

# Professional Certification

## Applied Classroom Inquiry Project Components

The Applied Classroom Inquiry Project is an important part of your portfolio evidence and may be used as one of your entries. The project must contain curriculum-based measures that reflect student performance on a target skill or behavior. An appropriate target might be a criterion for which you may need to do something extra to obtain evidence.

For example, if your concern is Standard I, *(g) informing, involving, and collaborating with families and community members as partners in each student's educational process, including using information about student achievement and performance*, you could focus your entry on this criterion and complete the Applied Classroom Inquiry Project at the same time.

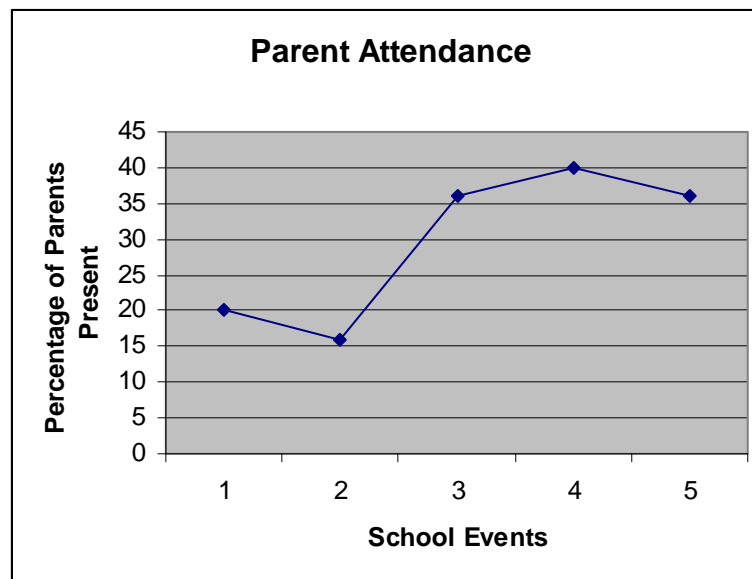
The steps below describe the expected components of the Applied Classroom Inquiry Project and Standard I (g) is given as an example only. You should focus on an issue that is relevant to your personal context and challenges.

### Structure one entry with these components:

- Identification of a skill or behavior that concerns you  
Many of the students in my class are English Language Learners and their parents infrequently attend open house events or individual conferences.
- Assess current performance information  
At the last open house and set of individual conferences, only four or five out of twenty-five parents attended. (16-20%) None of the parents of my eight ELL students came.
- Use outside resources to select an intervention  
The Education Leadership Journal contained two articles about increasing school/family communication, and I selected one by Jones and Billingsley that described the use of community partners to serve as translators during conferences and meetings. Two community partners were recruited – one who is fluent in Spanish and another who is a native Russian speaker.
- Implement change  
The community partners agreed to help contact my ELL parents either by telephone or in writing to invite them to the next series of school events and conferences and to attend the events/conference to translate for the parents. They contacted ELL student's families prior to the winter program in December, spring

conferences in April, and the school play in May. Community partners made a total of 36 contacts between them, and were able to be present to translate at all eight student conferences.

- Assess the impact on student performance  
Student conferences in my school are student-led and selection of “best work” samples is much more meaningful when students know that their parents are coming to listen. The quality of student work and the ability to explain learning targets and how to reach them improves when students prepare for student-led conferences with parents.
- Analyze the results. **The project must include charted data.**  
Here is the chart from this project:



The community partners began helping after the second school event and attendance did improve. At the first school event 5 parents attended, 4 came to the second event but once the community partners began helping, attendance improved to nine, then ten, then nine parents were in attendance.

- Describe implications  
This project has reminded me how important personal contact with parents is. Attendance at school events increased when the barriers of language and “newness” were removed and parents of the ELL students received personal invitations in their own languages. Personal invitations were extended only to parents of ELL students this year and next year I intend to expand this project by using PTA volunteers to issue personal invitations to parents of all of students in my class, not just to the parents of ELL students.

This simple example meets two Descriptors of Practice for criterion I (g).

1 (g) informing, involving, and collaborating with families and community members as partners in each student's educational process, including using information about student achievement and performance.

1. The teacher uses effective structures to form partnerships with parents and families in order to support student learning. The teacher demonstrates how s/he addresses the barriers to successful family involvement.
3. The teacher uses research data that includes data on traditionally underserved populations (racial, ethnic, low socioeconomic, ELL) to collaborate with families to determine specific learning and assessment needs for each student.

Depending on the complexity of the description The Applied Classroom Inquiry Project *could* be designed to meet additional Descriptors of Practice. For example, the narrative states that students are responsible for leading parent conferences. Additional information about student scripts and examples of their work might meet *1 (b) using a variety of assessment strategies and data to monitor and improve instruction,*

1. Students use a variety of assessment tools, and know how those tools measure their performance of the learning targets.
4. Students regularly use their work to examine and reflect on their achievement of learning targets. Students set individual goals and outline the steps required to reach those goals.
6. Students actively work with their teacher to decide how best to demonstrate their progress and capabilities, and to identify their best work.
7. Students participate in communication with parents/guardians and in decision-making about their learning progress and assessment data.

***And 1 (d) designing and/or adapting challenging curriculum that is based on the diverse needs of each student***

1. Students can articulate the required learning targets.
2. Students know what is needed to move to the next level of performance.
3. Students are aware of and utilize resources for assistance, remediation, acceleration, or enrichment, as appropriate.
4. Students articulate how the new learning builds on their prior knowledge and individual needs. Students understand the importance of their learning and why it is useful to them.
6. Students reflect on their thinking strategies, communicate what strategies worked well and what strategies did not, and adjust as necessary.