

The *PPAT*® Assessment Reflective Practice Handbook

**From Student to Student Teacher:
Transitioning from the Educator Preparation
Program to the Clinical Experience**

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Part 1: Introduction

The Student Teacher

Welcome, teacher candidate, to the *PPAT® Assessment Reflective Practice Handbook*. This handbook is designed to help support you during your student-teaching experience. As a pre-service teacher in an educator preparation program (EPP), you will soon find yourself teaching in an assigned classroom with guidance and support from both a cooperating teacher and your EPP instructor. As you likely realize, the habits you cultivate during this clinical work have the potential to both launch and further your career as a certified teacher. This handbook can help you make that happen. The goals of this handbook are as follows.

- To introduce you to the benefits and practice of regular professional reflection
- To help you complete a Professional Growth Plan that engages you in the kind of reflection, goal setting, and action planning that certified teachers across the United States practice annually to improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities in concert with their state’s teacher evaluation system

The EPP Instructor

Welcome, EPP instructor. This handbook is designed with you in mind as well. As a mentor of tomorrow’s educators, you will have the task of preparing and guiding pre-service teachers through the PPAT assessment. This handbook can help. Throughout the handbook, we suggest ways to engage your student teachers in reflection and in individual and peer activities that are aligned with the purposes of the PPAT assessment. A secondary aim of this handbook is to help you and your cooperating teachers coordinate your support of teacher candidates in ways that strengthen and reinforce each other’s efforts.

The Cooperating Teacher

Welcome, cooperating teacher. This is your handbook, too. Your willingness to open your classroom to teacher candidates and guide them through the clinical experience is vital to your profession. The four PPAT assessment performance tasks are designed to support your efforts by helping the student teacher assigned to your classroom approach your students and their families with thoughtfulness and professionalism. The tasks provide a structure that encourages the teacher candidate’s hands-on professional learning, and this same structure can help you facilitate professional dialogue with your student teacher. The shared-audience structure of this handbook can help you and the teacher candidate’s EPP instructor reinforce and supplement one another’s efforts in support of the teacher candidate.

 ***The color-coded headings throughout this handbook are designed to help you see at a glance the intended audience for that section.***

Sections of the handbook not designated by colored headings are intended for all three of the above audiences.

The PPAT® Assessment

The PPAT assessment is a performance-based, pre-licensure assessment of a teacher candidate's readiness and ability to teach effectively. Since you are all likely familiar with the PPAT assessment, this section stresses only those aspects of the assessment that are most relevant to the goals of this handbook.

 *For complete information about the PPAT assessment see:*

[PPAT Assessment Teacher Candidate and Educator Handbook](#)
[Submission System User Guide](#)

The Practice of Reflection

The practice of regular reflection is a critical habit of mind that supports teachers' professional growth. This key disposition primes teachers to think analytically and purposefully about their own knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as those of their students. Regular reflection inspires learning that directly feeds teachers' skill in directing their own professional growth. For that reason, the practice of regular reflection is a centerpiece of this handbook. Part 2 of this handbook provides teacher candidates with guidance on making the practice of reflection an integral part of their teaching and suggests ways the EPP instructor and cooperating teacher can help candidates learn this critical skill.

As Part 2 shows, this reflection can be guided by teacher candidates' own insights into their developing knowledge, skills, and abilities, or it can be directed by mentor feedback. Another productive focus of reflection is professional self-assessment. Activities in Part 2 prompt student teachers to reflect methodically throughout the clinical experience on their work as a student teacher, on their students, on the [InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards](#), on PPAT assessment Steps and rubrics, and on the formative observations the EPP instructor and cooperating teacher conduct of their teaching.

The PPAT Assessment Professional Growth Plan

Many states require every pre-service teacher to complete a PPAT assessment Professional Growth Plan (PGP) after finishing the PPAT assessment and the student-teaching experience. The PGP is a pre-service tool designed to help teacher candidates self-assess their performance as student teachers and set goals for their continued learning. This activity is a primer for the work that many certified teachers across the country do annually to direct their own professional

learning and growth. The pre-service PGP can be found among the ancillary materials provided with the PPAT assessment.

Part 3 of this handbook is designed to help teacher candidates thoughtfully complete the PGP. The work pre-service teachers do while student teaching should funnel naturally toward this task. Part 3 offers questions and tools to help teacher candidates drill down from multiple sources of information about their knowledge, skills, and abilities to manageable, achievable goals. Completed formative observations can be a key source of such information. Additional sources include teacher candidates' own reflections, other mentor feedback, and the PPAT assessment score report.

The EPP Instructor

To support the PPAT assessment goals for pre-service teacher learning and professionalism, consider how you will address the following before teacher candidates begin student teaching.

- How you will conduct formative observations of your student teachers?**
 - How many formative observations of each student teacher do you plan? At what intervals during the clinical experience will they be conducted?
 - How will you focus these — on the standards addressed by PPAT assessment tasks? Teacher candidates' individual learning needs? A set of EPP instructional milestones? Something else?
 - Which of these planned formative observations will you conduct yourself? Which will you ask the cooperating teacher to complete?
- What role will professional reflection play in the EPP?**
 - How will you help teacher candidates internalize an appreciation for regular reflection during the EPP supervisory seminar?
 - Will you require daily reflection? A certain number of reflections per week?
 - How will you structure these reflections? By assigning questions? Directing teacher candidates to choose a focus from the day's teaching? Using a combination of approaches?
 - What format would you like teacher candidates to use for their reflections (e.g., email, a physical notebook, a journal kept in a word-processing program, a blog)?
 - When and how will you review teacher candidates' reflections to provide feedback? What methods will you use to provide formative feedback on these reflections?

InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards

The PPAT assessment is aligned with the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards, which are articulated across ten general areas of professional practice, and multiple performance indicators further elaborate those areas.

The overarching purpose of the teaching standards is to provide effective educators for students across the United States. Throughout the careers of certified teachers, these standards serve as a focal point for professional dialogue. The teaching standards are referenced during professional development, used to help individual teachers identify their professional strengths and areas for improvement, and provide a basis for teachers' annual professional growth plans.

Along the same lines, the close relationship between the PPAT assessment and the teaching standards is intended to ensure that pre-service teachers perform at an acceptable level before they assume responsibilities as certified classroom teachers. Teacher candidates are expected to be well versed in the standards and performance indicators, to engage with these standards and indicators when reflecting on their teaching and on their professional capabilities, and to understand what the standards mean in terms of day-to-day teaching and student learning.

For this reason, the standards are suggested as a focus of reflection and peer discussion throughout this handbook. The specific standards for each PPAT assessment task can help teacher candidates understand the expectations for their performance both on the assessment and in the classroom. The standards can also help teacher candidates identify how well their draft performances address those expectations and pinpoint ways to improve them.

The Student Teacher

Reviewing the [InTASC Standards](#) is one way to prepare for student teaching, for taking the PPAT assessment, and for participating in the EPP supervisory seminar.

As you review the standards and performance indicators, the following questions may help focus your preliminary reflections.

- ✓ Which standards/indicators represent areas of knowledge, skills, and abilities in which you feel most prepared?
- ✓ Which standards/indicators represent areas of knowledge, skills, and abilities in which you feel least prepared?
- ✓ What questions do you have about the standards in which you feel least prepared? What might help you feel more prepared?
- ✓ What can you do to increase your preparation before you begin student teaching?
- ✓ How can your EPP instructor and cooperating teacher help you increase your knowledge, skills, and abilities in these areas while you are student teaching?

PPAT Assessment Rubrics and Exemplars

Another tool that can help teacher candidates to understand the state's expectations for their performance on the PPAT assessment is the rubrics that accompany each task. Each of the four PPAT assessment tasks is broken into multiple steps, and a unique rubric is provided for each step.

Suggestions for reviewing and reflecting on PPAT assessment steps and the rubrics associated with them are provided below for teacher candidates. As candidates' mentors, the EPP instructor and cooperating teacher may also wish to use these suggestions to guide their own review of the assessment and its relationship to the teaching standards. In doing so, it may be easier to imagine what pre-service teachers are likely to find challenging on the assessment and in the classroom.

In addition to the rubrics, the EPP instructor will have access to exemplars that can help teacher candidates better understand the task before them. These exemplars are part of the Library of Examples and can be found at <https://www.ets.org/ppa/test-takers/teachers/build-submit/library-examples>. These can be critical tools for helping teacher candidates visualize what a full performance might look like in a particular context.

In addition to the suggested activity below, the individual PPAT assessment rubrics are suggested as tools to further focus reflection and peer discussion throughout this handbook. They are used to help student teachers stay focused on the specific requirements of each PPAT assessment Step as they complete it, as well as to help them tie what they are doing during the step to the standards and classroom.

The Student Teacher

Because the PPAT assessment tasks are closely aligned with key work you will do as a student teacher, reviewing the tasks, the accompanying rubrics, and the exemplars in the Library of Examples is another way you can prepare for the test, for student teaching, and for the EPP supervisory seminar. (You can access the rubrics quickly from the [PPAT assessment informational website](#).) To manage this review in the time you have available, try focusing on one PPAT assessment Step at a time.

1. Read the overall description of PPAT assessment Task 1.
2. Read the directions, forms, and guiding prompts for Task 1, Step 1.
3. Reflect on the rubric for Task 1, Step 1.
4. As you get time, repeat steps 1-3 for Task 1, Step 2.
5. As you get time, repeat steps 1-4 for all PPAT assessment Steps associated with Tasks 2-4.

As you review the rubrics for each PPAT assessment Step, these questions may help focus your reflections.

- ✓ What changes across levels of this rubric? Why is this element important?
- ✓ Which teaching standards and indicators align with the rubric? Why are they important?
- ✓ How might each performance level for this PPAT assessment Step impact a classroom? Student learning?
- ✓ What are the connections between the guiding prompts and the rubrics?
- ✓ What are some ways you have learned to achieve positive impacts associated with the rubric?

Part 2: The Practice of Reflection

About Part 2

As noted in Part 1, a habit of mind that is critical to teachers' ongoing professional growth is the practice of regular reflection. Since reflection will be part of candidates' future career as certified teachers, they should begin cultivating their reflection skills as part of their EPP course work. The InTASC Standards advance reflection as a tool to enhance both student and teacher learning, and reflection helps provide the basis for annual goal setting in many teacher evaluation systems.

InTASC Teaching Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

Critical Disposition 9(I)

The teacher takes responsibility for student learning and uses ongoing analysis and reflection to improve planning and practice.

On the eve of the clinical experience, a new challenge facing teacher candidates may be how to integrate the practice of reflection into the structure of daily student teaching. Thinking purposefully about the role of reflection before beginning the clinical experience — and taking steps to incorporate it into their new routines — can encourage teacher candidates' reflection skills to grow alongside their other teaching proficiencies.

This section of the handbook, Part 2, reviews why teachers reflect, recommends mind-sets teachers cultivate to deepen their reflections, offers guidance on how to self-direct the practice of reflection so that it supports teaching and learning, and suggests ways the EPP instructor and cooperating teacher can help foster teacher candidates' pre-service reflection skills.

Why Reflection Matters

Why is reflection so important to the practice of teaching? One reason is that reflection bears a strong relationship to the unique improvisational thinking teachers do on the spot while teaching: they use what they know about teaching to implement planned instruction in the classroom, and as they do this, they think about which strategies are and are not helping specific students learn; and on the basis of that thinking, they continuously adjust their strategies until learning occurs.

As you know, the processes by which learners come to know and understand things vary both with the individual and the knowledge, skills, or abilities the individual is trying to learn. While each teacher carries a toolbox equipped with research-based instructional strategies for teaching different types of content, no hard-and-fast formulas dictate when to use them. Rather, teachers reflect on the tools available to them in concert with what they know about their students and curriculum to determine which strategies — and which modifications to those strategies — suit their students' current needs.

The practice of reflection formalizes this thinking. This practice can help teachers become more aware of their instructional thinking. Thus, teachers are asked to extend this formalized process by turning their skill with reflection on themselves to determine how to become more effective practitioners. As Teaching Standard 9 suggests, the two outcomes are closely entwined: teachers refine their own planning and practice to promote the learning of students.

Like other aspects of candidate-level teaching, the reflective skills of pre-service teachers are not expected to equal that of more experienced teachers. Rather, teacher candidates' skill with the practice of reflection is expected to develop in tandem with their other teaching skills.

The Student Teacher

To stress the importance of reflection as an integral aspect of practice, the PPAT assessment incorporates reflection questions into three of the performance-assessment tasks.

- **Task 2** guiding prompts ask teacher candidates to reflect on (a) how their data analysis will inform or guide future instruction for the whole class, (b) what modifications to the data-collection process they would make for future use, (c) what modifications to the assessment they would make for future use, (d) the ways an assessment that is different from the type used in this task would allow students to further demonstrate their achievement of the learning goal(s), (e) the selection of one successful aspect of the assessment for either Focus Student, (f) how the data analysis will inform or guide future instruction for each Focus Student, and (g) modifications that would be made to the assessment for future use for each Focus Student.
- **Task 3** guiding prompts ask teacher candidates to reflect on (a) what specific instructional strategies, learning activities, materials, resources, and technology they would use to help students who did not achieve the learning goal(s), (b) how they will use their analysis of the lesson and the evidence of student learning to guide their planning of future lessons for the whole class, and (c) how they will use their analysis of the lesson and the evidence of student learning to guide their planning of future lessons for each of the two Focus Students.
- **Task 4** guiding prompts ask teacher candidates to reflect on (a) the extent to which the students reached the learning goal(s), (b) what instructional strategies, interactions with students, and classroom-management strategies went well and what areas they would revise in the future, (c) what revisions they could make if they were to teach the lesson again, (d) the extent to which each of the two Focus Students achieved the learning goal(s) of the lesson, based on the baseline data and student work samples, and (e) how their analysis of the baseline data and student work samples will guide planning of future lessons for each Focus Student.

This handbook supports this integrated focus.

- **Part 2:** Ideas for reflection are integrated into the guidance for completing PPAT assessment Task 1.
- **Part 3:** Reflection activities are provided to help you and your EPP peers complete the Professional Growth Plan.

Cultivating a Reflection Mind-set

Certain mind-sets, beliefs, and attitudes have the potential to support and deepen teachers' reflections. Chief among these is *an open mind*. Preset ideas about whether or not a change in instructional approach will succeed can translate to missed learning opportunities for both student and teacher. Thus, being open to ideas shared by colleagues, seeking different ways to do things, and being willing to try new things in the classroom are all part of open-mindedness.

Open-mindedness connects with another crucial mind-set: *respecting your own thinking and ability to make appropriate decisions*. Reflective practitioners listen to what others say about different ways to teach, and then weigh those approaches in terms of their own teaching context. They know that it is important to acknowledge ideas that multiple colleagues report working in their own classrooms — and that it is up to them to figure out how to apply the idea in their own unique settings and that they are responsible for any outcomes.

Another critical habit of mind can help teachers thoughtfully appraise potential instructional approaches in terms of their own teaching contexts: *the willingness to make time for introspection and analysis*. Purposeful, open-minded reflection can involve questioning current practices, analyzing alternative solutions, thinking about what students require to succeed with new approaches, and ultimately, considering how your own skills support a potential change. Time to think in a distraction-free environment can help teachers make these connections.

Sometimes, introspection may lead teachers to confront personal biases and preferences that prevent them from seeing solutions to instructional problems. Thus, taking time for introspection broaches two related capacities: *the understanding that your own learning needs are professional considerations, not personal ones*, and *the willingness to reflect openly with supportive colleagues*. At one time or another, all teachers need support to make the fruits of their reflection real. Pushing away fear of judgment and asking for help — such as assistance with planning, a chance to observe a practice firsthand, or an opportunity for collegial conversation — are often prerequisites for growth.

At times, the support that reflective practitioners need may not be well focused. For example, novice teachers reflecting on the classroom environment, their students' motivation to learn, or their students' willingness to enter into deep discussion with their peers may need help understanding why these things are not blossoming in their classrooms before they can explore potential solutions. At such times, a teacher's willingness to reflect openly in the presence of supportive, more experienced colleagues can inspire formative insights, questions, and suggestions that sharpen or redirect reflection, making it possible to move toward solutions.

While the paragraphs above stress supports, mind-sets, beliefs, and attitudes that can enhance teachers' own reflections, an additional mind-set rounds out the picture: *a collegial spirit*. Reflective practitioners embrace their roles as members of professional learning communities by listening supportively to the reflections of their colleagues, sharing their knowledge and experiences to enrich the reflections of others, and opening their classrooms to their peers.

The EPP Instructor

While it is unclear what can be done to reverse national trends suggesting that as many as half of new teachers leave the field within five years, it is possible that supportive communities in which candidates feel safe talking about their challenges and learning needs — and are assisted in directing their own professional development — may help.

Creating a safe, supportive space in which student teachers can feel comfortable and can be vulnerable is similar to the challenge of nurturing a classroom environment in which teacher candidates' future students feel this way. So why not allow your pre-service teachers to help establish this culture for purposes of the EPP supervisory seminar? This hands-on experience may help them one day set up their own classroom environment and Professional Learning Community.

For instance, you might appoint two teacher candidates to lead a discussion in which peers suggest qualities of the classroom environment that would help them reflect openly and accept suggestions and feedback. One of these teacher candidates should focus on and chart qualities that support sharing reflections openly, while the other should focus on and chart qualities that support hearing and accepting feedback and suggestions.

As the seminar progresses, encourage teacher candidates to reflect from time to time on how well the contract and the resulting classroom culture is functioning — such as by assigning some of the questions that follow for at-home or in-class reflection.

- ✓ How successful is the classroom culture I helped create? What is working well? How have these successful aspects of our classroom environment affected my ability to reflect, to share my reflections, or to give or accept supportive feedback? What have these successful elements helped me learn about the practice of reflection?
- ✓ In what ways could the classroom culture created be improved? Did we forget to include any elements in our contract that could enhance our environment? What is not working well? How have these less successful aspects of our classroom environment affected my individual ability to reflect, to share my reflections, or to give or accept supportive feedback? What have these less successful elements helped me learn about the practice of reflection?
- ✓ What has establishing a classroom culture to support our own learning taught me about the role of creating a supportive learning community with my future students? How did being part of the process contribute to the success of the experience? What factors supported the process? What factors might impede it?
- ✓ If I were to translate this experience of being *part* of a community of learners into *creating* such a community with my future students, what would I do differently? Looking at my chosen area of certification (or my assigned student-teaching context),

what difference would my students' developmental ages make? How about the content and skills I plan to teach?

The Cooperating Teacher

You May Be Able to Help the Teacher Candidate ...

As a reflective practitioner yourself, you are well positioned to help your student teacher improve his or her skill with reflection, as well as to experience how collegial support can deepen the practice of reflection. Consider the options that follow.

- Relate some of your early experiences as a reflective practitioner: What were your pre-service reflections like? How did your reflective skills grow with your other instructional skills? What did you learn that helped you reflect more deeply or purposefully? How have those experiences affected your students?
- Function as a supportive colleague by listening and offering gentle suggestions, questions, and feedback to deepen and redirect the teacher candidate's reflections as needed.
- Explain how you integrate reflection into your practice, how you relay simple structures for focusing daily reflections, and how you share where you find support for your reflections.
- Explain what you do to establish a supportive learning environment for your students in the beginning of the school year, as well as how you sustain it throughout the year.
- Explain how your students' developmental ages and the content you teach influence the needs of that learning environment.

The EPP Instructor

Another way to support your teacher candidates' reflections is to think ahead about how you will take a formative approach to evaluating those reflections. First, explain to the teacher candidates what qualities you will be looking for when you review their reflections formatively (e.g., purposefulness, focus, strength of evidence, investment, and openness). Then, consider using one or a combination of these options.

- Take a pass/fail approach to this contribution to the EPP program requirements, based on the teacher candidates' levels of effort and engagement with reflection.
- Use a ✓ /✓plus / ✓minus system to indicate qualities ranging from strong insights to missed opportunities for learning and discovery.
- Adapt the "Circling Errors" approach by silently circling areas of reflection that merit deeper thought or investigation. (While the areas of reflection that you pick out are not errors, the act of circling the areas that deserve further attention should have a similar effect as circling errors — namely, to focus teacher candidates' further reflections.)
- Adopt a "Comment-Only" approach to marking, in which you add one or two questions or statements to a reflection that reinforce something the teacher candidate did well in order to help him or her see why something worked or did not work, to reassure the teacher candidate, to redirect the teacher candidate's thinking, and so on.
- Limit your feedback to "Two Stars and a Wish" by pointing to two positive things about a reflection and one that could be deepened.

Choosing a Focus

Teachers often have much to process after a day in the classroom, not all of it related to learning. Likewise, as teacher candidates make their way home after a day of student teaching, they are likely to find many aspects of the clinical experience competing for their mental attention. But the practice of reflection differs in two important ways from clearing the mind of peripheral matters: **reflection is professionally focused and it is purposefully directed**. It may be helpful to consider some ways to direct the practice of reflection so that it achieves these qualities.

Assigned reflections: As teacher candidates in an EPP program, student teachers are likely familiar with the need to reflect on prompts, questions, and scenarios assigned by EPP instructors. As their careers advance, assigned reflection will likely continue to play a role in their professional lives. For instance, a teacher may be asked by a supervisor to reflect on a particular area of practice, or a professional development or Professional Learning Community activity may require reflection. To make these meaningful and relevant, teacher candidates can focus their reflections on genuine challenges they face in their clinical classrooms or on challenges they are likely to face in their chosen areas of certification.

Student-based reflections: As teacher candidates should see when they begin the clinical experience and complete the PPAT assessment tasks, much may be gained by focusing reflection on individual students. For instance, this focus can be used to analyze assessment evidence to determine the particular concepts and skills a student is struggling with, as well as to evaluate why certain instructional choices may not be helping the student achieve a learning goal. The same focus can be used to explore different instructional choices or modifications that promise to be more effective, based on what the analysis reveals about the student. Such a focus can direct reflection across several weeks.

A daily student-based reflection might involve a teacher generating questions that must be answered to help students learn. Other daily reflections could be used to reflect on answers. Still others might be directed toward increasing a particular student's engagement: the teacher would name a student, say what she or he knows about the student, describe a planned modification based on that knowledge, and reflect on how the modification should impact the student's motivation to learn. Evidence of the effectiveness of various approaches could provide a focus for future daily reflections.

Some Common Goals of Reflection

Some things hold true across all purposeful reflections.

- Because of the close relationship between instruction and student learning, reflection should always feature students. They are the evidence of a teacher's developing skills.
- All categories of reflection work two ways: they can look backward in an effort to understand things that have already occurred, and they can look forward, toward solutions to challenges, improvements in practice, and ways to strengthen instructional planning.
- To make learning palpable, it is a good idea for practitioners to try to articulate what they learned — or are learning — about instruction in each of their reflections.

Lesson-planning reflections: Reflection focused on lesson planning can help teachers approach this valuable preparation more purposefully. The following are just a few of the many possible questions teachers might ask themselves to strengthen their planning.

- ✓ Why am I planning to teach this content this way? What do I know that makes this a good choice? What is the relationship between this choice and the learning goal? What is the relationship between this learning goal and the assessment?
- ✓ What did I struggle with the last time I implemented this kind of lesson? What have I learned since then about how to approach this difficulty? How have I incorporated what I learned into my planning? Is it enough? If not, what additional support do I need?
- ✓ Does my planning provide adequate alternative methods of teaching the content if students have trouble achieving the learning goal? How have I planned to maintain the engagement of students who learn the content quickly?

Action-research reflections: An action-research focus can also extend across weeks of reflection. It begins with identifying a challenge and can include multiple reflections that:

- Explore the nature of or causes of the challenge.
- Identify resources, information, and training to expand understanding of the challenge.
- Examine how new ideas about instruction might impact the challenge.
- Analyze ways to resolve the challenge.
- Weigh planning considerations for implementing a solution to the challenge.
- Assess the planning and implementation of the solution.
- Consider ways to improve the implementation or, if necessary, develop another solution to try.

Success-based reflections: Teachers should not overlook opportunities to reflect on things that go well. For instance, perhaps something the teacher tried during a lesson had a bigger positive impact than he or she imagined. What does that success say about the strategy? What does it say about how the strategy was implemented and the students who benefited? In other words, why did it work so well? Another rich avenue for reflection can involve looking forward to ways to capitalize on this learning in the future.

Reflection-based reflections: Teachers can learn a lot about their developing skills by reviewing reflections completed over time. For one thing, these may show how the quality and focus of their reflections evolved across an interval. For another, they may attest to periods of instructional challenge, as well as the successful resolution of such challenges. In other words, teachers' professional growth — and simultaneous improvements in student learning — are often memorialized in reflections and can provide valuable fodder for professional self-assessment. What teachers learn from reflection-based reflections can:

- Point to ways their instructional skills and student learning are improving.
- Help identify goals for continued professional growth.
- Contribute to the formal self-assessments they complete each year.
- Provide reasons to celebrate student learning and teacher improvement.
- Enhance their understanding of the close interplay between reflection and teaching.
- Reinforce the importance of reflective practice.

Reflection-based reflections can also be used to elicit collegial feedback. Supportive colleagues may see things in a teacher's reflections that lead them to suggest ways to focus or make the reflections more purposeful. They might see strengths that are worthy of acknowledgement. And they may see patterns of thinking that can help guide the teacher's future improvement

Professional self-assessments: While this type of reflection may be assigned at key junctures throughout a teacher's career (e.g., pre- or post-observation, to establish annual professional goals, or at the urging of a supervisor), teachers may choose this focus at other times, too. For example, they can use it to monitor the implementation of a new strategy in the classroom. Reflections can provide a basis for deciding when both the teacher and the class have reached a milestone, when it is time to take an implementation to the next level, and how to adjust prior planning based on evidence from successive steps.

Similarly, reflecting monthly on progress toward an annual goal can help teachers stay on track to achieve that goal. Mentors and supervisors can provide input on this progress, as well as on ways to advance toward the goal in manageable steps. Teachers can also use this self-monitoring focus to determine how to fine-tune an action plan developed to support the goal.

Teachers' professional self-assessments can be loosely structured, such as by analyzing aspects of implementations that went well, were challenging, or were surprising. Another kind of loosely structured self-assessment might be focused introspectively on the ways values and personal preferences affect instruction and may influence student learning.

Teachers' reflective professional self-assessments can also be more formally structured. The Daily Reflection Form described later in this section illustrates one way to do this.

The EPP Instructor

To keep the task of reflecting during the clinical experience from overwhelming teacher candidates, consider explaining how often you expect them to reflect for purposes of the EPP supervisory seminar, as well as what form you expect those reflections to take. Providing a range of sample structures for simple, pre-service, student-centered reflection can relieve them of having to develop these on their own and may help start their practice of reflection on more solid footing. Additionally, you may want to provide concrete examples of both the scope and focus of these reflections — particularly if you expect daily reflection. Examples that suggest scope have the potential to help teacher candidates see how they can incorporate reflection into their daily student teaching. Examples can also help illustrate what focus and purpose look like across the three different developmental levels of Standard 9.

The Student Teacher

Methods of Reflecting

Because you are beginning a practice intended to support you throughout your professional life, it is worth thinking about *the methods* you will use to both capture and share reflections. You can choose more than one method of reflection to support and document your developing instructional skills. In addition to choosing methods based on personal preferences, you should also identify (a) formats that you can easily review and borrow from, and (b) formats that you can readily share when opportunities arise.

- **Journals:** This traditional method of reflecting offers you a way to record your thinking on the go, but limitations like legibility may prevent easy sharing.
- **Computer files:** Word-processing documents offer legibility and convenience: you can copy a reflection into an e-mail to send to an EPP instructor or colleague, for example, or you can paste a prompt into the file to mark a reflection on an assigned topic. As your individual reflections inspire deeper research, problem solving, or action planning, you will likely accumulate many files related to your reflections on your personal or work computer. At times, you may wish to copy and paste things from these into formal self-assessments.
- **Diagrams:** Hand-drawn or computer-generated charts allow you to map the flow of learning during a lesson to analyze challenges, reflect on and stage the processes by which students learn, highlight junctures when students require greater support, and pinpoint opportunities for learners to arrive at critical connections in their thinking, just to name a few possibilities.
- **Audio and video recordings:** If you are more inclined to speak than to write, audio recordings can provide a means of capturing thinking that occurs while commuting so that it does not get away. Making video recordings of your reflections — as well as lessons that capture challenges at the heart of (or that arise out of) reflections — can be another powerful way to both document your developing skills and provide additional direction for reflection.
- **Blogs:** One way to reflect while connecting with a larger community of teacher-learners is to set up a blog. If you do this, consider configuring the blog's settings to only permit comments from invited guests or a forum's registered users to ensure supportive, constructive feedback. You will also need to make sure nothing you discuss in your blog could jeopardize your students' privacy.
- **Internet-based teacher forums:** These structured, Web-based opportunities invite anonymous collegial sharing around various pedagogical topics, grade levels, and subject areas and may be moderated to ensure that the environment retains a collegial spirit. Forums like these can be a good alternative for teachers

who are looking for a supportive community of learners outside their district. They may, for example, allow teachers in small schools to connect with a greater number of teachers in their areas of certification.

- **Video Communications:** Teachers can use video software to connect with supportive colleagues during the summer, to continue professional sharing with a colleague who has moved, or to set up a unique community of learners with colleagues from workshops and conferences.

The Role of Active Listening

Active listening can be a powerful tool for responding to colleagues' reflections and requests for supportive feedback. Active-listening strategies include the following.

- Listening respectfully while a colleague is speaking
- Remaining silent for a few moments after a colleague shares a reflection to encourage him or her to add to the response
- Waiting quietly while colleagues process their answers to questions
- Paraphrasing something a colleague says to emphasize another aspect of the reflection
- Asking a question that encourages a colleague to probe a reflection more deeply
- Putting into words an impact a colleague senses but cannot verbalize
- Offering reassurance when something does not go as planned
- Reinforcing colleagues' insights about habits and routines that help maintain teaching effectiveness
- Reminding struggling colleagues that their work is what they do, not who they are (or, to put it another way, that remedying a problem of practice is about learning to make better instructional choices, not about being a better person)
- Rewording a colleague's negative experience to take the person out of the problem and elevate it to the status of shared professional challenge
- Rewording a colleague's negative experience to emphasize something that was successful about the experience
- Using questioning to help a colleague understand a problem or challenge before offering insights and potential solutions

Professional Self-Assessment

The ten InTASC Standards and associated performance indicators are articulated at three developmental levels that together represent a professional continuum from basic competence of the pre-service teacher to more complex teaching practice of the distinguished, veteran teacher.

As described in the InTASC Standards: “These progressions are intended to describe what movement from basic competence to more complex teaching practice looks like. Generally, this means that the relationship between teacher and learner that defines a teacher’s practice moves along a continuum from being more directive (the teacher ‘directs’ what learners do), to more facilitative (the teacher guides learners with some choice and independence), to more collaborative (the teacher works side-by-side with learners who set direction for their own work). Each of these roles requires different and more sophisticated knowledge and skills. Specifically, it means:

- Practice moves toward scaffolding students’ learning opportunities so that they are able to assume more responsibility for their learning and make better choices about their learning.
- Practice moves toward helping learners see more connections and relationships and facilitates learning at higher levels of Bloom’s taxonomy (revised), including evaluating and creating. These higher order learning skills are what the 2012 Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) research report found is missing in most teachers’ practice today and what will be essential practice for us to move toward college-and-career-ready standards. The developmental trend is the teacher’s increasing ability to lead learners to their own maximal development.
- Practice moves from a focus on the teacher to a deeper focus on the individual learner, understanding his/her needs, and an increasing ability to differentiate instruction to meet those needs. The focus moves from delivery of instruction to the impact of practice on serving learner needs.
- Practice moves from reliance on the teacher alone to implement strategies to leveraging colleagues and the community to implement and supplement practice, to advocating for learners, and to serving in leadership roles.
- Practice moves from a limited repertoire of strategies to one with greater depth and breadth, including infusing technology in instruction and providing access to resources from around the world.

In addition to describing the nuances of different levels of performance, the progressions begin the process of identifying how a teacher can move from one developmental level to another. In the design of the progressions section, these are called ‘shifts’ in knowledge and skill between levels and include illustrative examples of professional learning that would promote growth toward the shift. Note that these examples are not intended to be exhaustive; rather they

suggest professional learning experiences that will move practice to higher levels of performance.

Developmental Level 1 of the professional continuum reflects the learning goals for the clinical experience. Teacher candidates should target their developing performances to this level as they student teach, with a goal of reaching the level by the end of the interim. A good understanding of what the Developmental Level 1 performance looks like for each teaching standard and indicator can help ground pre-service teachers' expectations for themselves, as well as help them focus their reflections and professional self-assessments on tangible ways to grow.

For the Student Teacher

The PPAT assessment Task 1 Teaching Standards that are provided in the *PPAT Assessment Task 1 Handbook* are worded at the Level 1 performance, where appropriate. See the [InTASC Standards](#) in which all of the Teaching Standards are articulated at each level of the continuum.

Consider inviting some of your peers to participate in a study group activity prior to the clinical experience. Focusing on one Task 1 standard and indicator at a time, reflect together on how the language associated with Developmental Level 1 might translate to actual performance.

- ✓ How does language at Level 1 reflect skills that are *developing* and more *directive*?
- ✓ What might these developing and directive skills look like in practice?
- ✓ What might distinguish a Level 1 implementation of this standard or indicator from an implementation at the Developmental Level 2? What might this more competent and experienced teacher do differently?
- ✓ What might you expect to see that indicates a student teacher is “shifting” from a Level 1 implementation of the standard or indicator to a Level 2 implementation?

After the group disbands, pick a Task 1 standard in which you feel relatively well-prepared and reflect on the following questions.

- ✓ To what extent does your skill with the standard meet the criteria for Level 1?
- ✓ Do you feel equally well-prepared across all performance indicators?
- ✓ For performance indicators that represent your strongest preparation, what help do you need to reach Level 2?

Finally, pick a Task 1 standard in which you feel relatively less well-prepared and reflect on these questions.

- ✓ To what extent does your skill with the standard meet the criteria for Level 1?
- ✓ Do you feel less well-prepared across all performance indicators?
- ✓ What help do you need to bring your proficiency with all performance indicators up to Level 1?

Repeating this study group activity with the standards for each PPAT assessment task before you begin working on that task may help you develop realistic expectations for your performance, as well as help you develop an understanding of where to focus your ongoing learning while you are student teaching.

The Daily Reflection Form

The Daily Reflection Form, which is provided with the ancillary materials on the PPAT assessment informational website and shown in three parts at the end of this section, is an optional form that the EPP instructor and cooperating teacher can direct teacher candidates to use to reflect on their daily student teaching experiences, including those related to the completion of PPAT assessment tasks. Questions provided on the form are designed to help teacher candidates reflect on student learning and to use that as a basis for self-assessing — and improving — their developing skills.

The EPP Instructor

If you want your teacher candidates to use the Daily Reflection Form while they are student teaching, you may want to give them some guidance on how much of the form they should complete regularly. The form is yours to tailor to EPP requirements and expectations.

For instance, on any given day, a student teacher's instructional activities may be more focused on one element of teaching than on another. Teacher candidates may focus their reflections more purposefully if they or their cooperating teachers can choose which questions to reflect on that day. At other times — such as before or after a formative observation — you may wish to direct the focus to align with the aim of the observation. And at intervals — perhaps at the end of each week — you may prefer that they complete the form in its entirety.

Also, how often do you expect teacher candidates to parlay their reflections into goals? If, for example, a teacher candidate is focusing on improving a specific skill, such as questioning, setting micro-goals may help the teacher candidate stay focused on moving that skill forward. Another option is to ask teacher candidates to work with their cooperating teachers to set weekly goals focused on an area of greatest need.

The Elements of Teaching

The Daily Reflection Form offers reflection questions organized around the elements of teaching. These elements (described in the table that follows) reflect processes and tasks all effective teachers rely on to teach content to students. While the elements overlap the InTASC Standards in many ways, the elements and standards do not strictly align. For instance, several elements of teaching reflect InTASC Teaching Standard 1 (learner development), Standards 5 (application of content) and 9 (professional learning and ethical practice) could also play a role in many of the elements.

One value of the elements of teaching is that they are potentially useful to all teachers, regardless of the content they teach or the performance standards their teaching embodies at a given point in time. Whether teachers self-assess their proficiency in terms of the state's teacher standards or some other performance standards (such as those of a professional organization), aligning the elements with specific standards and performance indicators is always within easy

reach. In essence, the elements function as a common language that allows teachers of different grade levels and content areas — as well as teachers who work in different parts of the country — to communicate with one another productively about their professional practices. For these reasons, many teacher evaluation systems use similar terminology to describe day-to-day instruction.

The Elements of Teaching

Element of Teaching	Description
Establishing Goals/Standards	Establishes goals for student learning based on state and national content standards for students
Learning About Students	Gathers knowledge of students (whole class and individual) and uses this information to plan instruction and assessment
Learning About Resources and Procedures	Gathers knowledge of materials, programs, personnel, data, policies, services, rules, and procedures and uses this information to plan and implement instruction and assessment
Planning for Instruction	Uses standards and learning goals, information about students, instructional strategies, learning activities, materials, resources, and technology to plan for instruction
Planning for Assessment	Uses standards and learning goals, information about students, instructional strategies, learning activities, materials, resources, and technology to plan for assessment
Addressing Student Learning Differences and Needs and Making Adaptations	Adapts instruction and assessment plans based on knowledge of students and their learning needs
Creating a Positive, Engaging, and Rigorous Learning Environment	Establishes a climate for learning and supports positive interactions among students and between the teacher and students
Engaging Students in Learning	Implements instructional plans to cognitively engage students and help them meet the learning goals
Analyzing Instruction	Uses information from all parts of a lesson to determine the impact on student learning and to plan/adapt further instruction

Element of Teaching	Description
Analyzing Assessment Data and Student Learning	Uses assessment data to obtain information about intended student learning and to plan/adapt further instruction
Reflecting on Teaching Practice	Reflects on connections among learning about students, planning/adapting instruction and assessment, student progress toward learning goals, and improving teaching practice and the learning environment

Other Advantages of the Daily Reflection Form

The columns of the Daily Reflection Form (provided at the end of this section) are designed to promote a habitual way of thinking about instructional success. Student teachers should base any self-assessment they enter in column 2 (Self-Assessment) of the form on the evidence of student learning they cite in column 3 (Rationale). Their rationales should explain what the evidence suggests about any instructional steps they took and should articulate how or why those measures were successful or unsuccessful.

The Daily Reflection Form also provides a means by which the EPP instructor and cooperating teacher can offer teacher candidates immediate formative feedback on their reflections. Mentors can use column 4 (Educator Feedback) and the second section of the form (Goal Setting) to review a teacher candidate’s thinking, indicate their level of agreement with a teacher candidate’s self-assessment, offer a question or comment that invites deeper thinking and reflection, or provide suggestions to guide the teacher candidate’s ongoing skill development.

Finally, the Daily Reflection Form is closely aligned with the Professional Growth Plan that teacher candidates complete after student teaching. Both forms rely on the elements of teaching, and the Daily Reflection Form offers teacher candidates practice using mentor feedback, their reflections, and their self-assessments to set goals for ongoing learning. Teacher candidates’ Daily Reflection Form entries can provide evidence of proficiency that filters naturally into the completion of the Professional Growth Plan and thus can help teacher candidates identify goals for post-clinical professional improvement.

The EPP Instructor and Cooperating Teacher

The elements of teaching are used as a framework for the PPAT assessment Daily Reflection Form and the Professional Growth Plan.

This alignment is one reason the PPAT assessment Daily Reflection Form may be a good choice for use with student teachers. Consistent use of the elements can help candidates assimilate information about their skill levels that they have received from several sources and can help them later use the information to identify goals for post-clinical professional growth.

Along the same lines, when you offer teacher candidates qualitative formative feedback, it may also be helpful to indicate from time to time how their skills are advancing with respect to the professional continuum. One way to do this is to use 1–, 1, or 1+ to rate their performances related to an element as they progress through Developmental Level 1 and to use 2–, 2, or 2+ for those performances that are moving toward Developmental Level 2. If teacher candidates take the same approach on their self-assessments, this consistency — in combination with qualitative feedback — may help them self-assess their post-clinical proficiency for purposes of the Professional Growth Plan.

The PPAT Daily Reflection Form and Professional Growth Plan are available as downloads on the [PPAT assessment informational website](#).

For the Student Teacher

Look to your EPP instructor for guidance in completing the Daily Reflection Form. For instance, your instructor may direct you to do a complete reflection and self-assessment at key intervals throughout the clinical experience but may wish you to take a sharper focus on a daily basis. Whether you are using the form to reflect on one element, a few related elements, or all of the elements, as well as to set goals that help you monitor and direct your ongoing learning, the approach that follows can help you develop a useful Daily Reflection Form entry.

1. For any given element, mentally reflect on the questions related to the element in column 1 (Element of Teaching).
2. In column 2 (Self-Assessment), self-assess your implementation of the element. Be descriptive. In addition, think of your performance in terms of the Developmental Level 1 and Level 2 language of the InTASC Standards professional continuum. To what extent is your performance with the element or an aspect of the element at the Developmental Level 1 (e.g., use 1–, 1, or 1+ to rate the performance)? To what extent is it approaching the Developmental Level 2 (e.g., use 2–, 2, or 2+)?
3. In column 3 (Rationale), cite the evidence on which you based your self-assessment of the element implementation. Tie your self-assessment to the evidence and explain how and/or why you arrived at your view.
4. Based on your analysis of your implementation, develop a goal for your next level of learning in column 2 (New Goal(s)/Learning) of the second (Goal Setting) section of the form. In column 3 (Rationale for This Selection), explain why you chose the goal, and in column 4 (What Can I Do to Reach the Goal(s)?) discuss what you will do to reach the goal.
5. Share your entry with your EPP instructor and/or cooperating teacher to request feedback. Your mentors can provide feedback for an element in column 4 and for your goal in the box at the end of the form. They may also suggest additional questions for reflection. Their questions may focus on your goal setting or on the implementation of a particular element.

Refining Your Self-Assessment Skills

To refine your self-assessment skills, repeat the study group activity described earlier (see the “Professional Self-Assessments” section) by reflecting with your peers on how each element of teaching might differ at the Developmental Levels 1 and 2. Use the terminology provided with the professional continuum to support your group thinking.

Daily Reflection Form, Part 1

Element of Teaching	Self-Assessment	Rationale	Educator Feedback
	Be descriptive. Also think in terms of the Developmental Levels 1 and 2 of the professional continuum.	Cite evidence of how and/or why for your answers to the questions. Tie your self-assessment to this evidence.	The EPP instructor and/or cooperating teacher can offer feedback here.
Establishing Goals/Standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the students meet my learning goals for this lesson? • What evidence of student learning did I see to support my claim? 			
Learning About Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did my lesson accurately reflect and connect to students' lives, prior knowledge, and background information to enhance student learning? • What are some of the connections that worked? 			

Daily Reflection Form, Part 1 (cont'd.)

Element of Teaching	Self-Assessment	Rationale	Educator Feedback
	Be descriptive. Also think in terms of the Developmental Levels 1 and 2 of the professional continuum.	Cite evidence of how and/or why for your answers to the questions. Tie your self-assessment to this evidence.	The EPP instructor and/or cooperating teacher can offer feedback here.
<p>Learning About Resources and Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did my lesson adequately make use of available materials, programs, personnel, data, policies, services, rules, and procedures? • What are some examples that worked? 			
<p>Planning for Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did my selection of strategies, activities, and resources enhance the delivery of my lesson? • Did my knowledge and understanding of the content help the students achieve the planned learning goals? 			

Daily Reflection Form, Part 1 (cont'd.)

Element of Teaching	Self-Assessment	Rationale	Educator Feedback
	<p>Be descriptive. Also think in terms of the Developmental Levels 1 and 2 of the professional continuum.</p>	<p>Cite evidence of how and/or why for your answers to the questions. Tie your self-assessment to this evidence.</p>	<p>The EPP instructor and/or cooperating teacher can offer feedback here.</p>
<p>Planning for Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was my selection of strategies for assessment effective? 			
<p>Addressing Student Learning Differences and Needs and Making Adaptations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did I have to alter my instructional plan as I taught the lesson? Did I have any students who struggled with the learning activities? If so, identify the students and describe how they struggled and where in the learning activity this occurred. What adjustments or modifications in the learning activity can I make that might better support these students' learning needs? 			

Daily Reflection Form, Part 1 (cont'd.)

Element of Teaching	Self-Assessment	Rationale	Educator Feedback
	<p>Be descriptive. Also think in terms of the Developmental Levels 1 and 2 of the professional continuum.</p>	<p>Cite evidence of how and/or why for your answers to the questions. Tie your self-assessment to this evidence.</p>	<p>The EPP instructor and/or cooperating teacher can offer feedback here.</p>
<p>Creating a Positive, Engaging, and Rigorous Learning Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did I provide all my students with a supportive environment in which to learn and interact appropriately? • Did I demonstrate clear expectations for student behavior? • What resources, including technology, did I use to enhance student learning and create a risk-free environment? 			

Daily Reflection Form, Part 1 (cont'd.)

Element of Teaching	Self-Assessment	Rationale	Educator Feedback
	<p>Be descriptive. Also think in terms of the Developmental Levels 1 and 2 of the professional continuum.</p>	<p>Cite evidence of how and/or why for your answers to the questions. Tie your self-assessment to this evidence.</p>	<p>The EPP instructor and/or cooperating teacher can offer feedback here.</p>
<p>Engaging Students in Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the behaviors my students exhibited show me that they were engaged? • What do I believe contributed to this engagement? • What is my perception of the students' level of engagement during my different learning activities today? • Were they focused, responding, asking questions, volunteering, etc.? • Did I prepare and manage my time and routines so that instructional time was maximized? 			
<p>Analyzing Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which parts of the lesson had a positive impact on student learning? • What further instruction must I plan or adapt? 			

Daily Reflection Form, Part 1 (cont'd.)

Element of Teaching	Self-Assessment	Rationale	Educator Feedback
	Be descriptive. Also think in terms of the Developmental Levels 1 and 2 of the professional continuum.	Cite evidence of how and/or why for your answers to the questions. Tie your self-assessment to this evidence.	The EPP instructor and/or cooperating teacher can offer feedback here.
<p>Analyzing Assessment Data and Student Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did any of my students struggle with their learning today? • What particular aspects of learning must I adjust or modify? 			
<p>Reflecting on Teaching Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In teaching this lesson today, what did I learn about this group of students or individual students that I will now use to facilitate student learning? • If I would teach this lesson again to the same students, how would I change this lesson? 			

Daily Reflection Form: Goal Setting

Personal Goal(s)	New Goal(s)/Learning Based on my self-reflection and my own learning from today, what new goal(s)/ learning can I set for myself?	Rationale for This Selection These are the reasons why I selected the goal(s) as important for my personal growth.	What Can I Do to Reach the Goal(s)? This is my plan to help me reach my goal(s).
Feedback from the EPP Instructor or Cooperating Teacher¹			
Additional Reflection Question			
Additional Reflection Question			

¹ The EPP instructor and/or cooperating teacher can offer feedback here and can also suggest reflection questions in column 1 below. Questions for further reflection can be focused on goal setting or on the implementation of an element of teaching.

The EPP Instructor

Throughout the EPP supervisory seminar, teacher candidates may benefit from discussion and reflection that helps them maintain a focus on evidence as the basis for their instructional decisions, reflections, and self-assessments.

All PPAT assessment rubrics reflect the important role evidence plays in promoting student learning and teachers' professional growth. Every level of every rubric is grounded in the strength of the evidence teacher candidates cite to support their responses to guiding prompts (e.g., such evidence may be "minimal and/or ineffective," "limited and/or vague," "appropriate and connected," or "insightful and thoroughly connected"). In the *PPAT Assessment Task 1 Handbook*, suggestions for peer activities based on these rubrics invite student teachers to analyze the role evidence plays in PPAT assessment performance and, by extension, their teaching.

However, teacher candidates may have an easier time seeing the role evidence plays in sample PPAT assessment responses (see Library of Examples on the PPAT assessment website) than they do in their assigned classrooms. What *is* good evidence? they may wonder. How do I recognize it? How do I interpret it? At this point in their career, they may grasp that evidence should drive their reflections, student learning, and ongoing professional learning but that recognizing, interpreting, and making effective use of quality evidence is a competency that is expected to evolve alongside their other skills.

Here are some approaches you can use to help teacher candidates begin to think automatically about evidence when they are reflecting and making instructional decisions.

- Insist that they cite evidence for any statements they make about their student-teaching experiences during conferences and peer discussions. Consistently asking the same question (such as, What evidence do you have of that?) can help teacher candidates learn to anticipate your thinking and thus make the connection between evidence and instruction. Probing a teacher candidate's response with follow-up questions (hot seat questioning) can help deepen their thinking about evidence.
- Use evidence as a consistent indicator when giving teacher candidates formative feedback on their reflections and self-assessments. As you review each teacher candidate's work, ask yourself, *Is the evidence an apt choice? Do the teacher candidate's observations align with the evidence? How strongly? Does the evidence suggest anything of significance that the teacher candidate does not observe or mention?* Your comments may help the teacher candidate learn to focus on what matters.
- Organize group activities that engage teacher candidates in analyzing, discussing, and reaching consensus on a potential use for a specific piece of evidence.

- Allow teacher candidates to present evidence for peer discussion during the EPP seminar by telling a story: A presenter starts by contextualizing a piece of evidence in terms of the classroom setting (e.g., by describing the student(s), content, learning goal, and activity that generated the evidence). Next, the presenter shows and describes the evidence, relates any conclusion he or she reached about it, and states how the evidence will be used. The teacher candidate's peers are then permitted to ask questions about the evidence and to share any insights they may have.

Part 3: The Professional Growth Plan

Introduction

As noted earlier, your state may require you and your EPP peers to complete a Professional Growth Plan (PGP) at the conclusion of the clinical experience. The PGP is a tool for setting goals for your future professional learning based on a self-assessment of your post-clinical teaching proficiency. It is uniquely crafted for student teachers.

While the PGP bears a relationship to the growth plan that many certified teachers complete annually within their districts, in most cases your PGP cannot be focused in the same way. The focal point of many certified teachers' annual goal setting is the specific students they know they will teach the following year. Of course, if you are hired for the coming school year before you complete the PGP, by all means think about your goals in terms of that setting.

Otherwise, your PGP should be targeted toward understanding what you need to do to further develop your instructional skills within the context of your planned area of certification so that you can be better prepared for your upcoming licensure tests, a job search, and a future position as a teacher. What you learned about your knowledge, skills, and abilities while student teaching will influence what you need to do to advance your proficiency with one or more elements of teaching, teaching standards, and performance indicators to the emerging-teacher level.

On the other hand, if you achieved the proficiency of a Level 1 teacher across all elements, standards, and indicators by the end of the clinical experience, your next step might be to strengthen a skill with which you are less confident or to set your sights on what it might take to move your skill in a given area to the next level.

At any point in time, an overarching goal for your professional growth should be achieving the level of proficiency for which you are (or should soon be) qualified to work across all elements of teaching, teaching standards, and performance indicators. For you, this target is the Developmental Level 1 of performance. But your lowest proficiencies do not always have to dictate the path of your growth. In fact, an area of strength can be a very productive focus for improvement.

This section of the handbook, Part 3, provides analysis and reflection activities designed to help you complete the PGP. The work you did while student teaching and completing PPAT assessment tasks should funnel naturally toward this end. The activities should help you drill down from multiple sources of information about your knowledge, skills, and abilities so that you can achieve a holistic understanding of your instructional strengths and challenges and, in turn, develop manageable, achievable goals for future learning.

 *You can download a Microsoft® Word version of the Professional Growth Plan from the ancillary materials that are available on the [PPAT assessment informational website](#).*

Sources of Performance Information

Formative observations completed during the clinical experience are a key source of information about your current knowledge and teaching skills. Additional sources include your own reflections, other feedback from your EPP instructor and cooperating teacher, and the PPAT assessment score report.

As noted earlier in this handbook, the elements of teaching serve as a basis of your goal setting on the PGP. If you and your EPP instructor made use of the PPAT assessment Daily Reflection Form, analyzing information about your teaching proficiency across sources and selecting an element of focus for your PGP should be relatively easy. If not, you may have to first mentally translate information on other forms to choose an element of focus.

The elements of teaching are provided below for easy reference while completing the activities in Part 3. They are numbered to make it easier to analyze information about your developing knowledge, skills, and abilities. The numbers are not meant to suggest any priorities among the elements.

Element of Teaching	Description
1. Establishing Goals/Standards	Establishes goals for student learning based on state and national content standards for students
2. Learning About Students	Gathers knowledge of students (whole class and individual) and uses this information to plan instruction and assessment
3. Learning About Resources and Procedures	Gathers knowledge of materials, programs, personnel, data, policies, services, rules, and procedures, and uses this information to plan and implement instruction and assessment

Element of Teaching	Description
4. Planning for Instruction	Uses standards and learning goals, information about students, instructional strategies, learning activities, materials, resources, and technology to plan for instruction
5. Planning for Assessment	Uses standards and learning goals, information about students, instructional strategies, learning activities, materials, resources, and technology to plan for assessment
6. Addressing Student Learning Differences and Needs and Making Adaptations	Adapts instruction and assessment plans based on knowledge of students and their learning needs
7. Creating a Positive, Engaging, and Rigorous Learning Environment	Establishes a climate for learning and supports positive interactions among students and between the teacher and students
8. Engaging Students in Learning	Implements instructional plans to cognitively engage students and help them meet the learning goals
9. Analyzing Instruction	Uses information from all parts of a lesson to determine the impact on student learning and to plan/adapt further instruction
10. Analyzing Assessment Data and Student Learning	Uses assessment data to obtain information about intended student learning and to plan/adapt further instruction
11. Reflecting on Teaching Practice	Reflects on connections among learning about students, planning/adapting instruction and assessment, student progress toward learning goals, and improving teaching practice and the learning environment

The EPP Instructor



Peers Supporting Peers

Activities that engage teacher candidates in learning from one another

Facilitating EPP Instructor and Peer Support for Post-Clinical Self-Assessment

When: In Stages as Teacher Candidates Complete the PGP

One way to ensure that completing the PGP supports teacher candidates' professional learning is to use it to structure learning activities across a few meetings of the EPP supervisory seminar when the clinical experience ends. The teacher candidate activities on the pages that follow can help you do this. These activities require teacher candidates to analyze their own reflections, as well as to interpret observations, feedback, and PPAT assessment scores, all of which span their student-teaching experiences. In addition to supporting skills related to self-directing teacher candidates' professional growth, the activities exercise teacher candidates' developing skills in data analysis and reflection. The activities may be deepened if teacher candidates complete them in pairs with your support and guidance.

For example, pairs of teacher candidates may strengthen the outcomes of the following activity steps.

- **Activity 1:** Teacher candidates analyze their reflections to identify strengths and challenges.
- **Activity 2:** Teacher candidates analyze their formative observations and other mentor feedback for information that suggests Developmental Levels 1 and 2 of performance.
- **Activity 3:** Teacher candidates analyze their PPAT assessment performances and contextualize their scores in terms of what they learned about their teaching from reflections, observations, and feedback.
- **Activity 4:** Teacher candidates prioritize opportunities for growth, develop manageable goals, and plan ways to achieve them.

As teacher candidates work on these PGP activities, you can help pairs and individuals with:

- Contextualizing early challenges and feedback in light of the transition to student teaching, as well as in light of later, more-developed performances.
- Interpreting feedback from you and the cooperating teacher, and explaining why you think the feedback suggests the teacher candidate was performing at the Developmental Level 1 or 2 of performance at that point in the clinical experience.

- Determining why a limited quantity of feedback or score information appears to be out of sync with what you, the teacher candidate, and classroom evidence suggest about a teacher candidate’s skills, as well as what weight to give that feedback or score information.
- Understanding what may underlie an inconsistent performance.
- Prioritizing areas for improvement and setting manageable goals for future growth.
- Planning ways to achieve the professional goals they identify.

Activity 1: My Reflections and Self-Assessments

Directions:

1. **Gather.** Collect all the reflections you completed while student teaching and that were part of the EPP supervisory seminar, including any Daily Reflection Form entries and any other structured self-assessments you completed. Print the Activity 1 Data Analysis Tool and questions that follow.
2. **Areas of strength.** Review all your reflections *except* your Daily Reflection Form entries and self-assessments. Mark reflections that point to your areas of strength with a plus sign (+) and the number that best reflects the element of teaching that the strength represents. Tally the number of times you identified each element as a strength, and enter these numbers in the My Reflections column of the Data Analysis Tool under the plus sign.
3. **Areas of challenge.** Review the same reflections again. Mark reflections that point to areas of challenge for you with a minus sign (-) and the number that best reflects the element of teaching the challenge represents. Tally the number of times you identified each element as a challenge, and enter these numbers in the My Reflections column of the Data Analysis tool under the minus sign.
4. **Self-assess.** Now review your Daily Reflection Form entries and other self-assessments. As you do, determine the elements of teaching in which you believe you achieved the Developmental Level 2 by the end of the clinical experience. For each such element, put a 2-, 2, or 2+ in the My Self-Assessments column under the plus sign.
5. **Self-assess.** Review your Daily Reflection Form entries and other self-assessments again. This time, determine the elements of teaching in which you believe you are still working toward the Developmental Level 2. For each such element, put a 1-, 1, or 1+ in the My Self-Assessments column under the minus sign.
6. **Reflect.** Reflect on the questions provided after the Data Analysis Tool to determine what your analysis of your reflections and self-assessments says about your instructional

strengths and challenges. Also look to your reflections for qualitative information that illuminates the nature of the strengths and challenges you identify.

The Student Teacher

The first part of this analysis looks at the frequency with which your reflections identify teaching elements as strengths and challenges. In some cases, however, frequency can be a misleading statistic. For instance, it is possible that you addressed an area of challenge while student teaching and that your frequent reflections evidence the hard work you did. If you have since improved your proficiency with that element, your self-assessment in the second half of this analysis should reflect that. Do not count it as a challenge unless it is still a weak area for you, relative to your other skills, or unless you are not as comfortable with the element as you would like to be.



Activity 1 – Data Analysis Tool: My Reflections and Self-Assessments

Element of Teaching	My Reflections +	My Reflections –	My Self-Assessments +	My Self-Assessments –
1. Establishing Goals/Standards				
2. Learning About Students				
3. Learning About Resources and Procedures				
4. Planning for Instruction				
5. Planning for Assessment				
6. Addressing Student Learning Differences and Needs and Making Adaptations				
7. Creating a Positive, Engaging, and Rigorous Learning Environment				
8. Engaging Students in Learning				
9. Analyzing Instruction				
10. Analyzing Assessment Data and Student Learning				
11. Reflecting on Teaching Practice				

Reflect on the following questions.

Strengths: Which elements of teaching do your reflections and self-assessments suggest are your greatest teaching strengths? (Choose three based on the quality, consistency, and progression of your performances.)

1.

2.

3.

What evidence did you see while student teaching that supports this self-assessment?

1.

2.

3.

According to your reflections, in what ways are these elements strengths for you? Why?

1.

2.

3.

In what ways would you next like to advance your skills with each of these elements? What do you need to learn? How do you want to refine your skills? How do you see this learning and skill refinement more effectively supporting student learning?

1.

2.

3.

Challenges: Which elements of teaching do your reflections and self-assessments suggest are your greatest teaching challenges? (Choose three based on the quality, consistency, and progression of your performances.)

1.

2.

3.

What evidence did you see while student teaching that supports this self-assessment?

1.

2.

3.

According to your reflections, in what ways are these elements challenges for you? Why?

1.

2.

3.

In what ways would you next like to advance your skills with each of these elements? What do you need to learn? How do you want to refine your skills? How do you see this learning and skill refinement more effectively supporting student learning?

1.

2.

3.

Activity 2: Formative Observations and Mentor Feedback

Directions:

1. **Gather.** Collect copies of the formative observations that your EPP instructor and cooperating teacher conducted as you student taught. Also collect any feedback you received from either of your mentors during the clinical experience or as part of the EPP supervisory seminar, such as feedback provided on Daily Reflection Form entries. Print the Activity 2 Data Analysis Tool and questions that follow.
2. **Organize.** Order your formative observations and feedback chronologically and organize them into four piles: one for every four weeks of student teaching. The timing can be approximate. The goal is to establish data points that show how your skills improved across the clinical experience. The four piles may contain varying amounts of feedback on your performance. Ideally, try to include at least one formative observation in each pile. If you have more than four observations, you can exclude the earliest ones, unless they offer the only data for an element.
3. **Analyze.** For each data point and element, determine whether feedback you received from your mentors suggests you were at the Developmental Level 1 or 2 of the professional continuum by the end of that interval. For the former, enter 1–, 1, or 1+ under EPP or CT of the Data Analysis Tool, depending on whose assessment it was. For the latter, place a 2–, 2, or 2+ under EPP or CT. Try to generate at least some data for each element and data point, but do not worry if you cannot fill every cell of the chart.
4. **Identify.** Review the completed chart and observe areas where (1) mentor feedback suggests progressive improvement in performance, (2) mentor feedback suggests little progress in performance, or (3) mentor feedback suggests inconsistent performance.
5. **Reflect.** Reflect on the questions provided after the chart to determine what your analysis of your formative observations and mentor feedback says about your instructional strengths and challenges. Also look to your mentor feedback for qualitative information that sheds light on why your mentors see these as your strengths and challenges. The last set of reflection questions asks you to compare your findings from Activities 1 and 3.

The Student Teacher

This analysis looks at how your instructional skills developed across the clinical experience. Consistent, progressive improvement toward the Developmental Level 2 probably reflects your instructional strengths. Similarly, strong performance on an element across the internship likely also points to teaching skills that reflect both your talents and your hard work. On the other hand, performances that cling to the Developmental Level 1, or that waver between levels, are likely to suggest areas of challenge. If you are unsure about how to evaluate these trends, your peers and EPP instructor may be able to help.

Activity 2 – Data Analysis Tool: Formative Observations & Mentor Feedback

Element of Teaching	Data Point 1 EPP	Data Point 1 CT	Data Point 2 EPP	Data Point 2 CT	Data Point 3 EPP	Data Point 3 CT	Data Point 4 EPP	Data Point 4 CT
1. Establishing Goals/Standards								
2. Learning About Students								
3. Learning About Resources and Procedures								
4. Planning for Instruction								
5. Planning for Assessment								
6. Addressing Student Learning Differences and Needs and Making Adaptations								

Activity 2 – Data Analysis Tool: Formative Observations & Mentor Feedback (cont’d.)

Element of Teaching	Data Point 1 EPP	Data Point 1 CT	Data Point 2 EPP	Data Point 2 CT	Data Point 3 EPP	Data Point 3 CT	Data Point 4 EPP	Data Point 4 CT
7. Creating a Positive, Engaging, and Rigorous Learning Environment								
8. Engaging Students in Learning								
9. Analyzing Instruction								
10. Analyzing Assessment Data and Student Learning								
11. Reflecting on Teaching Practice								

Reflect on the following questions.

Strengths: Which elements of teaching does mentor feedback suggest are your greatest teaching strengths? (Choose three based on the quality, consistency, and progression of your performances.)

1.

2.

3.

What evidence did you see while student teaching that supports this feedback?

1.

2.

3.

According to your mentors, in what ways are these elements strengths for you? Why?

1.

2.

3.

In what ways would you next like to advance your skills with each of these elements? What do you need to learn? How do you want to refine your skills? How do you see this learning and skill refinement more effectively supporting student learning?

1.

2.

3.

Challenges: Which elements of teaching does mentor feedback suggest are your greatest teaching challenges? (Choose three based on the quality, consistency, and progression of your performances.)

1.

2.

3.

What evidence did you see while student teaching that supports this feedback?

1.

2.

3.

According to your mentors, in what ways are these elements challenges for you? Why?

1.

2.

3.

In what ways would you next like to advance your skills with each of these elements? What do you need to learn? How do you want to refine your skills? How do you see this learning and skill refinement more effectively supporting student learning?

1.

2.

3.

Strengths: In what ways do your reflections and self-assessments (Activity 1) and your mentor feedback (Activity 2) point to similar strengths? For which elements do the findings overlap?

Strengths: In what ways do your reflections and self-assessments (Activity 1) and your mentor feedback (Activity 2) point to different strengths? For which elements do the findings diverge? How do you account for this difference?

Challenges: In what ways do your reflections and self-assessments (Activity 1) and your mentor feedback (Activity 2) point to similar challenges? For which elements do the findings overlap?

Challenges: In what ways do your reflections and self-assessments (Activity 1) and your mentor feedback (Activity 2) point to different challenges? For which elements do the findings diverge? How do you account for this difference?

Activity 3: Task 1 Feedback and the PPAT Assessment Score Report

Directions:

- Gather.** Collect any formative feedback your mentors provided for PPAT assessment Task 1 (including scores), your PPAT assessment score report, and the InTASC Standards. Also have on hand your reflections, self-assessments, formative observations, and other mentor feedback, since this evidence of your skill development can help you analyze and contextualize your PPAT assessment scores. Print the Activity 3 Data Analysis Tool and questions that follow.
- Scores.** Enter the scores your EPP instructor assigned for PPAT assessment Task 1, Steps 1 and 2, in the row of the Data Analysis Tool labeled Task 1. Working from your PPAT assessment score report, enter your summative scores for each step of Tasks 2–4 in the respective rows of the chart.
- Elements of teaching.** In column 2 of the Data Analysis Tool (Element of Teaching), circle elements you identified as strengths in *both* Activity 1 and Activity 2, everywhere they appear in the column, and mark these with a double plus sign. Circle elements that *only* Activity 1 or Activity 2 suggests are strengths, everywhere they appear in the column, and mark these with a single plus sign. Using double and single minus signs, do the same for your challenges.
- Teaching standards.** Working in the Activity 3 Data Analysis Tool, identify the teaching standards and performance indicators listed in column 3 (InTASC Teaching Standards) that align with elements of teaching you identified as strengths in column 2 (Elements of Teaching). Circle these standards and indicators, and mark them with a plus sign and the number of the element. Do the same with elements of teaching you identified as challenges in column 2 of the data analysis tool, but mark these standards and indicators with a minus sign and the respective element number.
- Reflect.** Reflect on the questions you printed earlier to contextualize your PPAT assessment scores and determine how they relate to your current levels of proficiency. As needed, refer to your reflections, self-assessments, formative observations, and mentor feedback for evidence of your thinking. Other tools that may help you interpret your scores and make connections include the PPAT assessment rubrics, explanatory information provided on the PPAT assessment score report, and any artifacts you and your peers created during the EPP supervisory seminar, such as annotated rubrics and standards crosswalks. After responding to the questions about your strengths and challenges, identify four areas for ongoing professional learning. In Activity 4, you will prioritize these and decide which to use for your PGP.

The Student Teacher

Because you continued to develop your teaching skills after completing some of the PPAT assessment tasks, your understanding of your current instructional strengths and challenges may not agree with your PPAT assessment scores in all places. One role of this analysis is to contextualize the scores in terms of where you were in your development when you completed each PPAT assessment task and how any subsequent clinical learning may have impacted your proficiency. Overlaying the dates you completed the different PPAT assessment tasks on the Activity 2 Analysis Tool may help you align your PPAT assessment scores with what you know about your skills at that time.

Activity 3 – Data Analysis Tool: Task 1 Feedback and the PPAT Assessment Score Report

PPAT Assessment Task	Elements Of Teaching	Element Score (0-4)	InTASC Teaching Standards	Element Score (0-4)
Task 1: Knowledge of Students and the Learning Environment	Step 1: Factors, Resources, and Procedures Step 2: Knowledge of Students	Step 1: Step 2:	Step 1: Standards 1(b, c), 2(f), 3(a, c, d, e, f), 4(d, g), 6(g), 7(b, d), 8(a, c), 9(d), and 10(b, d, e) Step 2: Standards 1(b), 2(a, c, d, f), 7(a, b, d, e), and 8(a, c)	Step 1: Step 2:
Task 2: Assessment and Data Collection to Measure and Inform Student Learning	Step 1: Establishing Goals/Standards, Planning for Assessment Step 2: Analyzing Assessment Data and Student Learning Step 3: Reflecting on Teaching Practice	Step 1: Step 2: Step 3:	Step 1: Standards 2(b,f) and 6 (b,h) Step 2: Standards 6(c, d, g) and 8(b) Step 3: Standards 1(a), 6(c), 7(d), and 9(c)	Step 1: Step 2: Step 3:

Activity 3 – Data Analysis Tool: Task 1 Feedback & the PPAT Assessment Score Report (cont'd.)

PPAT Assessment Task	Elements Of Teaching	Element Score (0-4)	InTASC Teaching Standards	Element Score (0-4)
Task 3: Designing Instruction for Student Learning	Step 1: Establishing Goals/Standards, Planning for Instruction Step 2: Addressing Student Learning Differences and Needs and Making Adaptations Step 3: Analyzing Instruction Step 4: Reflecting on Teaching Practice	Step 1: Step 2: Step 3: Step 4:	Step 1: Standards 1(b), 2(a, b, c, f), 4(e, f, g), 7(a, b, c, d), and 8(a) Step 2: Standards 1(a, b), 2(a, b), 4(f), 6(g), 7(a, b, c, d, e, f), and 8(a, b) Step 3: Standards 1(a, b), 2(a, b), 3(e), 4(f), 6(a, c, d, g) 7(c, f), and 8(a, b) Step 4: Standards 1(a, b), 2(a, b, c, f), 4(f), 6(a, c, g), 7(a, b, d, f), 8(a, b), and 9(c)	Step 1: Step 2: Step 3: Step 4:



Activity 3 – Data Analysis Tool: Task 1 Feedback & the PPAT Assessment Score Report (cont’d.)

PPAT Assessment Task	Elements Of Teaching	Element Score (0-4)	InTASC Teaching Standards	Element Score (0-4)
<p>Task 4: Implementing and Analyzing Instruction to Promote Student Learning</p>	<p>Step 1: Establishing Goals/Standards Planning for Instruction Creating a Positive, Engaging, and Rigorous Learning Environment</p> <p>Step 2: Analyzing Instruction</p> <p>Step 3: Analyzing Assessment Data and Student Learning</p> <p>Step 4: Reflecting on Teaching Practice</p>	<p>Step 1:</p> <p>Step 2:</p> <p>Step 3:</p> <p>Step 4:</p>	<p>Step 1: Standards 1(a, b), 2(a, b, c), 4(d, h), 5(h), 6(a, b, g), 7(a, b, c, d), and 8(a, b, f, h, i)</p> <p>Step 2: Standards 1(a), 2(a), 3(d, f), 4(c) 5(h), 6(a, g), 7(a, b), and 8(a, b, f, h, i)</p> <p>Step 3: Standards 1(a), 2(a, b), and 6(a, b, c, g)</p> <p>Step 4: Standards 1(a), 2(a), 4(f), 6(a, c, g), 7(a, b, d, f), 8(a, b), and 9(c)</p>	<p>Step 1:</p> <p>Step 2:</p> <p>Step 3:</p> <p>Step 4:</p>

Strengths: In what ways do the elements of teaching you identified as strengths in column 2 (Elements of Teaching) of the Activity 3 Data Analysis Tool support your PPAT assessment scores?

Strengths: Do you see any disparities between the elements you identified as strengths and your scores? How would you explain these in the context of the work you did while student teaching?

Strengths: For each element you identified as a strength in column 2 of the Data Analysis Tool, look at the corresponding standards and indicators that are impacted. What does this suggest about the role of this strength in terms of teaching and learning? What did you see while student teaching that supports this conclusion?

Strengths: How does considering a particular element you identified as a strength together with the corresponding standards and indicators help to explain your PPAT assessment scores? How does it help to explain your student-teaching performance?

Challenges: In what ways do the elements of teaching you identified as challenges in column 2 of the Activity 3 Data Analysis Tool support your PPAT assessment scores?

Challenges: Do you see any disparities between the elements you identified as challenges and your scores? How would you explain these in the context of the work you did while student-teaching?

Challenges: For each element you identified as a challenge in column 2 of the Data Analysis Tool, look at the corresponding standards and indicators that are impacted. What does this suggest about the role of this challenge in terms of teaching and learning? What did you see while student teaching that supports this conclusion?

Challenges: How does considering a particular element you identified as a challenge together with the corresponding standards and indicators help to explain your PPAT assessment scores? How does it help to explain your student-teaching performance?

Opportunities for Growth: Identify four potential areas for ongoing professional learning in the charts that follow. For each one, explain why this learning is important in terms of student learning.

(1) Element of Teaching:

What aspect(s) of your skill with this element do you wish to improve?

Rationale: Why do you wish to make this improvement?

With which teaching standards and performance indicators does this professional development align?

(2) Element of Teaching:

What aspect(s) of your skill with this element do you wish to improve?

Rationale: Why do you wish to make this improvement?

With which teaching standards and performance indicators does this professional development align?

(3) Element of Teaching:

What aspect(s) of your skill with this element do you wish to improve?

Rationale: Why do you wish to make this improvement?

With which teaching standards and performance indicators does this professional development align?

(4) Element of Teaching:

What aspect(s) of your skill with this element do you wish to improve?

Rationale: Why do you wish to make this improvement?

With which teaching standards and performance indicators does this professional development align?

Activity 4: The Professional Growth Plan

Directions:

1. **Get feedback.** Share the areas of potential learning you identified in Activity 3 with your peers and EPP instructor and elicit their feedback on how to prioritize your learning needs.



Teacher Candidate Tip

With Activity 4, your reflections shift from retrospective to prospective. Feedback can help ensure that your future learning is focused on what matters most in the classroom. In the future, this kind of input will likely come from a school supervisor and may be based on any number of considerations (or combinations of considerations), including your learning needs, the district's priorities for students, planned school-level professional development opportunities, district goals, and more.

2. **Prioritize.** Rank your learning needs in whatever way makes the most sense, given your particular situation. For example, you might prioritize your future learning based on the following.
 - Relative impact on student learning
 - The need to advance a skill or skills to Developmental Level 2
 - A wish to capitalize on a strength or strengths
 - The need to prepare for the grade level or content you will teach in the fall (if you know)



Teacher Candidate Tip

In addition to using the areas of learning you listed in Activity 3 to drive your goal setting for the PGP, you can also use them to inform your final EPP course selections. Your EPP instructor may be able to suggest additional ways to meet your learning needs before you begin teaching. For example, summer work and/or learning opportunities may be available, and you could organize a study group with a few peers who have similar needs.

3. Print the draft PGP charts that follow. In the chart labeled Goal 1, identify the element of teaching you identified as your highest priority for professional learning, explain why you chose it, and list the teaching standards and performance indicators associated with the aspect of the element you wish to strengthen. Develop the rest of the chart as follows.

- **My Goal(s):** State the focus of your growth plan. What do you want to achieve? (Note: Breaking an ambitious goal into smaller goals that represent steps toward achieving the ambitious goal can help you scaffold your action planning.)
 - **Resources, support, and assistance:** Specify any resources (e.g., reading materials, course work, workshops), support (e.g., mentors, study groups, collaborators), and other assistance you will avail yourself of to achieve the goal.
 - **Action/strategy:** List specific activities you will undertake to achieve your goal.
 - **Results:** State what you should see once the measures you selected indicate you met the goal. How do you expect this learning to affect your teaching? How do you expect it to affect student learning?
4. **Get peer feedback.** Exchange draft goals with your peers in the EPP supervisory seminar and provide one another with feedback. Here are some questions to consider.
- How effectively do the goal and action plan target the identified learning?
 - How is achieving this goal expected to impact student learning?
 - Are the goal and action plan manageable within the projected timeline?
 - How do the identified measures of success align with the learning at the heart of the goal?



Teacher Candidate Tip

For purposes of the PGP, here are two guidelines to keep in mind when trying to determine if your goal and action plan are manageable.

- Limit your annual plan to no more than three goals.
- Ask yourself, “Can I achieve my combined goals in a way that supports rather than impinges on my work as a classroom teacher in the coming school year?”

5. **Elicit feedback** on your draft goal from your EPP instructor and cooperating teacher. If you have a teaching job lined up for the fall, a future mentor or supervisor (or, if you were hired in the district in which you student taught, your former cooperating teacher) may be able to provide feedback related to your future assignment. A key component of mentor feedback should be manageability for the coming school year.
6. **Revise.** Make the feedback you received formative by revising your draft goal.

7. **Develop another goal.** If the feedback you received on the manageability of your goal suggests that your PGP (your hypothetical annual plan) could sustain an additional goal, repeat steps 3–6 of these instructions.



Teacher Candidate Tip

If the feedback you received suggests that your first goal is robust enough to support learning for a full school year, consider developing additional goals to (1) focus the remainder of the EPP school year or (2) direct the learning you plan to do over the summer.

8. **Complete the PGP.** When you are satisfied with your future growth plan, download a Microsoft Word® version of the Professional Growth Plan from the PPAT assessment informational website and transfer your final plan to the form. Respond to the questions included on the PGP. When you are finished, print the form, get the required signatures, and submit the form to your EPP instructor.

Draft Professional Growth Plan: Goal 1

Element of Teaching

Identify the Element of Teaching that you see as an area for growth.

Why did you select this element as your goal?

Standards/Indicators

List the InTASC Teaching Standards/State Standards represented within this element that would be appropriate for your goal.

My Goal(s)

Draft Professional Growth Plan: Goal 1 (cont'd.)

Resources, Support, and Assistance
Action/Strategy
Results

Draft Professional Growth Plan: Goal 2

Element of Teaching

Identify the Element of Teaching that you see as an area for growth.

Why did you select this element as your goal?

Standards/Indicators

List the InTASC Teaching Standards/State Standards represented within this element that would be appropriate for your goal.

My Goal(s)

Draft Professional Growth Plan: Goal 2 (cont'd.)

Resources, Support, and Assistance
Action/Strategy
Results

Draft Professional Growth Plan: Goal 3

Element of Teaching

Identify the Element of Teaching that you see as an area for growth.

Why did you select this element as your goal?

Standards/Indicators

List InTASC Teaching Standards/State Standards represented within this element that would be appropriate for your goal.

My Goal(s)

Draft Professional Growth Plan: Goal 3 (cont'd.)

Resources, Support, and Assistance
Action/Strategy
Results