



Texas A&M- San Antonio

Education Leadership Program

TExES 268 & 368 Exam Preparation Guide Sheet

Welcome Future Campus Leaders!

You have spent months diving into educational theory, analyzing school finance models, and unpacking the nuances of public school law. You have balanced late-night study sessions with the intense, daily demands of your classrooms and campuses. Now, you stand at the threshold of the ultimate milestone in your leadership journey: passing the TExES 268 and TExES 368 (PASL).

It is completely natural to feel a sense of urgency—or even a little anxiety—when looking at these two assessments. They are rigorous, comprehensive, and demanding. But here is the truth: these exams are not roadblocks designed to trip you up; they are your platform to prove you are ready to lead. The State of Texas isn't just looking for building managers who can handle paperwork and schedules. They are looking for *Instructional Leaders*—visionaries who can step into a school, analyze complex data, build collective teacher efficacy, coach with empathy, and advocate fiercely for equitable student outcomes.

Every single framework, constructed response, and PASL artifact you tackle during your preparation is a direct dress rehearsal for the real-world decisions you will make as a principal or assistant principal.

This guide sheet is designed to help Master's students navigate the structure, core pillars, and critical frameworks of both exams.

Embedded Support

TEST PREPARATION SUPPORT	SCHEDULE OF SUPPORT	POINT OF CONTACT
Begin with the end in mind: Introduce students to the certification tests during our New Student Orientation	First semester of enrollment	Dr. Kearney
Monthly Advising Newsletters: Sent to students monthly to notify them of scheduled test reviews and practice exams	Monthly	Dr. Krimbill
268 Test Overview: Presentation during synchronous class	EDAD 5301	Dr. Kearney
Required text for course: Passing the Principal as Instructional Leader TExES Exam: Keys to Certification & School Leadership (3 rd ed.) by Elaine Wilmore	EDAD 5301	Dr. Kearney
Discussion and practice: How to write a constructed response	EDAD 5315	Dr. Scott
Practice for timed writing: weekly In-class timed writing assignments	EDAD 5383	Dr. Krimbill
Embedded practice questions: In-class learning activities	EDAD 5330	Dr. Scott
368 Test Overview: Presentation during synchronous class Key Assignment: Create your success plan and schedule for how you will prepare for the certification exams	EDAD 5329	Dr. Krimbill
PASL Data Collection during Practicum	EDAD 5345	Dr. Scott
Required attendance at PASL TExES 368 Test Review Session	Available during the last two semesters of enrollment	Dr. Kearney
Required attendance at TExES 268 Test Review Session	Available during the last two semesters of enrollment	Dr. Kearney
Required completion of the TExES 268 Practice Exam: A score of 80% or higher on both the multiple choice and constructed responses is required to receive access to the required state exam	Available during the last two semesters of enrollment	Dr. Kearney
Individual coaching for students who do not pass the Practice Exam: Mometrix Online Resources	Required coaching and Retest as needed	Dr. Scott



Test Overviews

Taking on the TExES 268 (Principal as Instructional Leader) and the TExES 368 (Performance Assessment for School Leaders - PASL) requires a strategic blend of understanding of Texas educational law, instructional leadership, and data-driven decision-making.

TExES 268:

Principal as Instructional Leader

The TExES 268 is a computer-administered test consisting of 91 selected-response questions and 4 constructed-response tasks. It evaluates your readiness to drive student achievement and manage campus operations under the Texas Principal Standards.

Core Pillars of Focus

- **Instructional Leadership:** Prioritize high-quality curriculum, student-centered coaching, and actionable feedback loops with teachers.
- **Human Capital:** Focus on targeted professional development, strategic hiring, and continuous teacher retention models.
- **Executive Leadership:** Cultivate a shared campus vision, strong community culture, and ethical decision-making frameworks.
- **School Culture & Strategic Operations:** Align campus budgeting, safety procedures, and daily operations to directly support instructional goals.

The Constructed-Response Mindset

When tackling the 4 written responses, you must think like an established, proactive campus leader. Your answers should explicitly address:

1. **Data Analysis:** Disaggregating student performance data (demographics, passing rates, growth metrics) to pinpoint a root instructional gap.
2. **Strategic Planning:** Creating a targeted, research-based action plan with clear timelines and resource allocations.
3. **Professional Development:** Designing adult learning opportunities directly tied to the identified campus need.
4. **Feedback Loops:** Utilizing observation data and coaching frameworks to provide teachers with high-leverage feedback.

Deconstructing the TExES 268 Constructed-Response Formula

The 4 constructed-response tasks on the TExES 268 are highly predictable. They assess your ability to analyze a campus scenario, look at data artifacts (e.g., benchmark data, teacher lesson plans, walkthrough notes), and write a targeted action plan.

To maximize points, students should use the A.P.E.X. Framework to structure their responses:

1. Analyze the Gap (A)

- **What to do:** Identify the exact academic or instructional root cause based only on the provided data artifacts.
- **The Formula:** Avoid broad statements like "the teachers need help." Instead, narrow it down: "Based on Exhibit 1, 4th-grade math students are struggling with multi-step word problems (TEKS 4.4H), specifically falling 22% below the district average in the 'meets' category."

2. Plan the Intervention (P)

- **What to do:** Outline a concrete, high-leverage action plan to fix the gap.
- **The Formula:** Detail what professional development or Professional Learning Community (PLC) focus will occur, who will facilitate it, and when. The plan must be highly proactive, research-based, and directly aligned with the Texas Effective Schools Framework (ESF).

3. Execute the Coaching & Feedback Loop (E)

- What to do: Describe how you will support the teachers implementing the plan.
- The Formula: Outline the exact coaching cycle:

4. eXamine Impact & Monitor (X)

- What to do: Define how you will track success over time.
- The Formula: Never rely on the end-of-year STAAR test to see if a plan worked. Specify interim monitoring tools (e.g., weekly common formative assessments, bi-weekly student exit tickets, and weekly PLC data tracking sheets).

TE_xES 368:

Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL)

The PASL is an artifact- and evidence-based assessment completed during your internship or practicum. It consists of three specific tasks requiring written commentary and direct evidence of your leadership in action.

Task Breakdown

- Task 1: Problem Solving in the Field
 - *Focus:* Identify a significant campus issue impacting student learning or culture.
 - *Requirement:* Analyze relevant data, collaborate with stakeholders, and implement a targeted plan to address the problem.
- Task 2: Supporting Continuous Professional Development
 - *Focus:* Lead a small group of educators to improve instructional practices.
 - *Requirement:* Plan and facilitate professional development, observe teachers, and collect evidence of shifts in instructional practice and student learning.
- Task 3: Creating a Collaborative Team
 - *Focus:* Build a collaborative team with teachers and community stakeholders to promote a specific school goal.
 - *Requirement:* Facilitate collaborative meetings, implement a plan, and submit a video recording demonstrating your leadership of the team.

TEExES 368 (PASL) Artifact & Evidence Checklist

The PASL is not just a writing assignment; it is a portfolio of proof. Students often lose points not because their writing is poor, but because their submitted artifacts do not explicitly support their written commentary.

Instruct students to check off these critical evidence requirements before submitting each task:

Task 1 Checklist: Problem Solving in the Field

- **Data Artifacts:** At least two distinct data sources (e.g., demographic data, climate surveys, attendance records, or academic benchmarks) that clearly justify why this specific problem was chosen.
- **Stakeholder Communication:** Blurred/redacted emails, meeting minutes, or planning agendas showing collaboration with a campus committee or leadership team.
- **The Plan:** A formal, written action plan document outlining timelines, responsibilities, and specific resources allocated.

Task 2 Checklist: Supporting Continuous Professional Development

- **The Assessment:** A copy of the pre- and post-assessment tools used to measure the growth of the targeted student group.
- **Walkthrough/Observation Documentation:** Copies of the specific rubric or observation forms used when watching the selected teachers implement the new strategy.
- **Teacher Work Samples:** Anonymous samples of teacher lesson plans showing the exact modifications made before and after the professional development sessions.

Task 3 Checklist: Creating a Collaborative Team

- **The Video Recording (Max 15 Minutes):** A continuous, unedited video segment demonstrating *your* active facilitation of a collaborative team. Ensure your face and voice are clear, and that you are prompting others rather than lecturing.
- **Meeting Artifacts:** Agendas and sign-in sheets from the collaborative team meetings.
- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Surveys or feedback forms collected from team members or parents evaluating the effectiveness of the collaborative project.

High-Leverage Texas Frameworks to Master

To succeed on both assessments, your instructional philosophy must align with current Texas education models and state standards.

Framework / Concept	Key Focus Areas for the Exam
Texas Principal Standards (Chapter 149)	The foundational benchmark for every question. Focus on <i>Standard 1: Instructional Leadership</i> and <i>Standard 2: Human Capital</i> .
Texas Effective Schools Framework (ESF)	Leverages data-driven strategies for school improvement. Know the core levers: Strong School Leadership, Effective Instruction, and High-Quality Curriculum.
Texas School Finance & Budgeting	Understand how campus budget allocations (Title I funds, local funds) must tie directly to the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP) and student needs.
Educator Code of Ethics (TAC §247)	Essential for situational questions regarding professional conduct, appropriate boundaries, and ethical leadership decisions.

Strategic Preparation Tips

- Adopt the "Perfect World" Persona: When answering 268 questions, choose the option that reflects the ideal, proactive instructional leader. Avoid quick fixes; choose answers that involve root-cause analysis, stakeholder collaboration, and ongoing teacher support.
- Deconstruct the Constructed Responses: Treat the 268 written prompts like a formula. Directly answer every bullet point in the prompt, anchor your claims in the provided data artifacts, and use precise educational leadership terminology.
- Align PASL Artifacts Early: Do not wait until the deadline to gather PASL evidence. Align your current campus projects, professional development facilitation, and PLC meetings directly with Tasks 1, 2, and 3 criteria early in your practicum.
- Focus on the Feedback Loop: Both exams heavily emphasize how a principal coaches teachers.

Pro-Tip

Emphasize to students that across *both* tests, Texas examiners are looking for distributed leadership. An answer that says *"I will tell the teachers to do X"* will score poorly. An answer that says *"I will build capacity by partnering with the instructional coach to facilitate a data-drive PLC where teachers collaboratively unpack the TEKS"* will consistently score high.

Principal Mindset Reminder

A successful Texas principal does not just manage a building; they are the primary driver of instructional quality and equitable student outcomes. Let every answer you write reflect that vision.

Don't hesitate to get in touch with us if you have any questions.

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