


# Study Guide

## Purpose of This Preparation Guide

This preparation guide is designed to provide information about the content and format of a test for the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations™ (NYSTCE®) program. Education faculty and administrators at teacher preparation institutions may also find the information in this guide useful as they discuss the test with candidates. This preparation guide illustrates some of the potential types of questions that appear on a test; however, the set of sample questions provided in this preparation guide does not necessarily define the content or difficulty of the actual test. All test components (including, but not limited to, directions, question content and formats) may differ from those presented here. Furthermore, review of this preparation guide, in whole or in part, does not guarantee an increased likelihood of success on any of the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations. The NYSTCE program is subject to change at the sole discretion of the New York State Education Department, and any changes will fully supersede the information presented in this document. As a reminder, candidates are responsible for contacting their certification officer(s) regarding any changes to the New York State Teacher Certification Examinations.

## Test Design and Framework

For a complete overview of the assessment design and framework, review the Revised (Sept. 2013) School Building Leader Assessment Design and Framework .

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**NEW YORK STATE TEACHER  
CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS™**

**FIELDS 107/108: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER  
ASSESSMENT DESIGN AND FRAMEWORK**

**March 2014**

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## NEW YORK STATE TEACHER CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS™

### FIELDS 107/108: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER ASSESSMENT DESIGN

This assessment consists of two parts, administered as two separate tests. In order to pass the overall assessment, candidates are required to achieve a score that meets or exceeds a separate performance standard for each part. Each part consists of selected-response items and three performance tasks. In Part One, the greatest emphasis is on instructional leadership. In Part Two, the greatest emphasis is on human capital management.

Part One includes one extended performance task that requires candidates to read a school-based scenario and analyze student performance data, formative assessment data, student and teacher survey results, and teacher evaluation and observation data. Candidates are asked to use the information provided to respond to a series of prompts, identifying strengths and areas of need in the school's instructional program and outlining and supporting strategies for building on the program's strengths and addressing areas of need. Part One also includes two shorter performance tasks, each of which presents a scenario and data describing an authentic situation involving a school's culture or learning environment, or an equity concern in a school. Candidates are required to use the information to respond to prompts, exploring the situation and explaining strategies for addressing important issues related to the situation.

Part Two includes two extended performance tasks. The first task requires candidates to analyze and evaluate a teacher's video-recorded classroom performance using a state-approved rubric for annual professional performance review. Candidates are required to identify evidence from the video relating to each component, determine a level of performance for each rubric component, and identify a teacher strength and area of need, citing observable evidence as support. The second task requires candidates to analyze teacher evaluation data, as well as other types of authentic evidence related to human capital development (e.g., teacher observation data, teacher survey data, state assessment results). Candidates are asked to use the information provided to respond to four short assignments involving short- and long-term human capital development, as well as actions to promote the development of specific teachers. Part Two also includes one shorter performance task that presents a scenario and data describing an authentic situation involving either family engagement in a school or school interactions with a community organization (e.g., business, institution of higher education). Candidates are required to use this information to respond to prompts, exploring the situation and explaining strategies for addressing important issues related to the situation.

Both Part One and Part Two include selected-response item sets. Each set requires candidates to read a school-based scenario and analyze several pieces of authentic evidence relevant to the competency being assessed in order to answer four or five selected-response items. In addition, Part Two includes discrete selected-response items.

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ASSESSMENT DESIGN**

As indicated in the tables that follow, for Part One, the selected-response items count for 40% of the total test score and the performance tasks count for 60% of the total test score. For Part Two, the selected-response items count for 25% of the total test score and the performance tasks count for 75% of the total test score. Within each part, each selected-response item counts the same toward the total test score for that part. The percentage of the total test score derived from each performance task is also indicated in the tables that follow.

The total testing time is four hours for each part. Candidates are free to set their own pace during the test administration.

The following estimates were used to determine the total test time for Part One:

- The extended performance task is designed with the expectation of a response up to 60 minutes.
- Each shorter performance task is designed with the expectation of a response up to 30 minutes.
- The selected-response items are designed with the expectation of response time up to 120 minutes.

Further information regarding the content of each competency can be found in the assessment framework.

**Part One**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Selected-Response</b>		<b>Performance Tasks</b>	
	Approximate Number of Items	Approximate Percentage of Test Score	Number of Tasks	Approximate Percentage of Test Score
0001 Instructional Leadership for Student Success	25	25%	1 (60 minutes)	30%
0002 School Culture and Learning Environment to Promote Excellence and Equity	16	15%	2 (30 minutes each)	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>60%</b>

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The following estimates were used to determine the total test time for Part Two:

- Each extended performance task is designed with the expectation of a response up to 70 minutes.
- The shorter performance task is designed with the expectation of a response up to 40 minutes.
- The selected-response items are designed with the expectation of response time up to 60 minutes.

Further information regarding the content of each competency can be found in the assessment framework.

**Part Two**

Competency	Selected-Response		Performance Tasks	
	Approximate Number of Items	Approximate Percentage of Test Score	Number of Tasks	Approximate Percentage of Test Score
0001 Developing Human Capital to Improve Teacher and Staff Effectiveness and Student Achievement			1 (70 minutes) 1 (with 4 assignments) (70 minutes)	30%  25%
0002 Family and Community Engagement	10	10%	1 (40 minutes)	20%
0003 Operational Systems, Data Systems, and Legal Guidelines to Support Achievement of School Goals	16	15%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>75%</b>

**NEW YORK STATE TEACHER CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS™**

**FIELDS 107/108: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER  
ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK**

**Part One**

Instructional Leadership for Student Success  
School Culture and Learning Environment to Promote Excellence and Equity

**Part Two**

Developing Human Capital to Improve Teacher and Staff Effectiveness  
and Student Achievement  
Family and Community Engagement  
Operational Systems, Data Systems, and Legal Guidelines to Support  
Achievement of School Goals

The New York State School Building Leader has the knowledge and skills necessary to lead stakeholders in developing and implementing a shared vision and goals focused on high levels of student learning and achievement. The building leader knows how to use student achievement data and other evidence to identify vision-aligned goals and to develop, implement, and monitor plans to achieve goals. The building leader has a deep and comprehensive knowledge of research-supported practices for curriculum, instruction, and assessment and knows how to develop and sustain a rigorous, standards-based, data-driven educational program that encourages and enables all students to be successful learners and all teachers to perform at a high level. The building leader is able to develop and enhance an organizational culture of academic excellence, exemplary behavior, and equity that is responsive to all types of student diversity and that promotes students' and educators' accountability for their own performance and outcomes.

To promote the success of every student, the New York State School Building Leader has the knowledge and skills necessary for developing a skilled and dedicated school staff through effective hiring, evaluation, supervision, and professional development opportunities matched to staff needs. The building leader is able to promote a professional learning community of teachers, administrators, and other staff committed to achieving the school vision and goals through ongoing collaboration, professional growth, planning, sharing, and problem solving. The building leader knows how to build positive, productive relationships with families, the business community, institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and other members of the community and gain their active involvement and support in developing and sustaining a strong school program. The building leader understands and adheres to legal and ethical guidelines relevant to school leadership and knows how to implement organizational, fiscal, and operational management systems and practices that support achievement of school goals for teaching and learning.

As used in this document, the term "research-based" refers to those practices that have been shown to be effective in improving learner outcomes through systematic observation or experiment, rigorous data analysis, ability to replicate results, and publication in a peer-reviewed journal. "Evidence-based" refers to strategies empirically shown to improve learner outcomes, though not necessarily based on systematic experiments or published in a peer-reviewed journal.

**FIELDS 107/108: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER  
ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK**

**FIELD 107: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER, PART ONE**

**COMPETENCY 0001—INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR STUDENT SUCCESS**

Performance Expectations

The New York State School Building Leader leads the learning community in developing, articulating, and implementing a shared vision of high levels of learning for every student and effective, research-supported curriculum and instructional practice in every classroom. The building leader uses the vision and relevant data to analyze patterns and trends; identify ambitious goals for improved performance; and develop, implement, evaluate, and monitor plans to achieve those goals. The building leader maintains an intense focus on building a learning organization that is responsive to the needs of all students in preparing them to be college and career ready. The building leader uses assessment data to monitor instructional outcomes and identify needs for improved teaching and learning, establishes systems and practices that support individual accountability for results, and advocates on behalf of student learning.

Performance Indicators

Applies knowledge of skills and strategies for:

- a. collaboratively developing and implementing a school vision of high achievement and college/career readiness for all students
- b. collecting, analyzing, and using data to identify vision-aligned goals for improved teaching and learning; developing plans to achieve goals; monitoring and evaluating plan progress and effectiveness; and revising plans as needed
- c. establishing and leading a comprehensive, coherent, and challenging curricular and assessment program aligned to state and college/career readiness standards, including the New York State P–12 Common Core Learning Standards
- d. planning, organizing, supervising, monitoring, and supporting a rigorous instructional program based on research- or evidence-based best practices for curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- e. leading collaborative efforts to use student assessment data to monitor student progress, identify instructional strengths and needs, and develop plans for improved learning
- f. ensuring teachers' use of instructional practices that promote academic engagement and success for every student, including students with diverse characteristics and needs (e.g., English Language Learners, students with disabilities)
- g. using technology and information systems to enhance curriculum and instruction, support student learning, and monitor instructional effectiveness
- h. ensuring that time spent on quality instruction is maximized
- i. establishing and using monitoring and accountability systems to evaluate the impact of the instructional program and ensure accountability for results
- j. using data to anticipate emerging trends and advocate on behalf of students

**FIELDS 107/108: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER  
ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK**

**FIELD 107: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER, PART ONE**

**COMPETENCY 0002—SCHOOL CULTURE AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT TO  
PROMOTE EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY**

Performance Expectations

The New York State School Building Leader develops, nurtures, and sustains a school culture of achievement focused on rigorous academic and behavior standards and a relentless commitment to high levels of student learning. The building leader works with others in the school community to create a safe, supportive, equitable, and fair environment for all individuals and groups; to use resources efficiently and effectively; and to ensure that consideration of students' academic and social-emotional needs is at the center of all school decision making. The building leader ensures consistent implementation of the building code of conduct and serves as a model of professional, ethical, and respectful behavior at all times.

Performance Indicators

Applies knowledge of skills and strategies for:

- a. establishing an organizational culture of shared commitment to academic excellence and exemplary behavior for all students
- b. ensuring that teachers set rigorous academic and behavior expectations for every student
- c. promoting an environment in which students are consistently learning, respectful, and on task and are active and engaged learners
- d. ensuring that student needs are the primary consideration in all aspects of school decision making and resource use
- e. creating a personalized, motivating, safe, supportive, and equitable learning environment that is responsive to and respectful of student diversity; that supports each student in achieving at the highest levels; and that promotes students' sense of responsibility and accountability for their own learning
- f. ensuring all students full and equitable access to educational programs, curricula, and available supports and safeguarding the values of democracy and diversity
- g. using effective and equitable behavior management systems and systems for supporting students' social-emotional development
- h. modeling professional, ethical, and respectful behavior at all times and demonstrating expectations for the same behavior from others



**FIELDS 107/108: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER  
ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK**

**FIELD 108: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER, PART TWO**

**COMPETENCY 0001—DEVELOPING HUMAN CAPITAL TO IMPROVE TEACHER  
AND STAFF EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

Performance Expectations

The New York State School Building Leader recruits and retains high-quality staff while fostering continuous improvement in instructional and leadership quality and student achievement. The building leader oversees the development of a professional learning community whose members are committed to achieving the school vision and goals through collaboration, planning, and problem solving grounded in reflection on and analysis of current student and school performance. The building leader uses effective observation and evaluation procedures to evaluate the performance of teachers and other staff, provides differentiated professional growth opportunities to improve performance for all staff and learning for all students, and adheres to requirements related to human resource administration.

Performance Indicators

Applies knowledge of skills and strategies for:

- a. recruiting, developing, and retaining teachers and other staff to support achievement of school goals
- b. assigning and scheduling teachers and other staff to meet student needs and support school goals
- c. designing and implementing effective induction and mentoring plans to support, retain, and improve the performance of new teachers
- d. creating a professional learning community characterized by teamwork, reflective practice, discussion, sharing, problem solving, initiative, innovation, and action research whose members are committed to continuous improvement of the organization
- e. creating professional growth plans and using supervisory approaches appropriate to teacher strengths and needs
- f. observing and evaluating the performance of teachers and other staff functioning at different levels, and providing effective feedback
- g. orchestrating high-quality coaching, workshops, team meetings, and other professional learning opportunities to promote professional growth for teacher effectiveness and student learning
- h. providing formal and informal opportunities to mentor emerging leaders, promote teacher leadership, and create a leadership pipeline
- i. acting in accordance with local policies and procedures and state and federal laws and regulations related to human resource administration; processes of collective bargaining and contract management; and issues of equity, diversity, and fairness

**FIELDS 107/108: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER  
ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK**

**FIELD 108: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER, PART TWO**

**COMPETENCY 0002—FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Performance Expectations

The New York State School Building Leader effectively promotes and sustains family and community engagement to support student learning and school improvement efforts. The building leader uses leadership skills to reach out to diverse constituencies, develop positive relationships, and create partnerships beneficial to the school and its students.

Performance Indicators

Applies knowledge of skills and strategies for:

- a. guiding staff to establish and maintain positive, productive, and respectful relationships with parents/guardians and engage them in their children's learning
- b. engaging families and the community to support planning and implementation of change
- c. promoting family involvement in children's education and developing partnerships with families that improve the school's ability to achieve goals for student success
- d. building productive partnerships and other relationships with the business community, institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and others in the community to meet specific school needs
- e. responding effectively to diverse family and community interests and needs
- f. establishing effective communication systems between the school and outside stakeholders, including using community and media relations and public information strategies

**COMPETENCY 0003—OPERATIONAL SYSTEMS, DATA SYSTEMS, AND LEGAL GUIDELINES TO SUPPORT ACHIEVEMENT OF SCHOOL GOALS**

Performance Expectations

The New York State School Building Leader uses, maintains, and monitors effective technological, fiscal, and operational systems and practices and ensures adherence to legal requirements in support of a school organization focused on effective teaching and learning.

Performance Indicators

Applies knowledge of skills and strategies for:

- a. using technological tools and data systems to support organizational management and increase organizational effectiveness
- b. planning, managing, and monitoring school budgets, and allocating, aligning, and efficiently utilizing fiscal resources to achieve educational goals and priorities

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ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK**

**FIELD 108: (SEPT 2013) SCHOOL BUILDING LEADER, PART TWO**

- c. using knowledge of public school financing, sources of funding, restrictions on the uses of funding, and strategies for obtaining additional resources (e.g., grants) to support school programs and promote student success
- d. using efficient and effective procedures for accurate financial management, including recordkeeping, reporting, and internal controls, consistent with legal requirements
- e. using procedures for allocating and utilizing space and time effectively to meet educational needs and for providing a safe, secure, and healthy environment for all students and staff
- f. using procedures for building and information security, crisis planning and prevention, and emergency management in the school setting
- g. using practices to enable the school's physical plant and equipment to operate safely, efficiently, and effectively
- h. adhering to laws, regulations, and ethical standards related to student, staff, and parent/guardian rights, protections, and responsibilities; educational equity; student safety and welfare; students with disabilities, students who are English Language Learners, and other protected classes; building management; and other matters relevant to school leadership

# Study Guide

## Field 107: School Building Leader Part 1 Sample Performance Tasks

### Sample Directions

For each of the assignments in this section, you are to prepare a written response and record it in the on-screen response box presented with each assignment. You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your response for each assignment. **You must write responses to all of the assignments in this section.**

Read each assignment carefully before you begin to work. Think about how you will organize each of your responses. You may use the erasable \*notebooklet to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response. **However, your final response to each assignment must be typed in the on-screen response box presented with the assignment.** Each assignment contains directions for the suggested length for an appropriate response. You may use the word-count feature in the lower left corner of the response box to monitor the length of your response.

Your response to the written assignment will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

**COMPLETENESS:** The degree to which the response addresses all parts of the assignment

**ACCURACY:** The degree to which the response demonstrates the relevant knowledge and skills accurately and effectively

**DEPTH OF SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING:** The degree to which the response provides appropriate examples and details that demonstrate sound reasoning and reflects a strong understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills

Your responses will be evaluated on the criteria above, not on writing ability. However, your responses must be communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgment of your knowledge and skills. Your responses should conform to the conventions of edited American English. This should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

Be sure to write about the assigned topics. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Remember to review your work and make any changes that you think will improve your responses. You may work on the assignments in any order you choose, but be sure to finish all three assignments before the end of the test session.

\*notebooklet: A small, hand-held erasable whiteboard

### Assignment 1: Instructional Leadership

**Use the information below and the six documents provided to complete the task that follows.**

You are the new school building leader of Branson Heights Middle School. The school is located on the outskirts of a relatively affluent suburb. Over the past three years, the school has maintained a steady enrollment of approximately 750 students in grades 6–8. Staffing has remained stable for the last two years. Approximately 25% of students at Branson Heights are eligible for free or reduced-price meals and the community has experienced a slight economic downturn with the closing of a few

major employers. School faculty and staff strive to provide a positive environment for all students and families. Branson Heights enjoys strong community and family support.

The district's new superintendent has charged you with developing an instructional change plan for the middle school. Many of the district's professional development sessions have focused on reevaluating the mathematics curriculum to align it to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), looking at formative assessment data to measure student growth, and conducting cross-curricular planning sessions to embed more complex text in all lessons. Branson Heights has redesigned its mathematics curriculum to reflect the CCLS and to align with the focus topics identified by the CCLS as the major work of each grade. Your teachers have been very active in supporting the curriculum redesign and have asked for professional development to support its implementation.

It is October and you have received the first round of formative assessment data.

## Document 1

### Student Performance Indicators for Branson Heights Middle School

#### State Assessment Results for All Students Two-Year Comparison

This table displays the percentage of students in all groups scoring at or above Level 3 ("meets proficiency standard").

Subject	School		District		State	
	2 Years Ago	Last Year	2 Years Ago	Last Year	2 Years Ago	Last Year
ELA	62%	67%	62%	60%	57%	58%
Math	48%	49%	47%	50%	49%	50%

#### State Assessment Results, by Student Group Two-Year Comparison

This table displays the percentage of students, by group, scoring at or above Level 3 ("meets proficiency standard").

	Percent of School Population	2 Years Ago		Last Year	
		ELA	Math	ELA	Math
Female	51%	67%	44%	72%	44%
Male	49%	59%	52%	62%	54%
Grade 6	31%	64%	53%	72%	54%
Grade 7	33%	65%	50%	70%	51%
Grade 8	36%	61%	45%	64%	46%
Economically Disadvantaged	25%	50%	41%	53%	44%
Limited English Proficient	19%	40%	36%	36%	37%
Students with Disabilities	20%	41%	30%	44%	34%

**Document 2****Formative Assessment Results, ELA and Mathematics**

<b>Formative Assessment Results for ELA Grades 6 through 8</b> (end of 1st quarter)			
(percentage of students answering more than 65% of formative assessment items correctly)			
	<b>Grade 6</b>	<b>Grade 7</b>	<b>Grade 8</b>
Reading Closely & Writing to Learn	51%	50%	47%
Working with Evidence	50%	51%	47%
Understanding through Research	48%	53%	55%
Forming Positions	45%	48%	45%

<b>Formative Assessment Results for Math Grade 6</b> (end of 1st quarter)	
(percentage of students answering more than 65% of formative assessment items correctly)	
Ratios and Proportional Relationships	63%
The Number System	51%
Expressions and Equations	44%

<b>Formative Assessment Results for Math Grade 7</b> (end of 1st quarter)	
(percentage of students answering more than 65% of formative assessment items correctly)	
Ratios and Proportional Relationships	55%
The Number System	36%
Expressions and Equations	34%

<b>Formative Assessment Results for Math Grade 8</b> (end of 1st quarter)	
(percentage of students answering more than 65% of formative assessment items correctly)	
Expressions and Equations	29%
Functions	37%
Geometry	40%

**Document 3****Student Survey Results for Branson Heights Middle School (last year)**

### ELA and Mathematics Classes, Grades 6, 7, 8

<b>Student Survey Results (average percent agreement)</b>						
	<b>Grade 6 ELA Classes</b>	<b>Grade 7 ELA Classes</b>	<b>Grade 8 ELA Classes</b>	<b>Grade 6 Math Classes</b>	<b>Grade 7 Math Classes</b>	<b>Grade 8 Math Classes</b>
My teacher in this class cares about me as an individual.	92%	88%	80%	74%	69%	57%
Students in this class stay busy and don't waste time.	86%	83%	90%	92%	88%	86%
My teacher in this class explains difficult things clearly.	77%	75%	72%	47%	43%	38%
My teacher in this class expects me to explain my answers and clarify why I think what I think.	52%	41%	35%	34%	36%	30%
My teacher in this class makes learning enjoyable.	76%	64%	55%	38%	32%	27%
My teacher in this class wants us to share our thoughts.	84%	82%	78%	28%	35%	22%
My teacher in this class takes time to summarize what we have learned during each lesson.	42%	46%	50%	65%	62%	51%

### Document 4

#### Excerpt from Teacher Survey Results (last year)

<b>Branson Heights Middle School Results of Anonymous Teacher Opinion Survey</b>		
<b>When considering your experiences at Branson Heights Middle School over the past three years, how much do you agree that:</b>	<b>ELA Teachers (percent agreeing or strongly agreeing)</b>	<b>Math Teachers (percent agreeing or strongly agreeing)</b>
You enjoy working in this school.	83%	75%
You feel effective in your role.	81%	73%
All students are receiving instruction appropriate to their needs.	68%	53%
You are interested in professional development opportunities to help you develop your ability to achieve instructional goals for all of your students.	76%	84%
You have access to ideas, support, and materials to effectively differentiate instruction for students of various ability levels.	72%	51%
You possess the knowledge and skills needed to help students from all economic backgrounds and family circumstances progress academically at an adequate pace.	64%	47%
You possess the knowledge and skills needed to help English Language Learners progress academically at an adequate pace.	58%	46%
Diverse learners are welcomed and appreciated at this school.	89%	86%
English Language Learners are generally receiving effective instruction.	61%	52%
The school provides appropriate enrichment opportunities for higher-achieving students.	72%	78%

## **Document 5**

### **Teacher Evaluation Data**

#### **Composite Evaluation Scores: All Teachers (last year)**

**(as assessed through multiple measures, including a state-provided growth score or other comparable measure and locally selected measure of student achievement and other measures of teacher effectiveness)**



		Ineffective		Developing		Effective		Highly Effective	
Subject Area	Total Teachers	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Grade 6 ELA	6	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	66.7%	2	33.3%
Grade 6 Math	6	0	0.0%	1	16.7%	5	83.3%	0	0.0%
Grade 6 Special Education	4	0	0.0%	1	25.0%	2	50.0%	1	25.0%
Grade 6 Non-Core (G&T, Library Media, Health)	3	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	66.7%	1	33.3%
Grade 7 ELA	6	0	0.0%	1	16.7%	3	50.0%	2	33.3%
Grade 7 Math	6	0	0.0%	2	33.3%	3	50.0%	1	16.7%
Grade 7 Special Education	3	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%
Grade 7 Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language	9	0	0.0%	1	11.1%	6	66.7%	2	22.2%
Grade 8 ELA	6	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	66.7%	2	33.3%
Grade 8 Math	6	0	0.0%	2	33.3%	3	50.0%	1	16.7%
Grade 8 Special Education	2	0	0.0%	0	0%	2	100%	0	0.0%
Grade 8 Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language	10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	50.0%	5	50.0%
Grade 6-8 Specialty Areas (PE, Art, Music, FACS)	10	1	10.0%	1	10.0%	4	40.0%	4	40.0%

Key:

G&T – Gifted and Talented

PE – Physical Education

FACS – Family and Consumer Science

## Document 6

### Teacher Observation Summary Data (last year)

(number of teachers scoring at each level of performance on the teacher practice rubric)

<b>Domain 1: Planning and Preparation</b>	ELA	U 1	B 1	P 10		D 6
	Math	U 2		B 3	P 10	
<b>Domain 2: The Classroom Environment</b>	ELA	U 2	B 2	P 9		D 5
	Math	U 3		B 5	P 7	
<b>Domain 3: Instruction</b>	ELA	U 1	B 3	P 10		D 4
	Math	U 2	B 6		P 8	
<b>Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities</b>	ELA	U 1	B 4	P 8		D 5
	Math	U 3		B 4	P 7	

U	Unsatisfactory
B	Basic
P	Proficient
D	Distinguished

Read the six documents provided. Based on the information provided, respond to each of the following prompts. Be very specific in your answers, citing evidence from the scenario and documents as appropriate.

- Identify one strength of this school, citing evidence to support your response.
- Identify three areas of need in the instructional program, citing evidence to support each need.
- Which area of need would be your highest priority? Explain why.
- What are two important questions you must answer to address your highest priority area of need? Explain why each question is important to address.
- How will you go about getting answers to EACH question?
- What actions would you take to address the school's priority need? Explain why.
- How would you leverage the identified strength of the school (see Part A) to address the priority need?
- What possible challenges might your actions create and what are some ways that you could manage these challenges?

Your response should be approximately 600–800 words and may be in a format of your choice (e.g., paragraphs, bulleted list).

### **Sample Response to Assignment 1**

(710 words)

A. A major strength at Branson Heights Middle School is the staff's support of students and dedication to improvement. Teachers have supported the curriculum redesign and over 75% of all math and ELA teachers would like professional development to improve their practice. Moreover, staff are aware of areas where improvement is needed such as their ability to meet the needs of ELLs.

B. 1. Student performance in mathematics is stagnant, with just under 50%

of students meeting proficiency on statewide assessments and minimal growth for each grade level and student subgroup. Formative assessment results suggest limited understanding of CCLS-aligned math concepts. 47% of math faculty report lacking the knowledge and skills to teach all students. Student survey results suggest low teacher expectations, minimal explanation, and failure to engage students in higher-level thinking.

2. Students who are limited English proficient (LEP) and students with disabilities (SWDs) score substantially below the general population and below students who are economically disadvantaged on statewide assessments. While SWDs showed some improvement over the past two years, the performance of students who are LEP declined in ELA, to 36% meeting proficiency, and remained flat in math.

3. Discrepancies exist between teacher evaluation and teacher observation summary data. A majority of teachers were rated "effective" or "highly effective" last year. Teacher observations indicate weaknesses, however. For example, 8 of 18 math teachers were rated "basic" or "unsatisfactory" in the classroom environment and instruction domains.

C. The highest priority is low achievement for students who are LEP and SWDs. 19% of students are identified as LEP and 20% as SWDs, well above the state average. Less than 45% of these populations are meeting proficiency standards in ELA and Math. A substantial portion of the student population thus does not receive adequate instruction. Support for these subgroups is needed to increase their access to the curriculum, improving equity and overall school performance.

D. 1. What professional development opportunities and instructional resources would be most effective in helping teachers reach students who are LEP and SWDs? This information is essential to ensure teachers gain the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of all students. For example, only 58% of ELA and 46% of math teachers feel they possess the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of ELLs, indicating many cannot provide effective instruction for students who are LEP. Generalized professional development will not be sufficient.

2. What steps can be taken to align teachers' self-perceptions with evidence indicating weaknesses in instructional practices and skills? A majority of teachers feel they are effective, despite evidence that students who are LEP and SWDs are not receiving adequate instruction. Teachers who recognize the need for improvement are more likely to adopt new practices and skills.

E. The first step is conducting a needs assessment to determine what professional development is required for faculty to meet the needs of students who are LEP and SWDs. In addition, teachers should engage in reflection and cycles of inquiry to recognize discrepancies between their perceptions and evidence of instructional weaknesses. The principal's role will be to facilitate data analysis and the development and implementation of action plans.

F. 1. Utilize grade level and/or departmental teams to review student performance data, examine student work, assess instructional practices, and

commit to improvement in instruction for students who are LEP and SWDs. Staff must own the performance of students in these subgroups and understand each teacher's role in improving their achievement.

2. Implement job-embedded professional development activities related to improving instruction for these subgroups. Teachers should spend the majority of their team planning and meeting time focusing on student learning and instructional improvement.

G. Branson Heights's positive learning environment can be leveraged to address this need. In particular, strong interest in professional development opportunities to achieve instructional goals for all students (76% of ELA and 84% of math teachers) could encourage staff to commit to instructional improvement.

H. 1. Tension from teachers with inflated self-perception of instructional effectiveness when confronted with contradictory data.

2. Communicating the need to improve instruction and achievement for students who are LEP and SWDs as part of an overall school improvement plan.

Managing these challenges will require full staff involvement. Working with teacher leaders and implementing effective data analysis throughout the school will be important. The goal is to instill a heightened sense of commitment to improvement for all students.

## Analysis of Response

The response demonstrates strength in the following Performance Characteristics.

### **Completeness: The degree to which the response addresses all parts of the assignment**

The response thoroughly and completely addresses all aspects of each prompt, including actions to be taken, rationales for these choices, and evidence from the documents. The evidence cited is sufficient in quantity and quality and reflects an accurate interpretation of the data. The response illustrates the inquiry stance of a strong instructional leader. Taken as a whole, the multiple sections of the response draw upon all sources of data provided in the documents.

### **Accuracy: The degree to which the response demonstrates the relevant knowledge and skills accurately and effectively**

The response reflects an accurate interpretation of the data provided, as well as the content of the scenario. Student and teacher survey information are cited to support the identified school strength, and the issue identified as the highest priority—low achievement for students who are LEP and SWDs—is clearly essential in promoting achievement for all students. Assessment data are used accurately to identify concerns and establish appropriate priorities related to instruction. Information drawn from the teacher survey data is used to identify steps which are likely to ensure that all students, including students who are LEP and SWDs, have full and equitable access to educational programs and curricula. The response further demonstrates an understanding of the need for specific, targeted professional development in response to individual teacher needs, as well as the actions the school building leader should take to support and monitor plans for teacher growth and provide effective feedback.

**Depth of Support and Understanding: The degree to which the response provides appropriate examples and details that demonstrate sound reasoning and reflects a strong understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills**

The response illustrates the depth of understanding needed by a school building leader to act as an effective instructional leader and to establish the culture and foundational structures that would enhance the professional growth of the staff. Rationales provided for decisions about immediate priorities and areas for further inquiry demonstrate a balanced use of objective and subjective data to guide leadership actions. By raising questions that distinguish between the availability of instructional resources and teacher perceptions of their status and needs, the response illustrates a problem-solving approach that effectively utilizes both materials and staff motivation. In addition, the analysis of challenges is logical and significant, and conveys a school building leader's respect for staff, willingness to engage teacher leaders in distributed leadership, and awareness of potential biases. Overall, the response demonstrates understanding of the scenario, appropriate use of data, and sound, logical reasoning.

## Assignment 2: Educational Equity

Use the information below to complete the task that follows.

You are the new school building leader of an urban middle school with an enrollment of approximately 1,200 students in grades 6–8. The school has a gifted and talented program in which eligible students are pulled out for enrichment classes in English Language Arts and mathematics once a week. Most of the students in the program participated in a gifted and talented program at one of several district elementary schools.

Before the school year begins, a group of parents and guardians comes to see you with concerns about the gifted and talented program's admission criteria. In your first meeting with staff, you met with various faculty members and teams within the building, including Ms. S, the gifted and talented teacher. You learned that Ms. S has overseen the gifted and talented program for the past five years. During that time, the program has grown from 50 participants to approximately 125 participants. Ms. S told you that students are selected for the program based on a combination of scores on diagnostic screening assessments and teacher nominations.

During the first few weeks of school, you walked through the school building throughout the day visiting classrooms and getting to know students, faculty, and staff. You noticed that the school as a whole reflects substantial economic, cultural, and language diversity; however, in your visits to the gifted enrichment classes, you realized that very few students who participate in the gifted and talented program reflect this diversity. After checking available information on students who currently participate in the gifted and talented program, you created the table below.

You visited a number of general education classrooms and noted several students who appeared to have advanced knowledge and understanding, with outstanding verbal abilities. They made particularly articulate responses that reflected deep understanding of the topics at hand, and their questioning of the teacher exceeded typical classroom exchanges. It is apparent in your observations that these students would benefit from more challenging instruction. You learned from Ms. S that some of these students are not eligible for the program, due to low scores on the screening assessments used for selection.

<b>Students in the Gifted and Talented Program, Current Year</b>		
<b>Student Subgroup</b>	<b>Percentage of the Student Body</b>	<b>Percentage of All Students in the Gifted and Talented Program</b>
Limited English Proficient	27%	4%
Economically Disadvantaged	52%	15%
Students with Disabilities	11%	1%

Based on the information provided, respond to each of the following prompts. Be very specific in your answers, citing evidence from the scenario as appropriate.

- A. What is the primary issue presented in this scenario, and why do you believe this to be so?
- B. What are two important questions you must address in order to explore this issue? Explain why each is important to address.
- C. How will you go about getting answers to EACH question? What challenges might you face in getting answers to your questions?
- D. Describe one possible finding of your inquiry process and the potential action that finding would imply.

Your response should be approximately 300–400 words and may be in a format of your choice (e.g., paragraphs, bulleted list).

### **Sample Response to Assignment 2**

(388 words)

The primary issue is the underrepresentation of diverse students in the gifted and talented program. The program does not reflect the school's diversity despite recent expansion. Parental/guardian concerns about the program's admission criteria, demographic data regarding the program, meetings with faculty, and classroom observations all demonstrate the seriousness of this issue.

One question I will address is: To what extent does the selection process for the program provide access to all students? This question focuses attention on the process for teacher nominations, the diagnostic assessment, as well as the program's design. These elements could inadvertently create a narrow focus or bias in selection. A second important question is: Are teachers setting rigorous academic expectations for all students? Evidence from classroom visits suggests that there are a number of students in the school whose verbal abilities and advanced knowledge and understanding of content might make them excellent candidates for the program.

To answer the first question, I would conduct a thorough review of the selection process in light of current research and best practice. I would speak with referring teachers to determine their selection criteria. In addition, I would also consider whether the program structure or schedule

impacts which students are nominated. Further, observations will be required to answer the second question. I would share evidence from observations with faculty and hold discussions focused on high expectations for all as well as access to the gifted and talented program. It would be appropriate to share all findings with Ms. S and involve her in actions to expand access and increase equity. Challenges may arise as I review the program. I may find that the timing or the criteria for the nomination process are problematic. I may also find that some teachers do not believe all student subgroups are capable of succeeding in the program due to the rigorous expectations.

One possible finding is that the current selection process for the gifted and talented program is restricting access. If so, I would need to follow any procedures established by my district to address my concerns regarding the need to increase diversity in the program. My conversations may include but would not be limited to the diagnostic exam, the admissions process, professional development aimed at helping teachers recognize students who would benefit from the program, and increased administrator oversight and support.

## Analysis of Response

The response demonstrates strength in the following Performance Characteristics.

### **Completeness: The degree to which the response addresses all parts of the assignment**

The response fully addresses all components of each question. A primary issue, two questions to be addressed, steps to answer each question, possible challenges, potential findings, and actions necessitated by those findings are identified and explained. In addition, the response is supported by a thorough and accurate interpretation of the scenario and the data provided.

### **Accuracy: The degree to which the response demonstrates the relevant knowledge and skills accurately and effectively**

The response identifies a primary issue that is rooted in an accurate evaluation of the concerns presented in the scenario and table. The failure of the gifted and talented program to reflect the school's diverse population, parent/guardian concerns about admission criteria, and observations of student performance are all considered. The response identifies appropriate questions regarding the accessibility of the selection process and whether or not teachers are setting rigorous expectations for all. The importance of these questions is accurately explained, and appropriate, effective procedures for answering them are outlined. The challenges and possible findings identified are accurate, logical, and probable given the scenario and data. The action in response to possible findings is clearly described and likely to be effective.

### **Depth of Support and Understanding: The degree to which the response provides appropriate examples and details that demonstrate sound reasoning and reflects a strong understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills**

The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the role of the school building leader in the given situation. A clear emphasis is placed on working with others in the school community to promote excellence and equity. Accurate and thorough interpretation and synthesis of relevant information in the scenario and data are evident throughout the response, as is a firm commitment to academic excellence, creating an equitable learning environment, and ensuring all students are

considered for educational programs of this nature. Clear and relevant examples and details are given throughout.

## Assignment 3: School Culture and Learning Environment

Use the information below to complete the task that follows.

You are the new school building leader in a rural school with an enrollment of approximately 500 students in grades K–12. The school has experienced very little staff turnover over the past five years and, on average, the teachers have 5–8 years of teaching experience. Your review of student performance on the state and formative assessments shows that student performance in mathematics and English Language Arts has remained flat for the past two years.

A few months into the school year, you noticed that there seems to be a relatively large number of referrals for minor student discipline problems in grades 3–5, such as excessive talking, inappropriate language, roughhousing, and uncooperative behavior. A summary of the referral data is shown below. The school has a code of conduct in place that outlines behavior guidelines and consequences for inappropriate behavior. In the past, teachers have used these guidelines to develop their own classroom rules and expectations.

For the next teacher professional development day, you asked members of your leadership team to plan a series of conversations about classroom management based on the teacher practice rubric the district adopted for evaluation purposes. After allowing teachers time to reflect on the conversations and their own practice, you decided to make a brief visit to each third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade classroom to observe student behavior and interactions and gain insight into teachers' approaches to maximizing opportunities for learning in the classroom. During these visits, you observe that most teachers seem to have caring relationships with their students. However, some of the teachers interacted with students in an almost overly casual manner.

During the classroom visits, you also had an opportunity to see some of the classroom discipline issues. Some teachers ignored behavioral problems and moved on with instruction. In a couple of the classes, a significant portion of the students in the class were either off task or so distracted by their off-task peers that they were not effectively participating in the instruction. Other teachers stopped instruction and administered immediate consequences for each misbehavior, consuming significant class time. In general, teachers exhibited a range of responses to problem behaviors within and across classes.



<b>Discipline Referrals by Teacher for Quarters 1 and 2, Grades 3, 4, 5 (current year)</b>							
	<b>Excessive Talking</b>	<b>Inappropriate Language</b>	<b>Uncooperative</b>	<b>Roughhousing</b>	<b>Disrespectful</b>	<b>Disruptive</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Teacher A (grade 3)	0	1	0	2	0	2	<b>5</b>
Teacher B (grade 3)	5	0	2	5	3	2	<b>17</b>
Teacher C (grade 4)	8	2	8	3	4	7	<b>32</b>
Teacher D (grade 4)	0	1	3	0	2	5	<b>11</b>
Teacher E (grade 5)	0	2	7	1	0	1	<b>11</b>
Teacher F (grade 5)	13	2	8	5	5	11	<b>44</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>120</b>

Based on the information provided, respond to each of the following prompts. Be very specific in your answers, citing evidence from the scenario as appropriate.

- What is an important school culture and learning environment issue presented in this scenario? Explain why the issue you chose is important.
- What are two important questions you must address in order to explore this issue? Explain why each is important to address.
- How will you go about getting answers to EACH question? What challenges might you face in getting answers to your questions?
- Describe one possible finding of your inquiry process and the potential action that finding would imply.

Your response should be approximately 300–400 words and may be in a format of your choice (e.g., paragraphs, bulleted list).

### **Sample Response to Assignment 3**

(388 words)

A. Classroom discipline issues are leading to decreased instructional time. There have been approximately 120 discipline referrals in grades 3–5 during the current school year for minor problems. Students who are not in class are not engaged in learning. In addition, evidence from classroom visits suggests discipline problems continue despite the high rate of referral, resulting in students being disengaged or distracted.

B. Two questions that must be addressed are: 1) Are teachers using the code of conduct to create classroom rules and expectations that are taught to students? and 2) To what extent are teachers consistently applying rules and expectation in their classrooms? The first question is important

because classroom visits and discipline referral data suggest that individual teachers are setting very different rules and expectations. Also, it is not clear that all teachers are teaching the rules and expectations they set to students. The second question is important because it appears from classroom visits that some teachers are not consistently applying rules and expectations. It is necessary to determine whether teachers are deviating from or ignoring school discipline policy.

C. To find answers to these questions:

Survey teachers regarding how they align classroom rules and expectations with the code of conduct and how they are teaching rules and expectations to students, as well as their professional development needs.

Conduct formal classroom observations in grade 3-5 classrooms, using an appropriate rubric to document student behavior and evaluate teacher responses. Evidence from the observations would provide a basis for feedback to teachers regarding classroom management.

Challenges may include teachers' resistance to what they might perceive as an intrusion into their classroom management. In addition, staff perceptions of student discipline and their own implementation of the code of conduct may not be accurate.

D. A possible finding is that several teachers face significant challenges in classroom management. Such a finding would require prompt action. For example, referral data indicate Teachers C and F need immediate assistance and support for improving behavior in their classrooms. Classroom visits further suggest other teachers ignore behavior problems that become distractions for all students. These teachers need targeted support to improve classroom management, such as coaching, additional professional development activities, and regular observations and evidence-based feedback from the school building leader. After taking these steps, the building leader can hold staff accountable for maintaining appropriate behavior standards.

## Analysis of Response

The response demonstrates strength in the following Performance Characteristics.

### **Completeness: The degree to which the response addresses all parts of the assignment**

The response fully addresses all components of each prompt within the assignment. A primary issue, two important questions to be addressed, procedures for answering each question, potential challenges, a potential finding, and a planned response to that potential finding are all presented and sufficiently developed. Evidence from the scenario and data table are cited appropriately throughout the response.

### **Accuracy: The degree to which the response demonstrates the relevant knowledge and skills accurately and effectively**

The response identifies a primary issue, discipline issues leading to decreased instructional time, that

is justified by evidence presented in the scenario and table. The importance of this issue is accurately explained. The response identifies two crucial questions to address regarding implementation of the code of conduct and discipline issues in other grade bands. Appropriate and effective procedures for answering each question are outlined, with consideration given to the possible need for professional development and the use of rubrics in classroom observations. Challenges and possible finding are significant and highly probable. The proposed action responding to that finding is both appropriate and effective.

**Depth of Support and Understanding:** The degree to which the response provides appropriate examples and details that demonstrate sound reasoning and reflects a strong understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills

The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the role of the school building leader with regard to establishing and maintaining a school culture focused on academic excellence. Careful analysis and evaluation of evidence presented in the scenario and table is evident throughout the response, as well as an understanding of how various factors such as student behavior and teacher perceptions affect the culture of the school. Clear and relevant examples and details are used throughout the response to support analyses and proposed actions.

## Performance Characteristics for Assignments 1–3

The following characteristics guide the scoring of responses to each assignment.

<b>COMPLETENESS</b>	The degree to which the response addresses all parts of the assignment
<b>ACCURACY</b>	The degree to which the response demonstrates the relevant knowledge and skills accurately and effectively
<b>DEPTH OF SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING</b>	The degree to which the response provides appropriate examples and details that demonstrate sound reasoning and reflects a strong understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills

## Score Scale for Assignments 1–3

Scores will be assigned to each response to the assignments according to the following score scale.

<b>Score Point</b>	<b>Score Point Description</b>
<b>4</b>	The "4" response reflects a thorough command of the relevant knowledge and skills.
<b>3</b>	The "3" response reflects a general command of the relevant knowledge and skills.
<b>2</b>	The "2" response reflects a limited command of the relevant knowledge and skills.
<b>1</b>	The "1" response reflects little or no command of the relevant knowledge and skills.
<b>U</b>	The response is unscorable because it is unrelated to the assigned topic or off-task, unreadable, written in a language other than English or contains an insufficient amount of original work to score.
<b>B</b>	No response.

# Study Guide

## Field 107: School Building Leader Part 1 Sample Performance Tasks

### Sample Directions

For each of the assignments in this section, you are to prepare a written response and record it in the on-screen response box presented with each assignment. You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your response for each assignment. **You must write responses to all of the assignments in this section.**

Read each assignment carefully before you begin to work. Think about how you will organize each of your responses. You may use the erasable \*notebooklet to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response. **However, your final response to each assignment must be typed in the on-screen response box presented with the assignment.** Each assignment contains directions for the suggested length for an appropriate response. You may use the word-count feature in the lower left corner of the response box to monitor the length of your response.

Your response to the written assignment will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

**COMPLETENESS:** The degree to which the response addresses all parts of the assignment

**ACCURACY:** The degree to which the response demonstrates the relevant knowledge and skills accurately and effectively

**DEPTH OF SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING:** The degree to which the response provides appropriate examples and details that demonstrate sound reasoning and reflects a strong understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills

Your responses will be evaluated on the criteria above, not on writing ability. However, your responses must be communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgment of your knowledge and skills. Your responses should conform to the conventions of edited American English. This should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

Be sure to write about the assigned topics. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Remember to review your work and make any changes that you think will improve your responses. You may work on the assignments in any order you choose, but be sure to finish all three assignments before the end of the test session.

\*notebooklet: A small, hand-held erasable whiteboard

### Assignment 1: Instructional Leadership

**Use the information below and the six documents provided to complete the task that follows.**

You are the new school building leader of Branson Heights Middle School. The school is located on the outskirts of a relatively affluent suburb. Over the past three years, the school has maintained a steady enrollment of approximately 750 students in grades 6–8. Staffing has remained stable for the last two years. Approximately 25% of students at Branson Heights are eligible for free or reduced-price meals and the community has experienced a slight economic downturn with the closing of a few

major employers. School faculty and staff strive to provide a positive environment for all students and families. Branson Heights enjoys strong community and family support.

The district's new superintendent has charged you with developing an instructional change plan for the middle school. Many of the district's professional development sessions have focused on reevaluating the mathematics curriculum to align it to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), looking at formative assessment data to measure student growth, and conducting cross-curricular planning sessions to embed more complex text in all lessons. Branson Heights has redesigned its mathematics curriculum to reflect the CCLS and to align with the focus topics identified by the CCLS as the major work of each grade. Your teachers have been very active in supporting the curriculum redesign and have asked for professional development to support its implementation.

It is October and you have received the first round of formative assessment data.

## Document 1

### Student Performance Indicators for Branson Heights Middle School

#### State Assessment Results for All Students Two-Year Comparison

This table displays the percentage of students in all groups scoring at or above Level 3 ("meets proficiency standard").

Subject	School		District		State	
	2 Years Ago	Last Year	2 Years Ago	Last Year	2 Years Ago	Last Year
ELA	62%	67%	62%	60%	57%	58%
Math	48%	49%	47%	50%	49%	50%

#### State Assessment Results, by Student Group Two-Year Comparison

This table displays the percentage of students, by group, scoring at or above Level 3 ("meets proficiency standard").

	Percent of School Population	2 Years Ago		Last Year	
		ELA	Math	ELA	Math
Female	51%	67%	44%	72%	44%
Male	49%	59%	52%	62%	54%
Grade 6	31%	64%	53%	72%	54%
Grade 7	33%	65%	50%	70%	51%
Grade 8	36%	61%	45%	64%	46%
Economically Disadvantaged	25%	50%	41%	53%	44%
Limited English Proficient	19%	40%	36%	36%	37%
Students with Disabilities	20%	41%	30%	44%	34%

**Document 2****Formative Assessment Results, ELA and Mathematics**

<b>Formative Assessment Results for ELA Grades 6 through 8</b> (end of 1st quarter)			
(percentage of students answering more than 65% of formative assessment items correctly)			
	<b>Grade 6</b>	<b>Grade 7</b>	<b>Grade 8</b>
Reading Closely & Writing to Learn	51%	50%	47%
Working with Evidence	50%	51%	47%
Understanding through Research	48%	53%	55%
Forming Positions	45%	48%	45%

<b>Formative Assessment Results for Math Grade 6</b> (end of 1st quarter)	
(percentage of students answering more than 65% of formative assessment items correctly)	
Ratios and Proportional Relationships	63%
The Number System	51%
Expressions and Equations	44%

<b>Formative Assessment Results for Math Grade 7</b> (end of 1st quarter)	
(percentage of students answering more than 65% of formative assessment items correctly)	
Ratios and Proportional Relationships	55%
The Number System	36%
Expressions and Equations	34%

<b>Formative Assessment Results for Math Grade 8</b> (end of 1st quarter)	
(percentage of students answering more than 65% of formative assessment items correctly)	
Expressions and Equations	29%
Functions	37%
Geometry	40%

**Document 3****Student Survey Results for Branson Heights Middle School (last year)**

### ELA and Mathematics Classes, Grades 6, 7, 8

<b>Student Survey Results (average percent agreement)</b>						
	<b>Grade 6 ELA Classes</b>	<b>Grade 7 ELA Classes</b>	<b>Grade 8 ELA Classes</b>	<b>Grade 6 Math Classes</b>	<b>Grade 7 Math Classes</b>	<b>Grade 8 Math Classes</b>
My teacher in this class cares about me as an individual.	92%	88%	80%	74%	69%	57%
Students in this class stay busy and don't waste time.	86%	83%	90%	92%	88%	86%
My teacher in this class explains difficult things clearly.	77%	75%	72%	47%	43%	38%
My teacher in this class expects me to explain my answers and clarify why I think what I think.	52%	41%	35%	34%	36%	30%
My teacher in this class makes learning enjoyable.	76%	64%	55%	38%	32%	27%
My teacher in this class wants us to share our thoughts.	84%	82%	78%	28%	35%	22%
My teacher in this class takes time to summarize what we have learned during each lesson.	42%	46%	50%	65%	62%	51%

### Document 4

#### Excerpt from Teacher Survey Results (last year)

<b>Branson Heights Middle School Results of Anonymous Teacher Opinion Survey</b>		
<b>When considering your experiences at Branson Heights Middle School over the past three years, how much do you agree that:</b>	<b>ELA Teachers (percent agreeing or strongly agreeing)</b>	<b>Math Teachers (percent agreeing or strongly agreeing)</b>
You enjoy working in this school.	83%	75%
You feel effective in your role.	81%	73%
All students are receiving instruction appropriate to their needs.	68%	53%
You are interested in professional development opportunities to help you develop your ability to achieve instructional goals for all of your students.	76%	84%
You have access to ideas, support, and materials to effectively differentiate instruction for students of various ability levels.	72%	51%
You possess the knowledge and skills needed to help students from all economic backgrounds and family circumstances progress academically at an adequate pace.	64%	47%
You possess the knowledge and skills needed to help English Language Learners progress academically at an adequate pace.	58%	46%
Diverse learners are welcomed and appreciated at this school.	89%	86%
English Language Learners are generally receiving effective instruction.	61%	52%
The school provides appropriate enrichment opportunities for higher-achieving students.	72%	78%

## **Document 5**

### **Teacher Evaluation Data**

#### **Composite Evaluation Scores: All Teachers (last year)**

**(as assessed through multiple measures, including a state-provided growth score or other comparable measure and locally selected measure of student achievement and other measures of teacher effectiveness)**



		Ineffective		Developing		Effective		Highly Effective	
Subject Area	Total Teachers	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Grade 6 ELA	6	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	66.7%	2	33.3%
Grade 6 Math	6	0	0.0%	1	16.7%	5	83.3%	0	0.0%
Grade 6 Special Education	4	0	0.0%	1	25.0%	2	50.0%	1	25.0%
Grade 6 Non-Core (G&T, Library Media, Health)	3	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	66.7%	1	33.3%
Grade 7 ELA	6	0	0.0%	1	16.7%	3	50.0%	2	33.3%
Grade 7 Math	6	0	0.0%	2	33.3%	3	50.0%	1	16.7%
Grade 7 Special Education	3	1	33.3%	0	0.0%	2	66.7%	0	0.0%
Grade 7 Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language	9	0	0.0%	1	11.1%	6	66.7%	2	22.2%
Grade 8 ELA	6	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	66.7%	2	33.3%
Grade 8 Math	6	0	0.0%	2	33.3%	3	50.0%	1	16.7%
Grade 8 Special Education	2	0	0.0%	0	0%	2	100%	0	0.0%
Grade 8 Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language	10	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	50.0%	5	50.0%
Grade 6-8 Specialty Areas (PE, Art, Music, FACS)	10	1	10.0%	1	10.0%	4	40.0%	4	40.0%

Key:

G&T – Gifted and Talented

PE – Physical Education

FACS – Family and Consumer Science

## Document 6

### Teacher Observation Summary Data (last year)

(number of teachers scoring at each level of performance on the teacher practice rubric)

<b>Domain 1: Planning and Preparation</b>	ELA	U 1	B 1	P 10		D 6
	Math	U 2		B 3	P 10	
<b>Domain 2: The Classroom Environment</b>	ELA	U 2	B 2	P 9		D 5
	Math	U 3		B 5	P 7	
<b>Domain 3: Instruction</b>	ELA	U 1	B 3	P 10		D 4
	Math	U 2	B 6		P 8	
<b>Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities</b>	ELA	U 1	B 4	P 8		D 5
	Math	U 3		B 4	P 7	

U	Unsatisfactory
B	Basic
P	Proficient
D	Distinguished

Read the six documents provided. Based on the information provided, respond to each of the following prompts. Be very specific in your answers, citing evidence from the scenario and documents as appropriate.

- Identify one strength of this school, citing evidence to support your response.
- Identify three areas of need in the instructional program, citing evidence to support each need.
- Which area of need would be your highest priority? Explain why.
- What are two important questions you must answer to address your highest priority area of need? Explain why each question is important to address.
- How will you go about getting answers to EACH question?
- What actions would you take to address the school's priority need? Explain why.
- How would you leverage the identified strength of the school (see Part A) to address the priority need?
- What possible challenges might your actions create and what are some ways that you could manage these challenges?

Your response should be approximately 600–800 words and may be in a format of your choice (e.g., paragraphs, bulleted list).

### **Sample Response to Assignment 1**

(710 words)

A. A major strength at Branson Heights Middle School is the staff's support of students and dedication to improvement. Teachers have supported the curriculum redesign and over 75% of all math and ELA teachers would like professional development to improve their practice. Moreover, staff are aware of areas where improvement is needed such as their ability to meet the needs of ELLs.

B. 1. Student performance in mathematics is stagnant, with just under 50%

of students meeting proficiency on statewide assessments and minimal growth for each grade level and student subgroup. Formative assessment results suggest limited understanding of CCLS-aligned math concepts. 47% of math faculty report lacking the knowledge and skills to teach all students. Student survey results suggest low teacher expectations, minimal explanation, and failure to engage students in higher-level thinking.

2. Students who are limited English proficient (LEP) and students with disabilities (SWDs) score substantially below the general population and below students who are economically disadvantaged on statewide assessments. While SWDs showed some improvement over the past two years, the performance of students who are LEP declined in ELA, to 36% meeting proficiency, and remained flat in math.

3. Discrepancies exist between teacher evaluation and teacher observation summary data. A majority of teachers were rated "effective" or "highly effective" last year. Teacher observations indicate weaknesses, however. For example, 8 of 18 math teachers were rated "basic" or "unsatisfactory" in the classroom environment and instruction domains.

C. The highest priority is low achievement for students who are LEP and SWDs. 19% of students are identified as LEP and 20% as SWDs, well above the state average. Less than 45% of these populations are meeting proficiency standards in ELA and Math. A substantial portion of the student population thus does not receive adequate instruction. Support for these subgroups is needed to increase their access to the curriculum, improving equity and overall school performance.

D. 1. What professional development opportunities and instructional resources would be most effective in helping teachers reach students who are LEP and SWDs? This information is essential to ensure teachers gain the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of all students. For example, only 58% of ELA and 46% of math teachers feel they possess the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of ELLs, indicating many cannot provide effective instruction for students who are LEP. Generalized professional development will not be sufficient.

2. What steps can be taken to align teachers' self-perceptions with evidence indicating weaknesses in instructional practices and skills? A majority of teachers feel they are effective, despite evidence that students who are LEP and SWDs are not receiving adequate instruction. Teachers who recognize the need for improvement are more likely to adopt new practices and skills.

E. The first step is conducting a needs assessment to determine what professional development is required for faculty to meet the needs of students who are LEP and SWDs. In addition, teachers should engage in reflection and cycles of inquiry to recognize discrepancies between their perceptions and evidence of instructional weaknesses. The principal's role will be to facilitate data analysis and the development and implementation of action plans.

F. 1. Utilize grade level and/or departmental teams to review student performance data, examine student work, assess instructional practices, and

commit to improvement in instruction for students who are LEP and SWDs. Staff must own the performance of students in these subgroups and understand each teacher's role in improving their achievement.

2. Implement job-embedded professional development activities related to improving instruction for these subgroups. Teachers should spend the majority of their team planning and meeting time focusing on student learning and instructional improvement.

G. Branson Heights's positive learning environment can be leveraged to address this need. In particular, strong interest in professional development opportunities to achieve instructional goals for all students (76% of ELA and 84% of math teachers) could encourage staff to commit to instructional improvement.

H. 1. Tension from teachers with inflated self-perception of instructional effectiveness when confronted with contradictory data.

2. Communicating the need to improve instruction and achievement for students who are LEP and SWDs as part of an overall school improvement plan.

Managing these challenges will require full staff involvement. Working with teacher leaders and implementing effective data analysis throughout the school will be important. The goal is to instill a heightened sense of commitment to improvement for all students.

## Analysis of Response

The response demonstrates strength in the following Performance Characteristics.

### **Completeness: The degree to which the response addresses all parts of the assignment**

The response thoroughly and completely addresses all aspects of each prompt, including actions to be taken, rationales for these choices, and evidence from the documents. The evidence cited is sufficient in quantity and quality and reflects an accurate interpretation of the data. The response illustrates the inquiry stance of a strong instructional leader. Taken as a whole, the multiple sections of the response draw upon all sources of data provided in the documents.

### **Accuracy: The degree to which the response demonstrates the relevant knowledge and skills accurately and effectively**

The response reflects an accurate interpretation of the data provided, as well as the content of the scenario. Student and teacher survey information are cited to support the identified school strength, and the issue identified as the highest priority—low achievement for students who are LEP and SWDs—is clearly essential in promoting achievement for all students. Assessment data are used accurately to identify concerns and establish appropriate priorities related to instruction. Information drawn from the teacher survey data is used to identify steps which are likely to ensure that all students, including students who are LEP and SWDs, have full and equitable access to educational programs and curricula. The response further demonstrates an understanding of the need for specific, targeted professional development in response to individual teacher needs, as well as the actions the school building leader should take to support and monitor plans for teacher growth and provide effective feedback.

**Depth of Support and Understanding: The degree to which the response provides appropriate examples and details that demonstrate sound reasoning and reflects a strong understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills**

The response illustrates the depth of understanding needed by a school building leader to act as an effective instructional leader and to establish the culture and foundational structures that would enhance the professional growth of the staff. Rationales provided for decisions about immediate priorities and areas for further inquiry demonstrate a balanced use of objective and subjective data to guide leadership actions. By raising questions that distinguish between the availability of instructional resources and teacher perceptions of their status and needs, the response illustrates a problem-solving approach that effectively utilizes both materials and staff motivation. In addition, the analysis of challenges is logical and significant, and conveys a school building leader's respect for staff, willingness to engage teacher leaders in distributed leadership, and awareness of potential biases. Overall, the response demonstrates understanding of the scenario, appropriate use of data, and sound, logical reasoning.

## Assignment 2: Educational Equity

Use the information below to complete the task that follows.

You are the new school building leader of an urban middle school with an enrollment of approximately 1,200 students in grades 6–8. The school has a gifted and talented program in which eligible students are pulled out for enrichment classes in English Language Arts and mathematics once a week. Most of the students in the program participated in a gifted and talented program at one of several district elementary schools.

Before the school year begins, a group of parents and guardians comes to see you with concerns about the gifted and talented program's admission criteria. In your first meeting with staff, you met with various faculty members and teams within the building, including Ms. S, the gifted and talented teacher. You learned that Ms. S has overseen the gifted and talented program for the past five years. During that time, the program has grown from 50 participants to approximately 125 participants. Ms. S told you that students are selected for the program based on a combination of scores on diagnostic screening assessments and teacher nominations.

During the first few weeks of school, you walked through the school building throughout the day visiting classrooms and getting to know students, faculty, and staff. You noticed that the school as a whole reflects substantial economic, cultural, and language diversity; however, in your visits to the gifted enrichment classes, you realized that very few students who participate in the gifted and talented program reflect this diversity. After checking available information on students who currently participate in the gifted and talented program, you created the table below.

You visited a number of general education classrooms and noted several students who appeared to have advanced knowledge and understanding, with outstanding verbal abilities. They made particularly articulate responses that reflected deep understanding of the topics at hand, and their questioning of the teacher exceeded typical classroom exchanges. It is apparent in your observations that these students would benefit from more challenging instruction. You learned from Ms. S that some of these students are not eligible for the program, due to low scores on the screening assessments used for selection.

<b>Students in the Gifted and Talented Program, Current Year</b>		
<b>Student Subgroup</b>	<b>Percentage of the Student Body</b>	<b>Percentage of All Students in the Gifted and Talented Program</b>
Limited English Proficient	27%	4%
Economically Disadvantaged	52%	15%
Students with Disabilities	11%	1%

Based on the information provided, respond to each of the following prompts. Be very specific in your answers, citing evidence from the scenario as appropriate.

- A. What is the primary issue presented in this scenario, and why do you believe this to be so?
- B. What are two important questions you must address in order to explore this issue? Explain why each is important to address.
- C. How will you go about getting answers to EACH question? What challenges might you face in getting answers to your questions?
- D. Describe one possible finding of your inquiry process and the potential action that finding would imply.

Your response should be approximately 300–400 words and may be in a format of your choice (e.g., paragraphs, bulleted list).

## **Sample Response to Assignment 2**

(388 words)

The primary issue is the underrepresentation of diverse students in the gifted and talented program. The program does not reflect the school's diversity despite recent expansion. Parental/guardian concerns about the program's admission criteria, demographic data regarding the program, meetings with faculty, and classroom observations all demonstrate the seriousness of this issue.

One question I will address is: To what extent does the selection process for the program provide access to all students? This question focuses attention on the process for teacher nominations, the diagnostic assessment, as well as the program's design. These elements could inadvertently create a narrow focus or bias in selection. A second important question is: Are teachers setting rigorous academic expectations for all students? Evidence from classroom visits suggests that there are a number of students in the school whose verbal abilities and advanced knowledge and understanding of content might make them excellent candidates for the program.

To answer the first question, I would conduct a thorough review of the selection process in light of current research and best practice. I would speak with referring teachers to determine their selection criteria. In addition, I would also consider whether the program structure or schedule

impacts which students are nominated. Further, observations will be required to answer the second question. I would share evidence from observations with faculty and hold discussions focused on high expectations for all as well as access to the gifted and talented program. It would be appropriate to share all findings with Ms. S and involve her in actions to expand access and increase equity. Challenges may arise as I review the program. I may find that the timing or the criteria for the nomination process are problematic. I may also find that some teachers do not believe all student subgroups are capable of succeeding in the program due to the rigorous expectations.

One possible finding is that the current selection process for the gifted and talented program is restricting access. If so, I would need to follow any procedures established by my district to address my concerns regarding the need to increase diversity in the program. My conversations may include but would not be limited to the diagnostic exam, the admissions process, professional development aimed at helping teachers recognize students who would benefit from the program, and increased administrator oversight and support.

## Analysis of Response

The response demonstrates strength in the following Performance Characteristics.

### **Completeness: The degree to which the response addresses all parts of the assignment**

The response fully addresses all components of each question. A primary issue, two questions to be addressed, steps to answer each question, possible challenges, potential findings, and actions necessitated by those findings are identified and explained. In addition, the response is supported by a thorough and accurate interpretation of the scenario and the data provided.

### **Accuracy: The degree to which the response demonstrates the relevant knowledge and skills accurately and effectively**

The response identifies a primary issue that is rooted in an accurate evaluation of the concerns presented in the scenario and table. The failure of the gifted and talented program to reflect the school's diverse population, parent/guardian concerns about admission criteria, and observations of student performance are all considered. The response identifies appropriate questions regarding the accessibility of the selection process and whether or not teachers are setting rigorous expectations for all. The importance of these questions is accurately explained, and appropriate, effective procedures for answering them are outlined. The challenges and possible findings identified are accurate, logical, and probable given the scenario and data. The action in response to possible findings is clearly described and likely to be effective.

### **Depth of Support and Understanding: The degree to which the response provides appropriate examples and details that demonstrate sound reasoning and reflects a strong understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills**

The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the role of the school building leader in the given situation. A clear emphasis is placed on working with others in the school community to promote excellence and equity. Accurate and thorough interpretation and synthesis of relevant information in the scenario and data are evident throughout the response, as is a firm commitment to academic excellence, creating an equitable learning environment, and ensuring all students are

considered for educational programs of this nature. Clear and relevant examples and details are given throughout.

## Assignment 3: School Culture and Learning Environment

Use the information below to complete the task that follows.

You are the new school building leader in a rural school with an enrollment of approximately 500 students in grades K–12. The school has experienced very little staff turnover over the past five years and, on average, the teachers have 5–8 years of teaching experience. Your review of student performance on the state and formative assessments shows that student performance in mathematics and English Language Arts has remained flat for the past two years.

A few months into the school year, you noticed that there seems to be a relatively large number of referrals for minor student discipline problems in grades 3–5, such as excessive talking, inappropriate language, roughhousing, and uncooperative behavior. A summary of the referral data is shown below. The school has a code of conduct in place that outlines behavior guidelines and consequences for inappropriate behavior. In the past, teachers have used these guidelines to develop their own classroom rules and expectations.

For the next teacher professional development day, you asked members of your leadership team to plan a series of conversations about classroom management based on the teacher practice rubric the district adopted for evaluation purposes. After allowing teachers time to reflect on the conversations and their own practice, you decided to make a brief visit to each third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade classroom to observe student behavior and interactions and gain insight into teachers' approaches to maximizing opportunities for learning in the classroom. During these visits, you observe that most teachers seem to have caring relationships with their students. However, some of the teachers interacted with students in an almost overly casual manner.

During the classroom visits, you also had an opportunity to see some of the classroom discipline issues. Some teachers ignored behavioral problems and moved on with instruction. In a couple of the classes, a significant portion of the students in the class were either off task or so distracted by their off-task peers that they were not effectively participating in the instruction. Other teachers stopped instruction and administered immediate consequences for each misbehavior, consuming significant class time. In general, teachers exhibited a range of responses to problem behaviors within and across classes.



<b>Discipline Referrals by Teacher for Quarters 1 and 2, Grades 3, 4, 5 (current year)</b>							
	<b>Excessive Talking</b>	<b>Inappropriate Language</b>	<b>Uncooperative</b>	<b>Roughhousing</b>	<b>Disrespectful</b>	<b>Disruptive</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Teacher A (grade 3)	0	1	0	2	0	2	<b>5</b>
Teacher B (grade 3)	5	0	2	5	3	2	<b>17</b>
Teacher C (grade 4)	8	2	8	3	4	7	<b>32</b>
Teacher D (grade 4)	0	1	3	0	2	5	<b>11</b>
Teacher E (grade 5)	0	2	7	1	0	1	<b>11</b>
Teacher F (grade 5)	13	2	8	5	5	11	<b>44</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>120</b>

Based on the information provided, respond to each of the following prompts. Be very specific in your answers, citing evidence from the scenario as appropriate.

- What is an important school culture and learning environment issue presented in this scenario? Explain why the issue you chose is important.
- What are two important questions you must address in order to explore this issue? Explain why each is important to address.
- How will you go about getting answers to EACH question? What challenges might you face in getting answers to your questions?
- Describe one possible finding of your inquiry process and the potential action that finding would imply.

Your response should be approximately 300–400 words and may be in a format of your choice (e.g., paragraphs, bulleted list).

### **Sample Response to Assignment 3**

(388 words)

A. Classroom discipline issues are leading to decreased instructional time. There have been approximately 120 discipline referrals in grades 3–5 during the current school year for minor problems. Students who are not in class are not engaged in learning. In addition, evidence from classroom visits suggests discipline problems continue despite the high rate of referral, resulting in students being disengaged or distracted.

B. Two questions that must be addressed are: 1) Are teachers using the code of conduct to create classroom rules and expectations that are taught to students? and 2) To what extent are teachers consistently applying rules and expectation in their classrooms? The first question is important

because classroom visits and discipline referral data suggest that individual teachers are setting very different rules and expectations. Also, it is not clear that all teachers are teaching the rules and expectations they set to students. The second question is important because it appears from classroom visits that some teachers are not consistently applying rules and expectations. It is necessary to determine whether teachers are deviating from or ignoring school discipline policy.

C. To find answers to these questions:

Survey teachers regarding how they align classroom rules and expectations with the code of conduct and how they are teaching rules and expectations to students, as well as their professional development needs.

Conduct formal classroom observations in grade 3-5 classrooms, using an appropriate rubric to document student behavior and evaluate teacher responses. Evidence from the observations would provide a basis for feedback to teachers regarding classroom management.

Challenges may include teachers' resistance to what they might perceive as an intrusion into their classroom management. In addition, staff perceptions of student discipline and their own implementation of the code of conduct may not be accurate.

D. A possible finding is that several teachers face significant challenges in classroom management. Such a finding would require prompt action. For example, referral data indicate Teachers C and F need immediate assistance and support for improving behavior in their classrooms. Classroom visits further suggest other teachers ignore behavior problems that become distractions for all students. These teachers need targeted support to improve classroom management, such as coaching, additional professional development activities, and regular observations and evidence-based feedback from the school building leader. After taking these steps, the building leader can hold staff accountable for maintaining appropriate behavior standards.

## Analysis of Response

The response demonstrates strength in the following Performance Characteristics.

### **Completeness: The degree to which the response addresses all parts of the assignment**

The response fully addresses all components of each prompt within the assignment. A primary issue, two important questions to be addressed, procedures for answering each question, potential challenges, a potential finding, and a planned response to that potential finding are all presented and sufficiently developed. Evidence from the scenario and data table are cited appropriately throughout the response.

### **Accuracy: The degree to which the response demonstrates the relevant knowledge and skills accurately and effectively**

The response identifies a primary issue, discipline issues leading to decreased instructional time, that

is justified by evidence presented in the scenario and table. The importance of this issue is accurately explained. The response identifies two crucial questions to address regarding implementation of the code of conduct and discipline issues in other grade bands. Appropriate and effective procedures for answering each question are outlined, with consideration given to the possible need for professional development and the use of rubrics in classroom observations. Challenges and possible finding are significant and highly probable. The proposed action responding to that finding is both appropriate and effective.

**Depth of Support and Understanding:** The degree to which the response provides appropriate examples and details that demonstrate sound reasoning and reflects a strong understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills

The response demonstrates a thorough understanding of the role of the school building leader with regard to establishing and maintaining a school culture focused on academic excellence. Careful analysis and evaluation of evidence presented in the scenario and table is evident throughout the response, as well as an understanding of how various factors such as student behavior and teacher perceptions affect the culture of the school. Clear and relevant examples and details are used throughout the response to support analyses and proposed actions.

## Performance Characteristics for Assignments 1–3

The following characteristics guide the scoring of responses to each assignment.

<b>COMPLETENESS</b>	The degree to which the response addresses all parts of the assignment
<b>ACCURACY</b>	The degree to which the response demonstrates the relevant knowledge and skills accurately and effectively
<b>DEPTH OF SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING</b>	The degree to which the response provides appropriate examples and details that demonstrate sound reasoning and reflects a strong understanding of the relevant knowledge and skills

## Score Scale for Assignments 1–3

Scores will be assigned to each response to the assignments according to the following score scale.

<b>Score Point</b>	<b>Score Point Description</b>
<b>4</b>	The "4" response reflects a thorough command of the relevant knowledge and skills.
<b>3</b>	The "3" response reflects a general command of the relevant knowledge and skills.
<b>2</b>	The "2" response reflects a limited command of the relevant knowledge and skills.
<b>1</b>	The "1" response reflects little or no command of the relevant knowledge and skills.
<b>U</b>	The response is unscorable because it is unrelated to the assigned topic or off-task, unreadable, written in a language other than English or contains an insufficient amount of original work to score.
<b>B</b>	No response.

# Study Guide

## Field 107: School Building Leader Part 1 Sample Selected-Response Items

**Competency 0001**  
**Instructional Leadership for Student Success**

**Use the information below to answer the five questions that follow.**

Ms. L has served as the school building leader at Central Avenue High School for several years. The school is located in an urban district and enrolls approximately 1,870 students. Many of the teachers at Central Avenue have taught at the school for ten years or more. A majority is consistently rated effective or highly effective, but close to 20 percent has been rated ineffective or developing at some point over the last five years.

Student performance at Central Avenue has generally lagged behind state and district performance. Three years ago, the district undertook an initiative to implement Data-Driven Instruction and Inquiry (DDI) in all district schools. Recognizing DDI as a powerful tool for improving student performance, Ms. L led a building-wide effort to implement fully the district's DDI system at Central Avenue. The school began administering district-adopted inventory and quarterly assessments, with data analysis conducted at department-wide meetings. Since then, the school's performance on standardized assessments has improved overall, with mathematics showing particularly significant gains. A strong commitment to the use of DDI by mathematics faculty has been credited for a good deal of this improvement. Improvement in English Language Arts (ELA) has been minimal, however, and student performance in this area continues to lag behind district and state averages.

As the new school year begins, Ms. L focuses attention on analyzing and improving student performance in ELA. She reviews formative assessment data in ELA and mathematics, as well as Regents examinations results for Central Avenue students over the last three years. In addition, she directs an assistant principal to gather information about and report on DDI activities occurring among the school's ELA staff.

### **Document 1**

#### **Formative Assessment Results (last year)**

(percentage of students answering more than 65% of formative assessment items correctly)

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	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
<b>ELA</b>				
Grade 9	80%	82%	79%	81%
Grade 10	79%	75%	78%	80%
Grade 11	80%	82%	81%	82%
Grade 12	82%	79%	80%	83%
<b>Mathematics</b>				
Grade 9	70%	76%	79%	81%
Grade 10	62%	67%	71%	75%
Grade 11	66%	69%	73%	77%
Grade 12	68%	71%	76%	79%

## Document 2

**Student Performance on Regents Exams—All Students,  
Central Avenue High School  
Three-Year Comparison**

Regents Exam	3 Years Ago % of students scoring:		2 Years Ago % of students scoring:		Last Spring % of students scoring:	
	65–84	85 or above	65–84	85 or above	65–84	85 or above
Comprehensive English	57%	6%	58%	6%	58%	7%
Integrated Algebra	47%	2%	55%	7%	61%	12%
Geometry	39%	3%	46%	7%	54%	10%
Algebra 2/ Trigonometry	—	—	—	—	—	—
Global History & Geography	49%	6%	49%	9%	52%	10%
US History & Government	64%	11%	65%	11%	67%	13%
Living Environment	55%	10%	55%	12%	58%	14%
Physical Setting/Earth Science	38%	8%	43%	10%	46%	12%
Physical Setting/Chemistry	32%	4%	38%	7%	42%	9%
Physical Setting/Physics	—	—	—	—	—	—

**NOTE:** The "—" symbol indicates that data for a group of fewer than five students have been suppressed to protect the privacy of individual students.

### Document 3

#### Assistant Principal's Report on DDI Activities in the English Department (last year)

To: Principal L  
 From: Assistant Principal R  
 RE: Update on Data-Driven Instruction and Inquiry (DDI) Activities in the English  
 Language Arts (ELA) Department

I observed an ELA department meeting held recently to review first-quarter formative assessment results for all grade levels. All ELA faculty members were supposed to attend, but a number were absent. The discussion was serious and

well-intended, but the data analysis that occurred was superficial and the meeting lacked focus. Eleventh and twelfth grade teachers, in particular, seemed to emphasize *how much* students got wrong instead of deepening the discussion to discover exactly *what* students got wrong and *why* students answered questions incorrectly. The department chair ended the meeting by urging teachers to make time in their own schedules to review the data more extensively.

In a separate discussion, I found the ELA department chair to have good intentions regarding DDI. However, the department action plans that we reviewed focused on surface-level concerns, despite the use of appropriate templates. Also, he has yet to see that ensuring teacher participation in this work is essential to improve teaching and learning. It was clear from our conversation that he views his administrative duties and demands on his time from teachers and students as leaving little time for regular DDI meetings.

In conversations with individual ELA teachers, I found only two or three who fully understand the importance of data and regularly use classroom-level DDI to inform their instructional planning. Most of the faculty seem to be disconnected from the DDI process. They rarely use data for their classes, relying instead on their own experience and intuition to plan and modify instruction—especially at the upper grade levels. A few teachers expressed reluctance to increase the rigor of instruction in response to poor test results. They believe that raising the level of rigor "too sharply" while students are performing at low levels would frustrate students and have a negative effect on their engagement with academics.

I'd be happy to discuss any of these matters further with you as needed. Please advise.

Sincerely,  
Assistant Principal R

1. In comparing formative assessment data with student performance on the Regents Exam in Comprehensive English, which issue should concern Ms. L the most?

- A. The content on the formative assessments does not appear to match the rigor of the standards assessed on the Regents Exam.
- B. The results of the formative assessments are likely to have substantially lower reliability than the results of the Regents Exam.
- C. The formative assessments are unlikely to be as comprehensive in their coverage of the school curriculum as is the Regents Exam.
- D. The formative assessments differentiate content according to grade level and quarter, while the Regents Exam does not.

### Answer

**Correct Response: A.** This item requires examinees to apply knowledge of skills for using student assessment data to monitor student progress. Local formative assessment results for ELA show that approximately 80 percent of students at Central Avenue High School were able to answer more than 65

percent of items correctly for quarters 3 and 4 last year. Meanwhile, Regents Exam results indicate that during that same time frame, only 65 percent of students taking the state ELA exam were able to answer at least 65 percent of items correctly. The discrepancy suggests a lack of alignment between the local formative ELA exams and the state ELA exams, with the state exams reflecting more rigorous standards and expectations for student performance. This is problematic because the school needs to be able to rely on the accuracy and alignment of the local formative assessment results to ensure meaningful analysis of teaching and learning as each school year proceeds.



2. To improve student learning at Central Avenue High School, Ms. L should prompt faculty in the ELA department to implement which strategy *first*?

- A. Create classroom assessments that more closely reflect content addressed in district-adopted formative assessments and the Regents Exam.
- B. Use available standardized assessment data to identify areas of their curriculum in which student performance is weakest as drivers for action planning.
- C. Compare formative assessment and Regents Exam data for their school with data from demographically similar high schools within and outside of the district.
- D. Identify additional sources of student performance data to determine the degree to which classroom instruction is aligned with curriculum standards.

### Answer

**Correct Response: B.** This item requires examinees to apply knowledge of skills and strategies for leading collaborative efforts to use student assessment data to develop plans for improved learning. To improve student learning, the ELA faculty at Central Avenue High School must first identify those areas in the ELA curriculum where students are having the greatest problems so that they know where changes in curriculum and/or instruction are most needed. In the absence of local formative assessments that are aligned with the Regents Exam, the most effective strategy available for identifying these areas of curricular weakness is to analyze standardized assessment results. Such analysis helps ensure that appropriately targeted planning for positive change can occur.

3. Which course of action taken by Ms. L would provide the most useful additional data for developing a plan to improve student performance in English?
- A. Conduct a time study to quantify the amount of time currently spent by ELA faculty on DDI activities.
  - B. Identify professional resources on assessment and instruction in ELA currently available in the school.
  - C. Administer a survey to ELA faculty to gather information about professional development needs related to DDI.
  - D. Review the school's formative assessment results in ELA for a period covering at least the last three years.

### Answer

**Correct Response: C.** This item requires examinees to apply knowledge of strategies for collecting and analyzing data to develop plans to achieve goals. Given the power of Data-Driven Instruction and Inquiry (DDI) to improve student performance and district expectations related to DDI, Ms. L should take steps to ensure that ELA faculty begin expanding their use of DDI as soon as possible. Information in Document 3 suggests that most ELA teachers at the school do not make regular use of such data in their instructional planning, so one of Ms. L's first priorities needs to be to provide these teachers with appropriate professional development opportunities. A faculty survey would be an effective way to determine how best to target professional development activities to meet the current needs of ELA teachers at the school.

4. Based on the information provided, the ELA department chair is most likely to need administrative support to succeed in
- A. recognizing how department issues affect the broader school community
  - B. establishing an atmosphere of collegiality and trust among department staff
  - C. marshaling additional resources to address new and emerging department needs
  - D. focusing on defined school and district priorities over competing department work

### Answer

**Correct Response: D.** This item requires examinees to apply knowledge of strategies for supervising and supporting a rigorous instructional program based on research- or evidence-based best practices. According to Document 3, the ELA department chair "views his administrative duties and demands on his time from teachers and students as leaving little time for regular DDI meetings." Since regular use of DDI is a priority for the school and the district, Ms. L should strive to support the chair in figuring out how competing department work can be addressed in ways that leave him ample time to play a leadership role in increasing his department's use of DDI. Such support may also be beneficial in further developing the department chair as a teacher-leader.

5. In addition to continuing the implementation of DDI, Ms. L's highest priority as instructional leader should be to
- A. establish academic expectations that are consistent with student performance in ELA
  - B. ensure that ELA teachers provide appropriately rigorous instruction for all students
  - C. promote buy-in among ELA faculty for a plan designed to promote instructional improvement
  - D. review faculty reports on student performance and progress in ELA classes on a regular basis

### Answer

**Correct Response: B.** This item requires examinees to apply knowledge of strategies for ensuring teachers' use of instructional practices that promote academic success for every student. The reluctance of some ELA teachers to increase the rigor of their instruction for fear of frustrating and decreasing the engagement of lower achieving students (Document 3) and the relative lack of rigor in local formative ELA assessments (Documents 1 and 2) suggest that ELA faculty may have low expectations regarding the academic performance and potential of at least some of their students. Given research indicating that low teacher expectations can have a negative effect on student performance, Ms. L should make it a priority to ensure that ELA teachers are providing appropriately rigorous instruction for all students and thereby giving all students opportunities to achieve academically at high levels.

**Competency 0002**  
**School Culture and Learning Environment to Promote Excellence and Equity**

**Use the information below to answer the four questions that follow.**

Ms. J is the new school building leader of Millview Middle School, which includes grades 6–8 and is located in a suburban community. The school has an enrollment of approximately 580 students, about 50% of whom qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Staffing has remained stable over the past five years. The local community has experienced little change in recent years in terms of its demographic and economic profile.

When she was hired, Ms. J met with the new superintendent to gain some background information about the school and to learn more about the superintendent's goals for the school. During this meeting, the superintendent noted that although academic performance for many students at Millview has been satisfactory, Ms. J will be expected to address the achievement gap between students who are economically disadvantaged and the rest of the student population.

Ms. J responded to the achievement gap concern by reviewing the school's recent state assessment results. The data strongly support the view that school staff must take steps to improve the academic performance of students who are economically disadvantaged. In addition, she reviewed the results of a student perception survey that was administered in classrooms by the school counselors the previous spring and a teacher survey administered at the end of the previous school year. She further noted that data gathered over the past few years have consistently shown a lower attendance rate among economically disadvantaged eighth-grade students than among the student population overall.

## **Document 1**

### **State Assessment Results, by Student Group (last year)**

This table displays the percentage of students, by group, scoring at or above Level 3 ("meets proficiency standard").

	<b>English Language Arts</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>Total Students Tested</b>
<b>Grade 6</b>				
<b>All Students</b>	69%	68%	N/A	174
<b>Limited English Proficient</b>	33%	50%	N/A	12
<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	45%	48%	N/A	80
<b>Grade 7</b>				
<b>All Students</b>	64%	70%	N/A	184
<b>Limited English Proficient</b>	36%	50%	N/A	14
<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	38%	45%	N/A	92
<b>Grade 8</b>				
<b>All Students</b>	58%	60%	72%	201
<b>Limited English Proficient</b>	31%	50%	44%	16
<b>Economically Disadvantaged</b>	34%	42%	55%	95

## **Document 2**

### **Excerpt from Student Perception Survey (4th quarter last year) Results for All Students**

(approximately 90% of the student body completed the survey)

<b>How much do you agree that adults in this school...</b>	<b>% Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing</b>
1. <u>support</u> and treat students with respect.	55%
2. <u>care</u> a lot about all students.	58%
3. <u>listen</u> to what every student has to say.	45%
4. <u>believe</u> that every student can be successful.	48%
5. <u>challenge</u> you to do your best.	33%
<b>Thinking about your school experience during this past year, how much do you agree that...</b>	<b>% Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing</b>
6. <u>your</u> teachers help you learn.	55%
7. <u>you</u> like school a lot.	65%
8. <u>you</u> try hard at school.	33%
9. <u>getting</u> good grades is important to you.	45%
10. <u>you</u> feel comfortable sharing your ideas and thoughts in class.	55%
11. <u>you</u> feel valued in this school.	49%
12. <u>your</u> teachers provide academic help when you need it.	54%
13. <u>you</u> set high expectations for yourself in school.	37%
14. <u>your</u> teachers give all students an equal opportunity to participate in class discussions and activities.	56%

### **Document 3**

#### **Excerpt from Summary of Anonymous Teacher Survey Results for All Teachers**

(approximately 80% of teachers completed the survey)

How much do you agree that..	Respondents Who Agree or Strongly Agree
1. every student can be motivated to learn.	42%
2. every student can succeed academically.	44%
3. teachers can have a positive impact on every student's learning.	52%
4. teachers are able to ensure that every student is actively engaged in learning.	58%
5. teachers play the primary role in determining their students' ability to achieve.	38%
6. teachers have a significant capacity to counteract negative factors outside of school that affect student learning.	35%
7. teachers exert the greatest influence on student attitudes toward school and learning.	30%
<p><b>Views expressed by 5 or more respondents in the open-ended comment section of the survey:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some groups of students just don't seem to care about school or getting good grades.</li> <li>▪ A teacher can't do much when students don't bother to show up.</li> <li>▪ A lot of students are so far behind that it would be hard for them ever to catch up and get passing grades.</li> <li>▪ I do what I can, and while it works for some groups of students, it never seems to be enough for others.</li> <li>▪ Some students come to school with a great attitude while others are completely apathetic.</li> </ul>	

6. Based on the information provided, Ms. J's highest *initial* priority should be to explore which question?

- A. Why are students learning more effectively in some subjects, such as science, than in others, such as mathematics and English Language Arts?
- B. Do procedures need to be put in place to deal with attendance and other discipline issues?
- C. Does the curriculum in any subject area need revision to increase alignment with state standards and to meet student needs?
- D. What can be done to ensure that teachers employ equitable teaching strategies to engage and motivate all students to do their best?

### Answer

**Correct Response: D.** This item requires examinees to apply knowledge of strategies for promoting an environment in which all students are consistently learning and are active and engaged learners. The documents associated with the scenario show large achievement gaps across student groups (Document 1); a significant proportion of students who do not view the school as a caring, supportive, and motivating place (Document 2); and problematic attitudes among many teachers regarding their own roles and



responsibilities and the potential of all of their students to succeed in school (Document 3). Collectively, the data suggest that teachers are not setting rigorous academic expectations for every student or doing enough to design their instruction in ways that meet the needs of all students and ensure all students' success. Therefore, of the options provided, Ms. J's highest initial priority should be to determine what can be done to ensure that teachers employ equitable teaching strategies to engage and motivate all students to do their best.

7. After completing an initial review of the student survey results and the state assessment results, which additional action by Ms. J would likely be most useful for providing further insight into the issues currently facing the school?
- A. Compare the state assessment results with those of demographically similar middle schools across the state.
  - B. Correlate students' performance on the state assessment with classroom performance and report card grades.
  - C. Disaggregate responses to the student survey to determine the results for different student groups.
  - D. Conduct a series of in-depth interviews with a random sample of student survey respondents.

### Answer

**Correct Response: C.** This item requires examinees to apply knowledge of skills and strategies for creating a learning environment that is responsive to and respectful of student learning needs and that supports each student in achieving at the highest levels. Millview Middle School has a significant achievement gap between students who are economically disadvantaged and those who are not, as well as between students who are limited English proficient and those who are not (Document 1). One way for Ms. J, the new school building leader, to learn more about the nature and causes of this problem would be to compare and contrast school-related perceptions and attitudes of students from different backgrounds. Because Document 2 shows the results of a recently administered student perception survey only for the student population as a whole, it cannot be used to identify and analyze differences in the perceptions of students from different groups. Ms. J could best gain further insight into the achievement gap and the low attendance of eighth-grade students who are economically disadvantaged if a new student survey is administered in order to disaggregate data by different student groups.

8. After reflecting on the ideas and perceptions revealed in the anonymous teacher survey, Ms. J should be most concerned about following up on teachers'
- A. failure to understand that great teaching can promote student performance
  - B. limited understanding of the role of motivation in student learning
  - C. excessive emphasis on grades as a yardstick for student success
  - D. tendency to focus on students' differences rather than on their similarities

### Answer

**Correct Response: A.** This item requires examinees to apply knowledge of strategies for establishing an organizational culture of shared commitment to academic excellence for all students. The anonymous teacher survey (Document 3) indicates that many teachers at Millview Middle School believe that some students are not motivated or able to learn, consider outside factors nearly insurmountable when it comes to students' academic problems, and fail to recognize the key role that they themselves can play in their students' motivation and performance. Given these results, Ms. J should make it a priority to follow up on teachers' lack of understanding about how excellence in teaching can lead to improved performance for all students.

9. Ms. J determines that she will facilitate a series of faculty and department meetings on a regular basis, with the goal of addressing the learning needs of diverse student populations. Considering the information provided, these meetings are likely to be most effective in achieving this goal if Ms. J guides teachers to use the meetings to focus on

- A. developing clear, comprehensive instructional outcomes suitable for diverse student populations
- B. developing and refining instructional strategies that improve student learning for diverse populations
- C. researching and discussing emerging theories regarding how students from diverse populations learn
- D. evaluating each other's assumptions about factors that support or hinder the learning process for students from diverse populations

### Answer

**Correct Response: B.** This item requires examinees to apply knowledge of strategies for creating a learning environment that is responsive to and respectful of student learning needs and that supports each student in achieving at the highest levels. Millview's large achievement gaps indicate that the learning needs of some segments of the school's student population are not currently being met. Since the data provided suggest that many teachers do not know or use the broad range of instructional strategies that would be required to motivate and engage all students, the meetings that Ms. J plans to facilitate are likely to be most effective in achieving school goals if they focus on having teachers develop and refine instructional strategies that promote learning and reduce academic achievement gaps.

