Section 4: Evidence for Meeting the Standards

Assessment 1: Georgia Content Test

GACE READING  
1. The Georgia Assessments for Certification of Educators in READING is a specialized a test that determines eligibility of candidates for applying to the Professional Standards Commission for issuance of Reading Specialist Certification, K-12.  
  
2. The GACE READING is designed to test the professional knowledge of reading and skills to perform the responsibilities in relation to the Professional Standards Commission Standards for Reading Specialists.  
  
3.  Of the 7 completers of the graduate program of study taking the GACE with reading, 100% passed the GACE at the Professional Level. All 7 applied for reading specialist certification and have been awarded this certification on their professional record.  
  
4.  The data indicates that our program of study and experiences throughout courses are effective in preparing our candidates for demonstrating professional knowledge and skills in reading, according to the PSC Standards for Reading Specialist measured by the GACE READING.

Assessment 2: Content Knowledge

TEST of FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

1. The Test of Foundational Knowledge is a beginning assessment in the literacy program and is an exit requirement of the first core foundation course in the program of study, EDRD 6000 Reading Process & Pedagogy.

2. This assessment specifically aligns with Standard 1: Foundational Knowledge. The assessment is a comprehensive course exam that includes an overview of the theories, processes, and principles, and effective practices in literacy education and development.

3. An analysis of the data indicates that our candidates pass this course with averages between 80 and 95% proficiency.

4. This data indicates that beginning candidates receive a satisfactory to strong understanding of professional knowledge from this entry level, core course. This professional knowledge continues to develop throughout the core courses in the program of study. Ultimately, professional knowledge is assessed in the Capstone Portolio and the GACE Reading. Since 100% of program completers pass the Literacy Capstone and the GACE in Reading, this beginning assessment provides a data point to assess beginning content knowledge and scaffold and support professional learning throughout the program of study.

Assessment 3: Planning

COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY CURRICULUM PROJECT

1. The Comprehensive Literacy Curriculum Project is a medial assessment and represents a major, semester long curriculum inquiry in EDRD 6200 Literacy and Language Across the Curriculum, K-12. This assignment is field-based and includes a curriculum design based on literacy research, implementation and assessment, and student learning outcomes analysis. This assessment provides data to inform mentoring and course development for successful progress and program completion.

2. While this assessment specifically targets Standard 2 Curriculum and Instruction. Candidates identify a focus of literacy instruction in their classrooms, use evidence from the research to design an instructional routine or curricular focus, implement this design and include an assessment of student learning outcomes, and analyze the findings and student assessments. Candidates present their findings to principals, grade level colleagues, and as a final course synthesis. In addition to a curriculum and instruction focus, candidates must consider diverse learners and students with special learning needs, a classroom environment that uses a range of text, including digital and electronic, and provides inviting, low-risk opportunities for learning so all students can succeed.

3. An analysis of the assessment data demonstrates that candidates perform at high levels of achievement on this assessment. The overall pass rate is 100%, with all candidates showing rubric scores in the meets and exceeds range.

4. The data show that candidates demonstrate strength in using literacy research to inform instruction, designing and implementing literacy routines and instruction in classrooms, considering the learning needs of their students and using embedded, performance-based assessments, and assessing student learning outcomes, analyzing the results and recommending future instruction based on this information. In addition, candidates show effective practices in creating literate environments by using a range of text, including digital sources, employing flexible grouping strategies, and creating a open and responsive climate for all learners.

Assessment 4: Clinical Practice

LITERACY LEADERSHIP PROJECT

1. The Literacy Leadership Project is a medial assessment that represents a semester long project in EDRD 6251 Literacy and Language Leadership. The Literacy Leadership Project is a field-based assignment. This assignment begins with a review of the candidate's school improvement plan and consultation with principals, instructional coaches and colleagues about possible leadership projects that would benefit their school literacy achievement. Candidates then research their topic in the professional literature, design a plan, implement this plan with observation by the instructor, local school administrator, or coach, include an evaluation form, and analyze the outcomes of the project.

2. The Literacy Leadership Project targets Standard 6 Professional Learning and Leadership. Candidates begin with an early learning module on adult learning and learn about school change and effective principles of professional development and literacy coaching. Candidates demonstrate a range of coaching and professional learning experiences that indicate their leadership both within their classroom and among their colleagues and administrators in their grade level and school. Their projects include a component of diversity in advocating for students from diverse backgrounds and special learning needs. Candidates include a focus on local and state policies in reviewing the professional literature for this project.

3. Based on two administrations of this assessment, the overall pass rate is 88%, receiving meets or exceeds on the scoring rubric. However, improvements in supporting and scaffolding candidates from the first assessment to the second show an increase to 100% meeting the assessment target on the rubric score for 2015 candidates assessed by this measure.

4. The data from this assessment shows that candidates are searching for leadership opportunities and beginning to assume increased leadership roles to support literacy instruction and initiatives in their schools. Of the roles of reading specialists, literacy leadership presents a unique challenge for candidates. Many assume on entering our program that leadership is an administrative function of principals and their assistants. Through this performance-based assessment, candidates realize that the expertise gained in this program builds their personal leadership capacity. In addition, they report seeking opportunities to support, initiate, and sustain efforts to improve literacy instruction, advocate for all learners, and support school reform.

Assessment 5: Effects on Student Learning

ADVANCED DIAGNOSIS AND INTERVENTION PORTFOLIO

1. The Advanced Diagnosis and Intervention Portfolio assessment addresses the essential role of reading specialists as interventionists, assessing students with reading and writing difficulties and collaborating with classroom teachers and providing interventions to support successful instruction and development. This assessment is a medial assessment and scaffolds candidates to practicum experiences. In addition, this assessment provides literacy faculty with important information about course and program development.

2. This assessment directly addresses Standard 3 Assessment and Evaluation. In this performance-based assessment, candidates select a student identified as having reading and writing difficulties, preferably a student that is culturally and linguistically diverse, administer assessments and present an assessment profile, analyze and interpret assessment results to develop an intervention plan, implement the intervention plan through a ten-week, two sessions weekly, tutoring project, conduct formative assess and administer exit assessments, determine student learning outcomes, and compile and write a clinical report. Candidates use multiple sources of data and collaborate with school and course colleagues during tutoring. They present case studies of their tutoring during seminar sessions and a final presentation at the end of the course. Candidates also communicate with students' teachers and parents.

3. Overall, 83% candidates demonstrated ratings of meets or exceeds (84% - 100%) on the Advanced Diagnosis and Intervention Project assessment. Candidates that did not meet target were within the high range of nearing target (78% - 83%).

4. An improvement in assessment results from the first administration to the second (80% meets target to 100% meets target) can be attributed to the summer practicum in tutoring that was created between the Reading Assessment course in the spring of the first year and the Advanced Diagnosis course in the fall of the second year. In this practicum, candidates tutor a student for eight weeks, twice weekly, and receive peer-coaching support from a candidate completing the program of study and enrolled in a coaching practicum. This additional scaffolding and support, in our estimation, has resulted in an improved professional learning experience for candidates and improved assessment results. These improvements provide evidence for meeting Standard 3 Assessment and Evaluation and also the way in which our program has used assessment data to improve this graduate program for our candidates.

Assessment 6: Dispositions

LITERACY DISPOSITIONS SURVEY

1. The literacy dispositions survey is administered at the beginning of the candidate’s program of study, in the middle, and also as an exit assessment. This survey is an online survey consisting of 22 items associated with attitudes, behaviors, and values of literacy professionals (See Section 2). The results are shared with the candidate’s faculty advisor. The assessment is used both for mentoring candidates and for improving courses and the program of study.

2. The items on this dispositions survey align with Standard 6 Professional Learning and Leadership. These dispositions involve the importance of lifelong professional learning, positives attitudes towards literacy and learning, advocacy for social justice and equitable learning opportunities for all students, and communicating effectively with a range of stakeholders to understand and influence local, state, and national policies relating to literacy education.

3. Analysis of the data indicates that candidates enter the program with strong overall dispositions of effective educators. However, dispositions that are associated with literacy professionals and leadership outside of their classroom and school community develop over the course of the candidate’s program of study and benefit from professional learning experiences in courses and practicum experiences.

4. The data shows professional growth in all candidates from the beginning of the program with their initial literacy disposition survey to the exit survey. The assessment data has been used to develop courses and opportunities for candidates to reflect on and practice behaviors, such as leading professional development and peer coaching, that foster the development of literacy professional dispositions. Dispositions develop throughout an educators career. The strong focus on reflection and career aspirations in the leadership course and capstone experience support literacy professional dispositions as an ongoing form of professional learning.

Assessment 7: Institutional Assessment

CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO AND PRESENTATION

1. The Literacy Capstone and Presentation is an exit assessment point in the M.Ed.in Reading, Literacy, and Language. This assessment also represents a common assessment (institutional assessment) and aligns with the capstone assessments in graduate programs throughout the College of Education. Candidates must receive meets or exceeds scores on this assessment to successfully complete the graduate program of study for the Masters of Education in Reading, Literacy, and Language.

2. In preparing the Literacy Capstone, candidates review the 2010 International Literacy Standards for Reading Specialists/Coaches and demonstrate, through evidence from their course work and practicum and in a concise narrative with justification, that they have satisfied each standard. In addition, candidates present an overarching narrative of their professional development as a reading specialist candidate and their career aspirations. The Literacy Capstone Assessment each indicator of the standards through the evidence and justification presented by candidates using a common rubric from the College of Education.

3. Overall, 100% of candidates received ratings on the rubric for the Literacy Capstone and Presentation of meets or exceeds (84% - 100%). This assessment consists of a comprehensive overview of the Standards for Reading Specialists/Coaches as presented in the 2010 International Literacy Association Standards.

4. Candidates present evidence from across their course work and practicum experiences and justify that this evidence meets all six standards and elements of the 2010 Standards for Reading Specialists/Literacy Coaches of the International Literacy Association. This process is both an assessment and a meaningful synthesis of professional learning across the graduate program of study. An analysis of the capstone assessment results over two administrations of this assessment demonstrates meets or exceeds ratings across all standards for all program completers.