GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Education Leadership Program

EDLE 690, Section 002

Using Research to Lead School Improvement

Spring 2020, 3 credit hours

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Course Meetings: **Time:** Tuesdays, 4:30-7:10 p.m.
Term: January 21 – May 13, 2020
Location: Thompson Hall L003

I.   COURSE DESCRIPTION

Prerequisite: EDLE 620

University Catalog Course Description
Using Research to Lead School Improvement (3:3:0) Develops skills, insights, and understanding of how leaders use research to improve schools, with emphasis on the use of assessment and research data to identify school improvement needs and to design school improvement projects.

II.   COURSE DELIVERY METHOD

Using Research to Lead School Improvement helps students to identify opportunities to improve student achievement and focus their efforts to change and restructure schools. Through workshops, discussions, case studies, and presentations, students will learn how to conduct library and field-based research, how to bridge theory and research to practice, and how to design school improvement projects based on sound theory and research.

III.   **COURSE MATERIALS**

Required Text

Bauer, S.C. & Brazer, S.D. (2012). *Using research to lead school improvement: Turning evidence into action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Recommended Text

Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P. G. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Other Assigned and Optional Sources

Assigned and optional source material will be available on their links listed on Blackboard. Assigned sources will also be listed on the tentative schedule below.

IV.   **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Each class will include a variety of activities and exercises. Out-of-class work will rely in part on the use of Blackboard, on readings, and on the use of the resource task sheets created to complement the primary text. Specific process goals for this class are as follows:

1. Classes will reflect a balance of activities that encourage the exploration of and the use of research in instructional leadership. To promote an atmosphere that allows us to accomplish this, we will:
    a. start and end on time;
    b. maintain (flexibly) a written agenda reflecting objectives for each class;
    c. agree to disagree respectfully during class discussions;
    d. strive to be open to new ideas and perspectives; and
    e. listen actively to one another.

2. Candidate work will reflect what is expected from leaders. Hence, it is expected that candidates will:
    a. write papers that are well-researched, proofread, submitted in a timely fashion, and conform to APA guidelines;
    b. participate actively in class discussions in a manner that challenges the best thinking of the class; and
    c. provide constructive feedback to others both on their ideas and on their written work, striving to learn from each other and to test each other's ideas.

3. We will endeavor to create a classroom climate that approximate what we know about learning organizations. Consequently, it is important that we create a space that allows participants to try out new ideas and voice opinions without fear or ridicule or embarrassment. The hallmark of a learning organization is a balance between openness and constructive feedback; hence, everyone is expected to:

a. come fully prepared to each class;
b. demonstrate appropriate **respect for one another**;
c. voice concerns and opinions about the class process openly;
d. engage in **genuine inquiry**;
e. recognize and celebrate each other's ideas and accomplishments;
f. show an awareness of each other's needs; and
g. **maintain strict confidentiality** regarding any information shared in the classroom.

V.   COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students completing the course successfully will be able to:
- ✓ understand and apply planning, assessment, and instructional leadership that builds collective professional capacity;
- ✓ understand and apply systems and organization theory;
- ✓ understand and apply management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations;
- ✓ understand and apply improvement science principles as part of professional practice;
- ✓ understand and apply research knowledge to a significant instructional problem.

Student Outcomes
Successful students will emerge from the course with the ability to:
- ✓ gather and analyze student achievement and demographic data available from their school, school district, and the state;
- ✓ search online databases for recent publications relevant to a specific topic, and prepare a brief summary of applied research on a topic relevant to the improvement of instruction at their school site;
- ✓ use education research to develop a position based on more than one's opinion;
- ✓ understand and be able to evaluate basic research designs;
- ✓ lead instructional and school improvement efforts using improvement science principles to fail quickly, learn fast, and accelerate improvement; and
- ✓ prepare and defend a proposal for a School Improvement Project (SIP) that becomes the blueprint for the capstone project required in the EDLE program internship.

VI.   RELATIONSHIP OF COURSE TO INTERNSHIP

Although the internship is a separate course, the Education Leadership program has integrated internship-related activities into course work. During this course, students will prepare and present a proposal for a school improvement project that they will implement and evaluate as a part of their internship activities over the remainder of the program.

VII.   NATIONAL STANDARDS AND VIRGINIA COMPETENCIES

National Standards
The following Education Leadership Constituent Council (ELLC) standard elements are

addressed in this course:

<u>ELCC Standard 1.0.</u> Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a school or district vision of learning supported by the school community.

> 1.2 Articulate a Vision
> 1.3 Implement a Vision
> 1.4 Steward a Vision

<u>ELCC Standard 2.0.</u> Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by promoting a positive school culture, providing an effective instructional program, applying best practice to student learning, and designing comprehensive professional growth plans for staff.

> 2.3 Apply Best Practice to Student Learning

<u>ELCC Standard 3.0.</u> Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by managing the organization, operations, and resources in a way that promotes a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

> 3.1 Manage the Organization
> 3.2 Manage Operations
> 3.3 Manage Resources

<u>ELCC Standard 4.0.</u> Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by collaborating with families and other community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

> 4.2 Respond to Community Interests and Needs

<u>ELCC Standard 6.0.</u> Candidates who complete the program are educational leaders who have the knowledge and ability to promote the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

> 6.2. Act to influence local, district, state, and national decisions
> 6.3. Anticipate and assess emerging trends and initiatives

Virginia Competencies
This course addresses the following Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Competencies:

a. Knowledge understanding, and application of planning, assessment, and instructional leadership that builds collective professional capacity, including:

> (2) Collaborative leadership in gathering and analyzing data to identify needs to develop and implement a school improvement plan that results in increased student learning;
> (7) Identification, analysis, and resolution of problems using effective problem-solving techniques; and
> (8) Communication of a clear vision of excellence, linked to mission and core beliefs that promotes continuous improvement consistent with the goals of the school division.

b. Knowledge, understanding and application of systems and organizations, including:
> (1) Systems theory and the change process of systems, organizations and individuals, using appropriate and effective adult learning models;
> (2) Aligning organizational practice, division mission, and core beliefs for developing and implementing strategic plans;
> (3) Information sources and processing, including data collection and data analysis strategies;
> (4) Using data as a part of ongoing program evaluation to inform and lead change;
> (5) Developing a change management strategy for improved student outcomes; and
> (6) Developing empowerment strategies to create personalized learning environments for diverse schools.

c. Knowledge understanding and application of management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations, including:
> (8) Application of data-driven decision making to initiate and continue improvement in school and classroom practices and student achievement.

f. Knowledge understanding and application of basic leadership theories and influences that impact schools including:
> (1) Concepts of leadership including systems theory, change theory, learning organizations and current leadership theory.

VIII.   TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Online access is vital for this class. Course materials will be distributed and assignments will be submitted through Mason's Blackboard platform, so students are required to have access to Blackboard. A Blackboard site is available to all students enrolled in the course at http://mymason.gmu.edu.

Email: Per university policy and in compliance with federal law, I will only communicate with candidates via their GMU email accounts and will be unable to respond to emails sent from other accounts (i.e., Gmail, yahoo, work email, etc.).
- **All candidates are required to activate and monitor their GMU e-mail accounts.**
- Any announcements concerning the course will be sent to your GMU email address.
- I will respond to emails within one business day of email receipt (i.e., excluding weekends).

Microsoft Office: It is my expectation that all students have access to Microsoft Office. We will be using Word and Excel for this course. If you do not have access to this software, you are required to obtain it within the first two weeks of the course. It is best, but not required, to have the most recent version of the software.

Google Account: We will be using Google Drive to organize some of our collaborative work this semester. All students are required to have an active gmail account in order to participate in these activities. This gmail account should be distinct from your school district email address, even if you have access to google through your school district account (email should end in @gmail.com).

IX. COURSE REQUIREMENTS, PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

General Expectations
Consistent with the expectations of a Master's-level course in the Education Leadership program, grading is based heavily on student performance on written assignments. The assignments constructed for this course reflect a mix of skills associated with the application of research to education leadership contexts. Overall, written work will be assessed using the following broad criteria:
- Application of concepts embedded in assigned readings and other materials and reinforced in class activities
- The quality of analysis, synthesis, and application
- The ability to write in a clear, concise, and organized fashion

Additionally, a significant portion of the class grade will be based on participation and the contribution you make to class discussion.

Specific Performances and Weights
The overall weights of the various performances are as follows:

Class Participation and Attendance - 10 points
Candidates are expected to participate actively in class discussions, small group activities, and in serving as critical friends to other colleagues. Being absent to class, arriving at class more than 10 minutes late, or leaving more than 10 minutes before the end of class will result in loss of points. *A rubric for attendance and participation is included at the end of this syllabus.*

In-Class Group Assignment - 10 points
In class, you will be organized into small groups based on common interests in improvement targets. In these small groups, called networked improvement communities (NICs), you will create a charter document in class to guide your collaborative work. *A rubric is included at the end of this syllabus.*

Written Assignments - 80 points
Several different types of performance-based assignments will be completed during the semester. Each assignment relates to the application of educational research in your school setting. *A description of each assignment and a rubric for grading each assignment are included at the end of this syllabus.*
The assignments are designed sequentially to help you define and plan the school improvement project *you will be conducting as your capstone project for the internship*. Thus, in the first assignment, you examine school performance data and define a research topic. In the second

and third, you review the available research literature on that topic, and begin to define the specific improvement project you will implement. In the fourth assignment, you will work collectively with your classmates to define a working theory of improvement and common goals. For the final assignment, you write your School Improvement Project Proposal—the improvement project that will be implemented during your internship. The School Improvement Project Proposal is the program-level *Performance-Based Assessment* (PBA) for this course.

Submitting papers: All papers must be submitted **on time, electronically via Blackboard.**

Late work: Students' work is expected to be on time, meaning no later than midnight of the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted except in an emergency situation that have been discussed and approved by the instructor in advance of the due date. Please take advantage of instructor availability to get assistance prior to assignment deadlines.

Grade Appeals: Grade appeals will only be granted when the number of points awarded for the assignment is less than 75 percent of the possible points available. Grade appeals will only be allowed for the first three written assignments. Students must resubmit the assignment within two weeks of receiving their original grade in order to receive a new grade. Students may receive half of the points lost on their original grade on the re-submission.

Grading Scale:
A+ = 100 points
A   = 95 - 99
A- = 90 - 94
B+ = 86 - 89
B   = 83 - 85
B- = 80 - 82
C   = 75 - 79
F   = 74 or below

TK20 Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement:
Every student registered for an EDLE course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit these assessments to TK20 through Blackboard. EDLE 690's required performance is the **School Improvement Project Proposal**. Evaluation of the performance-based assessments by the course instructor will also be completed in TK20 through Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Blackboard will result in the course instructor reporting the grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the Blackboard submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

X.   **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code **(see** https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/**).**

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/).

- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see http://ods.gmu.edu/).

- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to TK20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/.

- **For information on student support resources on campus, see** https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus

- **Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**
  As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website https://cehd.gmu.edu/**.**

Plagiarism:

- Plagiarism Statement: Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; **a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient.** Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions for this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may not be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful, to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being "reader friendly." In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism. (Statement of English Department at George Mason University)

- Plagiarism and the Honor Code: George Mason University operates under an honor system, which is published in the University Catalog and deals specifically with cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. Please familiarize yourself with the honor code, especially the statement on plagiarism (http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook/aD.html). If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor or utilize the GMU writing center.

- Plagiarism and the Internet: Copyright rules also apply to users of the Internet who cite from Internet sources. Information and graphics accessed electronically must also be cited, giving credit to the sources. This material includes but is not limited to e-mail (don't cite or forward someone else's e-mail without permission), newsgroup material, information from Web sites, including graphics.

- If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor utilize the GMU Writing Center.

Academic Integrity & Inclusivity: This course embodies the perspective that we all have differing perspectives and ideas and we each deserve the opportunity to share our thoughts. Therefore, we will conduct our discussions with respect for those differences. That means, we each have the freedom to express our ideas, but we should also do so keeping in mind that our colleagues deserve to hear differing thoughts in a respectful manner, i.e. we may disagree without being disagreeable. http://integrity.gmu.edu/

Diversity, Religious Holiday: Please refer to George Mason University's calendar of religious holidays and observations (http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday-calendar/). It is the student's responsibility to speak to the instructor in advance should their religious observances impact their participation in class activities and assignments.

Student Privacy Policy: George Mason University strives to fully comply with FERPA by protecting the privacy of student records and judiciously evaluating requests for release of information from those records. Please see George Mason University's student privacy policy https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/ .

Professional Dispositions: Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See http://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/.

Core Values Commitment: College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/.

Other Concerns: If you have concerns or issues relating to the content or conduct of the class, please talk with me directly. Although the specifics of these conversations are entirely confidential, they may provide me with useful suggestions that may be shared indirectly with the class to improve the learning experience for all students. As a matter of policy, I do not respond to anonymous e-mails.

Tentative Class Schedule
EDLE 690.002 (Viano) Spring 2020

To accommodate the learning needs of the class, the topics and reading schedule may be amended during the semester. Any changes will be communicated via email or Blackboard. **All readings and assignments are to be completed by the beginning of each class session (i.e., the week the readings and assignments appear next to), unless noted otherwise.**

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Assignment
1	1/21	*Introduction to the Course* 1) Introductions. 2) Course overview and syllabus review. 3) Motivating the use of research as part of school leadership. 4) Introduction to improvement science.	• Bauer & Brazer, Preface (pg. xiii-xx); Introduction to Part I and Chapter 1 (pg. 1-15). • Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P. G. (2015). Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. Introduction (pg. 1-19). *Pdf will be on Blackboard.*	• Pre-course survey online.
2	1/28	*Finding Data to Define Problems* 1) Overview of assignment #1. 2) Mock empathy interviews. 3) Finding data workshop. 4) Jigsaw on Skiba et al. 5) Sign up for data visualization report.	• Bauer & Brazer, Intro to Part II (pg. 69-71) and Chapter 4. • Skiba, R. J., Chung, C. G., Trachok, M., Baker, T. L., Sheya, A., & Hughes, R. L. (2014). Parsing disciplinary disproportionality: Contributions of infraction, student, and school characteristics to out-of-school suspension and expulsion. *American Educational Research Journal, 51*(4), 640-670. (Skim full jigsaw article,	• Secure and review your school's most current SIIP/SIP plan and mission/vision statements. • Bring laptop to class. • Send in names of potential principal speakers.

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Assignment
			prepare to be an expert on the section you are assigned.)	
3	2/4	*Using Data to Motivate Attention* 1) Using data to tell stories. 2) Displaying data workshop. 3) Data visualization report activity.	• Bauer & Brazer, Chapter 5. • Data visualization report you signed up for.	• Have data intend to use for Writing Assignment #1. • Bring laptop to class. • Send in names of potential principal speakers.
4	2/11	*Root-Cause Analysis* 1) Peer review of assignment #1. 2) Root-cause analysis.	• Bauer & Brazer, Chapter 6.	• Bring draft of Writing Assignment #1 to class (electronically). • Bring laptop to class.
----	2/16	Writing Assignment #1 (Improvement Target Proposal) Due		
5	2/18	*Finding Research* 1) Overview of Writing Assignment #2. 2) Qualitative and quantitative research. 3) Identifying research. 4) Library resources. 5) What Works Clearinghouse.	• Bauer & Brazer, Intro to Part III (pg. 135-137) and Chapter 7.	• Bring laptop to class.
6	2/25	*How to Classify Research* 1) Writing Assignment #1 strengths and weaknesses. 2) Research design (part 1). 3) How to read journal articles.	• Bauer & Brazer, Chapter 8. • Schutt, R. K. (2011). *Investigating the social world: The process and practice of research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. Pages 1-19.	

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Assignment
		4) Sign up for an article for jigsaw on research design.		
7	3/3	*Understanding Research* 1) Peer review of Writing Assignment #2: statement of problem and one annotated entry. 2) Research design (part 2). 3) Jigsaw on research design. 4) Overview of Writing Assignment #3. 5) Formative course evaluation.	• Jigsaw article on research design.	• Bring Writing Assignment #2, statement of problem and one annotated entry only (electronically). • Bring laptop to class.
----	3/8	Writing Assignment #2 (Annotated Bibliography) Due		
----	3/10	Spring Break		
8	3/17	*How to Differentiate Research Quality* 1) Writing Assignment #2 strengths and weaknesses. 2) APA citations. 3) Threats to validity (part 1). 4) Signup for jigsaw article on validity. 5) Discuss formative evaluation. 6) Intro to NICs	• Schutt, R. K. (2011). *Investigating the social world: The process and practice of research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. Pages 214-222.	
9	3/24	*Critiquing Research*	• Jigsaw article on validity.	

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Assignment
		1) Threats to validity (part 2). 2) Jigsaw on validity. 3) Fishbones in NICs.		
10	3/31	*Defining Your NIC* 1) Peer review of Writing Assignment #3. 2) Workshop fishbones. 3) Aim statements.	*(none)*	• Bring draft of Writing Assignment #3 (electronic). • Bring laptop to class.
----	4/5	Writing Assignment #3 (Research Brief) Due		
11	4/7	*Clarifying Your NIC's Plans* 1) Overview of Writing Assignment #4. 2) Driver diagrams.	• *Optional:* Bauer & Brazer, Introduction to Part IV, Chapter 9, and Chapter 10.	
12	4/14	*How to Measure Implementation and Change* 1) Measurement. 2) NIC work session.	*(none)*	
13	4/21	*Continuous Improvement* 1) Peer review of Writing Assignment #4. 2) PDSA and the SIP.	*(none)*	• Be prepared to present NIC charter and SIP Proposal plans to the class.
14	4/28	1) NIC presentations.	*(none)*	•
----	4/28	Writing Assignment #4 (School Improvement Project Proposal) Due		

Writing Assignment 1: Improvement Target Proposal
20 points

Overview:

Data are tools – they represent a primary source of knowledge-building for school improvement. As leaders in your school, one of your primary tasks is to understand available data relating to your school's performance in meeting its goals and objectives. Additionally, you need to learn how to communicate about these data to various stakeholder groups. In this task, you are asked to assemble some of these data, and prepare a short summary suitable for presentation to a school leadership team.

Tasks:

1. Identify the variety of published data relating to your school's demographic characteristics (e.g., enrollment, attendance, composition of the student body, staffing); measures of student learning; and any perceptual data that might exist relating to such things as school climate. These data may be available on your school or school system's website, on related websites (e.g., state education department), or in published material.

2. Determine your school's primary performance objectives: What is the school expected to achieve? Dig deeper than routine accountability requirements; examine the school's current improvement plan, for instance, to identify one or more current improvement priorities. **Conduct an empathy interview with a leader in your school.**

3. Examine relevant assessment data for <u>at least</u> a two-year period. To do this, you will need to <u>triangulate the data</u> available to you – look across various sources to answer the question: How well are we doing? As a leader in your school, you will add value to your analysis by using your craft knowledge to interpret what these data means. You may limit your focus to one or more areas identified as priorities for your school (in other words, you do not need to present data on each and every curricular objective, but you should provide a reasonable synopsis of "how well we're doing.").

4. Identify any areas that reflect priorities – for instance, areas in which students are achieving at a level below your school's goals and objectives. Be careful to identify performance indicators that clearly relate to the objective(s) you've identified. **The goal here is NOT to "solve" an identified problem or identify causes of the problem, but to highlight areas that are in continued need of attention in your school's improvement plan.**

5. Prepare a short paper intended to inform and persuade your team regarding an area that requires attention. Includes a brief overview of important school demographic characteristics (particularly characteristics of the student body); information related to the school's improvement goals; data relevant to current levels of performance; tables and figures you create; and a clear statement of the challenge area(s) you believe require attention in your improvement planning. Use the attached rubric as a guide to structure your paper.

This is an exercise in leadership communication. Be selective – you cannot provide an overview of all of the data that might be available. Craft your examination to focus on important areas of concern. NOTE – the tone of the paper is persuasive: you are providing your expert judgment based on your analysis of school performance data, and in the end you are lobbying the team to adopt the focus you identified as important.

Direct the paper to your school's leadership team as the audience – the team may include new members, including one or more parents or community members. Avoid jargon, and be aware of the clarity of your presentation – if you confuse your audience or present a lot of disparate data that don't connect to your school's objectives, you've failed to add value to the discussion. Use tables or graphs sensibly -- to briefly summarize the discussion and direct the reader's attention. Tables and graphs much be clearly legible and tell a compelling story.

This paper is a **maximum of 12 pages**, including all tables and figures, and should be written in a fashion that is suitable for the audience described above. Papers should be a minimum of 8 pages to meet all of the requirements.

Improvement Target Proposal Assessment Rubric:

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Introduction and thesis (2 points) Any written statement should begin with an introduction that draws the reader into the topic and includes a one-sentence thesis. The thesis states what the author intends to prove or demonstrate in the body of the written work. For this paper, the thesis must name the focal area(s) for improvement.	The paper starts with an introduction that provides a clear roadmap for the reader, foreshadowing what the Improvement Target Proposal is intended to provide in the way of information. The thesis appears as the last sentence of the introductory paragraph.	The paper starts with a brief introduction that alludes to the purpose of the paper and provides a general foreshadowing of what is to be included in the document. The thesis may not be entirely clear or appropriate.	The introduction provides only the barest hint about the purpose of the paper and the information to be shared. The thesis is either confusing or missing.	The paper lacks an introduction entirely, or the introduction fails to provide useful information that is linked to the intended purpose of the document.
Characteristics of the school and diversity of the school community (5 points) (ELCC 4.2) This section is intended to help the reader understand the nature of the school so that the priority area will make sense.	The paper includes a thorough and concise overview of the demographic characteristics of the school, school staffing, and the school community. The school's current improvement objectives are highlighted, and (if available) data related to characteristics of the school climate are described.	The paper includes a general overview of the demographic characteristics of the school, school staffing, and school community; the school's current improvement objectives, and measures of school climate. Some important demographic data are not evident and/or this section is not concisely written with extraneous information or description.	The paper includes a limited review of demographic and staffing data; the school's current improvement objectives, and measures of school climate. Important data are omitted or inaccurately presented.	The presentation of demographic data is missing or wholly inadequate.
Use of data to analyze school performance related to the school's vision and objectives (5 points) (ELCC 1.2)	The paper includes a clear and concise summary of the school's performance based on an assessment of important educational outcomes reflecting the school's vision	The paper includes a summary of the school's performance over a two-year period, using general measures of important educational outcomes. Writing may not be clear and	The paper includes a summary of the school's current performance in general terms. Specific indicators or educational outcomes are unclear or missing.	The assessment of school performance is missing or wholly inadequate.

This section explains where the school has been in terms of student achievement.	and objectives, over at least a two-year period. Information from empathy interview is included. Data are triangulated.	concise. Information from empathy interview might be missing. Data triangulation might be missing or inadequate.		
Identification of improvement area (4 points) (ELCC 1.3) This is the most important point of the paper in which you explain exactly where the school ought to be focused in its effort to improve student achievement.	The paper concludes with a recommendation of one or more problem areas. The identified achievement gap(s) are well supported by the analysis of school data, and are clearly connected to the school's vision, improvement objectives, and the emerging needs of the school community. Focus is on identifying the problem with no discussion of solutions or root causes.	The paper concludes with a recommendation of one or more problem areas. The identified achievement gap(s) are generally supported by the analysis of school data, and are at least loosely connected to the school's vision and improvement objectives.	The paper concludes with a general recommendation of one or more problem areas. The identified achievement gap(s) are not clearly supported by the analysis of school data.	The recommendation is missing or wholly inadequate.
Use of tables and figures to summarize data (2 points) Tables and/or figures should appear as support to the text. Data should be organized for ease of understanding.	Tables and/or figures are powerfully used to present demographic and/or school performance data. They are legible, clearly created by the author, and compelling.	Tables and/or figures are used sparingly, but effectively, to present demographic and/or school performance data. The tables and figures are legible but are all copied from other sources.	Tables and/or figures are used somewhat effectively, but in some instances they are distracting, mislabeled, illegible, or otherwise confusing.	Tables and/or figures are not evident.
Mechanics (2 points) Your written work should always represent you as accurate and precise.	The paper is nearly error-free which reflects clear understanding and thorough proofreading.	There are occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice.	Errors in grammar and punctuation are present, but spelling has been proofread.	There are frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Writing Assignment 2: Annotated Bibliography
5 Points

Overview:

As emerging leaders in your schools, you need to develop the skills associated with accessing the knowledge base on questions that are important to the understanding and improvement of teaching and learning. An <u>annotated bibliography</u> provides you with the opportunity to learn how to sift through existing research on a question that interests you and to begin to organize the knowledge that you are gaining by reading this literature.

Tasks:

1. Use the problem, challenge, or gap you identified in the previous writing assignment. With this focus, articulate a research or guiding question. For example, "Why do second language learners experience disproportionately low achievement in mathematics?" That might be a bit broad, so your research problem or question is likely to narrow as you read relevant literature.
2. Find a number of <u>research articles</u> (theoretical works, empirical studies, and syntheses) that speak to the question you selected. This is an iterative process; as you examine the literature, you will narrow your search by stating (and restating) the research question that defines what you want to know and why. You might identify several articles that are review pieces or syntheses of the literature themselves, but you should also concentrate on identifying primary research (i.e., papers that present an analysis using quantitative or qualitative methods to contribute to the knowledge base on the question). Most of your research can be accomplished on the Internet, with support from your school library, the public library, and/or GMU libraries.
3. Prepare an ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY using <u>at least five (5)</u> of the most important papers you found. An annotated bibliography is a list of articles (or books) that includes a <u>brief description of the work</u> and <u>an evaluation of its usefulness</u>. The purpose of an annotated bibliography is to provide information about the relevance, utility, and quality of the source **<u>for your purposes</u>**.
4. Your annotated bibliography should include a statement of the topic and research question you are investigating; five or more annotated entries using the format presented in class, and <u>a complete</u> <u>reference list</u> showing all of the papers you consulted (at least 10). References must be in APA format.

Annotated Bibliography Assessment Rubric:

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Statement of problem **(1/2 point)** (ELCC 1.2)	The paper begins with a clear statement of the question or problem, which specifically relates to a performance gap	The paper begins with a statement of the question or problem which relates generally to a performance gap	The statement of the research question or problem is evident, but is vaguely worded or poorly spelled out. It is difficult to discern a	The statement of research question or problem is missing or wholly inadequate.

A clear statement of the problem helps to guide the reader.	identified using assessment results, demographic data, and analysis of school and community needs.	identified using assessment data.	clear focus for the research.	
Bibliographic entries – content (2 points) (ELCC 2.2) Articles read and reviewed should contain original research or useful reviews of research.	Annotated entries provide a clear and concise summary of each research source. Each entry includes an overview of the research (including research question, method and findings); and an assessment of its generalizability, utility, and quality. All entries are under one page each.	Annotated entries provide a summary of each research source. Each entry includes a brief overview of the research and an assessment of its utility, but may be lacking in specificity or include too much detail (i.e., entries over one page).	Annotated entries provide a general overview of research sources, but lack detail or are missing significant elements needed to make the entries useful.	Annotated entries are severely lacking in detail, rendering them of little use.
Bibliographic entries – focus (1/2 point) Articles read must focus on the research	All entries clearly and specifically relate to the research question or problem.	Most entries relate clearly to the research question or problem.	Most entries relate only generally to the research question or problem.	The connection between annotated entries and the research question or problem is difficult to discern.
Bibliographic entries – quality (1/2 point) Articles used must be worthwhile.	Sources are well balanced, including original research and synthesis pieces from high-quality, credible sources.	Entries are included from quality sources, but are dominated by synthesis pieces; original research is not evident.	One or more entries are included from questionable sources, reflecting largely opinion pieces rather than original research or syntheses of research.	Entries are dominated by material from questionable sources; a review of research is not evident.
Bibliographic entries -- quantity (1/2 point)	Five or more annotated summaries are presented, along with a detailed reference list of at least 10 sources consulted.	Five or more annotated summaries are presented, as is a reference list of at least 10 sources consulted. Some references appear incorrect or are in improper format.	Fewer than five annotated summaries are presented, or the annotated entries and reference list contain numerous incorrect or incomplete references.	Annotated summaries and/or reference list are missing or wholly inadequate.
References (1/2 point)	References are complete and presented in APA format.	References are in APA format, but a few (1-3) appear incorrect or contain minor formatting errors.	The document contains numerous incorrect or incomplete references.	References are omitted entirely.
Mechanics (1/2 point)	The paper is nearly error-free which reflects clear understanding and thorough proofreading.	Occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice are present.	The paper contains errors in grammar and punctuation, but spelling has been proofread.	The paper contains frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Writing Assignment 3: Research Brief
15 Points

Overview:

A research brief is a short <u>literature review</u> or compilation and thematic summary of published work on a topic that both summarizes and evaluates what is known on the topic. The main difference between a research brief and a formal literature review is the intended audience: address your research brief <u>to a practitioner audience</u> (e.g., your principal or a school leadership team). The research brief is intended to use published research to make a persuasive case regarding the **root causes** of the problem, challenge, or gap you have identified in your school and one or two promising solutions that address the root cause(s). Use your annotated bibliography and the papers you collected to provide a synthesis of the knowledge base and to identify what is known, what is not known (gaps in the literature), and what is missing (unanswered questions) in the extant research.

(Note – the material you presented in the annotated bibliography is a minimum – you will likely need more sources to do a good job here! Remember, you are trying to present a trustworthy document that school leaders will rely on to formulate actions.)

Tasks:

1. Write an introductory paragraph that includes a clearly-worded, one-sentence <u>guiding question</u> that describes the purpose of your investigation. This should be a reformulation (if needed) or restatement of the question you framed for your annotated bibliography. Your introduction must also include a thesis that clearly states in one sentence the argument you are putting forward in the paper with respect to root causes and promising solutions that would address them.
2. Using the research literature you collected to prepare your annotated bibliography, along with any additional sources you might identify, write a <u>review of the literature</u> that addresses the question and supports your thesis. The body of the document should summarize <u>and analyze</u> the existing research. Remember that this is <u>not simply a listing of the research cited</u> – your review adds value by organizing various studies, and identifying strengths and weaknesses of established work.
3. For purposes of this exercise (and the intended audience – your school's leadership team), conclude the paper with a section that briefly summarizes what is known and provides a <u>recommendation</u> based on the available research. For instance, if your question was, "Why do second language learners experience disproportionately low achievement in mathematics?" and the research focuses your attention on the need to teach mathematics vocabulary prior to introducing new concepts, you might recommend that your school's improvement team work toward an improvement objective that addresses the mathematics curriculum in this way. Be as persuasive as you can – this recommendation will connect to your School Improvement Project (SIP) proposal (the next writing assignment).

Your paper should be no more than eight (8) pages (excluding title page and references), and must include citations and a reference list in APA format.

HINT: Your paper should be closely related to your Improvement Target Proposal, leading you to write your guiding question in a manner that suggests a potential course of action for your School Improvement Project Proposal. Remember, to get the most out of your efforts, you should use the literature and your own investigative work to identify likely *root causes* of the performance challenge and ways to reduce or eliminate these *root causes*.

Research Brief Assessment Rubric:

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Introduction: research problem, overview (3 points) The introduction must be very clear about the direction and focus of the paper.	The paper starts with a clear and concise statement of the research question and an introduction that provides a clear thesis for the reader that lays out the author's main argument. The thesis should be related to the achievement problem, challenge or gap identified in your Improvement Target Proposal.	The paper starts with a brief introduction that alludes to the research question and provides a general thesis.	An introduction is provided that gives only the barest hint about the research question or the information to be shared.	The paper lacks an introduction entirely, or the introduction fails to provide useful information that is linked to the research question.
Body: Application of research to school improvement (6 points) (ELCC 1.3) For the research to be meaningful, it must be directly related to a specific question and argument.	The body of the paper presents a systematically organized synthesis of research directly relating to the question and supporting the thesis. Analysis is provided that reflects an awareness of and judgment about the quality of published work. At least one root cause is included and the proposed solutions directly relate to the root cause(s).	The body of the paper provides a loosely organized synthesis and analysis of published work related to the research question and the thesis. Root cause(s) are not included, not supported by literature, and/or not effectively paired with solutions. There might also be a lack of discussion about quality of the published work.	The body of the paper describes published work generally related to the research question, but provides a limited synthesis or analysis of published work.	The synthesis and analysis of published work is wholly missing or inadequate.
Conclusion and recommendation (3 points) (ELCC 2.2) A conclusion should be both	The paper concludes with a clear and concise summary of research directly related to the research question (including a re-statement of the	The paper concludes with a general summary of research related to the research question and the thesis. A recommendation advocating for a	The paper concludes with a general summary of research on the research question. A recommendation advocating for a	The conclusion is missing or wholly inadequate; the paper ends abruptly.

summative and analytical. Re-stating the thesis is an important vehicle for tying the paper together.	thesis), and a recommendation and rationale advocating for a possible course of action that could effectively result in the desired improvement(s).	possible course of action that could effectively lead to desired improvement(s) is presented in general terms, but the rationale for the recommendation is not entirely persuasive.	possible course of action is not evident.	
Quality of research support (2 points) (ELCC 2.3) The best way to make a persuasive argument is with high quality research.	Research cited is well balanced, including original research and synthesis pieces from high-quality, credible sources.	Research is cited from quality sources, but lacks specificity or is not connected in a set of coherent arguments.	General supporting research evidence is referenced, but appears dominated by syntheses or opinion pieces, or material from questionable sources.	Few solid supporting ideas or evidence from research are included.
Organization, Mechanics, and APA (1 point)	The paper is powerfully organized and fully developed with clear, descriptive headings. The paper is nearly error-free, including strict adherence to APA format for references. Proofreading is thorough.	The paper includes a logical progression of ideas aided by clear transitions. Occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice are present. Some APA errors may be present.	The paper includes most required elements, but lacks transitions. Errors in grammar and punctuation are present, but spelling has been proofread. Adherence to APA format is weak.	The paper lacks a logical progression of ideas. Frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation are present.

Writing Assignment 4: SIP Proposal
40 points

Overview:

School leaders are increasingly expected to engage in short-term action research projects to demonstrate the efficacy of school programs and practices. As a part of your internship, you will propose a School Improvement Project (SIP) that addresses a problem or "achievement gap" identified through research on your school. Your proposal will describe a specific improvement project that you will **design, implement**, and **evaluate** during your internship, and later analyze in one of your concluding courses. The expectation is that you will lead a team in implementation of this project.

Tasks:

1. OVERVIEW: The proposal should start with a concise and well thought out description of the achievement gap you have identified through your assessment of student performance and achievement data, followed by a clear **statement of purpose** that generally demonstrates how you intend to address the performance gap. After stating this purpose, include an **overview** of the project that provides a brief description of what you intend to do to implement your proposal.

2. RATIONALE: Include a concise and well thought out **rationale** that describes why it is important to address the performance gap you identified, and your espoused theory of action that suggests why taking the proposed action will lead to improvement in the targeted area. Be sure to describe how your SIP connects to or reinforces your school's vision and objectives. Use the research literature to support your strategy for addressing the achievement gap you identified.

3. OUTCOMES: Provide a short description of the **specific outcomes** you are seeking by implementing your project. Be specific; identify the performance indicators you intend to track in order to measure the educational outcomes that are important in your improvement area.

4. INVOLVEMENT: The expectation is that you will be engaging members of your school community in designing and enacting your improvement project. Provide a short summary of who you involved in the creation of this proposal, and which stakeholders you envision involving in the enactment and assessment of the SIP. Describe how you plan to enlist their support and build your team, including means you will use to maintain effective communication throughout the project.

5. ACTION PLAN: The proposal must include a clear, step-by-step **action plan** that defines the objective of the project (i.e., restates your purpose as an action objective), and delineates each of the major tasks that need to be completed during the project; when each task will be completed; who is responsible for each task; the resources needed to complete each task; and specific "success signals" that serve as indicators of the

completion of major steps in the project. Use worksheets 9. 1 – 9.4 from *Using Research to Lead School Improvement* to help you prepare your action plan.

6. BUDGET: Following the action plan, a clear, well thought out <u>budget summary</u> should be presented. This can be a short narrative presentation (you do not need budget codes, etc.) The narrative should include a synopsis of the funding needed to complete the project; a description of any existing resources that will be devoted to the project, and a discussion of how authority to use these resources has been (or will be) procured.

7. EVALUATION PLAN: Include a narrative explanation of how you plan to **evaluate your project**, which includes a) the specific indicators you will be examining to determine impact of the project on student performance or on the learning environment; b) a description of how and when you plan to collect data about these indicators, and c) a brief description of the analysis you plan to conduct to examine these data in order to ascertain the impact of the project on your intended outcomes.

8. CONSEQUENCE ANALYSIS: In closing, briefly discuss the advantages and the potential limitations of the project. In particular, conduct a **consequence analysis** to predict any issues that might arise during implementation, or any limitations you might face in terms of using the evaluation design to draw trustworthy inferences about the effectiveness of the project. If possible, include reference to issues raised in the literature.

NOTE: The proposal is not an essay, per se; it can be written using each of the sections listed above, and some information can be presented in bullets (e.g., a listing of outcomes measured) or in tables (e.g., the action plan). There is a fair amount of redundancy in this proposal – for instance, the description of the project should provide a brief narrative explanation that matches the project delineated in the action plan; the list of outcomes measured should relate to the evaluation plan (which describes how you will go about collecting these data and what you will look at to know if you were successful). Your audience for this proposal is your principal – imagine that you are presenting this document to him/her, and lobbying for adoption of this project (which you will lead).

Your research proposal should be no more than 12 pages (not including cover page and reference list), and should include citations and a reference list in APA format.

SIP Proposal Assessment Rubric:

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Statement of purpose and overview of project (4 points) (ELCC 1.2)	The proposal begins with a clear statement of purpose, which relates specifically to a performance gap identified using assessment results, demographic data, and	The proposal begins with a statement of purpose which relates generally to a performance gap identified using assessment data. A brief description of the	The statement of purpose and/or description of the project are evident, but is vaguely worded or poorly spelled out. It is difficult to discern a	The statement of purpose and/or project description is missing or wholly inadequate.

Use of data to identify SIP topic that relates to and supports the school's vision and objectives.	analysis of school and community needs. A concise, but thorough description of the proposed project is provided that spells out the actions proposed to reduce the identified performance gap.	proposed project is provided.	clear focus of the project.	
Rationale (4 points) (ELCC 1.3) Use of research-supported strategies to promote continual and sustainable improvement	The proposal includes a concise and well supported rationale that describes the nature of the gap being addressed, why the problem is important, and how taking the proposed action is intended to lead to improvement. Specific, current research is presented in support of the strategy selected to address the identified performance gap.	The proposal includes a rationale that describes the nature of the gap being addressed and why the problem is important to the attainment of the school's vision, but it is somewhat unclear about how taking the proposed action is intended to lead to improvement. Research supporting the general improvement strategy is referenced.	The proposal includes a rationale, but only generally connects the proposed action to the reduction of the identified performance gap. Research supporting the proposed action is weakly presented or not evident.	The rationale is weak or wholly inadequate. It is not clear how enacting the proposed project relates to reducing the identified performance gap.
Outcomes (4 points) (ELCC 1.4) Identification of specific outcomes that will be used to monitor and evaluate progress and plans	Specific indicators are identified and described that will be used to monitor and evaluate the implementation and impact of the project. Each indicator is demonstrably connected to either monitoring implementation fidelity of the project or reducing the identified performance gap.	Specific outcome indicators are identified and described that could be used to monitor and evaluate the impact of the project. Indicators used to monitor implementation fidelity are unclear.	The proposal makes general reference to the kinds of outcomes sought, but specific measurable indicators of implementation fidelity and/or project outcomes are not clearly identified.	The outcomes associated with the project are not specified, or outcomes that do not relate to the identified performance gap are proposed.
Involvement (2 points) (ELCC 3.4) Identification and formation of team to distribute leadership	The proposal clearly describes which stakeholders will be involved in enactment, monitoring, and evaluation of the SIP. All stakeholders who are important to the success of the project are involved. Team member roles and responsibilities are outlined, as are means that will be used to	The proposal describes the primary stakeholders who will be involved in enactment of the SIP. One or more groups whose involvement may be important are omitted. Attributes of team organization are described in general terms.	The proposal is unclear about stakeholders' involvement in enactment of the SIP, or fails to mention groups who are obviously important to the success of the project. Attributes of team organization are referenced in general terms.	Stakeholder involvement in planning and/or implementation is not evident.

	maintain effective communication among team members.			
Involvement (2 points) (ELCC 2.1) Understand and sustain a culture of trust, collaboration and high expectations for students	The proposal clearly describes how the candidate will build a collaborative team to promote improvement goals, and build trust throughout enactment, monitoring, and evaluation of the SIP.	The proposal describes some ways the candidate will build a collaborative team and build trust in enactment, monitoring, and evaluation of the SIP.	The proposal is unclear about ways collaboration and involvement will be fostered throughout the project.	The proposal is silent with regard to stakeholder involvement and/or trust building.
Action Plan (6 points) (ELCC 3.1) Development of action plan to guide the implementation of SIP	The proposal includes a clear and well thought out action plan that focuses on effective deployment of human, fiscal, and material resources to guide the implementation of the SIP. The plan thoroughly delineates each of the major tasks to be accomplished in enacting the project; when each task will be completed; who is involved in accomplishing each task; the resources needed to complete each task; and specific "success signals" or process indicators that will be tracked to monitor completion of each stage of the project, including evaluation of the project.	The proposal includes an action plan that describes how human, fiscal, and material resources will be used to implement the SIP. The plan delineates most of the major tasks needed to enact the project; when various tasks will be completed; who is involved in accomplishing each task; the resources needed to complete each task; and specific "success signals" or process indicators that will be tracked to monitor completion of each stage of the project. Some necessary tasks or implementation details are vaguely described or missing.	The action plan includes details tasks, time lines, persons responsible, resources, and success indicators proposed to implement the project, but does so in a fashion that is unlikely to result in successful deployment of human, fiscal, and material resources to accomplish the stated purpose. Significant tasks are inadequately spelled out or are missing entirely.	The action plan is poorly organized, severely lacking in detail, or wholly missing. It is entirely unclear how any proposed actions can result in successful implementation of the project.
Professional development (2 points) (ELCC 2.3) Inclusion of appropriate human resource development plans	The proposal includes clear and well thought out plans for the development and supervision of instructional and other staff needed to enact the plan.	The proposal includes plans for the development and supervision of instructional and other staff needed to enact the plan, but lacks specificity or fails to anticipate the learning needs of some stakeholders.	The proposal includes vague or superficial plans for to develop the skills and abilities of stakeholders who are involved in enactment of the plan.	The proposal fails to account for the human resource development needs of stakeholders who are involved in enactment of the plan.
Budget (2 points) (ELCC 3.2)	The proposal includes a detailed and well thought out budget	The proposal includes a budget summary that spells out in general	A budget summary is presented, but it is lacking in sufficient	The budget is poorly organized, severely lacking in detail, or

Use of new and existing resources to facilitate SIP	summary that demonstrates the ability to identify and procure new and existing resources to facilitate the implementation of your SIP project. The budget includes a synopsis of the funding needed to accomplish the project; a description of any existing resources that will be devoted to the project; and a discussion of how authority to use these resources has been or will be procured.	terms how resources will be identified and procured to facilitate the implementation of the SIP project. Funding needed to accomplish the project is identified; a description of any existing resources that will be devoted to the project is outlined; and a discussion of how authority to use these resources has been or will be procured is described.	detail or is missing necessary components. The use of existing resources is not well thought out, and/or procedures for leveraging these resources are undeveloped or missing.	wholly inadequate to support the objective and action plan described.
Evaluation (4 points) (ELCC 2.2) Plan to monitor and evaluate the project	A clear, well developed plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, which specifies how data related to each educational indicator will be collected, when these data will be collected, and how they will be analyzed. The evaluation plan includes steps that will be taken to examine and adjust the project during enactment (i.e., monitor implementation) and to assess summatively the efficacy of the project in terms of reducing the identified performance gap.	A plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, which specifies how data related to most of the identified educational indicators will be collected, when these data will be collected, and how they will be analyzed. The evaluation plan includes general steps that will be taken to monitor implementation and to assess summatively the efficacy of the project.	A plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, but it lacks specificity and/or is not clearly connected to the espoused objectives of the SIP. Steps that will be taken to collect and analyze various data are unclear, as are methods that will be used to monitor implementation and to summatively assess the efficacy of the project.	The evaluation plan is poorly organized, lacks sufficient detail, or is wholly inadequate to support the evaluation of the project.
Consequence analysis (4 points) (ELCC 6.2) Identification of potential issues related to enactment of plan within the school and school	The proposal concludes with a detailed analysis of the benefits and limitations of the proposed project design, highlighting possible issues relating to enactment of the plan within the school and school community. Advantages and	The proposal concludes with a general analysis of the benefits and limitations of the proposed project design, including issues relating to the support and involvement of important stakeholders. Obvious	The proposal concludes with a cursory analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed design. Issues of stakeholder involvement, implementation fidelity, and trustworthiness are	The proposal concludes with a general restatement of the project's purpose and/or description, but lacks any reasonable reflection on the strengths or weaknesses of the proposed design. A consequence analysis is not evident.

community to positively influence the school context	disadvantages of the project and evaluation design are highlighted, including an assessment of issues relating to the involvement and support of important stakeholders within the school community. Issues relating to implementation fidelity and the trustworthiness of the evaluation research design are clearly spelled out.	advantages and disadvantages of the project and evaluation design are identified. Select issues related to implementation fidelity and trustworthiness of the research evaluation design are explored, though some important potential issues are not identified.	only superficially addressed.	
Support (2 points) (ELCC 6.3) Use available knowledge related to current and emerging trends	Specific, developed ideas and/or evidence from research are used to support the selection of the achievement gap and the strategy identified for addressing it.	Supporting research used to support the project lacks specificity or is loosely developed.	General supporting ideas or evidence are presented.	Few to no solid supporting ideas or evidence from research are included.
Organization of proposal (2 points)	The proposal is powerfully organized and fully developed.	The proposal includes logical progression of ideas aided by clear transitions.	The proposal includes brief skeleton (introduction, body, and conclusion) but lacks effective transitions.	The proposal lacks a logical progression of ideas.
Mechanics and APA (2 points)	The proposal is nearly error-free, which reflects clear understanding of APA and thorough proofreading.	Occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice are present.	Errors in grammar and punctuation are present, but spelling has been proofread.	The proposal contains frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

In-Class Group Assignment: The NIC Charter
(10 Points)

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Aim Statement (2 point)	Aim statement is measurable, relates to the problem, is specific, and is motivating.	Aim statement is measurable, relates to the problem, and is specific, but lacks motivating language.	Aim statement is either not measurable, does not relate to the problem, or lacks specificity.	Aim statement is missing or wholly inadequate.
Causal Systems Analysis (3 points)	Causal systems analysis is thorough, incorporates class and instructor feedback, and directly relates to the group members' assignments.	Causal system analysis is thorough but did not incorporate feedback or is not related to group members' assignments.	Causal systems analysis contains holes and needs more thorough consideration.	Causal systems analysis is missing of wholly inadequate.
Working Theory of Practice Improvement (3 points)	Working theory of improvement is thorough, incorporates class and instructor feedback, builds off of the causal systems analysis, and directly relates to the group members' SIP Proposals.	Working theory of improvement is thorough but did not incorporate feedback or is not related to group members' SIP Proposals.	Working theory of improvement contains holes and needs more thorough consideration.	Working theory of improvement is missing of wholly inadequate.
Common Measures of Implementation and Outcomes (2 points)	The group has compiled a robust set of common measures that are applicable to all or almost all of the group members' SIP Proposal. These measures address both implementation, proximal outcomes, and distal outcomes.	The group has compiled a set of common measures that are applicable to all or almost all of the group members' SIP Proposal. These measures fail to address either implementation or proximal outcomes.	The group has compiled one or two common measures that are only tangentially relevant to the group members' SIP Proposals.	The group did not create common measures.

Class Participation Assessment Rubric
(10 Points)

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Attendance **(2 points)**	Exemplary attendance, no tardies.	Near perfect attendance, few tardies.	Occasional (2-3) absences and tardies.	Frequent (>3) absences and tardies.
Quality of questions and interaction **(2 points)**	Most queries are specific and on point. Deeply involved in class dialogue. Challenges ideas, seeks meaning.	Often has specific queries, stays involved in class dialogue, though sometimes tentative or off-base.	Asks questions about deadlines, procedures, directions or for help with little specificity. Little discussion of ideas.	Rarely asks questions of any quality.
Effort **(2 points)**	Volunteers as appropriate and often leads in group settings. Engages and brings out the best in others.	Willingly participates with instructor and classmates. Engages others.	Reluctantly participates when asked (rarely volunteers) Seeks easiest duties within groups.	Actively avoids involvement. Complains about others and uses excuses to explain deficiencies.
Demonstration of preparation for class **(2 points)**	Demonstrates preparation regularly by referring to previous learning, text and other sources to contribute to class discussion and is prepared for each and every class.	Demonstrates preparation regularly by referring to previous learning, text and other sources to contribute to class discussion.	Demonstrates preparation and readiness periodically.	Is unable to demonstrate readiness for class.
Responsible use of technology **(2 points)**	Laptop/tablet is utilized for classroom activities only. Very limited cell phone use during class activities.	Laptop/tablet is utilized for classroom activities only. Cell phone use is irregular.	Laptop/tablet is utilized for classroom activities only. Cell phone is in use on a regular basis in a distracting manner.	Is consistently off task on laptop/tablet and/or constant cell phone usage.