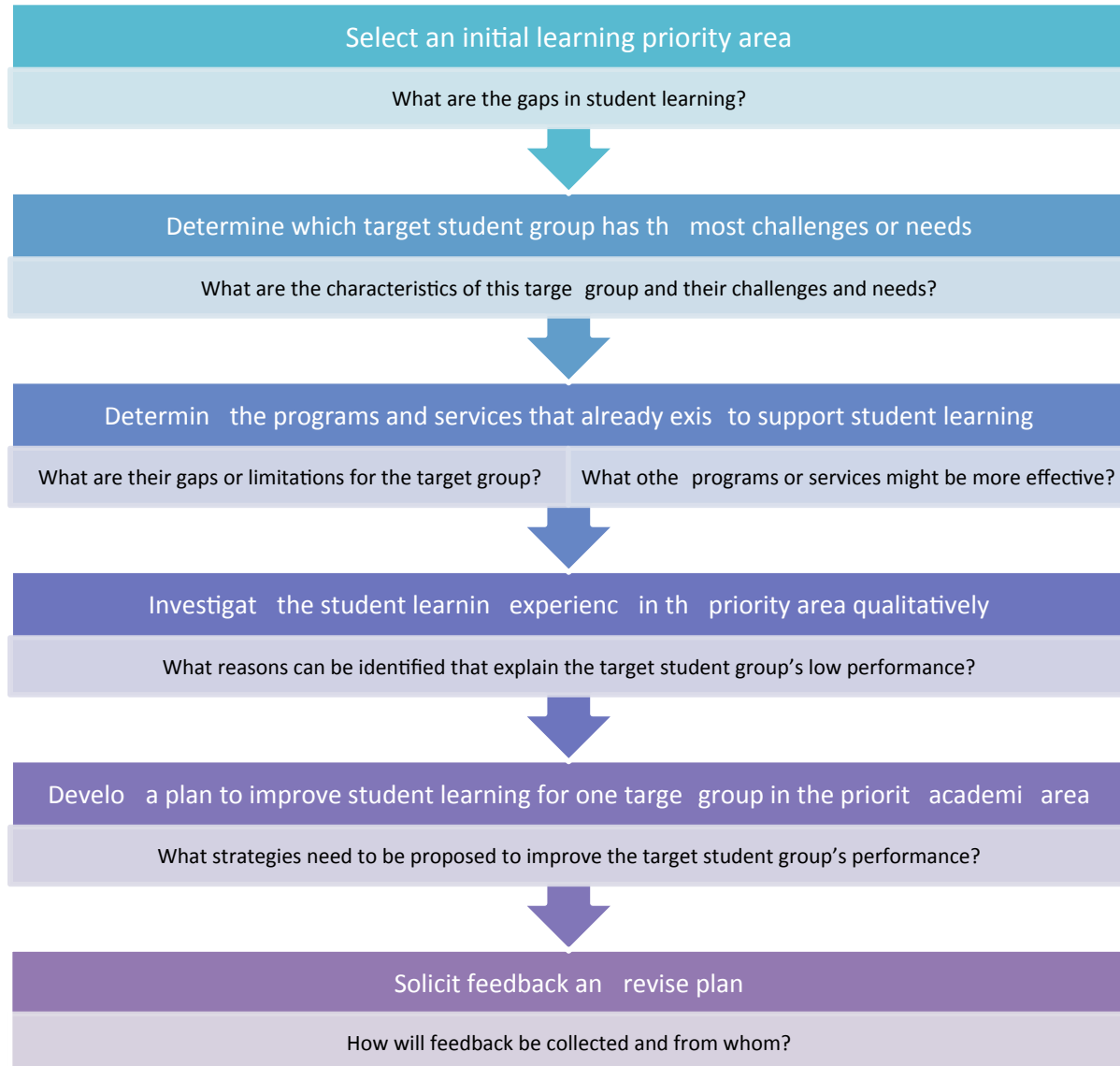
The Components of the Task

Component 1: Investigate

Task begins with an investigation of a priority academic area for a group of students where the school's approach—through programs, services, and policies—needs to be improved. First, **review available data** to identify a priority academic area and student group and subgroup. A group may be all the students in one or more grades or content areas; a subgroup would be a subset of this group based on demographic attributes or educational needs. For purposes of this task, you are encouraged to focus on different educational needs within a group of students, particularly giving attention to those who are part of federally designated priority student categories. The priority subgroup selected for this task is termed the target student group.

Next, **collect** additional data and information that justify why the academic area and student group(s) are being selected as priorities, and explain potential causes or contributing factors to low performance. Your investigation should progress through the inquiry and planning process illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Task 1 Inquiry and planning process



Consider using the inquiry tools and data use strategies outlined in the Massachusetts District Data Team Toolkit (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/ddtt/toolkit.pdf>) They provide suggestions on types of data and their use, engaging with others in data inquiry and planning, and using data for vision building and planning.

The following question should guide you in beginning your data collection and analysis:

What area of student learning should be a priority for improvement, and for which target group of students?

Begin by reviewing three to five years of available or newly collected student (whole group and subgroup) performance data (from the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) or other standardized measures, grade promotion rates, end-of-course assessments, course completion rates, dropout rates, interim or periodic assessments, A scores, graduation rates, and college-going rates). In the review process, identify trends and patterns where student progress may be insufficient or in need of targeted improvement. Disaggregate the data to investigate patterns of differences between student subgroups in these trends, with special attention to the federally-designated priority student groups identified above. Which subgroup of students needs targeted improvement support or attention and why?

As you **collect and analyze additional data** related to the student learning problem, consider the questions below and types of evidence suggested to guide you through identifying and deepening your understanding about performance in a priority academic area for a target student group.

- 1) *What is the relationship between the target student group's performance for the priority academic area and other student, teacher, and school data, particularly for the target student group?*

To investigate this question, review available student engagement data (e.g., attendance and program participation rates), teacher quality and engagement data (e.g., years of teaching, qualification(s), degrees earned, attendance record, length of time at the school), and school culture data (culture and climate surveys, such as the Massachusetts TELL survey, <http://tellmass.org/>). How does this information help to explain student performance for the priority academic area, particularly for the target student group? How does their relationship refine your understanding of the learning problem for the target student group?

- 2) *What is the learning experience for the target student group in the priority academic area?*

Through observations in and around the school; classroom visits; informal interviews; and focus groups or surveys with students, teachers, and other stakeholders, you can

elicit rich, qualitative information about the target student group's learning experiences. What can you learn about their experiences that deepens your understanding of their challenges and lack of progress in the priority area?

- 3) *How do the priority academic area and target student group align with school and district priorities?*

Review the district and school's vision and mission statements, and existing improvement plans. As you refine your understanding of the priority academic area, consider how it relates to the school and district priorities for school improvement.

At the end of this phase, you should have a clearly defined, well justified, priority academic area and target student group around which to develop an improvement plan.

Access Massachusetts school district data collection and analysis tools to assist in examining available qualitative and quantitative information (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/dart/lg.html>).

As part of the Massachusetts Educator Evaluation system, the Commonwealth requires the use of student and staff feedback surveys, which may provide information which is relevant for this task (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr35.html?section=07>).

Component 2: Prepare

To prepare a plan for improving the target student group's performance in the priority area, **evaluate gaps and opportunities for improvement** by auditing existing school programs, processes and practices, seeking input from others, and investigating possible improvement strategies. Consider using strategies and resources of the Massachusetts guide for focused planning for school improvement, which include tools for school or district self-assessment of strengths and areas for improvement, steps to explore root causes of learning issues, and means of establishing goals, objectives and strategic plans (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/dsac/FocusedPlanning.pdf>).

Below are the recommended preparation steps that you should take for this task:

- 1) Audit school programs, processes and practices that relates to the priority academic area (e.g., scheduling, teaching practices, academic intervention, team time, family participation, professional development opportunities) to identify gaps in effectiveness and opportunities for improvement.
- 2) Solicit further input using surveys, interviews, focus groups, and observations from school leaders, teachers, students, family members and community members to

determine the strengths, interests, and needs of all students, and in particular for the targeted student group relative to improving performance for the priority academic area.

- 3) Identify what is working well and where improvement is most needed in the components of the school program, such as in one or more of the following:
 - a) **Curriculum** (see the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks or the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section38Q1~2>)).
 - b) **Instruction** (see indicators of proficient and exemplary teaching in the Massachusetts Model System Educator Evaluation: Teacher Rubric (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eeval/resources/rubrics/>)).
 - c) **Assessments** (formative and/or summative).
 - d) **School culture** (e.g., student engagement, attendance, grade completion, course taking, and extracurricular activities; discipline practices, use of time, such as scheduling, grouping, tiered instruction, other school culture and student engagement improvement efforts, and family engagement).
- 4) Explore possible improvement strategies through research and best practices sources that may be relevant for the priority academic area and target student group.

Consider the nature of the school improvement planning process that currently exists in the school and what formal reporting is required. Determine how this task might build on, contribute to, or be part of this planning.

Consider school level and community conditions that contribute to the school's existing school improvement or strategic plan.

Component 3: Act

Using the results from Component 2, **design and present** a plan containing an integrated set of strategies that can be implemented to improve student learning in the priority academic area for the target student group. The plan should be built around a set of goals and measurable objectives and a coherent theory of action that explains how implementing the set of strategies will lead to improved student performance. It should reflect the school context and culture as well as the scope and nature of the improvement desired.

theory of action is an explanatory map of how specific strategies (practices, programs, and/or policies) will improve specific outcomes (in this case, student learning) and why.

The plan should contain the core elements of the focused plan described in the Massachusetts focused planning guide, which provides tools and resources for a planning process and examples of district plans (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/sss/dsac/FocusedPlanning.pdf>).

Further, it should include avenues to improve student engagement and learning by strengthening one or more of the following:

- Curriculum.
- Instruction.
- Assessment.
- School culture.

As you develop your plan, **solicit input and guidance** from the leadership team and other key stakeholders (such as students, teachers, other staff, family members and community representatives, as appropriate), and document the information they provide, their ideas, and recommendations. Their input should be formative to the planning process and address the scope and nature of the priority academic area and the needs of the target group, the strengths and challenges of existing programs and practices, and the potential for new strategies to improve performance.

The plan itself should be written as a compelling, evidence-based argument about how the proposed strategies will improve learning for the targeted students in the priority area. It should include sufficient detail about the following in order to garner support from the leadership team and key stakeholders:

- list of goals and measurable objectives, including the scope and nature of the improvement desired.
- use of action strategies to improve learning in the priority area that change, build on or add to already existing programs and strategies.
- theory of action about how these strategies will lead to improved student performance and foster student engagement and learning.
- Identification of existing resources and new resources required.
- Changes in school organization or structure (e.g., common planning time, block scheduling, afterschool and tutorial programs) for the proposed actions.

- Roles and lines of responsibility for implementing the strategies.
- Steps to engage staff and garner support for the proposed strategies.
- timeline for the development and implementation of the new strategies.
- Proposed evaluation and feedback approaches to determine whether these strategies yield the intended outcomes.

The school principal or superintendent, and the school leadership team, should critically review the draft plan and provide feedback to you. Unlike the input previously obtained from them and other stakeholders, this feedback is more summative, and should address the plan's relevance, quality, comprehensiveness, and feasibility. Evaluate this feedback and use it to guide your revisions to improve the plan. The final version should be revised based upon the feedback with an explanation of how the feedback was used.

Each school has one or more leaders (principal, assistant principal, and teacher leaders) and may also have a leadership team that represents the school's primary stakeholders. Any plan developed for improvement in the school would need their input and support or approval. These leaders in turn can provide critical feedback to strengthen proposal for improvement strategies.

Component 4: Assess

As a final step, evaluate the leadership skills and practices you used in this task and describe the nature of your support from school and district leadership in undertaking this task and how the support contributed to the process and successful completion of the task.

The leadership evaluation should specifically address **your leadership skills and practices** related to the following aspect of this task:

- Your collection and analysis of data to determine the priority academic area and target student group.
- Your engagement of others in the planning process, including soliciting input during planning.
- Your development of a proposed vision, theory of action and set of strategies.
- Your planning and construction of a compelling argument to gain support for the proposed action.
- Your presentation of the plan and solicitation of feedback.

- Your use of the feedback to make revisions to improve the plan.

Artifacts, Documents and Commentary

This section provides instructions for school leadership candidate submissions for the review process:

- Three artifacts.
- Documents that support your artifacts.
- Your commentary in narrative form, in response to a series of prompts, about the development of your leadership skills while completing this task.

Remember: Your artifacts must not include personally identifying information about you, the school staff, or the students. Your submissions must comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99), a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Be sure to protect the anonymity of the participants in your study by using pseudonyms for the district, the school, students, staff and other individuals.

Artifacts

The artifacts that you submit for scoring, each in a separate file, are described below.

Artifact #1: Priority Area and Its Context

In a **memo** of up to three single-spaced pages (up to 1,500 words) to the principal or superintendent, provide the following information:

- description of a priority academic area where improved student performance is needed, with attention to one or more federally-designated priority student groups (students with disabilities, English language learners, African American, Hispanic, and Native American students, low-income students, and high-risk students performing below state proficiency levels) or other underperforming groups that have been identified as a priority in your school.
- compelling rationale, based on the data you collected and analyzed for selecting the priority academic area and the target student group. The rationale for selecting the priority area and target student group should draw on quantitative and

qualitative data you present in this artifact and be aligned with school and district priorities.

- An analysis of multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative data (with appropriate references for each source) on student performance, student, teacher and school culture, and student engagement evidence that includes:
 - An analysis of three to five years of quantitative academic performance data.
 - An analysis of relevant student engagement data (e.g., attendance and program participation rates) and teacher quality and engagement data (e.g., years of teaching, years in the school, annual turnover, attendance, qualification, degrees earned).
 - An analysis of measures of student and school culture (student, teacher and other stakeholder culture and climate surveys, focus groups, and interviews).
 - An analysis of additional, relevant quantitative or qualitative data that clarifies possible reasons for the learning problems within the priority academic area for the selected target student group.
- description of the school and community context and culture factors that influence student performance and engagement, which must be taken into consideration in developing your plan.
- summary of gaps, utilization problems, and human and other resource limitations of existing school programs, services, and practices in relation to the priority area.
- How input was solicited throughout the planning process:
 - Identification (by role) of which individuals from the leadership team, staff, and other stakeholders provided input during the planning process.
 - description of how they provided input and the nature of the input in terms of identifying the priority area and target student group, assessing gaps and opportunities for improvement, and recommending improvement strategies.

Note: Synthesize the data used to define your priority academic area and the targeted student group. Do not present tables of information without interpreting the data and drawing conclusions about your selection of the priority area and target student group for this task. Use tables of data judiciously to guide and inform readers. Tables may be displayed in the Category 3 or Category 4 documents (as defined below) and referenced in this Artifact.

Artifact #2: The Plan for Action Strategies

In a **memo** of up to four single-spaced pages (up to 2,000 words) to the superintendent or principal, present a plan (the components of which are detailed below) that outlines a set of goals, objectives and action strategies to improve learning in the priority academic area for the targeted student group and a theory of action describing how these strategies will lead to improved student performance. Provide the following rationales for the plan:

- vision statement describing how the plan will support and sustain improvement in the priority academic area for the student group(s).
- compelling, evidence-based justification explaining how the plan responds to the school context and student culture, and addresses the needs of the student group(s) to improve student learning.

In addition, include the following components of the plan:

- Goals and measurable objectives specifying the magnitude and nature of the improvement in student performance that is desired.
- Use of action strategies to improve learning in the priority area, with details about how the strategies will be implemented.
- Theory of action of how these strategies collectively will lead to improved student performance and foster student engagement.
- Existing resources used and new resources required.
- Changes in the school organization or structure (common planning time, block scheduling, afterschool programs, etc.) needed to support the proposed strategies.
- Roles and lines of responsibility for implementing the proposed strategies.
- Steps to engage staff and garner support for the proposed strategies.
- Timeline specifying when the components of the proposed strategies will take place.
- Proposed evaluation and feedback processes that will be used to determine whether these strategies yield the intended outcomes.

Artifact #3: Findings, Feedback, and Recommendations

In a **report** of up to three single-spaced pages (up to 1,500 words), describe how you collected feedback from the school leaders, the leadership team, and other stakeholders

about the proposed plan, and synthesized and interpreted the feedback, providing the following information:

- Identification (by role) of which individuals from the leadership team, staff, and other stakeholders provided feedback on the proposed plan.
- synthesis and interpretation of their feedback that includes the following information:
 - How comprehensive the plan is in its focus, theory of action, and proposed strategies for improving the performance of the target student group(s) in the priority area.
 - How relevant the proposed strategies are for the following:
 - The school's priorities.
 - The priority academic area.
 - The identified needs of the specific student group.
 - The school culture, climate, and context.
 - Alignment to the district plan.
 - The quality and comprehensiveness of the proposed strategies.
 - The feasibility of the proposed plan for implementation in the school.
 - Suggested revisions based on the feedback.
- An explanation of how the final plan was revised to incorporate their feedback.

NOTE: All supporting documents, reports, and tables of data that are referenced in these artifacts must be included in the appropriate Category of documents below and be appropriately cited.

Documents by Category

First, you must complete the confidentiality and anonymity form for each task and upload it as you submit your work products for Task 1. This form is available online in ShowEvidence, as part of Task 1.

In addition to the artifact files described above, you must submit the following documents used in the task, using a separate file for each of these five file categories:

- Category #1: Student demographic and other relevant school context and student performance information.
- Category #2: The school's existing vision, mission, and school improvement plan.
- Category #3: School and district priorities.
- Category #4: Data collection forms (e.g., surveys, interview guides) used to gather additional information.
- Category #5: Forms (surveys or interview questions) used to collect feedback from the leadership team and other stakeholders about relevance, quality, comprehensiveness and feasibility of the proposed plan and a summary of the feedback data collected.

Commentary

In a **personal analysis** of up to two single-spaced pages (up to 1,000 words):

- Evaluate the leadership skills you used in developing the plan for Task 1 and in soliciting and using feedback to revise it to improve the performance of the targeted student group(s) in the priority academic area. Identify what worked well, what could be improved in your leadership skills and practices, and what adjustments you made to your leadership practices as you worked to complete this task. Specifically address your leadership skills and practices in response to the following questions about aspects of this task.
 - How did you determine what data to collect and analyze to identify the priority academic area and targeted student group(s)?
 - How did you engage others in the process to identify the priority area and student group, develop a theory of action, determine action strategies, and create the plan?
 - How did you construct a compelling argument to gain support for the proposed plan and solicit feedback to improve the plan?
 - How you gained input and guidance throughout the process and feedback on the draft plan?
- In addition, identify your successes and challenges in completing Task 1. Explain what you would have done differently, based on your experiences. Identify the implications for your future school leadership work, including proposing what skills and practices you need to improve to develop further as a school leader.

Task 1: Leadership through a Vision for High Student Achievement Rubrics

How Will the Evidence of Your Leadership Practice Be Assessed?

Scorers will be reviewing your submission to determine if you have complied with the following requirements before beginning scoring:

- A. Has the submission been appropriately blinded with all candidate, school, staff, and student identifying information removed? If not the submission will be returned for the information to be removed.
 - B. Is the submission addressing an *academic* priority area for the school? If not, the submission will be returned for revision.
 - C. Is the submission complete in that it contains all supporting documents in each category? If not, the submission will be returned for revision.
- A you prepare your artifacts and commentary, use the following rubrics to guide your thinking, planning, action, analysis, and presentation.

Rubric 1.a: Investigate and Prepare a Vision

MA Standard 1. Instructional Leadership: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating shared vision that makes effective teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

How does the candidate gather and analyze data to identify priority academic area and targeted student group?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Data collection	<p>Collects data on just one data element.</p> <p>Limits data collection to only one or two years.</p> <p>Does not collect information for one or more student subgroups or designate a target student group.</p>	<p>Collects data on two or more elements.</p> <p>Makes a weak connection between the selection of the priority academic area and the data collected.</p> <p>Collects data for at least one quantitative and at least one qualitative element.</p> <p>Collects two or more years of data for at least one element.</p> <p>Collects data for at least one student</p>	<p>Collects data on three or more elements.</p> <p>Makes a clear connection between the selection of the priority academic area and the data collected.</p> <p>Collects data for at least two quantitative or at least two qualitative elements.</p> <p>Collects three or more years of data for at least one data element.</p> <p>Collects data for two</p>	<p>Collects data on three or more elements.</p> <p>Generates a hypothesis about the underperformance of the student subgroups in a priority area to guide data collection.</p> <p>Collects data for at least two quantitative AND at least two qualitative elements.</p> <p>Collects three or more years of data for at least one data element.</p> <p>Collects data for two</p>	<p>Components 1, 2 Artifact 1</p>

		<p>subgroup and designate as a target student group.</p> <p>Collects little or no data that clarify the target student group’s learning problems in the priority academic area.</p>	<p>or more student subgroups and designates a target student group.</p> <p>Collects some relevant data from teachers and/or students about performance and/or student culture that help to clarify some reasons for the target student group’s learning problems.</p>	<p>or more student subgroups and designates at least one target student group.</p> <p>Collects relevant data from stakeholders (students, teachers, etc.) that clarify the reasons for target student group’s learning problems.</p>	
<p>Data analysis and priority definition</p>	<p>Provides little or no analysis except to state the priority area or student group.</p> <p>Presents some data, but does not identify a priority academic area or target student group</p>	<p>Presents some analysis of the data collected, with a weak connection to the identified priority academic area and target student group</p>	<p>Presents a comprehensive analysis of data collected with a clear connection to identify the priority academic area and target student group</p> <p>Connects the data analysis and identification of the priority area and target student group to school and district goals.</p>	<p>Analyzes, integrates, and interprets relevant data elements across multiple years to identify the priority academic area and target student group</p> <p>Generates a defensible hypothesis about how to improve student performance in a priority area, based on the data collected and analyzed.</p> <p>Makes a clear connection to existing</p>	<p>Components 1, 2</p> <p>Artifact 1</p> <p>Documents</p> <p>Commentary</p>

				school and district goals.	
Evaluation of existing policies, practices and programs	Does not consider existing policies, practices and programs in describing the priority area and student needs.	Identifies some existing policies, practices and programs, with limited connection to the priority academic area and student needs.	Evaluates relevant existing policies, practices and programs and identifies their strengths and challenges in relation to the priority area and student needs.	Evaluates relevant existing policies, practices and programs and generates a hypothesis about how changes in them could lead to improved student performance in the priority area.	

Rubric 1.b: Design an Integrated Plan for Strategies to Develop and Implement Improvement in the Priority Academic Area

MA Standard 1. Instructional Leadership: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes effective teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

MA Standard 2. Management and Operations: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.

How does the candidate design a vision and plan to improve student learning?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Vision and plan focus	<p>Presents no vision.</p> <p>Proposes one general goal with no outcome-based objectives.</p> <p>Generally describes an area of focus.</p> <p>Does not reflect the school context or school culture in the plan.</p>	<p>Presents a weakly articulated vision.</p> <p>Identifies at least one goal with student performance objectives.</p> <p>Creates a plan focus that generally reflects the analyzed data, school context, and school culture.</p>	<p>Presents a vision, well-defined goal(s), and specific student performance objectives.</p> <p>Makes clear connections between the data analysis and the vision, goals objectives, and a plan focus that reflects school context and culture.</p>	<p>Presents a coherent compelling vision, with well-defined measurement-based goals and objectives.</p> <p>Draws on the findings from the data analysis and explains how school context and culture are related to the vision, goals, and priorities.</p> <p>Presents clearly articulated theory of</p>	<p>Component 3 Artifact 2 Commentary</p>

				<p>action that relates the vision, goals and objectives and plan focus.</p> <p>Takes into account the gaps and opportunities in existing school policies and practices in stating the vision, goals, objectives and plan focus.</p>	
Solicitation of input from teachers and other stakeholders	Solicits no input from key stakeholders at any time during the planning process.	Solicits some input from some stakeholders that minimally helps to inform the selection of strategies to improve student performance	Solicits input and guidance from relevant stakeholders that directly informs the selection of strategies to improve student performance.	Solicits strategic input and guidance from relevant stakeholders that informs the selection of plan strategies and their implementation details.	
Plan details	<p>Identifies one or two strategies without sufficient details to implement.</p> <p>Makes no connection between the strategies and the desired student performance.</p>	<p>Describes one or two strategies, along with responsibilities and resources, and some implementation details.</p> <p>Makes limited connections between the plan strategies and how they will improve</p>	<p>Describes two or more relevant strategies, along with specific details about the responsibilities and resources required to implement them.</p> <p>Explains how the strategies relate to accomplish specific</p>	<p>Describes two or more strategies with extensive details about the responsibilities and resources required to implement them.</p> <p>Makes clear and coherent connections between the analysis of the data, school</p>	<p>Component 3 Artifact 2 Commentary</p>

		<p>o the quality of learning that is already taking place.</p> <p>Makes little connection to the school context and culture.</p>	<p>proposed student outcomes.</p> <p>Aligns the plan to school context and culture.</p>	<p>culture, and how the plan’s strategies relate to improve student performance.</p> <p>Aligns the plan to school context and student culture and provides clear evidence of feasibility.</p>	
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Rubric 1.c: Assess and Analyze Feedback from Participants

MA Standard 1. Instructional Leadership: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating shared vision that makes effective teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

MA Standard 4: Professional Culture: Promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

How does the candidate use feedback in analyzing and planning for the priority academic area?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Plan feedback	<p>Provides no evidence of collecting feedback o the plan.</p> <p>Provides no evidence of plan revision.</p>	<p>Attempts to collect some school leaders’ feedback, but provides minimal documentation in discussing the feedback.</p> <p>Collects feedback that is minimally related to the plan’s quality or relevance for improving student learning in the priority area.</p> <p>Shows little or no</p>	<p>Collects, analyzes, and interprets specific feedback from school leaders on the quality and relevance of the plan for improving student performance in the priority area.</p> <p>Solicits some input or feedback from other stakeholders.</p> <p>Shows how leaders’ feedback was used to shape the final plan.</p>	<p>Collects, analyzes, and interprets detailed feedback from school leaders and other stakeholders on the quality and relevance of the plan for improving student performance in the priority area.</p> <p>Provides detailed evidence on how feedback was used to make specific revisions to the plan.</p>	<p>Component 4</p> <p>Artifact 3</p> <p>Commentary</p>

		evidence of soliciting feedback to improve the plan that could lead to revisions.			
Assessment of leadership skills and practices	Discusses leadership in general, if at all, and with little attention to this task.	<p>Conducts a general analysis of some leadership skills and practices used in completing this task, without drawing on specific experiences.</p> <p>Recaps the steps taken in completing the task with little evaluation of his or her leadership skills.</p>	<p>Evaluates relevant leadership skills and practices needed to complete to this task, by drawing on specific experiences.</p> <p>Identifies what worked well and what he or she could have done differently.</p> <p>Identifies changes that could be made to improve his or her leadership skills in the future.</p>	<p>Evaluates relevant leadership skills and practices used in completing this task, based on experiences, and describes how he or she adjusted leadership practices throughout the task.</p> <p>Solicited feedback on his or her leadership skills from stakeholders involved in this task.</p> <p>Identifies what worked well and what he or she could have done differently and proposes specific steps to improve his or her practice.</p>	Commentary

Task 2

Instructional Leadership for a Professional Learning Culture

What Do School Leaders Need to Think about When Creating a Professional Learning Culture through Professional Learning Groups?

Task 2 requires school leadership candidates to demonstrate how to foster school improvement by developing and supporting groups of teachers as professional learning groups. The candidate works with one small group of teachers as an ongoing learning group or community of practice, by engaging in structured learning activities to improve the practice of its members with the goal of improving student performance in a student priority academic area. The group, facilitated by the candidate, defines a focus area for study and selects a new curriculum, instructional approach, assessment procedure, or student engagement strategy to try out individually and then share the results collectively to improve each other's practice.

Task 2 assesses your capacity to create and facilitate a professional learning culture among a small group of teachers over time. Your aim as facilitator is to promote professional group learning norms and practices; teacher learning; and effective curriculum, instruction, and/or assessments. Using structured group building³ and group process activities, you will prepare, facilitate, support, and assess the group's learning and individual teacher learning.

Your work on this task should directly relate to the Massachusetts Professional Standards and Indicators for Administrative Leadership (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html?section=10>). You can draw on Massachusetts' recommended guidelines for school and district team data use and inquiry (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/ddtt/toolkit.pdf>).

³ Also known as *team building*.

Schools have three interrelated cultures: professional culture, student culture, and the culture of family engagement and community involvement. This task focuses on developing learning orientation within the school's professional culture to improve student learning.

Consider the school's professional culture with respect to groups and group processes. Schools use different approaches to structure and support teachers' work in groups. Some approaches are based on divisions within the school, with groups formed within departments or within grade levels, while other approaches are ad hoc or informal. Some staff are trained in group norms and practices and are supported as a collective learning community, while others do not receive training at all on how to be part of a professional learning community or community of practice.

The nature of the school's professional learning culture with respect to the use of groups to increase each teacher's learning will be a function of how new or existing groups of teachers (and other staff) work on improving their instructional practice in the priority area.

What Do You Need to Do to Complete this Task?

- Select student priority academic area for improvement and begin to organize a group of interested teachers for collective learning.
- Document relevant school context information, including the school and district goals and vision, and the policies and structures (such as meeting time, space and resources) that support professional learning.
- Describe any existing types of teacher or staff groups, their membership, and how they are used in the school. Consider the nature of the current school culture for teacher groups, and for group-based professional learning, and how it would shape your group work.
- Identify and invite teachers to be members of a professional learning group related to the student priority academic area and provide a rationale for their inclusion. If assigned a group, explain how the group is to be engaged specifically around the priority academic area and focus for instructional improvement.
- Work with this group to identify an area of focus within the priority academic area for group learning and improving practice, and to develop a plan for how to work together over time.

- Facilitate group learning activities over time.
- Collect evidence of the group members' roles in selecting the student learning focus within the priority academic area and of their learning activities; and information about curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices or engagement strategies. Based on the collection of evidence develop a plan to pilot a new or improved practice.
- Support individual teachers as they try out new practices or take steps to improve existing instructional practices and share their experiences with the group.
- Collect evidence on new or improved practices that group members implement (individually or collectively) and analyze their initial impact on student performance (e.g., student behavior, student work samples and student feedback).
- Analyze the professional learning that group members engage in and collect feedback on their perceived effectiveness, individual and group learning, and improvement of practice; and their evaluation of your facilitation and support.

What Do You Need to Consider to Complete this Task?

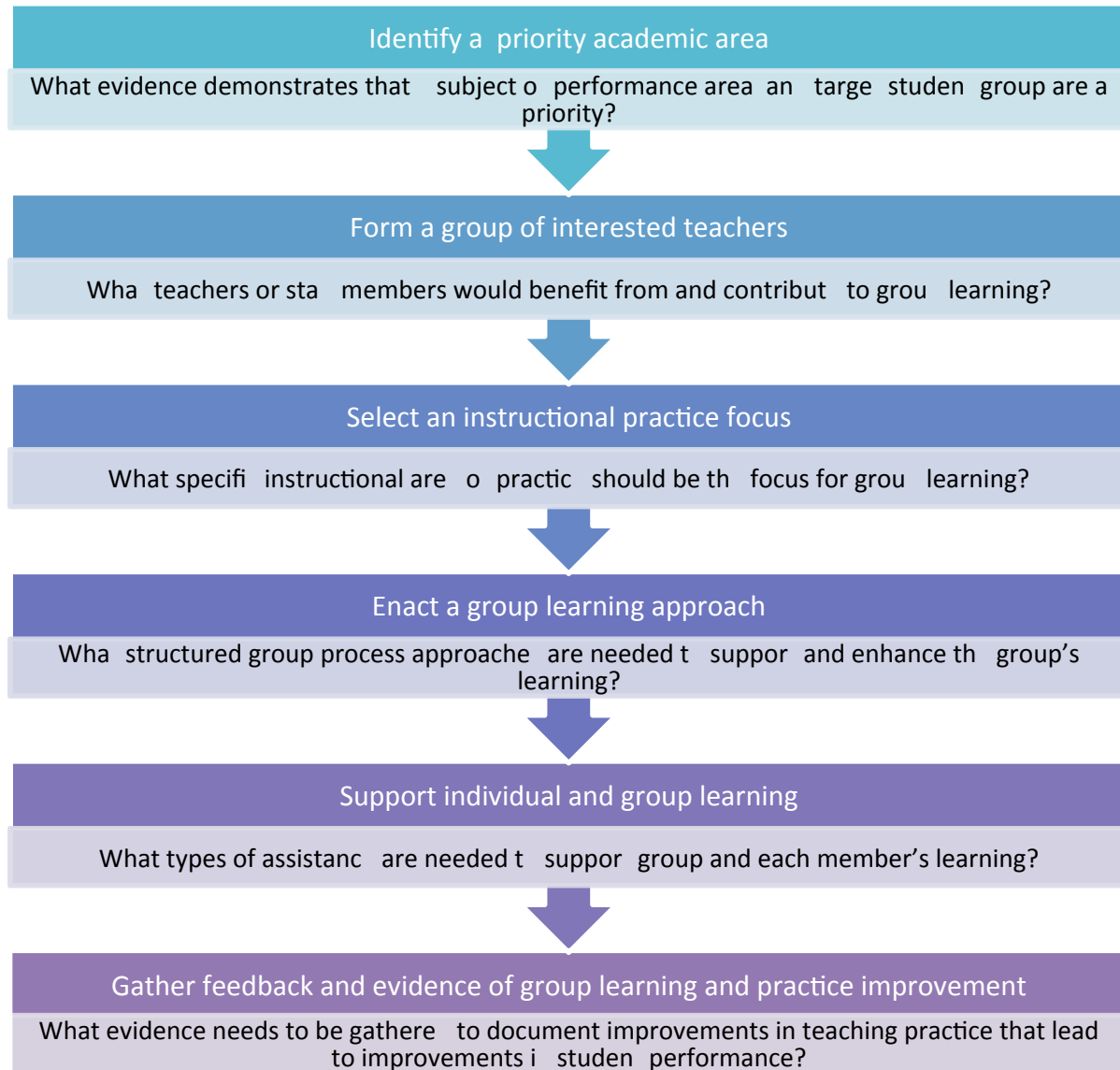
- What is a priority academic area where professional learning is needed to improve the instructional practice skills of a group of teachers or other staff for better student learning?
- What is the current school culture for teacher groups and for group-based professional learning?
- In what way will you identify the teachers (or other staff) to participate in this task as a group? Can you accomplish this task with an existing group or a subset of an existing group that may be able to sustain the work after completing it? How will you engage them in this work?
- Within the priority area (such as the area identified in Task 1), what do you envision as the focus of the group's professional learning and how does it relate to school and district priorities?
- What research-based group learning activities should you use to foster group learning? How will you support the group's learning?
- What instructional practices can the group pilot or improve, as they engage in the task? How does the group learn about these practices and prepare to try them? How will these changes in instructional practice improve learning for all students?

- What evidence of implementation and the initial impact on student performance is needed to assess the benefits of this professional learning experience for the group of teachers (and other staff)?

The Components of the Task

The four component steps of this task require working with a group of teachers and other staff to address a student priority academic area, through a group professional learning cycle as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Task 2 group professional learning cycle



Component 1: Investigate

Select a student priority academic area for this task by identifying a student performance problem or need. This area, which should relate to school and district priorities, planning, and goals and take account of existing student group performance differences, can be the same priority area selected for Task 1.

Next, identify the nature of existing teacher groups (grade level, department, content area, special interest, or other) in the school community.

With input from one or more school and teacher leaders, select a group of two to five teachers (teaching a common grade or content area) with which to improve instructional practice for better student learning in the priority academic area. This group can be the whole or part of an existing group or newly formed. Determine the members' strengths, interests, and needs related to the student priority academic area. Assess their related prior knowledge and skills, their norms and expectations for group learning, and relevant school and student cultural influences.

Arrange a meeting time (during or outside the school day) and schedule a series of meetings to foster the professional learning of the group over time.

Finally, as part of getting started, determine together which group learning approach to use (such as a professional learning community, community of practice, collaborative action research, or other action-oriented learning approach). Develop a plan for how the group will work together, share responsibilities, manage agendas and minutes, and use protocols to facilitate inquiry and learning.

student priority academic area should be based on student performance indicators for one or more student groups. A priority student group can be defined as one or more of the federally-designated priority student groups (students with disabilities, English language learners, African American, Hispanic, and Native American students, low-income students, and students performing below state proficiency levels) or other groups that are a priority in your school.

Teachers can improve student learning by focusing on and strengthening one or more of the following instructional practices: their instructional content knowledge, their pedagogical practices, their understanding of student development and learning, and the integration of the relationship among these critical instructional components into their practice.

Consider school level conditions that hinder or foster opportunities for teachers to work together on curriculum, instruction, and assessment; ways to establish a common planning time for this task; and how frequently the group can meet.

Component 2: Prepare

Through a series of structured group meetings, help the members narrow their focus to a specific student performance priority. This process includes setting regular meeting times, having agendas and keeping minutes, assigning roles and responsibilities in the group learning process, and using protocols and tools to facilitate inquiry and learning.

Next, help the group identify a meaningful professional learning goal. The goal should be designed around improving course content, instruction, or classroom practice and should lead to improved student learning. Further, it should include objectives for group learning and for steps that each teacher take to improve his or her practice to improve student learning. The goal should include objectives for collaboratively sharing instructional practices and learning from each other, through monitoring and collecting feedback on the effect of trying new or improved instructional practices, particularly to support students with different instructional or learning needs.

As an extension of these objectives, identify the key ideas that the group members are developing and instructional improvement strategies they are trying, relating them to the school context and desired outcomes.

Finally, determine what resources and supports the group members need to foster learning during meetings, try out new instructional practices in each of their classrooms, and monitor their improvements and document their benefits for student learning.

Consider the group members' individual and collective strengths, interests, and needs in relation to the priority area, drawing on relevant professional learning and adult development theory and research.

Consider a professional learning goal that enables group members to give constructive feedback to each other, take the initiative in trying out new instructional practices, for the priority area.

Component 3: Act

In the group meetings, facilitate the group members as they work to improve their instructional practice (and thus student learning) in their classrooms. It is expected that such group learning would require at least three meetings over time.

Use a group learning process consisting of preparing, acting, and assessing. Direct the group's learning toward implementing a new instructional practice or improving on an existing practice to increase student learning in the focus area, such as the following:

- new or revised curricular unit (such as a unit related to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks [<http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html>]).
- new or improved instructional practice (such as performance-based learning or literacy instruction embedded within a subject-matter curriculum).
- new or improved assessment practice (such as formative and interim assessments aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks or a performance assessment).
- New or improved strategies to improve student engagement through more effective differentiated instruction and support for positive student behavior that lead to improve student learning.

Your role as facilitator and support provider, which is critical to the group learning process, includes the following:

- Convening regular meetings for teachers to prepare, implement, and assess their work.
- Maintaining agendas and minutes.
- Coaching the group process, using learning protocols and tools, and reinforcing appropriate norms for group learning.
- Facilitating group learning through the full inquiry cycle (plan, act, monitor and assess, draw conclusions and implications)

- Facilitating problem solving.
- Documenting implementation experiences and learning and work of the group.
- Assisting in implementing and assessing new instructional strategies.
- Providing support to individual teachers as they try out or work to improve their instructional practices.
- Maintaining the group's focus and energy.
- Assessing progress, change, and impact, including evaluating the members' capacity to learn as a group.

Consider which aspects of changing practice are, or may be, the most difficult for teachers to accomplish; and determine how to engage the group as a whole and individual members, particularly the teachers who support struggling, disengaged, or gifted and talented students.

Component 4: Assess

Assess whether and how the instructional practices of the participating teachers improve through the group learning process and their individual learning efforts. Describe your own and the members' roles in the group learning and improvement process.

Document the implementation of new or changed practices. Through a feedback form or group discussion, ask the members to comment on and evaluate the group learning process, the quality of the professional guidance and support they received from each other and from you, and what they believe changed in their knowledge and skills as a result of the learning activities and tryout work. The focus should be on what the teachers learned about their own instructional practice, the changes they adopted or used, and what they learned from these.

Where possible, solicit teacher feedback on how changes in their practices impacted the focus area for student learning and their evidence of the impact, benefits and challenges.

Consider how the group's professional learning activities enhance each member's professional growth and development related to improving instructional practices for better student performance. How can the members sustain their work individually or within the group and use their learning process as a foundation to build group and school capacity?

Analyze what you learned from the group building and group learning experiences and solicit feedback from the teachers about your facilitation skills. Draw on theory, research, and best practices on leadership development, professional group building, and group learning; and the role of interpersonal skills in group facilitation.

Finally, identify problems and successes in facilitating group building and learning, including how you enabled teachers to take greater responsibility in initiating change. Draw implications from this work for improving your own group building and group learning facilitation skill for the future.

Artifacts, Documents and Commentary

This section provides instructions for school leadership candidate submissions for the review process:

- Your three artifacts.
- Documents that support your artifacts.
- Your commentary in narrative form in response to a series of prompts about the development of your leadership skills while completing this task.

Artifacts

The artifacts that you submit for scoring, each in a separate file, are described below.

Artifact #1: Description of the Priority Area and the Group

In a **memo** of up to two single-spaced pages (up to 1,000 words) to the principal or superintendent, explain the academic priority focus area and the group of teachers that will address it. Include the following specifically:

- description of student priority academic area for group learning and the focus within this area that the teacher group selected for it learning together. Explain how the group decided on its area of focus or shared work and how you facilitated the group's decision to narrow its focus within the priority area for student learning. Explain your use of data and how you considered competing priorities and demands. As part of this task, include the following information:

- An analysis and interpretation of student demographic, academic performance, and other relevant data on the importance of this student priority area, with reference sources provided as appropriate.
- An explanation of the focus of the improvement work for the group of teachers (i.e., curriculum, instruction, assessment) and a means of addressing a specific academic priority area.
- A brief explanation of the relationship between the focus and the school or district priorities and practices.
- An explanation of how school context and student, teacher, and school culture influence the focus within the priority academic area and are being addressed through the professional learning process.

Note: Synthesize the data used to define your priority academic area for improving student performance and the focus your group selected. Do not present tables of information without interpretation and conclusions about the focus used for this task. Use tables of data judiciously to guide and inform readers.

- description of the group selected for this task that includes a list of the members (by role, not name), and the reasons for the inclusion of each.
- Placement of this proposed group within the school context by including the following information:
 - An analysis of the role that group learning currently plays in the school's teacher and student culture, and an active part of school improvement efforts.
 - Identification of the types of groups that already exist in the school.
 - Information on recent formal training on professional learning communities, group building, or group process; and the nature of this training.
 - An explanation of how you obtained group members' commitment to participate, including their reasons for doing so.
 - description of your role in facilitating the group formation and focus selection.

Artifact #2: Description of the Group Learning Experiences and Results

In a **report** (of no more than five single-spaced pages, or 2,500 words) to the principal or superintendent, provide a summary of what the group did over the course of its meetings. Specifically, include the following information:

- An explanation of how you engaged teachers in a group learning process in order to enable them to improve their own practice in a manner that will positively influence student learning in the identified priority academic area. Include the following elements:
 - justification of how the selected adult learning approach(es) supported group learning.
 - An explanation of how the approach will facilitate changes in practices for the focus area and lead to improve student learning in the priority academic area.
 - An explanation of how the group learning approach is situated within the school's professional learning culture, history, and context.
- a description of the group learning norms that were created and sustained to support how the members worked together.
- a brief explanation of the nature of the group's learning and how the learning was structured that includes the following:
 - The schedule of meetings and a summary of the steps the group took to conduct its work.
 - a description of how protocols or other resources were used to support group learning during and between meetings.
 - a description of your role in facilitating the group process and how group members shared responsibilities.
- a summary of the work that the group did to foster learning in the focus area, and of the group's experiences in supporting each other's learning, including:
 - The ideas discussed during regular meetings and the learning activities.
 - a description of new content or practices teachers were trying out between meetings.
 - a description of how the work relates to the focus within the student priority area and has been relevant for group members.
- An explanation of how you garnered and structured time and resources to support the group's work that includes the following information:
 - How you secured and scheduled meeting time.
 - How you secured support to enable group work.

- How you secured other, non-staff resources to support group work or pilot new strategies.
- description of your role as a resource to the group as a whole and to individual teachers as each member tried out new practices, including an explanation of your role in supporting members' work and moving it forward.
- description of the challenges and problems, including conflicts and member differences, that arose and how you and the group resolved them.

Artifact #3. Findings, Feedback, and Recommendations

In a **memo** to the principal or superintendent of up to three single-spaced pages, (and no more than 1,500 words) provide an analysis of the group members' feedback on group learning, group task accomplishment(s), and your facilitation role. Also provide evidence of the benefits of the work for improving teaching practice and student learning. Specifically, include the following information:

- summary identifying which group members (by role) provided feedback and how it was collected.
- An analysis and interpretation of group or group members' feedback that you collected about the following aspects of the task, including a list of the individuals (by role, not name) who provided feedback and a brief description of how you obtained feedback:
 - Their experiences learning together as a group over time.
 - Your group facilitation and support skills.
 - How the work addressed the selected focus within the priority academic area, and what group members tried out and learned.
 - The group's accomplishments, challenges, and implications for improving group members' teaching practices.
 - How group member disagreements or conflicts were addressed and how members learned to work to resolve differences.
 - Preliminary evidence of how group members' work together is impacting student learning in the priority academic area.
 - The potential for sustaining the group, the group's receptivity for collaborative professional inquiry generally, and changes in instructional practice.

- Recommendations for sustaining the use of groups or groups to foster a professional learning culture in the school to improve student learning.

NOTE: All supporting documents, reports, and tables of data that are referenced in these artifacts must be included in the appropriate category of documents below and be appropriately cited.

Documents by Category

First, you must complete the confidentiality and anonymity form for each task and upload it as you submit your work products for Task 2. This form is available online in ShowEvidence, as part of Task 2.

Include the following documents used in the task, using a separate file for each of these six categories:

- Category #1: Background data and other information that defines the student learning priority area and focus selected.
- Category #2: A list of teacher or other staff groups existing in the school.
- Category #3: A list of the group building and discussion group protocols you used to facilitate your group.
- Category #4: The agendas and minutes for all the group meetings.
- Category #5: Other materials that are relevant to the work that the group undertook, such as references for readings used in group meetings or samples of student work that were examined.
- Category #6: The group learning feedback form and summary findings.

Commentary

Write a **personal commentary** of up to two single-spaced pages (and no more than 1,000 words) on your own learning and leadership development through this experience. Base your analysis on the activities and on the feedback received from group members about your leadership and how it influenced their professional learning. Use the prompts below for your commentary:

- 1) How effectively did you facilitate group building and learning experiences? What leadership skill did you develop for this Task? What particular lessons did you learn that shape your leadership approach and how?

- 2) In what ways did you help the group members make progress in improving instructional practice for the designated focus area?
- 3) What problems did you face and what successes did you achieve in facilitating group building and group learning? How did you handle conflict or group member differences? How did you enable teachers to take greater responsibility in initiating learning and change? How did you promote sustainability?
- 4) What would you do differently and why to improve group effectiveness? How would you improve your leadership skill in facilitating a group learning process for the future?

Task 2: Instructional Leadership for Professional Learning Culture through Professional Learning Groups Rubrics

How Will the Evidence of Your Leadership Practice Be Assessed?

Scorers will be reviewing your submission for the following before starting:

- A. Has the submission been appropriately blinded with all candidate, school, staff, and student identifying information removed? If not the submission will be returned for the information to be removed.
- B. Is the submission addressing an *academic* priority area for the school? If not, the submission will be returned for revision.
- C. Is the submission complete in that it contains all supporting documents in each category? If not, the submission will be returned for revision.

A you prepare your artifacts and commentary, use the following rubrics to guide your thinking, planning, action, analysis, and presentation.

Rubric 2.a: Plan to Facilitate Group Learning

MA Standard 1. Instructional Leadership: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes effective teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

MA Standard 4. Professional Culture: Promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

How does the candidate plan for a professional learning to improve instructional practice and student learning?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Group identification and group formation	<p>Identifies two or more teachers with whom to work.</p> <p>Informally forms a group, only for information sharing.</p>	<p>Selects two or more teachers whose work is related to the priority area.</p> <p>Forms the group for information sharing and professional learning.</p> <p>Develops a weak commitment among the group members to try out new instructional practices.</p>	<p>Selects two or more teachers for a professional learning group with an interest in improving teaching practice in the focus selected for the priority area.</p> <p>Forms the group for professional learning with a clearly defined facilitation role.</p> <p>Develops a moderate commitment among the group members to try out new instructional practices</p>	<p>Engages two or more teachers for a professional learning group, with school and leader input, based on their individual and collective strengths clearly connected to the priority area and focus.</p> <p>Forms the group for professional learning with a clearly defined facilitation role and expectations for shared leadership.</p> <p>Develops a strong</p>	<p>Components 1, 2 Artifact 1</p>

			to improve student learning.	commitment among the group members to support each other in trying out new instructional practices to improve student learning.	
Group learning plan	<p>Does not identify a priority area or does not link a focus to student performance data.</p> <p>Provides limited information on school context for group learning.</p> <p>States an aim for group learning.</p> <p>Does not propose a plan for group learning or has a plan that has few or no strategies to support group learning.</p>	<p>Generally define a priority area with limited use of student performance data and information on the school context and culture.</p> <p>Provides an aim to improving teachers’ instructional practice and general plan for group learning.</p> <p>Includes some attention to strategies to support group learning in the proposed plan.</p>	<p>Identifies a priority area that reflects student performance data for one or more student groups.</p> <p>Uses data to explain how the priority area and focus for improving teachers’ instructional practice is influenced by school context and culture.</p> <p>Provides goal and objectives for group learning based on the focus for the priority area.</p> <p>Provides plan with structure and process for group learning.</p>	<p>Identifies a priority area and focus that explicitly links to student performance data for one or more student groups and subgroups.</p> <p>Uses data to explain how the priority area and focus for improving teachers’ instructional practice is influenced by existing practices and school context and culture.</p> <p>Provides goal and measurable objectives for group learning that addresses the focus for the priority area.</p> <p>Has a research-based plan for group learning and professional</p>	<p>Components 1, 2 Artifact 1</p>

				<p>learning culture, with strategies, structure, and process.</p> <p>Links plan to school-level conditions, existing resources, school culture and broader school improvement strategies.</p>	
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Rubric 2.b: Enact Professional Learning Culture to Support Team Learning

MA Standard 4. Professional Culture: Promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff. MA Standard 1. Instructional Leadership: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating shared vision that makes effective teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

How does the candidate support group learning?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Group process	<p>Does little to facilitate group learning. Is a member of the group; facilitator role is unclear.</p> <p>Does not help the group create and use learning norms.</p> <p>Does not hold group meetings over time</p>	<p>Facilitates the group with limited evidence on how the facilitation engages group learning or individual learning.</p> <p>Establishes general group learning norms.</p> <p>Holds group meetings over a short time period, without sufficient time for a full inquiry cycle.</p>	<p>Consistently facilitates group learning related to the focus area. Has a clear role as the group’s facilitator or organizer.</p> <p>Establishes and uses shared norms for working and decision making.</p> <p>Uses protocols or structured group learning processes with the group to facilitate group learning.</p> <p>Provides support for individual teachers to</p>	<p>Consistently facilitates group learning in the focus area and has a clear role as the group organizer and facilitator. Enables shared responsibility for facilitating group learning.</p> <p>Establishes and uses shared norms for problem solving, resolving conflicts, monitoring, and eliciting feedback.</p> <p>Uses protocols or structured group learning processes and individual teacher</p>	<p>Components 2, 3 Artifacts 2, 3</p>

			<p>facilitate learning.</p> <p>Holds group meetings over time with sufficient time for a full inquiry cycle.</p>	<p>support strategies to facilitate learning.</p> <p>Holds group meetings over time with sufficient time for more than a full inquiry cycle.</p> <p>Differentiates support for individual teachers within the group and one-on-one.</p>	
<p>Group learning an work</p>	<p>Unsystematically shares information with others about practices if at all.</p> <p>Identifies generally what the teachers learn individually and collectively if at all.</p> <p>Provides at least some claims about how the teachers’ learning connects to the focus.</p>	<p>Directs teachers with limited information and support for individual and collective work.</p> <p>Describes in some detail what the teachers learn individually or collectively.</p> <p>Provides evidence on how the teachers’ learning connects to the focus.</p>	<p>Supports teachers’ ongoing individual and collective work.</p> <p>Provides clear evidence on what the teachers have learned individually and collectively and how it connects to the focus area.</p>	<p>Promotes and deepens teachers’ ongoing individual and collective work through cycles of preparing, acting, monitoring, assessing, and sharing.</p> <p>Enables teachers to share their individual learning experiences with the group.</p> <p>Provides evidence on what the teachers learn individually and collectively through the group learning</p>	<p>Component 3 Artifacts 2, 3 Commentary</p>

				process, and that the evidence is differentiated by teacher need or interest and is connected to the focus.	
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Rubric 2.c: Assess Team Learning to Improve Ongoing Group Learning

MA Standard 4. Professional Culture: Promotes success for all students by nurturing an sustaining school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

How does the candidate assess progress and change pertaining to a group learning task?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Assessment of group process and group work	Describes own learning accomplishments, with limited attention to others’ learning experiences.	Describes what group members tried out and/or what occurred in the group process, and the task accomplishments, drawing on teacher feedback. Makes weak or no links between group process and group accomplishments.	Uses teacher feedback and other data on how group process facilitates group’s learning and task accomplishments (individually and collectively).	Uses data on teacher feedback, documentation of practice, and other evidence to show how group learning and task accomplishments (individually and collectively) led to changes in teaching practices. Provides evidence that the group developed capacity as an ongoing learning community. Draw on theory, research, and best practices of leadership development, professional group building and learning	Component 4 Artifact 3 Commentary

<p>Assessment of leadership skills and practices</p>	<p>Discusses leadership in general, if at all, but not relative to this task.</p>	<p>Conducts a general analysis of some leadership skills and practices used in completing this task, without drawing on specific experiences.</p> <p>Recaps the steps taken in completing the task with little evaluation of his or her leadership skills.</p>	<p>Evaluates relevant leadership skills and practices, needed to complete to this task, by drawing on specific experiences</p> <p>Identifies what worked well and what he or she could have done differently.</p> <p>Identifies changes that could be made to improve his or her leadership skills in the future.</p>	<p>Evaluates relevant leadership skills and practices used in completing this task, based on experiences, and describes how he or she adjusted leadership practices throughout the task.</p> <p>Solicited feedback on his or her leadership skills from stakeholders involved in this task.</p> <p>Identifies what worked well and what he or she could have done differently and proposes specific steps to improve his or her practice.</p>	<p>Commentary</p>
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Task 3

Leadership in Observing, Assessing, and Supporting Individual Teacher Effectiveness

What Do School Leaders Need to Think about When Improving Teacher Effectiveness?

Effective school leaders understand and recognize the characteristics of high quality teaching and provide a range of supports to help classroom teachers improving instruction and the performance of all students.

Task 3 asks school leadership candidates to demonstrate instructional leadership skills. Specifically, it assesses your ability to improve a teacher’s instructional practice and effectiveness while engaging in the following activities: (1) gathering and analyzing classroom data, including the teacher’s self-assessment (if available), student work samples, student performance data (a relevant for the grade and subject), and samples of the teacher’s work; (2) visiting three or more classrooms to identify common school practice; (3) conducting a pre-teacher observation meeting; (4) conducting at least two classroom observations and reviewing related instructional artifacts; (5) assessing the classroom observation and student performance data for instructional strengths and areas for improvement; (6) providing formative feedback to the teacher; and (7) planning for professional support. It is important for you to know about the teacher’s classroom context, differences in individual student performance relative to a priority area of instruction, the school and district classroom observation protocols, and research-based practices in classroom observation and teacher development. These actions build on Massachusetts Professional Standards and Indicators for Administrative Leadership (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr7.html?section=10>) and state and district guidelines for educator evaluation.

Unlike a formal observation for teacher evaluation that examines all areas of a teacher’s practice, your observations will focus on a specific area of instructional practice, enabling you to integrate information on curriculum, instruction, and student performance to understand an individual teacher’s content and pedagogical practices. While focused on a specific teaching area or practice, the observations are guided by the descriptors of proficient and exemplary teaching in the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/rubrics/>).

What do you need to do to complete this task?

- Identify a content and instructional focus within a student learning priority area (considering district, school, and teacher team priorities, where possible).
- Select a teacher to serve as a volunteer and select two or more of his or her class sessions for observation. Provide a rationale for your selection.
- Examine and summarize classroom context information.
- Visit three or more similar classes (as in a walk-through or instructional round process or other form of brief observational visits) and examine samples of student work and teacher assignments for the priority area to learn about instructional practice that is common in the school.
- Conduct a pre-observation meeting with the teacher where together you review pre-observation data (such as student test scores, classroom assessments, and performance tasks), instructional goals for the lesson and unit of study, and the teacher's instructional strengths and mutually agreed upon areas for improvement. Identify areas of focus for the observation as defined by your joint analysis of information and the interests of the teacher.
- Conduct (with video recording) two or more classroom observations and collect teacher and student information and samples of artifacts associated with the lesson. Prepare a continuous 15-minute video segment drawn from one observation.
- Analyze the teaching observation using the district's observation guide and state teaching standards and indicators.
- Identify the teacher's instructional strengths and one or more areas for improvement. Gather information on available resources (such as professional development, instructional specialists, and peer facilitated learning) to support the teacher in improving instruction.
- Conduct at least one post-observation and feedback meeting with the teacher, discuss plans for improvement, and identify possible sources for professional learning. Prepare a 15-minute video segment of this meeting.
- Gather feedback from the teacher to assess your leadership skills in the pre-observation meeting, observation, and post-observation meeting and feedback.

What Do You Need to Consider to Complete this Task?

- What is your area of focus in curriculum and instruction? Why is this focus a priority for improving learning for all students?
- Which teacher will you observe and what can you learn about his or her teaching and students' learning prior to the classroom observation?
- What can you learn about current teaching practices in this focus area by observing teachers in three or more similar classes and analyzing student work and performance data? Are there school- or district-adopted instructional practices that should be evident?
- What are the typical teacher observation practices in the school and what protocols and rubrics are used to assess instructional practice and provide feedback?
- What are the school or district policies concerning video recording instruction? What consent forms are required and what video recording considerations need to be taken into account?
- What additional student or teacher information and artifacts are needed to inform your classroom observation and the feedback you provide to the teacher?
- What professional supports are available for teachers in the school after receiving feedback?

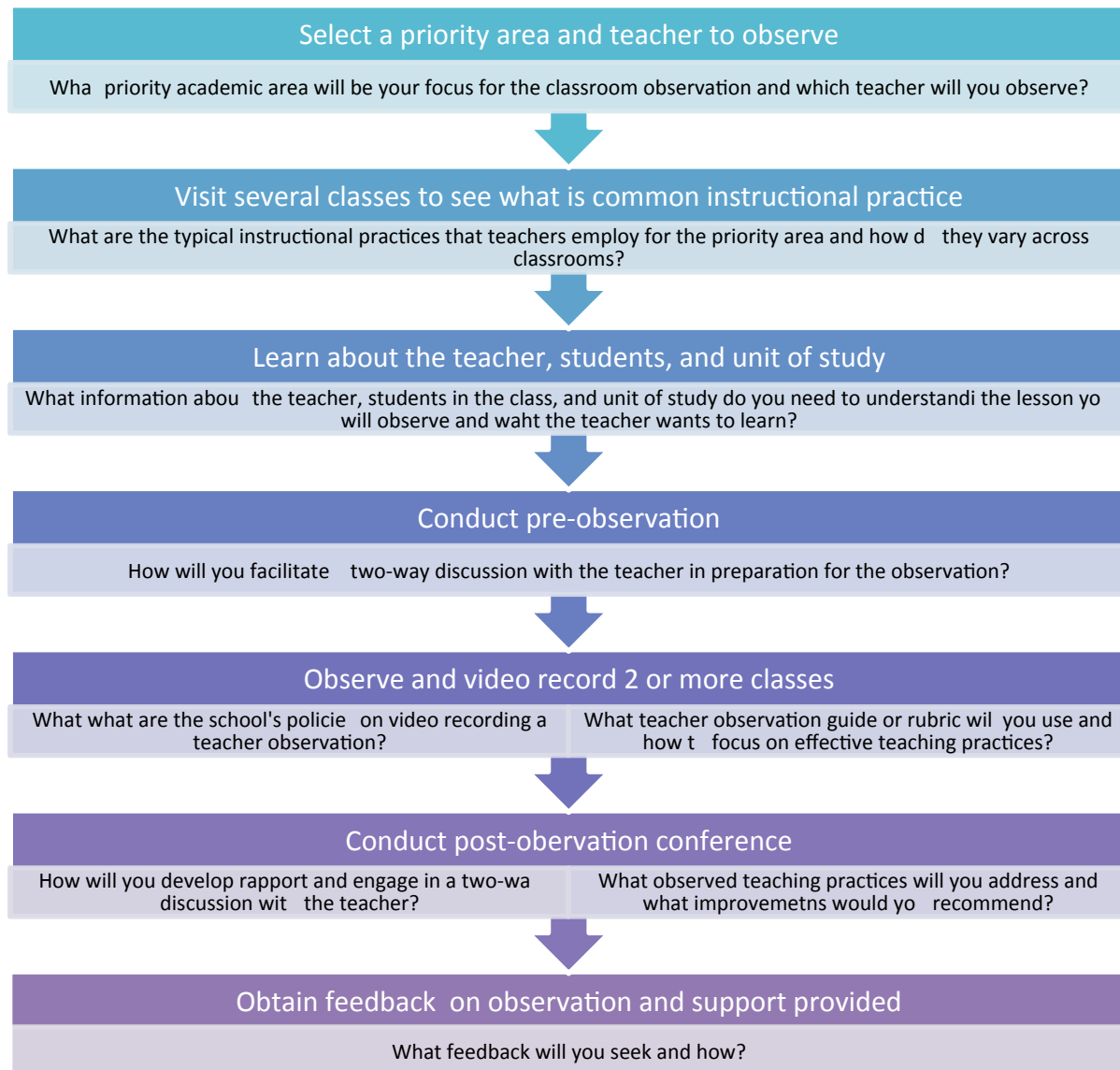
Consider that effective teaching encompasses the following: subject matter knowledge, pedagogical skills, an understanding of child and adolescent development, student engagement practices, cultural responsiveness, and a mastery of the ability to combine knowledge in all of these areas to produce high quality teaching and meaningful learning to meet diverse student needs.

For purposes of this task, high quality teaching is defined by the descriptors of proficient and exemplary teaching in the Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation: Teacher Rubric. Meaningful learning for all students is defined by these descriptors for student motivation and engagement and meeting diverse student needs, and by student performance outcomes on state assessments (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/rubrics/>).

The Components of the Task

Your investigation should progress through the inquiry process illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Providing observation feedback and support for an individual teacher



Component 1: Investigate

Begin with a priority academic area, such as the area selected for Task 1 and/or Task 2. Based on student learning indicators and other relevant evidence, as well as on school

and district learning priorities, choose to focus the teacher observation(s) on one or more instructional area. The investigation should include the following steps:

- 1) Analysis of relevant student performance and other indicators that frame the areas of focus
- 2) Identification of how the focus area relates to district, school, or teacher team goals and priorities.

Next, select and ask a teacher to volunteer to be observed and receive feedback as you complete the work for this task. The volunteer could be one of the teachers with whom you worked in completing Tasks 1 or 2.

Before preparing to observe this teacher, learn more about the typical instructional practice for the focus area in the school by visiting three or more similar classes (as in a walk-through or instructional round process or brief visit) to document the nature of instructional practice (including examining a sample of assignments and student work).

Teacher performance has a direct relationship to student learning. As you investigate the learning context for the teacher observation, consider how classroom instruction is shaped by individual students' strengths, interests, cultural assets, and needs; required standards; instructional objectives; standardized tests and available resources.

Each classroom has different demographic, cultural, and academic attributes that comprise its context. All impact a teacher's instructional choices and strategies. Consider the relevant classroom context attributes and their relationship to the academic focus and instructional strategies.

Finally, learn more about the teacher observation practices in the school. While you are not conducting a formal teacher observation for evaluation purposes, it is important to know how teacher observations are conducted in the school and to identify the criteria for effective teaching that the school and district use. For example, find out how frequently all teachers are observed annually, the length and focus of teacher observations, the way that observations are recorded, and whether they are coupled with pre-observation and post-observation meetings.

Determine the environment for teacher observation, which varies widely among schools and districts. What are the expectations and practices for teacher observation and how do they relate to the state educator evaluation system? What training has the school or district provided to teachers and leaders about teacher evaluation? What is the culture of the school regarding teacher observation and

how receptive are teachers to being observed for non-formal, formative purposes? How can you build trust and maintain confidentiality in completing this assessment?

How does the school climate and professional culture affect your capacity to undertake this task? What considerations are necessary in order to video record the observation and feedback sessions with the teacher?

To learn about the nature and focus of teacher observations in the school, collect forms and procedures that the school or district uses for teacher observation and evaluation. If the district's observation protocols do not include standards or expectations for effective teaching, consider using the Massachusetts Model System Educator Evaluation: Teacher Rubric in the observation of teacher practice (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/rubrics/>)

Identify district policies and practices for video recording teachers and classes for developmental purposes only. They may include consent requirements for teachers and students, restrictions on video recording classes, and other related requirements. See the guidance for video recording the classroom observation and post-observation meeting at the end of the task.

Identify school and district policies and practices concerning the length of observation time.

Component 2: Prepare

This component consists of preparing for and conducting the pre-observation teaching meeting in preparation for the teacher observation. To prepare for this meeting, compile and analyze the following information:

- Evidence about the teacher's students and their performance in the priority area, using appropriate grade-level data and analyses for various demographic groups.
- The teacher's lesson plans for the unit of study that contains the lesson that will be observed and the teacher's intended instructional processes and student assignments leading to that lesson.
- Samples of student assignments and work (prior to and following the lesson being observed).

Using this information, generate questions for the teacher about the lesson to be observed.

Next, schedule and meet with the teacher for a pre-observation discussion that should include the following elements:

- Sharing of information collected and establishing a focus for the observation with the teacher.
- Identifying, through a two-way conversation, of one or more areas of focus for the classroom observation, based on student needs, the teacher’s interest and your own interest.
- Making suggestions for improving the lesson.
- Documenting the teacher’s and your roles and participation in the pre-observation conference.

The focus of the observation should combine areas of interest to the teacher—what the teacher identified in the pre-observation meeting—and a focus you identified based on analysis of student performance and other indicators, brief observations of other classes, school priorities, and other evidence.

The pre-observation meeting could also include discussion of the students in the class, the lesson objectives and the lesson’s fit within the unit planned curriculum; the way that the lesson is structured to help the students acquire the skills and knowledge presented in it; the way that instruction is differentiated based on student needs; the use of assessments to check student understanding; and the teacher’s assessment of his or her content and instructional strengths and areas for improvement.

Component 3: Act

In this step, you observe the teacher, analyze the observation and other evidence (e.g., lesson plan, samples of student work and student performance evidence), and provide feedback about instructional strengths and areas for improvement, as well as recommended supports or actions.

First, conduct an audio record observations of two or more class sessions (at least 30 minutes in all), using the district’s teacher observation protocol or the Massachusetts recommended teacher observation guide, Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eeval/resources/rubrics/>) Using this video recording, prepare a continuous 15-minute video of the observed teaching that aligns to your pre-observation focus and post-observation feedback. (See the Candidate Confidentiality Guidelines for Video Recording at the end of this section.)

Next, in memo form, prepare a written description of the observation of the teacher that includes notes specifically addressing instructional issues and practices in the priority area. The notes—aligned to the observation video—should describe the observed teaching practices and techniques; pacing, and timing; use of technology; instructional differentiation; assessment practices; and connections to curricular standards. The memo should conclude with an assessment of the teacher’s strengths and areas for improvement addressing the focus area, in relationship to effective teaching practices using the district’s teaching standards rubric.

Using these results and the evidence compiled for the pre-observation meeting, select the strengths and most critical area(s) for improvement to discuss with the teacher. In addition, identify a strategy (involving one or more sources of support) to foster teacher learning and development in one (or more) identified focal areas, with a rationale for the way that the strategy will support teacher learning. Prepare this information as preliminary discussion points for the post-observation meeting with the teacher.

Conduct a post-observation meeting and feedback session in which you and the teacher discuss his or her practice strengths and areas for improvement drawing on the observation data and findings. Discuss your observation analysis with the teacher and solicit his or her own analysis and thoughts. Discuss ideas for improving his/her instructional practice. Provide the teacher with feedback, using at least two sources of data (including observation, student assignments, and student work or assessment results). Finally, explore the next steps for improving the teacher’s practice and suggest strategies and possible supports.

The aim of this post-observation meeting is to foster a learning conversation with the teacher to improve his or her practice. Engage the teacher in reflecting on dimensions of effective teaching and evidence of student learning. The meeting should demonstrate mutual respect for, rapport with, and responsiveness to the teacher and challenge him or her to engage in professional learning.

Video record this feedback session and edit the video to 15 minutes of continuous footage as a submission for scoring.

Consider how teacher performance can be improved with targeted feedback, professional development, and ongoing support.

Remember that your role is to support teacher development, not to evaluate teacher performance. Classroom observation is formative and part of a teaching inquiry/continuous improvement process. All observation notes and feedback are confidential and cannot be used as part of a formal teacher evaluation process or for summative teacher ratings.

There are many ways of providing teachers with support to improve his or her practice. Support should be developed through two-way discussion that encourages a teacher to take responsibility for his or her learning and improvement. It should include one or more of the following elements: information sharing, modeling, coaching, and feedback from peers (through inter-visitation and consultation); and suggestions from lead teachers (for modeling and coaching), school leaders, and external consultants and resources (such as a professional development workshop, conferences, and graduate coursework) that are available in the school or district.

Component 4: Assess

Analyze the development of your own leadership skills as you complete Task 3. Solicit and analyze feedback from the teacher about the pre-observation, observation, and post-observation experiences with you, your skills as you complete this task, and the implications of the feedback for the teacher's work and improved practice. The following are required questions that the teacher must answer for you to solicit information about your observation and feedback skills.

- How effective was the candidate in facilitating the pre-observation discussion as a learning experience for you?
- How did the candidate conduct the observation? In what ways was the observation disruptive or not disruptive for your teaching?
- How effective was the candidate in conducting the post-observation meeting? What areas of teaching strengths and improvement did the candidate identify? How do they relate to your understanding of your own teaching practice?
- What recommendations for improvement did the candidate offer? How beneficial were they? How feasible? How likely are you to try them out?

In addition, complete your own analysis of what worked well and what could be improved. Focus on the steps you took to complete the pre-observation, observation, and post-observation activities; and on your feedback to the teacher to improve his or her practice with respect to increasing student learning. What is the relationship among the components of this analysis? The aim of this step is to assess your own skills and the implications for your further leadership development in observing, assessing, providing feedback, and supporting an individual teacher to improve instruction. What can you do in the future to improve your teacher observation and feedback skills?

Artifacts, Documents and Commentary

This section provides instructions for school leadership candidate submissions for the review process:

- Your five artifacts.
- Documents that support your artifacts.
- Your commentary in narrative form in response to a series of prompts about the development of your leadership skills while completing this task

Remember: Your artifacts must not include personally identifying information about you, the school staff, or the students. Your submissions must comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99), a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Be sure to protect the anonymity of the participants in your study by using pseudonyms for the district, the school, students, and other stakeholders.

Artifacts

The artifacts that you submit for scoring, each in a separate file, are described below.

Artifact #1: Pre-observation Template

This is a **completed template** that describes the results of the classroom visits, the classroom and the students to be observed, and the instructional focus and rationale for selection of this focus. It is important that it include a summary of the pre-observation meeting and findings. (The template is presented at the end of this section).

Artifact # 2: Teacher Observation Video Recording

This is a **video recording** of 15 **continuous (unedited) minutes** of observed teaching, drawn from the 30 minutes of video. (Provide only 15 minutes worth of video, as scorers will only review the first 15 minutes of the recording they receive.)

Artifact #3: Post-Observation Meeting Video Recording

This submission consists of a 15-minute selection from the **video recording** of your post-observation meeting with the observed teacher. The feedback should center on the

area(s) of focus for the observation, and only those elements of quality teaching that are relevant. Make connections to student work samples and differentiation of instruction. Please note: The video **should clearly show both you and the teacher** you observed to demonstrate how you are providing feedback and support and the teacher's reactions in receiving feedback and engaging in discussions around improving his or her practice.

Artifact #4: Analysis of Observed Teaching

In a **memo** of up to two single-spaced pages (of up to 1,000 words) to the observed teacher, provide summary documentation and analysis of the observed teaching using the school/district teacher observation protocol. This memo should include observational notes that specifically address issues in the priority area and instructional focus, describing the observed teaching practices and techniques; pacing, and timing; use of technology; and connections to curricular standards. Appropriate references to the district or other teacher observation rubric used should be included. The memo should conclude with an identification of the teacher's strengths and areas for improvement.

Artifact #5: Analysis and Implications of the Feedback of the Observed Teacher on the Candidate's Pre-Observation Meeting, Observation, and Post-Observation Meeting Feedback

In a **memo** of up to two single-spaced pages (of up to 1,000 words) to the teacher, analyze the observed teacher's feedback about the pre-observation meeting, observation, and post-observation meeting experiences; and the implications for the teacher's work and improved student learning. Include an explanation of how the feedback was gathered and present the teacher's own analysis of these experiences. The memo should draw a clear connection between the priority academic area and instructional focus and the pre-observation meeting, observation analysis, post-observation meeting, and recommendations for improvements you discussed with the teacher.

NOTE: All supporting documents, reports, and tables of data that are referenced in these artifacts must be included in the appropriate Category of documents below and be appropriately cited.

Documents by Category

First, you must complete the confidentiality and anonymity form for each task and upload it as you submit your work products for Task 3. This form is available online in ShowEvidence, as part of Task 3.

You must submit the following documents used in the task, using a separate file for each of these three file categories:

- **Category #1:** The teacher observation protocol and teacher evaluation rubric commonly used in the school and district. If the district uses the state rubric, include just the internet link for the rubric instead of uploading the whole document. Identify which categories and indicators were used for the observation.
- **Category #2:** The unit of study, lesson plan outline, and core student assignments, and work samples (such as worksheets, assignments, completed work).
- **Category #3:** Samples of relevant student and teacher information, and artifacts related to the lesson that were not included in Category #2.

Commentary

In personal analysis of up to a two-page single-spaced commentary (of up to 1,000 words):

- Evaluate the leadership skills you used in Task 3 to conduct a teacher observation, provide feedback, and make recommendations for supports that could improve teaching practice. Identify what worked well and what could be improved in the way you conducted the pre-observation, observation, and post-observation activities, and specify any adjustments you made to your leadership practices as you worked on this task. Reference examples from the pre-observation meeting, the classroom observation video, the post-observation meeting video and feedback from the teacher. Specifically address your leadership skill and practices in response to the following questions:
 - How effectively did you prepare for and conduct the pre-observation meeting?
 - How did you develop rapport with and demonstrate respect for the teacher and engage him or her in professional learning through the observation and feedback process?

- How did you use the district or state teacher observation protocol to conduct the observation and how did you focus on and assess teaching practices?
- How did the feedback you provided engage the teacher in reflecting on dimensions of effective teaching, on evidence of student learning, and on identifying specific areas for improving his or her instructional practice? Explain why your feedback focused on some area for improvement rather than others.
- How did your proposed support strategies prompt teacher learning about improving instructional practices? In addition, identify your successes and challenges in completing Task 3. Explain what you would have done differently, based on your experiences. Draw implications from completing this task about the leadership skills you need to improve in observing, assessing, providing feedback, and supporting an individual teacher to improve instruction.

Task 3: Leadership in Observing, Assessing, and Supporting Individual Teacher Effectiveness Rubrics

How Will the Evidence of Your Leadership Practice Be Assessed?

Scorers will be reviewing your submission for the following before starting:

- A. Has the submission been appropriately blinded with all candidate, school, staff, and student identifying information removed? If not the submission will be returned for the information to be removed.
- B. Is the submission addressing an *academic* priority area for the school? If not, the submission will be returned for revision.
- C. Is the submission complete in that it contains all supporting category documents in each category? If not, the submission will be returned for revision.
- D. Are both video recordings uploaded and of appropriate length and quality? If not, the submission will be returned for revision.

As you prepare your artifacts and commentary, use the following rubrics to guide your thinking, planning, action, analysis, and presentation.

Rubric 3.a: Plan

MA Standard 1. Instructional Leadership: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating shared vision that makes effective teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

MA Standard 2. Management and Operations: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing and scheduling.

How does the candidate prepare for and conduct a pre-observation meeting?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Observation focus selection	Selects focus with little or no analysis of common instructional practices or student and teacher needs.	Selects focus with some analysis of common instruction practice or student needs.	Selects focus based on an analysis of common instructional practices and student and teacher needs.	Identifies standards-based instructional focus and builds on district/school improvement efforts.	Component 1 Artifact 1
Pre-observation meeting	Conducts an informal pre-observation discussion with little connection to student data and priorities.	Conducts a brief pre-observation meeting that includes reference to a focal area and solicits the teacher’s input on an area of interest supported by some student data.	Engages the teacher in pre-observation discussion, referring to common instructional practices or student/teacher needs and student data related to the focus area.	Engages the teacher actively in two-way discussion and refines proposed lesson. Builds discussion on common instructional practices and student and teacher needs and grounds it in identified focus area and student performance data.	Component 2 Artifact 1

Rubric 3.b: Conduct the Observation

MA Standard 1. Instructional Leadership: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes effective teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

MA Standard 2. Management and Operations: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing and scheduling

How well does the candidate recognize qualities of teaching practice?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Use and application of teacher observation rubric	<p>Identifies few or no essential qualities of observed teaching practices related to the focus area.</p> <p>Not clear if a district or state observation rubric is used.</p>	<p>Identifies some essential qualities of observed teaching practices.</p> <p>Uses the district or state observation rubric to define the essential qualities of observed teaching practice.</p> <p>Links the observation to the identified focus area.</p>	<p>Identifies essential qualities of observed teaching practices centered on clearly identified instructional focus area.</p> <p>Uses the district observation rubric as a framework for differentiating observed teaching practice.</p>	<p>Identifies essential qualities of observed teaching practices centered on identified instructional focus area and teacher or student context issues (or possibly subgroup issues) identified in pre-observation meeting.</p> <p>Uses the district observation rubric as a framework for differentiating observed teaching practice.</p>	<p>Component 3 Artifacts 2, 3, 4</p>

<p>Description of observations</p>	<p>Provides only a description or summary of the observation, without detail.</p>	<p>Describes some details of the observation, with notes consisting of a mix of descriptions and summary judgment.</p>	<p>Documents the teaching observation, including attention to specific teaching practices and techniques (e.g., pacing and time, use of technology, connections to curricular standards).</p> <p>Constructs observation notes as primarily descriptive comments, with supporting summary judgment, and organizes them sequentially.</p> <p>Includes teacher and student actions in the notes.</p>	<p>Prepares an annotated and detailed summary and analysis of the observed teaching.</p>	<p>Component 3 Artifacts 3, 4</p>
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Rubric 3.c: Provide Feedback and Suggest Support

MA Standard 1. Instructional Leadership: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes effective teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

MA Standard 2. Management and Operations: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing and scheduling.

How does the candidate foster teacher learning and development?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Feedback content	<p>Provides feedback with limited or no connections to observation data and essential qualities of observed teaching practices.</p> <p>Does not maintain a consistent focus from the pre-observation, observation, and post-observation meetings; and data gathering.</p>	<p>Provides feedback with some connection to observations or essential qualities of teaching practice generally connected to the focus area.</p> <p>Generally maintains a common focus across some of the following: the pre-observation, observation, and post-observation meetings; and data gathering.</p>	<p>Links improvement feedback to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified focus area. • Observation data. <p>Provides observation evidence for every conclusion drawn for feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential qualities of observed teaching practice and performance level indicators. • Teacher or student issues identified in 	<p>Makes a strong connection between student performance indicators and teacher observation analysis in feedback, which is coherent and integrated across the artifacts.</p> <p>Draws connections between the observations and difference students' experiences in relation to indicators for the academic priority and instructional focus.</p>	<p>Components 3, 4 Artifacts 3, 5</p>

			<p>pre-observation meeting, including the teacher’s priorities for the observation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student performance indicators that frame the academic priority and instructional focus. <p>Maintains a consistent focus from the pre-observation, observation, and post-observation meetings through other data gathering.</p>		
Rapport and teacher engagement	Directs the discussion and does not solicit teacher input or opinions.	Presents observation findings and solicits some teacher input.	Engages the teacher in two-way discussion about his or her teaching.	Engages teacher actively in two-way discussion and assists the teacher in analyzing his/her own performance.	Components 3, 4 Artifacts 3, 5
Teacher development	Directs teacher on steps to improve practice with few references to observation data and few recommended resources.	Provides general suggestions for teacher to improve practice with some reference to the observation data. Provides improved	Engages teacher actively in two-way discussion on improving practice and anchors improvement needs in observation data and initial student performance	Engages actively in a two way discussion on improving practice, anchored in improvement needs in observation data and student performance indicators.	Components 3, 4 Artifacts 3, 5

	<p>Provides improved practice suggestions that are general or not essential to improving teaching practices as identified in the teacher observation.</p>	<p>practice suggestions that are relevant and designed to improve teaching practices in at least one area identified in the teacher observation.</p>	<p>indicators.</p> <p>Provides improved practice suggestions that are relevant to the priority academic area and designed to improve teaching practices in two or more areas identified in the teacher observation.</p> <p>Identifies available references resources or strategies.</p>	<p>Identifies resources/support that are tailored to teacher’s specific needs.</p> <p>Engages the teacher in proposing ways to improve instructional practice and means of monitoring and following up.</p> <p>Provides improved practice suggestions that target key ways for the teacher for improving student learning in the priority area.</p>	
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Rubric 3.d: Assess: Analyze and Identify Implications

MA Standard 2. Management and Operations: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.

MA Standard 4: Professional Culture: Promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

How does the candidate assess his/her skills in observing, assessing, and providing feedback?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Assessment of leadership skills and practices	Discusses leadership in general, if at all, but not relative to this task.	<p>Conducts a general analysis of some leadership skills and practices used in completing this task, without drawing on specific experiences.</p> <p>Recaps the steps taken in completing the task with little evaluation of his or her leadership skills.</p>	<p>Evaluates relevant leadership skills and practices, needed to complete to this task, by drawing on specific experiences.</p> <p>Identifies what worked well and what he or she could have done differently.</p> <p>Identifies changes that could be made to improve his or her leadership skills in the future.</p>	<p>Evaluates relevant leadership skills and practices used in completing this task, based on experiences, and describes how he or she adjusted leadership practices throughout the task.</p> <p>Solicited feedback on his or her leadership skills from the teacher involved in this task.</p> <p>Identifies what worked well and what he or she could have done differently and</p>	Commentary

				proposes specific steps to improve his or her practice.	
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Pre-Observation Template

Teacher (anonymize all names) Gender Race/ethnicity Specialization
Grade Subject area Number of students
Gender composition of the class Racial/ethnic composition Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price free lunch (in the school) Number of Students with IEPs Number of English Language Learners
Other adults in the classroom and their roles
One or more relevant student performance and/or other indicator(s) using available state or local evidence; include subgroup differences where available
Delineation of specific student needs and student data related to the focus area and implications
Instructional focus and teacher need
Number of visits to other classes Dates of visits (if applicable)
Summary of common instructional practices related to the instructional focus
Essential question for the observed lesson
Rationale for selecting this teacher
Description of the teacher, class, and lesson focus to be observed in relationship to the school or district “learning” priority
Situation of the instructional focus within the context of student performance and other relevant indicators
Situation of the instructional focus for the observation within the context of practice based on observations of similar classes
Description of the teacher’s self-assessment on this focus, including his or her strengths, areas in need of improvement, and goals
Summary description of the pre-observation meeting including starting and ending times, location, topics discussed and discussion of information collected for this template
Local contractual guidelines or union rules for teacher observations

Candidate Confidentiality Guidelines for Video Recording

Candidates can submit video recordings as work products for their MA-PAL tasks, and they are required to submit two video recordings as part of completing Task 3. Candidates must protect the confidentiality of individuals who are video recorded and adhere to district policies and procedures about appropriate permissions and consent. These guidelines address the recording, submittal, and use of videos prepared for the MA-PAL task requirements.

Before Making Video Recordings

Before you record and submit your video recordings, you must do the following:

- 1) Review the MA-PAL Video Recording Permissions document for additional information and the sample release form provided for your reference. Check with your preparation program and school district for other specific information that you may be required to include in the release form.
- 2) Secure appropriate permission from the school district, parents, and guardians of students, and from teachers and other adults who appear in the video recording. Keep the signed permission forms on file for your use if needed.

Remove your name and use pseudonyms or general references (e.g., "the district") for your school, district, and observed teacher to protect confidentiality. Blind or remove all names on any typed or written material (e.g., work products, commentaries, lesson plans, student work samples) that could identify individuals or institutions. During video recording, use students' first names only.

Before Submitting Video Recordings

Check the **audio** and **video** quality before submitting your video recordings. If the quality is poor, the submission cannot be scored and will be returned and require you to redo the video recordings before resubmitting the task.

Storage and Use of Video Recordings

In order to protect the privacy of all individuals who appear in the video recording:

You **MAY**

- Store/upload your video recording through the MA-PAL assessment system;

You **may NOT**

- Display the video publicly (i.e., personal websites, YouTube, Facebook) without expressed permission from all those featured in the video;
- Use the video recording for any purpose that is not within the parameters of the release forms you received for students or adults who appear in your video

Task 4

Leadership for Family Engagement and Community Involvement

What Do School Leaders Need to Think about When Promoting Family Engagement and Community Involvement?

In Task 4, school leadership candidates develop a plan and implement one of the strategies described in i to promote or improve family engagement and community involvement. The goal is to support student learning in school priority area they select. The priority area can be related to student academic performance or to the health, emotional, and/or social needs that impact student learning.

As part of this task, you will work collaboratively with school leaders, staff, families, and community representatives through working group with family and/or community member representation that you form. The group will meet throughout the investigation, planning, and strategy implementation process.

For the purposes of this task, consider various types of family and community engagement that could be developed or improved as means for improving student learning, such as: sharing information about student learning issues; communicating about student performance and related school matters, and responding to communication from the school; engaging family and community members in volunteering and supporting classroom and school activities (in relation to student learning needs); helping families to extend learning at home; involving family and community representatives in decision making on school matters related to the improvement of student learning; and accessing and utilizing community resources and services in ways that support student learning directly or indirectly. Consider how developing or enhancing these engagement strategies create support for or contribute to improved student learning in the priority area, not simply expand family or community participation generally.

Overall, it is important for you to know the school; the priority area and how different groups of students may have different experiences with it; and the school's current approaches to family engagement and community involvement in support of this priority area and the challenges it must overcome. In addition, you must make

connections to relevant research on leadership and family engagement and community involvement.

Your work on this task should directly relate to MA Professional Standards and Indicators for Administrative Leadership and draw on state guidelines on Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/boe/sac/parent/FSCPfundamentals.pdf>).

Consider what defines “family” in the school’s context. Family includes any caregiver who can support students educationally and play a central role in children’s school and home experiences, such as parents, guardians, siblings, other relatives, and other child care providers.

Also consider what “community” means in the school’s context. It can include educational, health, recreational, social, cultural, and community-based organizations that serve the students. Community can also comprise local businesses; nonprofit organizations; libraries; religious organizations; parks and recreation departments; higher education institutions; and social service, police, juvenile justice, and other governmental offices that have an interest in the educational well-being of the students or can provide educational resources. Lastly, and other local individuals with an interest in students’ education as part of their civic interest can be part of the community for this task.

What Do You Need to Do to Complete this Task?

- Select a priority area (such as the focus for the other tasks based on student performance evidence (and on student differences in performance), or on evidence on student health and social needs that impact learning).
- Create or engage a small working group of school staff, family, and/or community members that represents diverse interests pertaining to the priority area; and clearly define the group’s purpose, its relevance to the priority area, and the backgrounds, and interests of its members.
- Meet regularly, in convenient times and locations, to create an engagement plan and prepare for the pilot implementation of one of the plan’s strategies.
- Gather, analyze, and interpret school and community context information, data on student needs, and evidence related to existing family engagement and community involvement and needs, in relation to the priority area, by examining existing policies, strategies, programs, and practices.

- Develop a plan to address the priority area that involves school staff, family, and community members, in collaboration with the working group. The plan should have several well-justified strategies to improve family engagement and community involvement in relation to the priority area, based on data or research, and be connected with the school and district plans for family engagement and community involvement.
- Pilot one strategy, proposed in collaboration with members of the working group, that engages families and/or communities in addressing the priority area and document the implementation process.
- Assess the implementation process and initial outcomes, including those relating to the improvement of student learning or addressing student health and social needs that impact student learning.

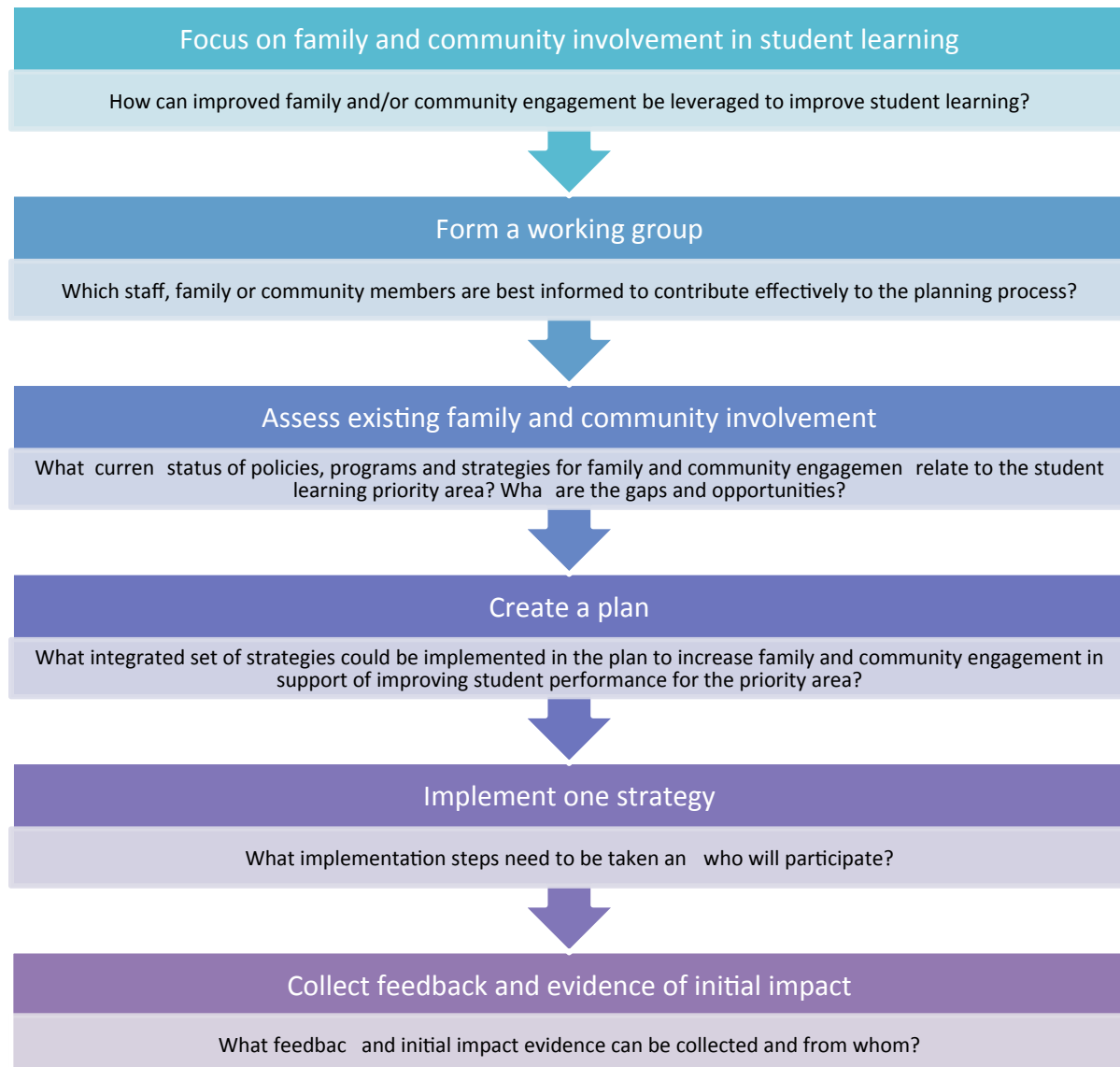
What Do You Need to Consider to Complete this Task?

- How does family engagement and community involvement relate to the priority area that you selected? What is currently being done to encourage family and community participation in student learning and what are the gaps and opportunities?
- How can improved or increased family and community engagement around the priority area leverage improvements in that area? How can family and community representatives of diverse interests be involved in the planning and implementation process in addressing the priority area?
- What family engagement and community involvement strategies can best support improved student learning or address student health and social needs that impact student learning? What the family and community resources could be used to support student learning?
- How can reciprocal (two-way) family engagement and community involvement be fostered?
- What does it mean to engage families and community with a school to support student learning or to meet student health, emotional and social needs?

The Components of the Task

Your investigation should progress through the inquiry process illustrated in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Planning and implementing a change for improved family and/or community engagement



Component 1: Investigate

Select and describe a priority area for this task based on evidence related to student academic performance and student performance differences, or on another student need that can impact student learning (such as health, emotional, and social). School leadership and family and community support is essential for this process.

To address this priority area, identify two or three individuals from each of the following two categories: (1) key school staff (including teachers); and (2) family members and/or community representatives for whom the area is most relevant, who represent diverse interests, and who can be most supportive of your efforts to improve or increase family and community participation. With them, form a school-family-community working group to meet two or more times for planning and to support the implementation of one of the plan's strategies. The group may be newly formed for this task or be all or part of an existing group. The group's role may be advisory, existing solely to support your work, or it may be collaborative in co-constructing the proposed plan and implementing one of the plan's strategies. Throughout the task, clearly document how the group members participated.

Schedule regular meetings for planning and implementation support at times convenient for family and community representatives and in convenient locations in and/or outside of school.

With the group's assistance, identify existing school policies related to the priority area and relevant programs and services that the school provides. Gather evidence on how family and community members already participate and are engaged in the school's programs and services, and the effectiveness of the programs and services. Evidence on school-family-community engagement might include family member attendance and participation in student-related events, teacher and family member survey responses on school communication and student learning support, family member use of learning resources and services for improving student learning (or related student health and social needs), participation in policy and program decision-making groups, observations of family and community support of student learning (or related student health and social needs), the existence of partnerships with local agencies and businesses, and/or the findings from focus groups with relevant parties.

Also with the group's assistance, identify gaps or needs for improved family engagement and community involvement related to the priority area.

The primary focus of this task is to improve student learning, a goal that families and the community can support directly or indirectly.

Consider how family engagement and community involvement can help address needs related to student academic performance and/or to health, emotional, and social issues that can impact learning, particularly for federally-designated priority student groups (students with disabilities, English language learners, African American, Hispanic, and Native American students, low-income students, and

students performing below state proficiency levels) or other groups that are a priority in your school.

Consider how improving family engagement and community involvement relates to school or district priorities for improving student learning.

Component 2: Prepare

With the working group, prepare a focused and coherent plan to improve school-family engagement and community involvement. Include in it well-justified strategies for improving policies, practices, and programs that are applicable to the priority area and that support the school's and district's mission and priorities. Strategies can focus on changes in policies; the improvement, expansion, or tailoring of existing practices; or the development of new programs and practices.

The goal of the strategies is to create opportunities for families and community members to support and enhance student learning or to address related student health, emotional, and social needs. A persuasive theory of action—an explanatory map of how certain policies and practices will improve specific outcomes—should inform the development of the strategies and be presented in the plan. Draw on current research and best practices to identify strategies that are responsive to the school's priority area and feasible within the school and community culture and context. Then select for implementation one or more of them.

In addition to providing a blueprint for the development and implementation of the strategies, the plan should include steps to assess their implementation and outcomes.

Document the working group's role and input in preparing the plan. Before finalizing it, solicit feedback from school leaders and the broader school-family-community and obtain their support to implement one or more strategies. Such feedback and subsequent revisions should be reflected in the final version of the plan.

Include the following specific elements in the plan:

- Goals and objectives, including the scope and nature of the family and community engagement desired.
- Use of two or more action strategies to improve family and/or community engagement in relation to the priority area.
- Theory of action and rationale for how these strategies will lead to improved family and community engagement in ways that contribute to improved student learning (or related student health, emotional and social needs).

- Existing resources to be accessed and new resources required.
- The roles and responsibilities of group members or staff who will implement the plan and its strategies.
- Actions to engage families, community members, and school staff to support the plan's implementation.
- Timeline for implementing the plan and selected strategy.
- The proposed evaluation technique and feedback method to determine how the plan and selected strategies lead to the intended outcomes.

Consider strategies that foster an inclusive school culture by developing reciprocal school-family engagement and community involvement and by sharing knowledge and responsibility that strengthen the capacity of families and community members to become active partners in student learning and that develop the sensitivity and skill of school staff in engaging and working productively with family and community members to improve student learning.

Such strategies should be culturally responsive and based on student, family, and community needs and priorities. They might also take different forms at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Consider the ways that the proposed plan specifically addresses a specific group of students relative to the priority area.

Component 3: Act

You must implement one family and community engagement strategy from the plan. Implementation should be undertaken in cooperation with school staff and family and/or community members, particularly those from the working group. The implementation process can include piloting a new or improved program or practice, developing and implementing a new policy, and/or creating new roles for family and/or community member involvement.

Consider a policy, program, or communication strategy that creates new or enhances existing forms of family and community engagement and involvement, that also improves or increases the number and diversity of family and/or community participants, and that leads directly or indirectly to improved student learning in the priority area. Consider, as well, how the strategy can be integrated within the school and will be sustained over time.

Document the implementation of the strategy and the ways that family and community members are involved. Describe your role and the working group's role in this process. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of implementation and the ways that its enactment enhanced family and community participation. Identify problems that arose and document how they were addressed. Cite any evidence that demonstrates that these actions have already contributed to improved student learning.

Component 4: Assess

Solicit and analyze feedback from working group members on the feasibility, usefulness, and benefits of the school-family engagement and community involvement plan and implemented strategy. Collect information and documentation to show how the program, practice, or policy was implemented; how it has enhanced family and community participation; and how it addressed the priority area.

Solicit feedback from the working group members and school leaders about your leadership effectiveness in focusing on high priority area, working with the group, developing the plan, and implementing a strategy.

Analyze the effectiveness of the planning and strategy implementation process that you and others used, particularly in how actively family and community members were involved. Discuss the implications for sustainability and future development or expansion of the strategy in this area.

Artifacts, Documents and Commentary

This section provides instructions for school leadership candidate submissions for the review process:

- Your three artifacts.
- Other relevant documents that support your artifacts.
- Your commentary in narrative form in response to a series of prompts about the development of your leadership skills while completing this task.

Artifacts

The artifacts that you submit for scoring, each in separate file, are described below.

Artifact #1: Analysis of the Data, Priority Area, and Plan

In a **proposal** of up to five single-spaced pages (up to 2,500 words) to the principal or superintendent, submit a plan to improve or increase family engagement and community involvement with the purpose of improving student learning (directly or indirectly). Specifically, the document must provide the following information:

- description of, and justification for, the selection of a priority area for the plan's focus, related to student academic performance or student health, emotional, and social needs that impact student learning, which will serve as focus for improving family and community involvement. Reference relevant school and district data and provide relevant documents.
- list of members (by category) of the small working group of representative school staff, family, and community members that you assembled, the rationale for including each member in the group; and description of the group's purpose.
- description of the ways that the group worked together, including the number of meetings, the members' roles and responsibilities, the issues discussed, and the actions taken. Include a discussion of your own role in these meetings.
- An analysis and interpretation of school and community context information relevant to the priority area and based on an examination of existing policies, strategies, and programs; and relevant information about existing family engagement and community involvement. Describe the sources of evidence.
- Information received from family and community members and staff about the gaps or needs for improved family engagement and community involvement to address the priority area. Describe the sources of evidence for this input.
- plan for improving family engagement and community involvement in priority area, with compelling rationale justifying the proposed strategies. The plan must include the following elements:
 - Goals and objectives, including the scope and nature of the family and community engagement desired.
 - description of two or more action strategies to improve family and community engagement in relation to the priority area.
 - description of the theory of action and research-based rationale for how these strategies will lead to improved family and community engagement in ways that contribute to improved student learning or related student health and social needs.

- list of existing resources and new resources required.
- Definitions of roles and responsibilities of group members or staff or other stakeholders who will implement the plan.
- Descriptions of actions to engage constituents, such as families, community members, and school staff, to support the plan's implementation.
- timeline for implementing the plan and its strategies.
- proposed evaluation and method for obtaining feedback to determine how the plan and selected strategies lead to the intended outcomes.
- description of individuals who contributed to the plan and how.

Note: Synthesize the data used to define your student priority area and the focus selected. Do not present tables of information without interpretation and conclusions about the focus used for this task. Use tables of data judiciously to guide and inform readers.

Artifact #2. Implementation of One Strategy

In a **memo** of up to three single-spaced pages (up to 1,500 words) to the principal or superintendent, provide the following information:

- description of the strategy that was implemented, with justification for starting with this choice and information about how it addressed the priority area.
- An outline of the steps taken to implement the strategy, identification of the roles and responsibilities of those who enacted it, and a list of the resources used. Clearly explain your own role in the implementation process.
- description of how families, community members, and students were involved, and how they are benefiting from or being impacted by the strategy. Include quantifiable evidence on family, community, and student participation.
- discussion of the strengths and weaknesses evidenced during implementation of the strategy, with an identification of problems that arose and the way they were addressed or would need to be addressed in the future. Describe the sources of evidence for this discussion.
- discussion and compelling explanation of the ways the strategy enhanced family and community participation. Provide quantifiable evidence for this explanation and recommendations for improving and sustaining the strategy.

Artifact #3. Feedback

In a **report** up to three single-spaced pages (up to 1,500 words) to the principal or superintendent, present an analysis of feedback from working group members and school leaders and other staff and stakeholders that includes the following:

- description of the individuals who provided feedback on the plan and implemented strategy and how it was collected. Include quantifiable information on the number of individuals and the nature of their feedback.
- summary analysis and interpretation of the feedback pertaining to the following questions about the plan:
 - How feasible is the family and community engagement plan for the school setting?
 - In what ways can the plan increase, improve, and diversify family and community engagement?
 - In what ways are the proposed strategies expected to improve or increase family and community engagement in order to improve student learning (or related health and social needs)?
 - How culturally responsive is the plan for the families, the community, and the school?
 - How can the plan be improved?
- summary analysis and interpretation of the feedback pertaining to the implemented strategy:
 - In what ways did the strategy improve or increase family and community engagement?
 - In what ways did (or will) the strategy improve student learning or address related student health, emotional and social needs?
 - How can each strategy's design, implementation, and use be improved?
 - How sustainable is the strategy?

Documents by Category

First, you must complete the confidentiality and anonymity form for each task and upload it as you submit your work products for Task 4. This form is available online in ShowEvidence, as part of Task 4.

In addition to the artifact files described above, submit the following documents used in the task, using a separate file for each of these three file categories:

- Category #1: Evidence compiled to justify the priority area selected and the role for family and community engagement.
- Category #2: summary of relevant school policies and a description of currently implemented strategies and programs for family engagement and community involvement.
- Category #3: Evidence of existing participation and engagement of families and community representatives for the priority area. If possible, include quantifiable information.

Commentary

Prepare a **personal narrative** summary of up to two single-spaced pages (up to 1,000 words) that evaluates your leadership activities in developing a plan to improve family and community engagement and implementing at least one strategy described in the plan. Focus on the leadership skills you developed and then used to undertake this task. Explain what you did most effectively and what can be improved. Draw on evidence from the working group and leadership team members' feedback about your leadership practices in the following areas:

- How did you determine the priority area and the needs for improved family and community engagement in relation to this priority area?
- How did you form a working group and engage others in the planning process throughout the planning and implementation process?
- How did you facilitate development of a culturally-responsive plan?
- How did you implement a strategy and address implementation opportunities and challenges?
- How did you garner support and solicit feedback for the plan and strategy among working group members? Family and community members? School leadership team members?

- How did you foster diverse family and community participation throughout planning and implementation?
- What problems did you face and what successes did you achieve in facilitating improved family and community engagement?
- What insights did you gain about a leader’s role in facilitating family and community engagement?
- What would you do differently in the future and why? How would you improve your leadership skills?

Task 4: Leadership for Family Engagement and Community Involvement Rubrics

How Will the Evidence of Your Leadership Practice Be Assessed?

Scorers will be reviewing your submission for the following before starting:

- A. Has the submission been appropriately blinded with all candidate, school, staff, and student identifying information removed? If not the submission will be returned and the information must be removed.
- B. Is the submission addressing an academic priority area or a student health, social or emotional issue that impacts student learning for the school? If not, the submission will be returned for revision.
- C. Is the submission complete with all supporting documents in each category? If not, the submission will be returned for revision.
- D. If the submission does not describe a working group and does not demonstrate family or community member input in the planning process, the submission will be returned for revision.
- E. If the submission does not include evidence that at least one of the plan’s strategies was implemented, the submission will be returned for revision.

As you prepare your artifacts and commentary, use the following rubrics to guide your thinking, planning, action, analysis, and presentation.

Rubric 4.a: Plan to Promote Family and Community Involvement

MA Standard 3. Family and Community Engagement: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.

How does the candidate document existing family engagement and community involvement strategies to promote a proposal for improving a priority area?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Investigation of the priority area	<p>Provides vague reference to a student learning priority.</p> <p>Makes limited or no connection to family and community engagement in defining a student learning priority area.</p> <p>Does not investigate current school practices or data that focus on family engagement and community involvement.</p>	<p>Identifies a student learning priority area and makes general use of data.</p> <p>Makes some connection between family and community engagement and a student learning priority area.</p> <p>Informally or unsystematically compiles information about current practices for family and community engagement.</p>	<p>Clearly defines a student learning priority area, using available student performance or other relevant data.</p> <p>Explains how developing or expanding family and community engagement would enhance student learning priority area or issue impacting it.</p> <p>Systematically describes existing information and data on policies, programs, and strategies for</p>	<p>Clearly defines a student learning priority area and differentiates student needs within it for different student groups using relevant qualitative and quantitative data.</p> <p>Clearly explains how developing or expanding family and community engagement should take into account the different needs and roles of families and community members.</p> <p>Differentiates analyses</p>	<p>Component 1 Artifact 1</p>

			family and community engagement.	of school policies, programs, and strategies for family and community engagement for different student groups in a priority area.	
Investigation o work group engagement	<p>Consults with others but does not form a working group.</p> <p>Demonstrates little or n evidence that family or community members were involved in the planning process.</p> <p>Does not explain the candidate’s role in the working group.</p>	<p>Forms working group that meets once.</p> <p>Generally consults with school leaders, staff, and family and community members in the planning process.</p> <p>Includes one family and/or community member in the planning.</p> <p>Provides general description of the candidate’s role in the working group.</p>	<p>Forms and facilitates an ongoing working group.</p> <p>Forms working group representative of school leaders, staff, and family and community members in planning process.</p> <p>Includes two or more family and community members in the planning process.</p> <p>Explains the candidate’s role in facilitating the working group and supporting the research and planning.</p>	<p>Forms and shares leadership with an ongoing working group.</p> <p>Actively engages appropriate representative school leaders, staff, and family and community members as working group members in the planning process.</p> <p>Uses various strategies to seek input from the larger family or community membership to inform planning and decision making for the engagement plan.</p> <p>Explains the candidate’s role in facilitating the work</p>	Component 1 Artifacts 1, 3

				group, sharing responsibility, supporting the research and planning and engaging the broader parent and community in the planning process.	
Preparation of the plan, including strategies	<p>Proposes an idea with few of the plan elements listed in Artifact #1.</p> <p>Has only one strategy.</p> <p>Lacks a rationale for how the plan will improve or increase family involvement or improve student learning.</p>	<p>Proposes plan with some supporting detail and plan elements listed in Artifact #1.</p> <p>Has a plan with two or more strategies.</p> <p>Has a vague rationale for how the plan will improve or increase family and community engagement in the priority area.</p>	<p>Develops a complete, detailed plan.</p> <p>Includes two or more distinct strategies that focus on the same priority area issue.</p> <p>Explains how the plan is responsive to family and community engagement in the priority area.</p>	<p>Develops an integrated, coherent plan with a compelling rationale focused on a priority area of student learning.</p> <p>Has a plan with two or more distinct strategies that focus on the same priority area issue and reflect different groups and needs.</p> <p>Provides evidence on how the proposed strategies will improve or increase family and community engagement and contribute to improved student learning.</p>	Component 2 Artifacts 1, 3

Rubric 4.b: Implement an Engagement or Involvement Strategy

MA Standard 3. Family and Community Engagement: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.

How does the candidate implement an effective strategy to improve family engagement or community involvement?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Implementation of the strategy	<p>Claims to have implemented a family and community engagement strategy with little or no description of steps or evidence.</p> <p>Does not describe how family and community members participate in the strategy.</p> <p>Does not explain the candidate's role in implementing the strategy.</p>	<p>Generally describes the strategy that was implemented and the implementation steps.</p> <p>Describes limited family and community involvement in participating in the strategy or in benefiting from it.</p> <p>Describes generally how the candidate was involved in implementing the strategy.</p>	<p>Clearly describes the strategy that was implemented.</p> <p>Provides detailed description of the implementation steps, roles, resources used, and challenges.</p> <p>Provides some detail of how the strategy involved family and community members in the implementation and how it benefited or impacted the targeted family or community group.</p> <p>Describes the candidate's role in</p>	<p>Provides coherent, detailed description of the strategy and implementation steps, roles, resources used, and the challenges encountered.</p> <p>Provides detail on how the targeted family and community group members benefit from, or are impacted by, the strategy.</p> <p>Describes the candidate's role in the implementation and how he/she shares responsibility in</p>	<p>Component 3 Artifact 2</p>

			implementing the strategy.	implementing the strategy.	
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Rubric 4.c: Analyze Feedback from Participants and Assess Leadership Skills

MA Standard 3. Family and Community Engagement: Promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.

MA Standard 4. Professional Culture: Promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

How does the candidate assess the effectiveness of the proposed plan and implemented strategy and his or her own leadership role?

	Beginning	Developing	Meeting	Exceeding	MA PAL Component, Artifact, Commentary
Assessment and analysis of feedback on the family and community engagement plan and strategy	<p>Provides a summary assessment of feedback on the plan or strategy but not both.</p> <p>Provides little or no detail about which individual(s) provided the feedback and how feedback was obtained.</p> <p>Does not collect feedback from working group members.</p> <p>Does not clearly</p>	<p>Collects feedback on the plan from some working group members.</p> <p>Collects feedback on the implementation strategy from some working group members.</p> <p>Collects feedback on the implemented strategy from some family or community members who participated in the strategy.</p>	<p>Systematically collects, analyzes, and interprets feedback from working group members to determine the effectiveness of the plan and strategy.</p> <p>Systematically collects, analyzes, and interprets feedback from family and community members who participated in the strategy.</p> <p>Clearly explains the candidate's role in</p>	<p>Coherently analyzes and interprets feedback from working group members about how and in what ways the plan and strategy were effective and impacted the priority area.</p> <p>Provides evidence on how the feedback was collected and from whom.</p> <p>Collects, analyzes, and interprets family and community member</p>	Component 4 Commentary

	<p>explain the candidate's role in collecting feedback.</p>	<p>Provides cursory analysis of feedback in summary form.</p> <p>Explains the candidate's role in collecting feedback.</p>	<p>collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the feedback data.</p>	<p>feedback on the implemented strategy, differentiating by relevant subgroups.</p> <p>Draws implications for future development of the plan and strategy and the strategy's sustainability.</p> <p>Explains the candidate and work group members' role in collecting, analyzing and interpreting feedback.</p>	
<p>Assessment of leadership skills an practices</p>	<p>Discusses leadership in general, if at all, but not relative to this task.</p>	<p>Conducts a general analysis of some leadership skills and practices used in completing this task, without drawing on specific experiences.</p> <p>Recaps the steps taken in completing the task with little evaluation of his or her leadership skills.</p>	<p>Evaluates relevant leadership skills and practices needed to complete to this task, by drawing o specific experiences.</p> <p>Identifies what worked well and what he or she could have done differently.</p> <p>Identifies changes that could be made to improve his or her</p>	<p>Evaluates relevant leadership skills and practices used in completing this task, based o experiences, and describes how he or she adjusted leadership practices throughout the task.</p> <p>Solicited feedback on his or her leadership skills from stakeholders involved in this task.</p>	<p>Commentary</p>

			leadership skills in the future.	Identifies what worked well and what he or she could have done differently and proposes specific steps to improve his or her practice.	
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Logistics of Submission

Implementation of the Massachusetts Performance Assessment for Leaders

Access

To access the PAL assessment system, candidates, scorers, and preparation program faculty and staff can use www.MA-PAL.com. Within this website are sign-in links to the ShowEvidence system for candidates and scorers for submitting and scoring work products, respectively. There is also access information for preparation program faculty and staff to their own ShowEvidence system account, as well as a resource page for resource materials through the MA-PAL website.

Once registered in the ShowEvidence system, candidates will have access to the assessment system to upload and manage their tasks, and to receive scoring feedback.

Once registered through the MA-PAL website, scorers can participate in scorer training to achieve proficiency and certification. Once certified, scorers will be assigned candidate tasks to score and be given access to the assessment system for scoring purposes only.

Rules of Assessment

By registering for PAL, candidates are agreeing to abide by the current Rules of Assessment Participation for PAL and all procedures and policies contained on the current www.MA-PAL.com website and in the current PAL Candidate Assessment Handbook. Appendix B includes a copy of these Rules. The Rules outline requirements and candidate understanding pertaining to:

- Purpose of the assessment
- Confirmation of originality of work completed and submitted
- Permissions obtained and confidentiality protection
- Distribution and posting of assessment materials

- Use of assessments
- Rights and obligations regarding PAL
- Changes to the PAL program or procedures
- Compliance with procedures (including rules pertaining to assessment fraud)
- Rules

Confidentiality

Protecting the confidentiality of the performance tasks, the candidates, and the results during the initial pilot and field test is critical. Each candidate will be assigned a unique account to track information and maintain confidentiality. Access to the performance outcomes will also be designed to maintain confidentiality. Candidates will have access to their own work products and scores.

Scorers will be screened and assigned to candidates who are not in their own districts or preparation programs to ensure candidate anonymity and confidentiality.

Preparation programs and pathways will receive summary information on candidate task performance and ratings and total scores for individual candidates. They will not have access to candidates' tasks as evaluated by scorers.

Model confidentiality forms for districts, teachers, students, and their parents (as are necessary for Task 3) are available on the resource page of the MA-PAL website.

Assessment Platform

The PAL assessment system is implemented using a web-based platform that candidates can access from their home or institution using a browser running on a PC or Mac. This system provides access to each task and forms for uploading authentic work products for each task, whether it is a document, presentation, video, audio file, or link to a website. Below are the minimum technical requirements to access the system.

ShowEvidence is a web-based platform that users can access from home or school using a browser running on a PC or Mac. To provide the best user

experience and secure environment, we recommend that users adhere to the following technical requirements:

Hardware and Browser Support

We have elected to support the newer version of most browsers to ensure a secure environment and to enable a more powerful and friendly user experience.

Windows OS			
Version	Internet Explorer	Firefox (1)	Chrome
Windows 7	11.X or higher	37.X or higher	42.x or higher
Windows 8	11.X or higher	37.X or higher	42.x or higher
Apple OS			
Version	Safari	Firefox (1)	Chrome
Mac OS X 10.6.X (Snow Leopard)	N/A	37.X or higher	42.X or higher
Mac OS X 10.7.X (Lion)	N/A	37.X or higher	42.X or higher
Mac OS X 10.8.X (Mountain Lion)	N/A	37.X or higher	42.x or higher
Mac OS X 10.9.X (Mavericks)	Safari 7.X or higher	37.X or higher	42.x or higher
Mac OS X 10.10.X (Yosemite)	Safari 8.X or higher	18.X or higher	27.x or higher
Screen Size	Minimum screen resolution of 1024 x 768 or higher (1280 x 960 preferred) for optimal viewing		

Note:

- 1) All Firefox browsers may require the Flash plug-in to allow the viewing of .mp4 video.

Network Bandwidth

The application will have a relatively light load on network traffic, since most work products will be developed offline. The primary network traffic will be the uploading of large video artifacts and the streaming of video for scoring.

To reduce the size of your videos, we recommend that you export videos from the video editing software at the smallest setting possible. Candidates should not use high definition (HD) settings on the videotapes that they submit.

To ensure optimal throughput, we **strongly** recommend that the minimum connection speed should be T1 line and DSL for home use and that video should be uploaded through a wired connection (**not wireless**) to speed up the uploading of video.

Security

The ShowEvidence platform adheres to the latest standards for data encryption. As a result, all traffic will use SSL protocol. This will ensure that all traffic to and from our servers is encrypted for the protection of user information.

For more information about the ShowEvidence platform, please contact the ShowEvidence support group at support@showevidence.com.

Appendix A

Confidentiality and Anonymity Form

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT *for* LEADERS

Before starting to upload your work products, documents and commentary in the ShowEvidence system for the MA PAL, please ensure that you have protected the rights of children and adults in your school and community, as outlined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In addition, please ensure that you have blinded your entry and removed all identifying information related to you, your program and your faculty. Check the boxes below and **upload this file as one of your Other Documents**.

Confidentiality

By clicking each box below, I verify that I have protected the identity of people in my work product submittals according to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records that contain information directly related to a student and which are maintained by a state, school or district. For more information about FERPA, please see <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>.

Please affirm for each box below:

- I have removed the SCHOOL's name from all documents before uploading.
- I have not used any staff or student names in any documents that I produced before uploading.
- I have removed all staff and student names from all documents before uploading.

Anonymity

All work product submittals must be made anonymous to ensure that scorers are not biased in their ratings. There can be no information that identifies who is submitting the work. Please remove all personally identifying information from your work products before submitting. Please affirm that you have done so by checking the following boxes:

- I have removed MY NAME from all documents before uploading.
- I have removed the name of my preparation program and institution from all documents before uploading.
- I have removed the name of any faculty member who supported me in preparing my work products.

NOTE:

Any work products that contain identifying information will be returned to candidates without scoring. Candidates must delete identifying information and resubmit for scoring.

Appendix B

Massachusetts PAL Rules of Assessment Participation

By registering for PAL, you are agreeing to abide by the current Rules of Assessment Participation for PAL and all procedures and policies contained on the current www.MA-PAL.com website and/or in the current PAL Candidate Handbook.

- 1. PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT:** understand that this assessment is administered for the purpose of fulfilling a requirement for state principal licensure and is only to be taken by individuals to fulfill this requirement. I certify that I am taking this assessment for which I have registered for the purpose of initial school principal/assistant school principal licensure.
- 2. CONFIRMATION OF ORIGINALITY:** I understand that by submitting my PAL materials, I am confirming that:
 - a. I am the person who has completed the assessment, that I have primary responsibility for leading the teachers, staff, and other individuals for the four tasks that comprise this assessment,
 - b. the video clips submitted show the class I observed and my post-observation conference with the teacher about the class I observed, that the materials and student work included as other documents are related to the class I observed and were completed during the observation or other lessons in the same unit of study documented in this assessment,
 - c. I am the sole author of the commentaries and other written artifacts in this assessment, and
 - d. I have cited all materials in the assessment whose sources are from published text, the internet, or other educators.
- 3. PERMISSIONS AND CONFIDENTIALITY:** have protected the identity of people featured in my submission by removing any identifiable information including the name(s) of my district, school, institution, faculty, staff, and students. I understand that I am responsible for obtaining appropriate consents from the teacher(s) and parents/guardians of the students who appear on the video clips I submit. I agree to maintain such consents for at least one year after I submit my assessment. I have ensured confidentiality of individuals appearing

in the video clips I submit by uploading the video only to the designated ShowEvidence system, an integrated third party PAL Platform Provider system. I understand that I may use my assessment materials according to the parameters of the release forms obtained for children and/or adults who appear in the video. I will not display videos publicly (i.e., personal websites, YouTube, Facebook) without expressed permission for this purpose from the adults and students featured in the video.

- 4. DISTRIBUTION AND POSTING OF ASSESSMENT MATERIALS:** I acknowledge that I am not permitted to reproduce any of the information or materials from the PAL handbooks for commercial purposes or otherwise display publicly (i.e., personal websites, YouTube, Facebook). If I do reproduce information or materials from the PAL handbooks for personal use, I will properly attribute the copyright of such materials to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and authorship to Bank Street College of Education.
- 5. USE OF ASSESSMENT:** I agree that my PAL submission, including text, images, and video or audio recordings, without the use of my name or other identifying information, may be used by Bank Street College and/or ShowEvidence for PAL program development and implementation, including scorer training associated with the program. If I provided consent as part of my response to registration questions, my submission, without use of my name or other identifying information, may also be used for continued PAL program activities conducted by Bank Street College such as future benchmarking, validity and reliability studies and other assessment-related research of the PAL. Bank Street College will not show candidate materials publically, make them available in a non-secure way, or use them as exemplars for marketing purposes.
- 6. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS REGARDING PAL:** I understand and agree that the liability for assessment activities, including but not limited to the adequacy or accuracy of assessment materials, the registration processes, scoring, score report accuracy, and information provided to me in connection with PAL, will be limited to score correction or PAL retake. I understand and agree that liability for data loss or file corruption associated with my PAL submission will be limited to an additional PAL submission. To the extent allowed by Massachusetts law, I waive any and all rights to all other claims, specifically including but not limited to claims for negligence arising out of any act or omissions of Bank Street College, ShowEvidence, and/or the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education which is requiring

completion of the PAL (including the agents, employees, contractors, or professional advisors of Bank Street College, ShowEvidence, or such entity).

- 7. CHANGES TO PROGRAM OR PROCEDURES:** understand that the PAL assessment and associated policies and procedures are subject to change at the sole discretion of Bank Street College. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education may make changes to their policies and requirements related to the PAL at their discretion.
- 8. COMPLIANCE WITH PROCEDURES:** understand that if I fail to comply with the rules, requirements, and policies specified or referenced on the current www.MA-PAL.com website, including these Rules of Assessment Participation, or if I take any prohibited actions, my results may be voided, my registration may be canceled, and I may be prohibited in the future from registering for PAL. In addition, I understand that assessment fraud may be grounds for denial, revocation and/or suspension of a school principal/assistant school principal license. Legal proceedings and actions may be pursued as well as other remedies deemed appropriate by Bank Street College, ShowEvidence, or the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, as appropriate. understand that if my submitted artifacts, videos, and/or other documents do not comply with the current rules and submission requirements as specified in the PAL Candidate Handbook and the www.MA-PAL.com website, my submission or portions thereof may not be scored or my scores may be voided. If my submission cannot be scored due to a system error upon submission, I will have the opportunity to resubmit my assessment materials. I understand that my submitted assessment materials, or a portion thereof, may be reviewed by authorized individuals at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education responsible for school principal/assistant school principal certification in order to investigate compliance with the Rules of Assessment Participation, as needed.
- 9. RULES:** I understand that should any of these rules or any other requirement or provision contained on the current www.MA-PAL.com website be declared or determined by any court to be illegal or invalid, the remaining rules, requirements, and provisions will not be affected and the illegal or invalid rule, requirement, or provision shall not be deemed a part of the current PAL website. The headings of each of the Rules of Assessment Participation for PAL are for convenient reference only. They are not a part of the rules themselves; they do not necessarily reflect the entire subject matter of each rule; and they are not intended to be used for the purpose of modifying, interpreting, or construing any of these Rules of Assessment Participation for

PAL. I agree that any legal action arising in connection with my registration for or participation in PAL shall be brought in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and federal courts and I consent to the personal jurisdiction of such courts.