



TEXAS EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION

TE_xES | TE_xMaT | TASC/TASC-ASL

Texas Examinations of Educator Standards™ (TE_xES™) Program

Preparation Manual

Superintendent (195)



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About The Test

Test Name	Superintendent
Test Code	195
Time	5 hours
Number of Questions	110 multiple-choice questions
Format	Computer-administered test (CAT)

The TExES Superintendent (195) test is designed to assess whether a test taker has the requisite knowledge and skills that an entry-level superintendent or assistant superintendent in Texas public schools must possess. The 110 multiple-choice questions are based on the Superintendent test framework. Questions on this test range from grades EC–12. The test may contain questions that do not count toward the score. The test contains two case studies and a set of questions pertaining to Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) with authentic materials. These are located in a separate booklet.

The number of scored questions will not vary; however, the number of questions that are not scored may vary in the actual test. Your final scaled score will be based only on scored questions.

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The Domains

Domain	Domain Title	Approx. Percentage of Test	Competencies Assessed
I.	Leadership of the Educational Community	40%	001–004
II.	Instructional Leadership	30%	005–007
III.	Administrative Leadership	30%	008–010

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The Standards

Superintendent Standard I

Learner-Centered Values and Ethics of Leadership: A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner.

Superintendent Standard II

Learner-Centered Leadership and School District Culture: A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students and shapes school district culture by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

Superintendent Standard III

Learner-Centered Human Resources Leadership and Management: A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by implementing a staff evaluation and development system to improve the performance of all staff members, selects and implements appropriate models for supervision and staff development and applies the legal requirements for personnel management.

Superintendent Standard IV

Learner-Centered Policy and Governance: A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context and by working with the board of trustees to define mutual expectations, policies and standards.

Superintendent Standard V

Learner-Centered Communications and Community Relations: A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs and mobilizing community resources.

Superintendent Standard VI

Learner-Centered Organizational Leadership and Management: A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by leadership and management of the organization, operations and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment.

Superintendent Standard VII

Learner-Centered Curriculum Planning and Development: A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the design and implementation of curricula and strategic plans that enhance teaching and learning; alignment of curriculum, curriculum resources and assessment; and the use of various forms of assessment to measure student performance.

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Superintendent Standard VIII

Learner-Centered Instructional Leadership and Management: A superintendent is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school district culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

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Domains and Competencies

The content covered by this test is organized into broad areas of content called **domains**. Each domain covers one or more of the educator standards for this field. Within each domain, the content is further defined by a set of **competencies**. Each competency is composed of two major parts:

- The **competency statement**, which broadly defines what an entry-level educator in this field in Texas public schools should know and be able to do.
- The **descriptive statements**, which describe in greater detail the knowledge and skills eligible for testing.

Domain I – Leadership of the Educational Community

Competency 001: *The superintendent knows how to act with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner in order to promote the success of all students.*

The superintendent knows how to:

- A. Serve as an advocate for all children.
- B. Model and promote the highest standard of conduct, ethical principles and integrity in decision making, actions and behaviors.
- C. Exhibit understanding and implement policies and procedures that promote district personnel compliance with *The Code of Ethics* and *Standard Practices for Texas Educators*.
- D. Monitor and address ethical issues affecting education.
- E. Apply laws, policies and procedures in a fair and reasonable manner.
- F. Interact with district staff, students, school board and community in a professional and ethical manner.

Competency 002: *The superintendent knows how to shape district culture by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the educational community.*

The superintendent knows how to:

- A. Establish and support a district culture that promotes learning, high expectations and academic rigor for self, students and staff.
- B. Facilitate the development and implementation of a shared vision that focuses on teaching and learning and ensures the success of all students.
- C. Implement strategies for involving all stakeholders in planning processes and for facilitating planning between constituencies.

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- D. Use formal and informal techniques to monitor and assess district/school climate for effective, responsive decision making.
 - E. Institute procedures for monitoring the accomplishment of district goals and objectives to achieve the district's vision.
 - F. Facilitate the development, use and allocation of all available resources, including human resources, to support implementation of the district's vision and goals.
 - G. Recognize and celebrate contributions of staff and community toward realization of the district's vision.
 - H. Maintain awareness of emerging issues and trends affecting public education and communicate their significance to the local educational community.
 - I. Encourage and model innovative thinking and risk taking and view problems as opportunities.
 - J. Promote multicultural awareness, gender sensitivity and the appreciation of diversity in the educational community.
 - K. Understand and support educational programs for all student populations, including students with special needs.

Competency 003: The superintendent knows how to communicate and collaborate with families and community members, respond to diverse community interests and needs and mobilize community resources to ensure educational success for all students.

The superintendent knows how to:

- A. Serve as an articulate, effective communicator for the importance of public education in a free democratic society.
- B. Develop and implement an effective and comprehensive internal and external district communications plan and public relations program.
- C. Analyze community and district structures and identify major opinion leaders and their relationships to district goals and programs.
- D. Establish partnerships with families, area businesses, institutions of higher education and community groups to strengthen programs and support district goals.
- E. Implement effective strategies for systematically communicating with and gathering input from all stakeholders in the district.
- F. Communicate and work effectively with diverse groups in the district and community, i.e., social, cultural, political, ethnic and racial groups, so that all students receive appropriate resources and instructional support to ensure educational success.

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- G. Develop and use formal and informal techniques to gain an accurate view of the perceptions of district staff, families and community members.
 - H. Use effective consensus-building and conflict-management skills.
 - I. Articulate the district’s vision and priorities to the community and to the media.
 - J. Influence the media by using proactive communication strategies that serve to enhance and promote the district’s vision.
 - K. Communicate effectively about positions on educational issues using effective writing, speaking and active listening skills to ensure educational success for all students.

Competency 004: *The superintendent knows how to respond to and influence the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context, including working with the board of trustees, to achieve the district’s educational vision.*

The superintendent knows how to:

- A. Analyze and respond to political, social, economic and cultural factors affecting students and education.
- B. Provide leadership in defining superintendent and board of trustees roles and establishing mutual expectations.
- C. Communicate and work effectively with board members in varied contexts, including problem solving and decision making.
- D. Work with the board of trustees to define and consistently adhere to mutual expectations, policies and standards.
- E. Access and work with local, state and national political systems and organizations to provide input on critical educational issues.
- F. Use legal guidelines to protect the rights of students and staff and to improve learning opportunities.
- G. Prepare and recommend district policies to improve student learning and district performance in compliance with state and federal requirements.

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Domain II – Instructional Leadership

Competency 005: *The superintendent knows how to facilitate the planning and implementation of strategic plans that enhance teaching and learning; ensure alignment among curriculum, curriculum resources and assessment; use the current accountability system; and promote the use of varied assessments to measure student performance.*

The superintendent knows how to:

- A. Facilitate effective curricular decision making based on an understanding of pedagogy, curriculum design, cognitive development, learning processes and child and adolescent growth and development.
- B. Implement planning procedures to develop rigorous curricula that achieve optimal student learning and that anticipate and respond to occupational and economic trends.
- C. Implement curriculum design and delivery systems to ensure instructional quality, appropriate depth of learning and alignment across the district.
- D. Develop and implement collaborative processes for systematically assessing and renewing the curriculum to meet the needs of all students and ensure appropriate scope, sequence, content and alignment.
- E. Use assessment to measure student learning, diagnose student needs and determine effectiveness of the curriculum to ensure educational accountability.
- F. Evaluate district curricula and provide direction for improving curricula based on sound, research-based practices.
- G. Facilitate the integration of technology into the school district curriculum to enhance learning for all students.
- H. Facilitate the use of creative thinking, critical thinking and problem solving by appropriate school district staff and other individuals involved in curricular design and delivery.
- I. Facilitate the effective coordination of district and campus curricular and extracurricular programs.
- J. Ensure that staff members have a working knowledge of the accountability system and are monitoring its components to increase student performance.

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Competency 006: *The superintendent knows how to advocate, promote and sustain an instructional program and a district culture that are conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.*

The superintendent knows how to:

- A. Apply knowledge of motivational theories and strategies to encourage staff, students, families/caregivers and the community to strive to achieve the district's vision.
- B. Facilitate the implementation of sound, research-based theories and techniques of classroom management, student discipline and school safety to ensure a school district environment conducive to learning.
- C. Facilitate the development of a learning organization that encompasses high student engagement and learning with academic rigor through the use of effective planning and lesson design.
- D. Facilitate the ongoing study of current best practice and relevant research and encourage the application of this knowledge to district/school improvement initiatives.
- E. Implement and support student services and activity programs to address developmental, scholastic, social, emotional, cultural, physical and leadership needs.
- F. Establish a comprehensive school district program of student assessment, interpretation of data and reporting of state and national data results for improvement of student learning.
- G. Apply knowledge of special programs to ensure that students are provided with appropriate resources and effective, flexible instructional programs and services.
- H. Analyze instructional resource needs and deploy instructional resources effectively and equitably to enhance student learning.
- I. Analyze the implications of various organizational factors (e.g., staffing patterns, class scheduling formats, school organizational structures, student discipline practices) for teaching and learning.
- J. Develop and use appropriate change processes to improve student and adult learning.
- K. Ensure responsiveness to diverse sociological, linguistic, cultural, psychological and other factors that may affect student development and learning and create an environment in which all students will learn.

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Competency 007: *The superintendent knows how to implement a staff evaluation and development system and select appropriate models for supervision and staff development to improve the performance of all staff members.*

The superintendent knows how to:

- A. Improve teaching and learning by participating in quality, relevant professional development activities and studying current professional literature and research.
- B. Develop, implement and evaluate a comprehensive professional development plan to address identified areas of district, campus and/or staff need.
- C. Facilitate the application of adult learning principles to all professional development activities, including the use of support and follow-up strategies to facilitate implementation.
- D. Implement strategies to increase the expertise and skill of staff at the district and campus level.
- E. Work collaboratively with other district personnel to plan, implement and evaluate professional growth programs.
- F. Deliver effective presentations and facilitate learning for both small and large groups.
- G. Implement effective strategies for the recruitment, selection, induction, development, evaluation and promotion of staff.
- H. Develop and implement comprehensive staff evaluation models that include both formative and summative assessment and appraisal strategies.
- I. Assess and support the organizational health and climate by implementing necessary strategies to improve the performance of all staff members.

Domain III – Administrative Leadership

Competency 008: *The superintendent knows how to apply principles of effective leadership and management in relation to district budgeting, personnel, resource utilization, financial management and technology applications.*

The superintendent knows how to:

- A. Apply procedures for effective budget planning and management.
- B. Work collaboratively with board of trustees and appropriate personnel to develop district budgets.
- C. Facilitate and evaluate effective account auditing and monitoring that complies with legal requirements and local district policy.
- D. Establish district procedures for accurate, effective, ethical purchasing and financial record keeping and reporting.

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- E. Acquire, allocate and manage resources according to district vision and priorities, including obtaining and using funding from various sources.
 - F. Use district and staff evaluation data for personnel policy development and decision making.
 - G. Apply knowledge associated with personnel management, including requirements related to certifying, recruiting, screening, selecting, evaluating, disciplining, reassigning and dismissing personnel.
 - H. Manage one's own time and the time of others to enhance district operations.
 - I. Develop and implement plans for using technology and information systems to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of school district operations.
 - J. Apply legal concepts, regulations and codes as required.
 - K. Use revenue forecasting and enrollment forecasting to address personnel and budgetary needs accurately.

Competency 009: *The superintendent knows how to apply principles of leadership and management to the district's physical plant and support systems to ensure a safe and effective learning environment.*

The superintendent knows how to:

- A. Apply procedures for planning, funding, renovating and/or constructing school facilities to support the district's mission and goals.
- B. Implement strategies that enable the district's physical plant, equipment and support systems to operate safely, efficiently and effectively.
- C. Apply strategies for ensuring the safety of students and personnel and for addressing emergencies and security concerns.
- D. Develop and implement procedures for emergency planning and for responding to crises.
- E. Apply and evaluate procedures for ensuring the effective, efficient operation and maintenance of district facilities.
- F. Implement and evaluate appropriate procedures to ensure efficient, effective district transportation services, food services, health services and other services.
- G. Apply legal concepts, regulations and codes as required.

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Competency 010: *The superintendent knows how to apply organizational, decision-making and problem-solving skills to comply with federal and state requirements and facilitate positive change in varied contexts.*

The superintendent knows how to:

- A. Implement appropriate leadership skills, techniques and group process skills to define roles, assign functions, delegate effectively and determine accountability for goal attainment.
- B. Implement processes for gathering, analyzing and using data for informed decision making to attain district goals.
- C. Identify, analyze and resolve problems using appropriate problem-solving techniques and decision-making skills.
- D. Use strategies for working with others, including the board of trustees, to promote collaborative decision making and problem solving, facilitate team building and develop consensus.
- E. Encourage and facilitate positive change, enlist support for change and overcome obstacles to change in varied educational contexts.
- F. Analyze and use political influences to benefit the educational organization.

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Approaches to Answering Multiple-Choice Questions

The purpose of this section is to describe multiple-choice question formats that you will typically see on the Superintendent test and to suggest possible ways to approach thinking about and answering them. These approaches are intended to supplement and complement familiar test-taking strategies with which you may already be comfortable and that work for you. Fundamentally, the most important component in assuring your success on the test is knowing the content described in the test framework. This content has been carefully selected to align with the knowledge required to begin a career as a superintendent or assistant superintendent.

The multiple-choice questions on this test are designed to assess your knowledge of the content described in the test framework. In most cases, you are expected to demonstrate more than just your ability to recall factual information. You may be asked to think critically about a situation, to analyze it, consider it carefully, compare it with other knowledge you have or make a judgment about it.

When you are ready to respond to a multiple-choice question, you must choose one of four answer options. Leave no questions unanswered. Questions for which you mark no answer or mark more than one answer are counted as incorrect. Your score will be determined by the number of questions for which you select the correct answer.

The Superintendent test is designed to include a total of 110 multiple-choice questions. The number of scored questions will not vary; however, the number of questions that are not scored may vary in the actual test. Your final scaled score will be based only on scored questions. The questions that are not scored are being pilot tested to collect information about how these questions will perform under actual testing conditions. These pilot questions are not identified on the test.

How to Approach Unfamiliar Question Formats

Some questions include introductory information such as a map, table, graph or reading passage (often called a stimulus) that provides the information the question asks for. New formats for presenting information are developed from time to time. Tests may include audio and video stimulus materials such as a movie clip or some kind of animation, instead of a map or reading passage. Other tests may allow you to zoom in on the details in a graphic or picture.

Tests may also include interactive types of questions. These questions take advantage of technology to assess knowledge and skills that go beyond what can be assessed using standard single-selection multiple-choice questions. If you see a format you are not familiar with, **read the directions carefully**. The directions always give clear instructions on how you are expected to respond.

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For most questions, you will respond by clicking an oval to choose a single answer choice from a list of options. Other questions may ask you to respond by:

- **Typing in an entry box.** When the answer is a number, you might be asked to enter a numeric answer or, if the test has an on-screen calculator, you might need to transfer the calculated result from the calculator into the entry box. Some questions may have more than one place to enter a response.
- **Clicking check boxes.** You may be asked to click check boxes instead of an oval when more than one choice within a set of answers can be selected.
- **Clicking parts of a graphic.** In some questions, you will choose your answer by clicking on location(s) on a graphic such as a map or chart, as opposed to choosing from a list.
- **Clicking on sentences.** In questions with reading passages, you may be asked to choose your answer by clicking on a sentence or sentences within the reading passage.
- **Dragging and dropping answer choices into “targets” on the screen.** You may be asked to choose an answer from a list and drag it into the appropriate location in a table, paragraph of text or graphic.
- **Selecting options from a drop-down menu.** This type of question will ask you to select the appropriate answer or answers by selecting options from a drop-down menu (e.g., to complete a sentence).

Remember that with every question, you will get clear instructions on how to respond.

Question Formats

You may see the following types of multiple-choice questions on the test:

- Single Questions
- Decision Sets
- Clustered Questions

On the following pages, you will find descriptions of these commonly used question formats, along with some suggested approaches for responding to them.

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Single Questions

The single-question format presents a direct question or an incomplete statement. It can also include a reading passage, graphic, table or a combination of these. Four answer options appear below the question.

The following question is an example of the single-question format. It tests knowledge of Superintendent Competency 003: *The superintendent knows how to communicate and collaborate with families and community members, respond to diverse community interests and needs and mobilize community resources to ensure educational success for all students.*

Example

The final expenditures for a major school construction project in a district run over budget by approximately 20 percent. A series of articles on the discrepancy appears in the local newspaper, including some highly critical editorials. Which of the following would be the superintendent's best strategy for addressing this situation?

- A. Contact the publisher of the local newspaper to explore whether the paper might be willing to moderate its criticism
- B. Appeal to supporters of the project to organize a district-wide letter writing campaign to counter the negative publicity
- C. Initiate a communication plan to account fully for all expenditures, including cost overruns, related to the new facility
- D. Refrain from responding directly to the criticism but issue a series of press releases publicizing the benefits of the new facility

Suggested Approach

Read the question carefully and critically. Think about what it is asking and the situation it is describing. Eliminate any obviously wrong answers, select the correct answer choice and mark your answer.

As you read this question, consider the situation described. Public criticism is being leveled at the school district for significant cost overruns on a major construction project. Under such circumstances, the superintendent is responsible for ensuring that the public be provided with all relevant information on the issue (option C). Options B and D could both be seen as attempts to avoid accountability, and either response would be contrary to the superintendent's responsibility to be forthcoming about issues of legitimate public interest. With regard to option A, trying to influence press coverage in the manner described would be an unethical response on the superintendent's part. **Option C is therefore the correct answer.**

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Decision Sets

Decision sets contain approximately five to nine questions that are all about a particular situation faced by a superintendent in a hypothetical Texas school district. The decision-set format helps to simulate situations that superintendents encounter and in which they must make decisions that affect staff, students and the larger school community. Each decision set begins with stimulus material, which sets the scene and provides information to use in answering the questions that follow. Decision sets also contain additional stimulus material provided at one or more junctures. This stimulus material typically provides additional information or a subsequent development that you will need to answer the questions that follow.

The decision-set stimulus material may include demographic information about the district, a description of the community served by the district or information about district staff in general or one or more particular staff members. Each decision-set stimulus describes a situation that a superintendent is facing.

The beginning and end of each decision set will be clearly marked. The following sample shows the first stimulus for a decision set.

Decision Set: First Stimulus

Decision Set Begins Here

Part 1

Dr. Julian Smith, the superintendent of Grantwood ISD, is overseeing plans for a new school in the district. The new facility will replace an existing one that is old and in very poor condition. After gaining voter approval of the necessary bond issues, district officials begin planning construction of the new school.

The stimulus material presents essential information for the decision set. This stimulus indicates that a successful bond election has already taken place and that Dr. Smith and Grantwood ISD staff are in the early stages of planning the construction of a new school to replace the existing facility.

In a decision set, the stimulus is an important scene setter. As you consider the test questions that follow, check the stimulus as needed. As you progress through the decision set, additional stimuli may introduce new information. The decision set is often set up as a kind of story line that develops over time. You may find it helpful to skim all of the questions and stimulus materials in a decision set before answering any questions. Such a quick read-through may give you a richer understanding of the context for the questions. However, as you select your answer for each question, be sure to base your choice on only the information that has already been presented about the situation.

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Regardless of the strategy you use, keep in mind that every piece of information in each stimulus and question is important. You should base your answers on the particular situation presented, not on similar situations you have encountered or studied. With each question, you should think about the knowledge and skills outlined in the test framework.

Decision Set

The following question is the first example of the decision set Superintendent Competency 009: *The superintendent knows how to apply principles of leadership and management to the district's physical plant and support systems to ensure a safe and effective learning environment.*

Example 1

Dr. Smith's first step in the planning process for building the new school should be to

- A. schedule public forums to discuss instructional needs and space requirements for the new school.
- B. meet with the designated architect to discuss design options for the new school.
- C. work with district and campus representatives to develop educational specifications for the new school.
- D. ask the principal of the new school to prepare a brief report on anticipated space needs.

Suggested Approach

Read the question carefully and critically. Think about what it is asking and the situation it is describing. Eliminate any obviously wrong answers, select the correct answer choice and mark your answer.

As you read this question, think about what steps must be taken during the process of planning school construction projects and in what order they should take place. All decisions about building and classroom design should be driven by the instructional needs of the student population to be served in the new facility. This must be the primary consideration before any specific plans or designs can be made. Also, districts must ensure that a new facility meets the standards approved by the State Board of Education. To facilitate this process, the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) requires districts to draft educational specifications for new facilities that include descriptions of the new school's student population and instructional program. These specifications include, among other things, the number of students to be served, the grade-level configuration of the student population, a description of the instructional programs required by this population and a list of specialized classrooms and other support areas that will be needed. Therefore, **option C is the correct answer to this question.**

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Decision Set: Second Stimulus

The next few questions are part of the same decision set. These questions follow a second stimulus. Each sample question is followed by a suggested approach to answering it. Additional stimulus material is sometimes provided in a decision set to provide more information or to introduce a new development in a situation. In this case, the following stimulus supplies additional information regarding district needs and how Dr. Smith plans to address them.

Part 2

Dr. Smith considers building the campus library as a shared-use public library in collaboration with city officials. In addition, other organizations have voiced to Dr. Smith their interest in using the school facilities during non-school hours. Because Dr. Smith has a small administrative staff with no expertise in facility planning, he wants to hire an outside consultant to assist with the planning process.

Example 2

Which of the following provides the primary advantages of joint use arrangements between schools and other organizations?

- A. Responding to the lack of recreational space in expanding areas and the need to efficiently use limited public resources
- B. Meeting compliance obligations from state and local building codes and responding to a strong research base showing the effectiveness of joint use
- C. Decreasing maintenance requirements for the building and relieving time constraints on custodial staff
- D. Effectively aligning and coordinating multiple agency's funding sources and authority structures

Suggested Approach

Read the question carefully and critically. Think about what it is asking and the situation it is describing. Eliminate any obviously wrong answers, select the correct answer choice and mark your answer.

As you read this question, think about the many perspectives a superintendent must consider when making decisions for new construction planning. While school facilities are an integral component of public infrastructure, they largely sit empty after students complete their school day. With state finance budgets so tight around the state and nation, superintendents look for ways to be fiscally responsible and build partnerships with other non-school organizations to reduce costs and better serve the community. There is currently not a large amount of research available to define the effectiveness of this movement, and this initiative is guided largely by local policy and procedures, which invalidates option B. Despite the benefits, this

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joint arrangement is like a “forced marriage” and because each entity involved has complex decision-making structures, systems and policies and procedures that must be followed, the relationship between the school and non-school group is strained. Utilization often suffers as a result of these complexities, as well as the many competing political agendas. There is usually an increased demand on the building and custodial staff due to increased hours the campus is in use. So, the disadvantages and obstacles of this initiative are shown in options C and D. Therefore, **option A is the correct answer to this question.**

Example 3

In defining Dr. Smith’s working relationship with the independent contractor he plans to hire, Dr. Smith should ask the contractor to

- A. make decisions on educational matters that relate to the new facility because this is his area of expertise.
- B. administer the facilities planning process so that an efficient and effective system is maintained.
- C. utilize the district’s long-range plans and facility plans to meet the needs of students in the district.
- D. request an architect develop long-range plans for the district to ensure the facility is align with district needs.

Suggested Approach

As the district’s leader, the superintendent is responsible for administering facilities projects and reporting the status to board members, and should not delegate this role to an outside consultant. It is always tempting for educators to rely on the professional judgment of other professionals when they have very limited personnel resources. Only the educator can know the educational programs of the school system now and in the future, so Dr. Smith should provide the advice on educational matters. This includes the development of long-range plans for the district. These rationales invalidate options A, B and D. It is prudent for the superintendent to develop long-range plans and facility plans with the district stakeholders and ask the consultant to use them throughout the building and planning phase. **Option C is the correct answer.**

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Example 4

The independent educational consultant hired by Dr. Smith discusses state regulations and policies describing the general parameters for selecting a builder for the new facility. Which of the following statements accurately describes the legal guidelines Grantwood ISD must follow when awarding construction contracts to build the new school?

- A. The district must use the request for proposal method when awarding contracts for the construction of new schools or other district facilities.
- B. Competitive bidding is one of several methods the district may select, depending on which option provides the best value to the district.
- C. The district must use either the request for proposal method or a design/build contract, depending on which option provides the best value to the district.
- D. Competitive bidding is the only approved method for the district to use when awarding contracts for the construction of new schools or other district facilities.

Suggested Approach

As the district's leader, the superintendent must use an understanding of legal issues to make sound decisions. The Texas Education Code provides a variety of options to school districts that are awarding construction contracts for the building of new schools or for major renovation projects. The district may use whichever method provides the best value to the district, including but not limited to competitive bidding. **Option B is the correct response.**

Decision Set Ends Here

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Clustered Questions

Clustered questions are made up of a stimulus and two or more questions relating to the stimulus. The stimulus material can be a reading passage, description of an experiment, graphic, table or any other information necessary to answer the questions that follow.

You can use several different approaches to respond to clustered questions. Some commonly used strategies are listed below.

- Strategy 1** Skim the stimulus material to understand its purpose, its arrangement and/or its content. Then read the questions and refer again to the stimulus material to obtain the specific information you need to answer the questions.
- Strategy 2** Read the questions *before* considering the stimulus material. The theory behind this strategy is that the content of the questions will help you identify the purpose of the stimulus material and locate the information you need to answer the questions.
- Strategy 3** Use a combination of both strategies. Apply the “read the stimulus first” strategy with shorter, more familiar stimuli and the “read the questions first” strategy with longer, more complex or less familiar stimuli. You can experiment with the sample questions in this manual and then use the strategy with which you are most comfortable when you take the actual test.

Whether you read the stimulus before or after you read the questions, you should read it carefully and critically. You may want to note its important points to help you answer the questions.

As you consider questions set in educational contexts, try to enter into the identified superintendent’s frame of mind and use that superintendent’s point of view to answer the questions that accompany the stimulus. Be sure to consider the questions only in terms of the information provided in the stimulus — not in terms of your own experiences or individuals you may have known.

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select “Previous View” to go back to original text.

Multiple-Choice Practice Questions

This section presents some sample test questions for you to review as part of your preparation for the test. To demonstrate how each competency may be assessed, each sample question is accompanied by the competency that it measures. While studying, you may wish to read the competency before and after you consider each sample question. Please note that the competency statements do not appear on the actual test.

For each sample test question, there is a correct answer and a rationale for each answer option. Please note that the sample questions are not necessarily presented in competency order.

The sample questions are included to illustrate the formats and types of questions you will see on the test; however, your performance on the sample questions should not be viewed as a predictor of your performance on the actual test.

For these questions, you will be asked to refer to the Preparation Manual: Superintendent Supplemental Booklet that contains these documents and that accompanies the test.

Practice questions 1–11 refer to the case study located in the preparation manual supplement. Practice questions 12–17 refer to the TAPR report, also located in the Preparation Manual: Superintendent Supplemental Booklet. **Note:** Some of the documents are meant to reflect types of materials produced by the state and do not necessarily reflect current reporting formats. It is important that you use only the materials in this chapter to answer the questions.

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Questions 1–11 refer to the case study material in the Preparation Manual: Superintendent Supplemental Booklet.

Dr. Bugle is the superintendent of Sweetville Independent School District (SISD), a small suburban district with eight schools. One of the middle schools, Sweetville Middle School, a Title I school, has received notification from Texas Education Agency (TEA) that the campus is rated as “Improvement Required” due to poor mathematics performance. Dr. Bugle coordinates with the principal, Ms. Akon, to respond to this information and begin developing professional learning communities (PLCs) for all district schools.

Some teachers have voiced concerns regarding the teacher selection process for the new professional learning communities. A teacher at Sweetville Middle School, Susan Martin, has filed a grievance as a result of the teacher selection process for the PLC planning committee. Mr. Bugle plans to review all the pertinent information and respond appropriately.

Examine the following documents and respond to the questions:

- Letter from superintendent to Sweetville Middle School parents
- Superintendent’s memo to principals with article on professional learning communities
- Level I grievance from a campus department chair, Susan Martin
- Level I grievance response from principal
- Level II appeal notice from Susan Martin
- District grievance policy

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select “Previous View” to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 010

1. Dr. Bugle wants to ensure that all employees understand the state accountability system in order for students to be successful on state assessments. Which of the following statements by Dr. Bugle best addresses this goal?
 - A. When considering state accountability, schools can change their rating from one year to the next by closing the achievement gap between sub-populations.
 - B. When a school misses the target in two or more areas of the state assessment, TEA determines the rating for that school to be "Improvement Required."
 - C. TEA looks at student achievement, student progress, closing performance gaps and postsecondary readiness when determining a school's rating.
 - D. School districts should address the issues in the lowest-performing schools, as a way to increase student performance on the state accountability system.

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 005

2. As the district plans to implement PLCs, Dr. Bugle wants to ensure that all principals understand how to use student performance data to improve instruction at their campuses. Which of the following provides Dr. Bugle with an opportunity to share compiled district data trends with principals while demonstrating the use of PLCs?
 - A. Forwarding the data directly to principals and directing them to improve scores in the next year
 - B. Providing a memo to leadership teams that expresses the opinions of campus principals on the data and their implications
 - C. Distributing the data at a general meeting of principals and providing time for them to collaborate on solutions for problem areas
 - D. Working in vertical teams to review all the data with the representative campus teachers and campus leaders

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 006

3. According to the article provided by Dr. Bugle to principals and their staff, which of the following adjustments to their practice is most appropriate?
- A. Grouping students by achievement levels
 - B. Modifying the courses or grade levels taught
 - C. Adjusting instruction to meet student needs
 - D. Scoring assessments according to a bell curve

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 001

4. Which of the following strategies should Dr. Bugle implement to best address Susan Martin's concerns?
- A. Paying all teachers the same amount for participation in the selection process
 - B. Hiring only nontenured teachers to participate in the selection process
 - C. Including teacher representation in determining the selection process
 - D. Identifying participants by principal recommendation to be part of the selection process

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 001

5. In accordance with board policy, which of the following responses by Dr. Bugle to Susan Martin's Level II grievance is most appropriate?
- A. Instructing her principal to meet with her to address her concerns
 - B. Meeting with her himself to address her concerns and providing a follow-up memo summarizing the conference
 - C. Instructing the assistant superintendent to meet with her and include a follow-up memo summarizing the conference
 - D. Waiting to reply to the teacher until a district decision has been made regarding the implementation of the new initiative

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 001

6. If Susan Martin appeals the Level II decision, what is the most appropriate next step for Dr. Bugle to take?
- A. Denying the appeal so that the complaint goes to the board
 - B. Reviewing the appeal himself and providing a written response
 - C. Forwarding the appeal to the district legal team to consider
 - D. Sending the appeal back to the principal for a resolution

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 008

7. A group of teachers from Sweetville Middle School sends a letter to Dr. Bugle outlining their intention to join Susan Martin in her pending grievance. If their grievance is officially filed, which portion of SISD's board policy addresses how Dr. Bugle should respond?
- A. Guiding principles
 - B. Notice to employees
 - C. Jurisdictional referral
 - D. Consolidating complaints

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 003

8. A group of teachers tells a local television station that they are being discriminated against based on their age. A news story is broadcast during which the group recounts a rumor that Dr. Bugle is allowing principals to hire younger teachers to serve on the PLCs planning committee in order to keep personnel costs down. The group calls the actions ageism, and the teachers threaten to file a federal discrimination lawsuit. Which of the following is the most appropriate response from Dr. Bugle?
- A. Ignoring the news story and moving forward with the planned selection process for the planning committee, and then later calling the newspaper with the correct information
 - B. Informing the school board president of the news story, explaining the planned selection process to all employees and board members, and providing the media with the details of the process
 - C. Providing the media with the details of the selection process, calling school board members to inform them of the situation, and meeting with the teachers for a question-and-answer session
 - D. Asking the school board president to act as the district's official spokesperson to the media for the selection process and then report back to the superintendent

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 007

9. According to the principles discussed in the article provided by Dr. Bugle, which of the following sets of professional development topics best supports the implementation of PLCs?
- A. Curriculum, pedagogy and assessments
 - B. Curriculum, alignment, articulation and design
 - C. Mission, vision, values and goals
 - D. Historical perspective, practice and pedagogy

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 007

10. Dr. Bugle believes that PLCs will not be sustainable if the change initiative is not embedded in the culture of the schools. To change the district and campus culture, the school leadership team will need to address how to
- A. assign staff, schedule classes and discipline students.
 - B. articulate shared values, facilitate reflective dialogue and create time to celebrate.
 - C. create district benchmarks, common assessments and time for data desegregation.
 - D. plan professional development activities and timely follow-up strategies.

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 007

11. After several months of implementing PLCs, district staff and principals begin to see improvements with the district-created common assessments and increasing excitement from teachers involved. Which of the following strategies is the most appropriate first step for Dr. Bugle to take to communicate these successes and foster continued improvement?
- A. Providing the local media with a press release stating that the initiative has been successful and reinforcing that the successes occurred despite the selection process controversy
 - B. Sending the data and feedback to campus principals and requesting they share it with the teachers who were involved in the controversy surrounding the planning committee selections
 - C. Requesting the director of curriculum to compile the data and share it with campus principals at the next regular meeting as a checkpoint for the initiative and for distribution to their faculties
 - D. Sharing the data with the school board president and asking that the subject be placed on the agenda for the next regular board meeting as consideration for future budget decisions

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Questions 12-17 refer to the Texas Academic Performance Reports in the Preparation Manual: Superintendent Supplemental Booklet.

The superintendent of Davis Independent School District plans to meet with district leaders, teachers, parents and community members to review data and plan to support school improvement. The superintendent plans to analyze the Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) for the district and its campuses. Specifically, the superintendent wants to analyze the performance of Westbury Elementary, a K–6 school, and Rockfort Elementary, a PK–4 school, to see whether effective strategies at one school can be applied to the other in order to narrow the achievement gap between the schools.

NOTE: The sample TAPR data reports provided are intended to be representative only. The sample reports do not necessarily reflect the current reporting formats.

COMPETENCY 010

12. The TAPR data for the district best support establishing a goal of increasing students' performance
- A. in writing to 90 percent mastery for all grade levels.
 - B. on end-of-course assessments to exceed state averages.
 - C. in reading and mathematics to 90 percent mastery for all grades.
 - D. on the advanced standard for mathematics to exceed the state average.

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 006

13. Which of the following statements regarding the performance of special populations is best supported by the district TAPR?
- A. Reading and mathematics scores of special education students steadily increase as students progress through each grade level.
 - B. English-language learner scores for all grades are above state average in mathematics but below state average in all other test subjects.
 - C. Reading and mathematics scores of economically disadvantaged students for all grades are consistently lower than scores from special education students.
 - D. Reading, mathematics, and writing scores for bilingual students in all grades are lower than state averages for the same population.

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 010

14. Which of the following is the most accurate conclusion that can be drawn from analyzing district dropout and graduation rates?
- A. Graduation rates among all ethnic groups improved from the previous year.
 - B. The dropout and graduation rates of the economically disadvantaged population are improving.
 - C. The percentage of students receiving a General Educational Development certificate decreased from the previous year.
 - D. The four-year longitudinal rate shows that the district performed better than the region and state in all categories.

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 005

15. Last year, Rockfort Elementary implemented a small-group mathematics program in third and fourth grades that has been successful at Westbury Elementary. Based on Rockfort's changes in mathematics scores from last year to the current year, the school should
- A. discontinue the program at all grade levels and search for new alternatives.
 - B. continue the program in fourth grade only, because this is the only grade showing improvement.
 - C. discontinue the program at third grade because this grade continues to have the lowest scores.
 - D. continue implementing the program at all grade levels, building on the progress in third grade.

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 008

16. The superintendent evaluates the staffing patterns at Rockfort and Westbury Elementary Schools with the leadership team. Which of the following conclusions can be drawn based on the data?
- A. Both campuses have a large percentage of beginning teachers and need more experienced teachers on staff.
 - B. Both campuses need to focus on diversifying the teaching staff to better reflect the student population.
 - C. Both campuses should consider increasing the school leadership staff to meet district and state averages.
 - D. Both campuses should consider increasing the number of educational aides to meet district and state averages

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 007

17. Based on the data, which of the following professional development strategies is most needed?
- A. Mentoring first-year teachers at both elementary schools
 - B. Implementing a positive-behavior support system at both elementary schools
 - C. Providing small-group academic instruction at Westbury Elementary
 - D. Using culturally relevant instructional strategies to meet the needs of Rockfort Elementary

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Questions 18–21 refer to the following information.

Over the summer, Dr. Sarah Yin, the superintendent of Blackburn Independent School District (BISD), receives a letter from the Texas Education Agency that contains the near-final Summary of Finances (SOF) and other related reports for the district. Dr. Yin is working with the director of finance to examine the budget for the current year. At the same time, she is also collaborating with her staff, the district site-based decision-making committee and the school board to develop a budget for the next school year. To balance the budget for the next school year, Dr. Yin is considering an increase in the tax rate for maintenance and operations, which will require voter approval. The increase is needed to cover salaries and offset the decline in transportation revenue and average daily attendance monies.

COMPETENCY 002

18. Dr. Yin wants members of the district site-based decision-making team to be familiar with the Summary of Finances report from the TEA and understand its value in shaping the budget and associated district goals. Which of the following best explains how superintendents use this document?
- A. Calculating local funding elements that will supplement state aid
 - B. Estimating state revenue using projected and actual data from the previous year
 - C. Providing an accurate account of money spent in each expenditure area
 - D. Supporting the locally generated budgets with aid from the federal government

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Read the following excerpt of the 2014–15 SOF.

State Aid by Funding Source	Legislative Planning Estimate	Near-Final
<i>Fund Code/Object Code – Funding Source</i>		
199/5812 – Foundation School Fund	\$3,795,237	\$3,641,225
199/5811 – Available School Fund	\$162,546	\$162,546
599/5829 – Existing Debt Allotment	\$0	\$0
599/5829 – Instructional Facilities Allotment (Bond)	\$33,173	\$35,981
199/5829 – Instructional Facilities Allotment (Lease Purchase)	\$0	\$0
Total FSP/ASF State Aid	\$4,009,765	\$3,858,400

COMPETENCY 008

19. In comparing the legislative planning amount estimate with the near-final total state aid amount for Blackburn ISD’s 2014–15 SOF, which of the following should Dr. Yin consider when planning the 2015–16 budget?
- A. The positive impact the settle-up will have on the 2014–15 budget
 - B. The negative impact the settle-up will have on the 2014–15 budget
 - C. The positive impact the settle-up will have on the 2015–16 budget
 - D. The negative impact the settle-up will have on the 2015–16 budget

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 008

20. During the school board budget hearing, a board member asks, “How will raising local taxes generate revenue in Tier I and Tier II?” Which of the following is the most appropriate response from Dr. Yin?
- A. Maximizing the interest and sinking tax rate will generate revenue in both tiers by increasing additional property tax revenue locally
 - B. Increasing the maintenance and operations tax rate can generate more revenue for both tiers using the basic allotment and the guaranteed yield
 - C. Generating funding for the local budget through increased taxes will confirm how supportive taxpayers are regarding a tax ratification election
 - D. Increasing the total tax rate will automatically generate useable increases in revenue for both tiers

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select “Previous View” to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 010

21. After the new budget is approved, which of the following is Dr. Yin’s most appropriate next step?
- A. Submitting the budget to the TEA for approval
 - B. Requesting that the board approve the tax rate supporting the budget
 - C. Filing the budget with the county appraisal district office
 - D. Allocating funds for projects with next year’s budget money

Answer and Rationale

Questions 22–24 refer to the following information.

A school district has grown in size over the last decade, leading to overcrowding at its aging elementary school. To address the problem, the board proposes to replace the existing school and hires an architectural firm to draw up plans and estimate final costs for a new school. Although the state has agreed to pay for part of the cost of building a new school, the rest of the money must be raised through a bond issue that requires the approval of a majority of district voters. The bond issue is strongly opposed by a group of district residents.

COMPETENCY 009

22. During the planning stage for the design of the new school building, which of the following trends should be weighed most heavily?
- A. Changes in the size of the state’s overall budget for construction of new public school facilities
 - B. Projected changes in the cultural and ethnic makeup of district communities
 - C. Possible long-term changes in state mandates regarding facilities devoted to special education
 - D. Projected increases in the population of district communities over the next ten years

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select “Previous View” to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 009

23. When school districts are planning for a new school building's construction, Texas Administrative Code requires the districts to
- A. use construction materials produced in the United States whenever possible.
 - B. hire an outside design professional or consultant experienced in school planning and design.
 - C. allow for input from teachers, other school campus staff, and district program staff in developing the educational specifications.
 - D. obtain reduced prices for the same products and services utilized in previous construction projects.

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 010

24. Which of the following is the most important responsibility of the superintendent with regard to the bond election?
- A. Advocating for students to ensure that their educational needs are met
 - B. Mediating between community members who are on opposite sides of the debate
 - C. Organizing proponents of the bond issue to lobby for its passage
 - D. Acting as an intermediary between the board of trustees and the community

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Decision Set Begins Here

PART 1

Dr. Trenessa Louis is the new superintendent of Hutchins Ridge ISD (HRISD). Shortly after beginning work in the district, she holds individual meetings with district principals to discuss, among other topics, the strengths and needs of the district in terms of technology use and availability. Following are some of the key points Dr. Louis notes during these meetings.

- There is no district-wide technology plan.
- Several schools mention the use of technology in their Campus Improvement Plans; however, these uses are very limited.
- Technology resources are limited and are distributed unevenly district-wide.
- District libraries are only partially automated and need updating.
- The district has limited networking capability.
- Relatively few teachers district-wide have received staff development in the use of the latest types of instructional technology.

After gathering the background information, Dr. Louis decides that two of her primary goals during her first year as superintendent of HRISD will be to ensure that a comprehensive district technology plan is developed and that implementation of the plan is begun. She will begin by forming a technology planning committee (TPC).

COMPETENCY 003

25. To make sure that the new district technology plan is realistic and has the greatest chance for success, Dr. Louis should ensure which of the following related to the technology planning committee?
- A. It is directed by an objective outside consultant who has expertise in the area of instructional technology
 - B. It comprises members of all constituent groups, including people with varying backgrounds in and attitudes toward technology
 - C. It is encouraged to develop a technology plan that requires a minimum of financial support from the district
 - D. It bases its plan closely on the technology plans developed by other Texas school districts

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

PART 2

Once the new technology vision for the district has been established by the TPC and approved by the board of trustees, Dr. Louis encourages the TPC to develop specific student goals and an implementation plan.

COMPETENCY 002

26. The opening line of the mission statement in the new district technology plan states: "HRISD is committed to preparing all students to be successful workers and ongoing learners in the information age." The district could best fulfill its stated mission by establishing which of the following goals for all students to achieve by the time they graduate?
- A. Being active users of a variety of technologies that support communication and problem solving
 - B. Being fluent in one or more programming languages commonly used in the modern workplace
 - C. Being able to store, retrieve and manipulate numerical data through the use of technology
 - D. Being proficient in the use of databases and CD-ROM resources to support research

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 005

27. Which of the following guidelines should be included in a successful professional development plan in the area of instructional technology?
- A. Teacher trainers should be selected from among the most highly skilled math, science and business education teachers in the district
 - B. Training opportunities should be varied to take into account different learning styles and needs
 - C. Training should be supported through grant dollars from national education foundations
 - D. Teachers should be supported in visiting schools and workplaces in which current technologies are utilized

Answer and Rationale

Decision Set Ends Here

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 004

28. While attending a high school basketball game, a superintendent observes a school board member shouting insults at the referees whenever he disagrees with their decisions. Which of the following should be the superintendent's most appropriate first response?
- A. Sending the board member a formal letter of reprimand pointing out that such behavior violates the school's tradition of sportsmanship
 - B. Speaking to the board member privately about the importance of serving as a positive role model for students
 - C. Suggesting that the board member complete a course in anger management before his next evaluation by the superintendent
 - D. Taking no action at this time but planning to monitor the board member's behavior at future sporting events

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 004

29. Because of changing demographics in a growing city, community members believe some changes are needed to the district's career-oriented curriculum. Which of the following is the most appropriate role of the office of the superintendent in developing an effective career-oriented curriculum for a district?
- A. Conducting research into current principles of best practice and pedagogical approaches for career training
 - B. Disseminating a survey to students and parents to identify specific career goals
 - C. Drafting a provisional list of course offerings for review by principals and teachers
 - D. Acting as a liaison with business coalitions in identifying specific skills applicable to success in the workplace

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 009

30. A school board reviews bids from several vendors to provide food services to district schools. One vendor's bid is substantially lower than the rest, but a board member expresses reservations based on some negative comments she has heard about the vendor's work. In this situation, the best action for the superintendent to take next is to
- A. contact other consumers who have used the low-bidding vendor to inquire about the quality of the vendor's services.
 - B. recommend that the board accept the low bid in conformity with state law requiring acceptance of the lowest bid to provide goods and services.
 - C. reopen the bidding process after informing all participating vendors of the amount of the lowest bid.
 - D. recommend that the board reject the lowest bid and award the contract to a higher-bidding but more reputable vendor.

Answer and Rationale

COMPETENCY 007

31. Elementary school teachers in a district have just finished attending a series of professional development sessions on classroom-based observational assessments. Which of the following actions by district administrators will best ensure that students reap the greatest possible benefits from their teachers' participation in the sessions?
- A. Creating a program of follow-up activities and consultation to support all participants' application of new skills
 - B. Asking teachers who participated to make presentations at their own schools on the basics of observational assessment
 - C. Sending out bimonthly follow-up questionnaires asking participants to report their current use of observational assessment
 - D. Requiring that all participants pass a test on the principles and applications of observational assessment

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

COMPETENCY 004

32. Which of the following describes the primary role of a board of trustees in implementing a new vision and strategic plan for a school district?
- A. Identifying sources of funding to enable the district to achieve its vision and goals
 - B. Communicating to stakeholders the underlying values and beliefs of the district's vision and goals
 - C. Identifying operational practices and procedures to help achieve the district's vision and goals
 - D. Developing policies that provide guidance for accomplishing the district's vision and goals

Answer and Rationale

NOTE: After clicking on a link, right click and select "Previous View" to go back to original text.

Answer Key and Rationales

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
1	010	C	<p>Option C is correct because the foundation of the state accountability system is measured by the four areas of student achievement, student progress, closing performance gaps, and postsecondary readiness. Option A is incorrect because the rating is determined by measurement of four separate areas of performance. Option B is incorrect because missing the target in only one area will determine the rating of "Improvement Required." Option D is incorrect because communicating to staff that the state accountability system is intended to address only low-performing schools will not best encourage all campuses to use data to help all students succeed.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
2	005	D	<p>Option D is correct because PLCs are about establishing a collaborative, reflective community of stakeholders. Therefore, reviewing data trends with vertical teams, inclusive of teachers and campus leaders, best demonstrates the use of a PLC. Option A is incorrect because providing information to principals and directing them to find solutions is a better example of top-down, directive leadership. Option B is incorrect because providing a memo with options and implications does not exemplify empowerment of the community as supported by PLCs. Option C is incorrect because administrative meetings fulfill a managerial purpose rather than being reflective and collaborative as recommended by PLCs.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
3	006	C	<p>Option C is correct because strong PLCs use student data to determine changes necessary for enhancing instructional practice and student achievement. Option A is incorrect because grouping students by achievement level is not the focus of PLCs. Option B is incorrect because data analysis within PLCs is not focused on the course assignments of teachers but rather on seeking changes needed to improve instructional practice. Option D is incorrect because assessing students based on an established content and a common passing standard is better aligned with data analysis within PLCs.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
4	001	C	<p>Option C is correct because Susan Martin’s concerns are with the selection process completed by the principal. By allowing other teachers to be part of the selection process, the principal can make a more collaborative, unbiased selection. Options A and B are incorrect because both paying all teachers the same amount and hiring only nontenured teachers would aggravate the existing problem, not solve it. Option D is incorrect because allowing only principals to establish the selection process led to the grievance itself.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
5	001	C	<p>Option C is correct because, in a Level II complaint, the next immediate supervisor, above the principal, should meet with Ms. Martin. Option A is incorrect because the principal met with Ms. Martin to address her Level I complaint, which she is now appealing. Option B is incorrect because, according to board policy, the superintendent would not meet with Ms. Martin until Level III. Option D is incorrect because board policy requires a response within ten days. This strategy is also rarely effective and usually damages relationships within the organization.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
6	001	B	<p>Option B is correct because, according to board policy, the superintendent hears Level III grievances. Option A, C and D are incorrect, because, according to board policy, the superintendent should meet with Ms. Martin within ten days and hear her concern.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
7	008	D	<p>Option D is correct because information on procedures for addressing the same or similar complaints by several people with the same supervisor is titled "Consolidating Complaints" in the board policy provided. Option A is incorrect because the portion of board policy that addresses guiding principles is merely a general statement about the complaint process. Option B is incorrect because the notice to employee portion of the board policy addresses the district's responsibility to inform employees. Option C is incorrect because jurisdictional referral refers to the handling of complaints from individuals without a common supervising principal. Because all the complaints are from the same campus, this scenario does not apply.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
8	003	B	<p>Option B is correct because contacting the board president is essential to maintaining a good superintendent-board relationship. Next, squelching rumors by informing all employees and board members of the facts is an effective communication strategy. Then, providing similar information to the media addresses the topic in the community proactively. Option A is incorrect because responding to the media in a timely manner is essential to maintaining credibility in the community. Option C is incorrect because the board president should be informed and knowledgeable about the incident to best maintain a collaborative working relationship and to build trust. Option D is incorrect because the board president is not the best person to speak directly to the media on this topic.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
9	007	C	<p>Option C is correct because the campus is just beginning to initiate PLCs and better understanding how to create a culture of shared purpose in which the staff learns to habitually work together toward a greater purpose. Options A and B are incorrect because, while staff will likely address changes to curriculum, practice, alignment, design and assessments within their PLCs, these are not the building blocks of an effective PLC. Option D is incorrect because studying the historical perspective of PLCs is not the most important element of effectively implementing them. Studying practice and pedagogy will likely be discussed within PLCs, but these are not the building blocks of PLCs.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
10	007	B	<p>Option B is correct because addressing school culture in a manner that facilitates its change will require the campus to address the assumptions, beliefs, values and habits that shape how the staff think and act. Options A, C and D are incorrect because staff assignments, class schedules, student discipline, assessments and professional development do not address the core elements of campus culture as identified by the superintendent.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
11	007	C	<p>Option C is correct because implementing a process to communicate the early successes of the initiative through data will garner the support of participants for the continuation of PLCs. Option A and B are incorrect because they focus feedback toward the group of people who were unhappy with the initiative, but communication of early successes should be communicated across the board to leadership so they can share them with all staff. Option D is incorrect because this strategy communicates early successes to school board members for monetary purposes, but communication should be directed toward employees for a longer period of time. At a later time, program evaluation for monetary considerations would be appropriate.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
12	010	A	<p>Option A is correct because writing is clearly the weakest content area with 84% achieving satisfactory performance as compared to reading (90%), math (92%), science (90%), and social studies (88%), based on the district TAPR. Option B is incorrect because the end-of-course assessment scores already demonstrate higher achievement than the state and region in all content areas. Option C is incorrect because reading and mathematics achievement are currently at or above 90%. Option D is incorrect because the district has 34% of students achieving at the advanced standard in mathematics, while the state is at 17%.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
13	006	B	<p>Option B is correct because the ELL achievement rate in mathematics is 81%, which is above the state average of 78%. The achievement rates for ELL students are below the state average in the other content areas: reading is 71%, writing is 70%, science is 60%, and social studies is 43%. Option A is incorrect because the reading and math scores of special education students do not steadily increase through the grade levels. Option C is incorrect because economically disadvantaged students consistently scored higher than special education students. Option D is incorrect because reading, writing, and math scores for bilingual education students are higher than the state averages.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
14	010	D	<p>Option D is correct because the district performed better than the region and state in all categories. The district achievement rate is 96.2%, compared with 87.4% for the region and 88% for the state. Option A is incorrect because the graduation rate for African American students fell from 97.3% to 95.8%. Option B is incorrect because the dropout rate among economically disadvantaged students rose from 5.1% for the class of 2012 to 7.4% for the class of 2013. Option C is incorrect because it showed a slight increase from 0.3% to 0.4%.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
15	005	D	<p>Option D is correct because third grade was the lowest performing grade at 51% and saw large gains, 11%, in one year. Fourth grade was the highest performing group at 71% and lost 3%. All grades, at 66%, saw modest gains of 2%. So, with only one year of implementation, the program should be given more time with a focus on identifying and building on the aspects that made it so successful for third grade. Option A is incorrect because significant gains were seen in third grade and overall as a school. It is too soon to discontinue a new program with only one year of implementation. Option B is incorrect because third grade was the lowest and saw great gains. One year is too short a period to evaluate a program as successful. Demonstrable change and gains take time to develop. Option C is incorrect because while third grade does have the lowest scores, it was the grade that showed vast improvement, with 11% in one year. Something is improving the performance of that grade, so it would not be prudent to discontinue in that grade level.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
16	008	B	<p>Option B is correct because the data show that Rockfort has 77% White and 21% Hispanic teachers, while the student population is about 45% White, 40% Hispanic, and 8% African American. Westbury has 95.5% White and 2.2% Hispanic teachers, while the student population is about 51% White, 39% Hispanic, and 6% Asian. Option A is incorrect because both campuses have low numbers of beginning teachers. Option C is incorrect because administrative school-leadership staff exceeds the percentage for region and state. Option D is incorrect because the percentage of educational aides exceeds the percentage for region and state.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
17	007	D	<p>Option D is correct because the student data indicate achievement gaps in learning for diverse populations at Rockfort. The achievement gap in third-grade reading is 53% (Hispanic students) and 85% (White students); the achievement gap in third-grade mathematics is 56% (Hispanic students) and 70% (White students). A gap between Hispanic students and White students also exists in fourth-grade reading and mathematics. Option A is incorrect because both campuses have a low number of first-year teachers, so providing classes on how to mentor new teachers would not be a priority. Option B is incorrect because both schools have a low number of students with disciplinary placements, so this also would not be a priority. Option C is incorrect because Westbury is achieving high scores on the standardized tests, so this would not be a priority.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
18	002	B	<p>Option B is correct because the near-final SOF provides superintendents with stat funding data from the current year. Superintendents can plan for the effect of the settle-up on the district’s next-year budget. As well, without significant changes to district needs and state law, the SOF information can be used to estimate what to expect in state aid for the next budget year. Option A is incorrect because the SOF provides data on state funding, not local funding. Option C is incorrect because the SOF is not an expenditure report but rather a state revenue report. Option D is incorrect because the SOF does not provide data on federal revenue.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
19	008	D	<p>Option D is correct because the TEA’s practice has been to withhold the settle-up for any one year until the next budget year. So the settle-up impact for 2014–15 will be on the 2015–16 budget. Based on the data table, the state provided \$4,009,765 to the district as the planning estimate. Now the state’s final calculations show that the district should receive \$3,858,400. This will negatively affect the district because it owes the state the difference. Options A and B are incorrect because based on TEA practices, the 2014–15 settle-up affects the next budget year, 2015–16. Option C is incorrect because the district received more money than it qualifies for and will owe money back to the state. A positive impact would be realized if the final SOF showed that the state owned the district more than it provided in the legislative planning estimate.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
20	008	B	<p>Option B is correct because Tiers I and II are funded through a combination of formulas, district characteristics, basic allotments and guaranteed yields that produce a minimum foundation program and revenue for enrichment. The maintenance and operations tax rate funds Tiers I and II. The amount of the compression rate funds Tier I, and the extra pennies fund Tier II. Option A is incorrect because the interest and sinking tax rate applies only to debt service and has no bearing on revenue generated in Tier I and Tier II. Option C is incorrect because making a statement about confirming the support of taxpayers does not answer the board member’s question. Option D is incorrect because the total tax rate includes both the interest and sinking rate and the maintenance and operating tax rate. There is no automatic increase because the increase is based on the amount of each rate.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
21	010	B	<p>Option B is correct because TEA outlines a specific budgetary calendar that school districts must follow. After the board approves the budget, the next step is for the board to approve the tax rate that supports the budget. Option A is incorrect because submitting the budget to the TEA is the final step in the budget process and usually occurs around November of the following school year. Option C is incorrect because there is no TEA requirement to file the budget with the county appraisal district. Option D is incorrect because projects cannot be funded until both the budget and the tax rate have been adopted.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
22	009	D	<p>Option D is correct because, during the design phase, the district will want to ensure that the capacity of the school meets the district’s long-term needs. Thus, a thorough analysis of enrollment projections is prudent. Option A is incorrect because, while project costs are a factor in any construction project, once the decision is made to move forward, the most important factor is to ensure that the new building best meets the needs of the district. Option B is incorrect because considering the cultural and ethnic makeup of the community is better addressed in curriculum staff development and school culture. Option C is incorrect because the contractor will adhere to all current building code requirements, but second guessing what requirements may be enacted in the future would not be the priority in the design of a new school.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
23	009	C	<p>Option C is correct. TAC 61.1036 requires school districts to provide teachers, campus staff and district program staff an opportunity to provide input in the educational specifications on new school construction. Option A is incorrect because use of materials made in the USA is not mandated. Option B is incorrect because TAC 61.1036 states that a district is required to hire an outside consultant only if it doesn't already have staff with this type of expertise. Option D is incorrect because obtaining reduced prices for products and services based on previous construction projects is not required. There are competitive bidding requirements that guide this area for school districts.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
24	010	A	<p>Option A is correct because, while the superintendent plays many roles in the school district, the primary responsibility of the superintendent is to ensure that the educational needs of students are met. Options B, C and D are incorrect because, while the superintendent can provide facts regarding the district's needs in order to ensure that voters are informed before they vote, the superintendent's primary responsibility is to the students and their needs.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
25	003	B	<p>Option B is correct because seeking input from many segments of the school community with varying perspectives and skill levels will better help the committee meet a wide range of needs and build support for changes. Options A and D are incorrect because members of the staff and administration understand the culture and unique needs of students and teachers best. While outside expertise from a vendor and comparative information from similar districts may be helpful in certain circumstances, this information is secondary to the input of the campus community. Option C is incorrect because the technology plan should be developed based on need first, with a plan to work through budgetary constraints.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
26	002	A	<p>Option A is correct because the mission statement provided seeks to prepare students for the global workplace. Therefore, preparing students to be active users of a variety of technologies that support common skills, such as communication and problem solving, best supports the mission statement. Options B, C and D are incorrect because each is too specific to achieve the mission but each might be appropriate as one of many individual skill statements.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
27	005	B	<p>Option B is correct because, like students, teachers learn best in different ways and come with varying levels of technology proficiency. Considering how best to provide training for the beginning-level learner through expert-level learner is important to ensure that each teacher’s needs are being met. Option A is incorrect because certain expert content-area teachers may not be the most effective technology trainers. Consideration should be taken for technology understanding, ability to communicate the concepts to all levels of participants, knowledge of content areas utilized in training and being respected among peers. Option C is incorrect because selecting professional development to support the technology plan should be based on campus need rather than grant money available. Option D is incorrect because, while this may be helpful in certain situations, many times it is cost prohibitive. For most circumstances, professional development supporting the plan can be implemented on campus.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
28	004	B	<p>Option B is correct because, as this is the first occurrence the superintendent is aware of, speaking to the board member privately provides timely feedback at the lowest level to best maintain a positive working relationship. Options A and C are incorrect because these are more appropriate follow-up steps if talking with the board member does not remedy the situation. Option D is incorrect because, as a board member is a representative of the district, actions at a school-sponsored event should align with the district’s expectations. Therefore, the board member’s actions should be addressed.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
29	004	D	<p>Option D is correct because the superintendent acts in a facilitative role during curriculum development. When information is needed from the community, the superintendent should work with business leaders to better understand the needs of the workforce. Options A, B and C are incorrect because conducting best-practices research, disseminating a survey to students and drafting course offerings are all detailed curriculum work that should be delegated to leadership in the curriculum department. This work should be completed in collaboration with expert teachers.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
30	009	A	<p>Option A is correct because TEC 44.031 allows school districts to consider many factors, including the reputation of the vendor, when selecting a vendor for contract services. Because the district is considering eliminating the lowest bidder based on poor quality, it should ensure that due diligence is completed by contacting other consumers who have used the low-bidding vendor to inquire about the quality of services. Option B is incorrect because state law does not require school districts to accept the lowest-bidding vendor without exception. Option C is incorrect because it is not necessary to reopen the bidding process. A decision can be made based on submitted bids and due diligence. Option D is incorrect because the district has a fiscal responsibility to act on substantiated information about the lowest-bidding vendor rather than rumor. Therefore, research should be completed to verify the lack of quality in services by the lowest-bidding vendor before this action is taken.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Question Number	Competency Number	Correct Answer	Rationales
31	007	A	<p>Option A is correct because research shows that teachers involved in professional development activities that include theory, demonstration, practice and follow-up are more likely to transfer technology skills into teaching. Option B is incorrect because all elementary school teachers in the district attended the sessions, so presentations by teachers are not needed. Option C is incorrect because, while follow-up is important, a questionnaire is not the strongest avenue for ensuring implementation. Follow-up strategies should address concerns about implementation and provide support. Option D is incorrect because, while a proficiency standard may be helpful in assessing teachers' current understanding, a test alone will do little to ensure implementation.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>
32	004	D	<p>Option D is correct because developing policies, a primary responsibility of the board of trustees, should be executed in a manner that supports the district's goals and vision. Options A, B and C are incorrect because identifying sources of funding, communicating with stakeholders and establishing operational procedures are the responsibilities of the superintendent, not the school board.</p> <p>Back to Question</p>

Preparation Resources

The resources listed below may help you prepare for the TExES test in this field. These preparation resources have been identified by content experts in the field to provide up-to-date information that relates to the field in general. You may wish to use current issues or editions to obtain information on specific topics for study and review.

ORGANIZATIONS

The following is a list of organizations you may wish to contact as you prepare to take the Superintendent test. These organizations publish journals and other materials that address issues relevant to Texas administrators.

AASA, The School Superintendents Association
1615 Duke Street
Arlington, VA 22314
703-528-0700

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
1703 North Beauregard Street
Alexandria, VA 22311-1714
800-933-2723

Learning Forward
504 South Locust Street
Oxford, OH 45056
800-727-7288

National Association of State Boards of Education
333 John Carlyle Street, Suite 530
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-684-4000

National School Boards Association
1680 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-838-6722

Phi Delta Kappa International
320 W. Eighth Street, Suite 216
Bloomington, IN 47404
812-339-1156

Texas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
1601 Rio Grande, Suite 451
Austin, TX 78701
512-477-8200

Texas Association of School Administrators
406 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701
512-477-6361

Texas Association of School Boards
P.O. Box 400
Austin, TX 78767-0400
512-467-0222

Texas School Administrators' Legal Digest
1601 Rio Grande, Suite 455
Austin, TX 78701
512-478-2113

JOURNALS AND PERIODICALS

These journals provide up-to-date information about the field. You may wish to use current issues to review certain topics that you have identified for study and review.

American School Board Journal, National School Boards Association.

ASCD Education Update, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Educational Leadership, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

INSIGHT, Texas Association of School Administrators.

International Journal of Education Policy and Leadership, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

New Superintendents E-Journal, AASA, The School Superintendents Association.

Phi Delta Kappan, Phi Delta Kappa.

Policy Priorities, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

The School Administrator, AASA, The School Superintendents Association.

Texas Lone Star, Texas Association of School Boards.

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Banks, James A. (2007). *An Introduction to Multicultural Education*, Fourth Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Education Commission of the States — www.ecs.org

Education Law/Guide to Education Law/HG.org — www.hg.org/edu.html

National Center on Educational Outcomes — www.cehd.umn.edu/nceo

Texas Administrative Code — www.sos.state.tx.us/tac/index.shtml

Texas Constitution and Statutes/Texas Education Code — www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us

Texas Education Agency — www.tea.state.tx.us

Texas Project FIRST — www.texasprojectfirst.org/ARDIEP.html

U.S. Department of Education— www.ed.gov