

## **PPAT<sup>®</sup> Assessment**

### Library of Examples – Music

#### Task 1, Step 2, 1.2.3: Communicating with Your Students' Families

Below are two examples of written responses to Textbox 1.2.3 as excerpted from the portfolios of two different candidates. The candidate responses were not corrected or changed from what was submitted. One response was scored at the Met/Exceeded Standards Level and the other response was scored at the Does Not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level. This information is being provided for illustrative purposes only. These excerpts are not templates for you to use to guarantee a successful score. Rather, they are examples that you can use for comparison purposes to see the kinds of evidence that you may need to add to your own work.

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

#### **Guiding Prompt for Task 1, Textbox 1.2.3**

- a. Explain how your method of communication conveys the importance of cultivating positive relationships with students and their families. Use examples from your communication to support your explanation.
- b. Explain how your method of communication fostered interaction among you, your students, and your students' families. Use examples to support your explanation.
- c. Describe the overall response you received from your communication. How will this response impact an instructional decision you will make in your classroom? Use examples from the responses you received to support your analysis.

#### **Example 1: Met/Exceeded Standards Level**

- a. My form of communication I used to convey the importance of cultivating positive relationships with students and their families was in the form of an email. The focus of this email was to emphasize the importance of my excitement to be working with their children and beginning to form those positive relationships with my students. I first wanted to explain to the parents my situation being in both the elementary and high school. I thought it was very important to convey honesty to the parents and explain my situation to them so they had an understanding of my situation. It is my hope that showing honesty towards the parents will allow the parents to be honest with me. Even though we had just been in school for one week, I told the parents "I am having a blast getting to know your children and making music while we can in the event that school has

to close temporarily or permanently." Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, I also thought it was best to write in my email how I plan to keep their children safe in the choir room. I wanted to emphasize the importance of safety in my classroom given the Covid-19 pandemic and wrote "...doing our best to keep your children safe while also making music for possible performances." In my email, I wanted to give the parents what our game plan is going to be for this semester. I thought this was important to convey since music and musical performances have been a major topic of discussion. I ended my email with an invitation that if parents had any questions or concerns, that they could send me an email. This is important to show the openness of my classroom and the community.

- b. My method of communication fostered interaction between myself and my student's families by encouraging them to respond to my emails. I had one parent that emailed me saying that she could not get access to the poll that I created. I thought that I made it accessible to everyone but technology can put a little road block in front of us. I immediately went into the settings to fix the problem and emailed her back right away apologizing for the inconvenience. After I fixed the issue, she emailed me back informing me that she was able to participate in the poll. When she first informed me she was unable to have access to the poll, and after I fixed the problem, I emailed all the parents with a new link apologizing for the bombardment of emails, but informing that there was an error on my part and the problem was fixed. This parent was very appreciative of this. My method of communication also fostered interaction between myself and my student's families when another parent wanted to provide me with more information on her children than what my survey had to offer. I was very appreciative of her reaching out to me and providing me with these details that I replied back with how well her children are doing in my class and that I appreciated the insight she provided me with. My method of communication also fostered interaction among the parents as I had four parents total reach out to me. I was hoping to have more, but the responses I received were friendly and very welcoming. My method of communication fostered interaction among my students by having them respond to a survey I had them complete. Some of my questions I asked them included: What are you hoping to gain from this class? What is something you like from a teacher? I also asked my students why they were in choir. In this school, students have to have a fine arts credit. Choir for a semester counts as a half credit so in order for students to receive a full fine arts credit, they have to take choir for two semesters. I made sure to put in the form that it is ok for the students to say that they are in choir for the fine arts credit. I had many of my male singers explain they are here in the class solely for the fine arts credit, but when I asked "What is it you are hoping to gain from this class?" A few responded by bettering their voices and how to sing different pitches. I plan to work on these goals that the students conveyed through our method of communication to help them achieve their goals.
- c. The overall response I received from my communication was very positive as well as supportive. One parent wrote: "If you need anything down the road, please do not hesitate to ask." Another parent replied with "We are so glad you are here and excited to teach and share your passion for music with the students. If you ever need anything, please let me know." Another parent sent a long email and provided me with some history on their children. The parent informed me of her children's musical successes throughout their years and provided me with advice on how to engage her two children who are both in my class. This response I received from a parent would impact an instructional strategy such as guided instruction. This parent informed me that their child will sometimes get

distracted and will occasionally talk with their friends. With this information, I could plan an activity where the students have to listen to a song. Prior to hearing this song, the whole class would review musical elements such as rhythm, tempo, dynamics and more. I would hand out a worksheet with guiding prompts that follow the song. That way, this student would not have the opportunity to be distracted by his classmates and would have to stay focused on the song and worksheet.

**Refer to the [Task 1 Rubric](#) for Textbox 1.2.3 and ask yourself:**

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

- Does the candidate explain a method of communication that conveys the importance of cultivating positive relationships with students and their families?
- Does the candidate use examples to support this explanation?
- Does the candidate explain how this method of communication fostered interactions among you, your students, and their families?
- Does the candidate use examples to support this explanation?
- Does the candidate describe the overall response received from the communication?
- Where does the candidate explain how the response impacts an instructional decision that is made in the classroom?
- Does the candidate use examples from the received responses to support this explanation?

**Example 2: Did Not Meet/Partially Met Standards Level**

- a. In my parent communication letter, I started out giving a little background information on myself. I shared my major and where I am attending school as well as where I am from. I shared my excitement about student teaching at the high school to show that student teaching is more than a requirement but something I have looked forward to doing. I explained how special choir was to me as a high school student and expressed that I hoped for the students to have a similar experience. I also remained positive regarding the situation of COVID-19 by stating that I was going to use available resources to make singing possible even with masks and social distancing guidelines in place.
- b. I offered for the parents to email me with any questions regarding our lessons or information about their students they would like for me to know as a way of opening up the opportunity to connect with parents.
- c. I did not receive any response from the parents after sending out my letter. Due to the lack of response from the parents, one way this response impacts an instructional decision in the classroom is by creating a form either online or a printed copy that must be filled out and signed by the parent so that the probability of getting responses is higher.

**Refer to the [Task 1 Rubric](#) for Textbox 1.2.3 and ask yourself:**

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

- Does the candidate explain a method of communication that conveys the importance of cultivating positive relationships with students and their families?
- Does the candidate use examples to support this explanation?

- Does the candidate explain how this method of communication fostered interactions among you, your students, and their families?
- Does the candidate use examples to support this explanation?
- Does the candidate describe the overall response received from the communication?
- Where does the candidate explain how the response impacts an instructional decision that is made in the classroom?
- Does the candidate use examples from the received responses to support this explanation?

### **Suggestions for Using These Examples**

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

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

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