

## Appendix A: Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Special Educators

### Appendix A.1: Standards, Components, and Supporting Explanations

#### Field and Clinical Experience Standard

Special education candidates progress through a series of developmentally sequenced field and clinical experiences for the full range of ages, types and levels of abilities, and collaborative opportunities that are appropriate to the license or roles for which they are preparing. These field and clinical experiences are supervised by qualified professionals.

#### *Supporting Explanation*

Field and clinical experience sites are developed and strengthened over time through the building of solid relationships and partnerships between special educators in the field experience settings and the university special education faculty. Through collaboration and consultation, the placements of candidates are selected so as to provide developmental field experiences that support candidate learning across ages, ranges, and settings. Field experiences are supervised and mentored by school- or site-based professionals who are certified or licensed in the special education areas for which the candidates are being prepared. These professionals, in addition to being certified or licensed in the special education areas for which the candidate is being prepared, are selected for their expertise and experience with the individuals and services for which the candidate is preparing. Site-based professionals demonstrate mentoring skills to scaffold and support the learning of candidates. These site-based professionals effectively communicate with and support candidates in field experiences. Field experiences may also be supervised and evaluated by university faculty.

Field and clinical experiences are designed to connect theory with practice to provide rich, scaffolded, developmental, and graduated experiences with increasing responsibilities for prospective special educators. Field experience-based activities and assignments develop candidates' knowledge and skills. Performance assessments of candidates as they communicate with, instruct, guide, provide feedback to, and support individuals with exceptionalities in the field experience setting are ongoing and developmentally appropriate. Field experiences are structured and varied, and ensure the candidate has experiences with individuals with exceptionalities with the given set of specific exceptionalities across the age, grade, and severity ranges for which the candidate is being prepared. Candidates participate in field experiences across the preparation program. These experiences are connected, extensive, and appropriately intensive for candidates to develop and demonstrate proficiencies in the professional roles for which they are preparing.

## Standard 1: Engaging in Professional Learning and Practice within Ethical Guidelines

Candidates practice within ethical and legal guidelines; advocate for improved outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families while considering their social, cultural, and linguistic diversity; and engage in ongoing self-reflection to design and implement professional learning activities.

- 1.1 Candidates practice within ethical guidelines and legal policies and procedures.
- 1.2 Candidates advocate for improved outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families while addressing the unique needs of those with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds.
- 1.3 Candidates design and implement professional learning activities based on ongoing analysis of student learning; self-reflection; and professional standards, research, and contemporary practices.

### *Supporting Explanations*

- 1.1 *Candidates practice within ethical guidelines and legal policies and procedures.*

Candidates work within, and have a strong knowledge of, all applicable federal (e.g., the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act [IDEA] and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and state/provincial/local laws, regulations, and policies pertaining to individuals with exceptionalities and how these laws affect the delivery of services and supports. For example, candidates should understand that present levels of educational achievement and functional performance drive goals and lead to a plan for services. Candidates maintain a high level of professional competence and integrity, exercise informed professional judgment, and practice within the profession's and other relevant codes of ethics. Candidates practice with a commitment to understanding that individuals with exceptionalities deserve to be challenged with high expectations and provided with meaningful and inclusive participation opportunities to develop the highest possible learning outcomes.

- 1.2 *Candidates advocate for improved outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families while addressing the unique needs of those with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds.*

Candidates advocate for resources and the professional learning conditions to help individuals with exceptionalities meet instructional, behavioral, social, and transition goals and outcomes. For example, they work with colleagues, families, and others to adapt curricular materials, ensure service

provisions, implement principles of universal design, and speak on behalf of children with exceptionalities in situations where their voice has been absent. They evaluate new technology options given student needs and advocate for administrative support in technology implementation. Candidates seek a greater understanding of families' diverse knowledge and expertise (e.g., funds of knowledge) about their children's strengths and needs. Through their partnerships they support families by acting in ways that build on family strengths and capacities in working with their students at risk for or with disabilities. For example, for adolescents, candidates jointly identify and implement transition planning and supports around the family's priorities to promote the child's engagement, learning, development, and well-being (e.g., accessing natural environments and inclusive settings within the community). Together with families, candidates may identify strategies to facilitate the child's development of peer relationships, self-regulation, independence, and safety within the home, classroom, and/or community. Candidates understand barriers that exist for students with exceptionalities within educational settings and work with decision makers to design environments and select curriculum resources that include supports that address a range of student needs.

*1.3 Candidates design and implement professional learning activities based on ongoing analysis of student learning; self-reflection; and professional standards, research, and contemporary practices.*

Candidates engage in professional learning activities and participate actively in peer and professional learning communities that benefit individuals with exceptionalities and their families, colleagues, and their own professional growth. They keep current with research and contemporary practices in multiple ways. For example, they participate in professional associations, conferences, and online professional learning networks, and they access resources in libraries and on internet sites. They draw on that knowledge to design and implement professional learning experiences to improve their skills that include areas for growth, goals, and strategies to accomplish those goals. They regularly reflect on their professional performance, why they used specific practices and the impact on students, families, and other professionals. They adjust their practices based on this reflection and assessment of student performance. They recognize their own skill limitations and know when to turn to others for guidance and support to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities and their families.

## Standard 2: Understanding and Addressing Each Individual's Developmental and Learning Needs

Candidates use their understanding of human growth and development, the multiple influences on development, individual differences, diversity, including

exceptionalities, and families and communities to plan and implement inclusive learning environments and experiences that provide individuals with exceptionalities high quality learning experiences reflective of each individual's strengths and needs.

- 2.1 Candidates apply understanding of human growth and development to create developmentally appropriate and meaningful learning experiences that address individualized strengths and needs of students with exceptionalities.
- 2.2 Candidates use their knowledge and understanding of diverse factors that influence development and learning, including differences related to families, languages, cultures, and communities, and individual differences, including exceptionalities, to plan and implement learning experiences and environments.

### Supporting Explanations

- 2.1 *Candidates apply understanding of human growth and development to create developmentally appropriate and meaningful learning experiences that address individualized strengths and needs of students with exceptionalities.*

Candidates know how all individuals grow and develop and they understand developmental milestones from birth through 21 years. They recognize that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, ethical, and physical domains. Candidates further understand that development in different domains occurs at different times for individuals in different contexts. Candidates use this knowledge and understanding to plan, implement, and assess developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences and environments.

Candidates know and understand how learning occurs, how individuals construct knowledge, acquire skills, and develop disciplined thinking processes. Candidates further understand that each individual's cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, ethical, and physical development influences learning. They also understand how development in any one domain may affect performance in others and how all together they influence learning. Candidates use this knowledge and understanding to make instructional decisions that build on individuals' strengths and needs and to select and use instructional strategies that promote learning.

From a framework of typical growth, development, and learning, candidates understand how different exceptionalities can interact with development and learning. They create developmentally appropriate learning experiences relevant to the learners' strengths and needs to provide meaningful and

individualized learning experiences for children and youth with exceptionalities. Candidates understand that exceptionalities can interact with multiple domains of human development to influence an individual's learning in school, community, and throughout life. Candidates use this understanding to effectively apply strategies based on developmental principles so that individuals will be increasingly engaged, thus improving their learning outcomes.

*2.2 Candidates use their knowledge and understanding of multiple influences on individual development and learning to plan and implement learning experiences and environments.*

Candidates understand the multiple social, cultural, biological, physical, and psychological influences that affect learning and development when working with individuals with exceptionalities. They know that diversity is inclusive of both individual differences such as personality, ability, interests, health, and life experiences, and group differences, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, nationality, language, religion, political affiliation, and socio-economic background. Individual learning differences are manifested in areas such as differing rates of learning, motivation, attention, complexity of reasoning, persistence, foundational knowledge and skills, and preferred learning and response modes. Furthermore, candidates understand that individuals bring assets for learning based on their unique experiences, abilities, talents, prior learning, and peer and social group interactions, as well as home language, family, culture, and community values. Candidates know that development and learning occur within the contexts of specific families, languages, cultures, and communities as well as within a larger societal context.

Candidates use their knowledge and understanding of diverse factors that influence individual learning and development to plan and implement individualized instruction, which includes attention to an individual's personal, family, and community experiences as well as cultural norms. Candidates know and understand how home language, family, and culture interact with exceptionalities to influence the individual's academic and social abilities, attitudes, values, interests, and career and postsecondary options. Candidates not only understand these influences, but they structure and implement instruction that reflects the diversity of the learner and make informed decisions about content, which includes attention to the learner's personal, family, and community experiences as well as cultural norms. Furthermore, candidates reflect on and understand how their own experiences, family, race, gender, and culture biases may influence their instructional decisions and their relationships and interactions with learners and their families.

Candidates understand that the beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures can influence relationships among and between individuals, their families, and the school community. By understanding these influences, candidates structure and implement instruction that reflects the diversity of the learner with exceptionalities and make informed decisions about content, which includes attention to the learner’s personal, family, and community experiences. Candidates use understanding of the interaction of an individual’s areas of exceptionality, home language, family, culture, and other significant contextual factors to plan and implement instruction and learning environments that address the learner’s strengths and needs. Candidates also use knowledge of families, culture, and community when involving paraprofessionals, general educators, specialists, resources, and supports to create and incorporate strategies for making content and instruction accessible and challenging for individuals with exceptionalities.

Additionally, candidates ensure inclusive learning environments that enable individuals with exceptionalities and diverse backgrounds to meet high standards. Candidates design environments, curriculum, and instruction in ways that are accessible to all learners and that use each learner’s strengths to promote growth.

### Standard 3: Demonstrating Subject Matter Content and Specialized Curricular Knowledge

Candidates apply their understanding of the academic subject matter content of the general curriculum and specialized curricula to inform their programmatic and instructional decisions for learners with exceptionalities.

- 3.1 Candidates apply their understanding of academic subject matter content of the general curriculum to inform their programmatic and instructional decisions for individuals with exceptionalities.
- 3.2 Candidates augment the general education curriculum to address skills and strategies that students with disabilities need to access the core curriculum and function successfully within a variety of contexts as well as the continuum of placement options to assure specially designed instruction is developed and implemented to achieve mastery of curricular standards and individualized goals and objectives.

#### *Supporting Explanations*

- 3.1 *Candidates apply their understanding of academic subject matter content of the general curriculum to inform their programmatic and instructional decisions for individuals with exceptionalities.*

The phrase *academic subject matter* means the content of the general curriculum, including mathematics, reading, English/language arts, science, social studies, and the arts. It does not necessarily include the additional specialized knowledge and skills that special educators must possess in areas such as reading, writing, and mathematics (CEC's Policy Paper on Academic Subject Matter Content for of the General Curriculum and Special Educators, n.d.). Candidates have foundational understanding of the generalized content standards appropriate to the developmental and instructional levels of the students served. Candidates demonstrate an understanding of the applicable national and state/regional academic content standards and assessments, especially those focused on literacy and mathematics. With an understanding of individual strengths, needs, and future goals derived from comprehensive assessments, candidates identify academic content standards necessary for students with exceptionalities to progress in their individualized programs towards appropriate completion requirements. Candidates develop individualized goals and objectives aligned as appropriate with general education curriculum and standards to meet the needs of each learner with exceptional needs. Candidates also provide modified access to subject-specific instructional materials to address individual learner needs in different contexts, including specialized and general classrooms. Candidates possess solid foundational understanding of the general content area curricula (i.e., mathematics, reading, English/language arts, science, social studies, and the arts), sufficient to collaborate with general educators in teaching or co-teaching academic subject matter content of the general curriculum to students with exceptional learning needs across a wide range of performance levels. They design appropriate learning and performance accommodations and modifications for students with exceptional learning needs in academic subject matter content of the general curriculum. When a candidate assumes sole responsibility for teaching an academic subject matter class at the secondary level, the candidate should have solid foundational subject matter content knowledge to assure the students can meet state curriculum standards. Candidates will design appropriate learning and performance accommodations and modifications for individuals with exceptional learning needs in academic subject matter content of the general curriculum to address the specific goals and objectives of the individual's learning plan. In addition, candidates will be knowledgeable of and have the skills to employ instructional and assistive technology, as appropriate, to meet the learning goals and curricular standards for students with exceptional learning needs in academic subject matter content of the general curricula.

*3.2 Candidates augment the general education curriculum to address skills and strategies that students with disabilities need to access the core curriculum and function successfully within a variety of contexts as well as the continuum of placement options to assure specially designed instruction is*

*developed and implemented to achieve mastery of curricular standards and individualized goals and objectives.*

Candidates apply their knowledge of individual learner characteristics and specialized curricula to make accommodations, modify, and/or adapt the curricula across contexts, including the community, home, and school. Candidates understand that individual learners may require more specialized curricula than is appropriate for typically developing peers. With an understanding of individual strengths, needs, and future goals derived from comprehensive assessments, candidates identify the appropriate specialized curricula and develop individualized goals and objectives aligned as appropriate with that curricula to meet the needs of each learner. Candidates also provide modified access to instructional materials to address individual learner needs in different contexts, while considering the continuum of placement options. Candidates design appropriate learning and performance accommodations and modifications for individuals with exceptional learning needs in specialized curricula. Candidates are familiar with specialized curricula which may include curriculum for social skills, living skills, transition, orientation and mobility, social-emotional learning, independence, and self-advocacy. They use this knowledge to design effective and universally accessible environments and learning experiences. Candidates recognize barriers to accessibility and acceptance of individuals with exceptionalities and plan for ways to address those barriers through the implementation of specialized curricula. Candidates design learning environments that adhere to universal design principles and that facilitate active participation, self-advocacy, and independence of individuals with exceptionalities in a variety of group and individual learning activities. In addition, candidates are knowledgeable of and implement appropriate instructional, adaptive, and assistive technology, including augmentative and alternative communication devices as well as technologies to meet the learning goals of students with exceptionalities using specialized curricula.

#### Standard 4: Using Assessment to Understand the Learner and the Learning Environment for Data-based Decision Making

Candidates assess students' learning, behavior, and the classroom environment in order to evaluate and support classroom and school-based problem-solving systems of intervention and instruction. Candidates evaluate students to determine their strengths and needs, contribute to students' eligibility determination, communicate students' progress, inform short and long-term instructional planning, and make ongoing adjustments to instruction using technology as appropriate.

- 4.1 Candidates collaboratively develop, select, administer, analyze, and interpret multiple measures of student learning, behavior, and the classroom

environment to evaluate and support classroom and school-based systems of intervention for students with and without exceptionalities.

4.2 Candidates develop, select, administer, and interpret multiple, formal and informal, culturally and linguistically appropriate measures and procedures that are valid and reliable to contribute to eligibility determination for special education services.

4.3 Candidates assess, collaboratively analyze, interpret, and communicate students' progress toward measurable outcomes using technology as appropriate, to inform both short- and long-term planning, and make ongoing adjustments to instruction.

### Supporting Explanations

*4.1 Candidates collaboratively develop, select, administer, analyze, and interpret multiple measures of student learning, behavior, and the classroom environment to evaluate and support classroom and school-based systems of intervention for students with and without exceptionalities.*

Candidates' skill in progress monitoring, explicit and targeted instruction, data-based decision making, and supporting students with varying needs allows them to provide, evaluate, monitor, and improve evidence-based instruction and interventions for all students. To this end, candidates actively and collaboratively engage with educational professionals and families in ongoing, data-based decision making to evaluate and improve school and classroom environments, instruction, and intervention across varying levels of support, as for example, in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). Candidates may participate as members of a school's site-based support team – collaborating with administrators, school psychologists, school counselors, classroom teachers, teacher leaders, school social workers, and others – to ensure the academic and social emotional learning needs are met in a holistic manner. As members of these teams, candidates individually and collaboratively, as appropriate, develop, select, and administer multiple measures. They may also be members of student problem-solving teams using evaluation data for the purpose of supporting individual and/or groups of students with and without exceptionalities. Candidates may collaboratively contribute as members of school-based teams in the selection, analysis, and use of data from a variety of sources (e.g., universal screening, healthy school surveys, family surveys, office referrals, state language and achievement reports, community resources) to inform building-level decisions around tiered behavioral and instructional practices such as whole class accommodations, small group intervention, and individualized support. As part of this process, candidates participate in evaluating the effectiveness of existing school resources, programs, supports, and initiatives to improve school climate,

professional development opportunities, academic, social/emotional, linguistic, and behavioral supports for all students. As members of a school's problem-solving team, candidates support individual students without exceptionalities, who may experience difficulty in the classroom and at school by collaborating with educational professionals and families through the problem-solving process (problem identification, problem analysis, plan development, plan implementation, and plan evaluation). To this end, candidates jointly analyze multiple measures to document and critically examine school, classroom, curricular, instructional, home, student, and other factors that may contribute to a student's learning and behavioral strengths and needs. Candidates use these data to make collaborative decisions to improve outcomes for students placed at risk for learning and behavior difficulties.

*4.2 Candidates develop, select, administer, and interpret multiple, formal and informal, culturally and linguistically appropriate measures and procedures that are valid and reliable to contribute to eligibility determination for special education services.*

Candidates serve as part of larger, multidisciplinary teams when evaluating students for special education services. Candidates contribute to eligibility determination by developing, selecting, and administering multiple assessments to evaluate students' academic and behavioral strengths and needs. Candidates develop informal assessments such as observation tools or family interviews to determine how students access and demonstrate knowledge in the core curriculum and other contextually relevant curricula such as adaptive behavior skills. Candidates select and administer culturally and linguistically appropriate formal assessments that systematically measure how well a student has mastered learning outcomes. They understand constructs of validity and reliability and their impact on assessment selection and interpretation of results. Candidates use this knowledge as they work collaboratively with teams to administer assessments and interpret results in contributing to eligibility determination. Throughout this process, candidates understand how students' cultural and linguistic diversity and family backgrounds impact the selection, administration, and interpretation of assessment results. Candidates understand how these results contribute to eligibility determination, understand the limitations of formal and informal assessments such as biases and test constructs, and consider contextual factors including socioeconomic status, family structure, and previous instruction that may influence accurate interpretation based on individual student characteristics, including race, gender, gender identity, and cultural identity. Candidates collaborate with professionals with additional expertise as needed, for example, school psychologists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, vision specialists, hearing specialists,

assistive technology specialists, English as a Second Language specialists, Bilingual specialists, social workers, or translators, to ensure an appropriate and valid assessment process.

*4.3 Candidates assess, collaboratively analyze, interpret, and communicate students' progress toward measurable outcomes using technology as appropriate, to inform both short- and long-term planning, and make ongoing adjustments to instruction.*

Candidates engage in ongoing data-based decision making to inform immediate classroom practices, short-term goal development, and long-term planning using data regarding students' performance. These multi-sourced formative assessments should delineate individual student's strengths and academic and/or behavioral needs related to curricular standards and goals, and be used to develop, implement, evaluate, and revise instruction and interventions as needed. Candidates collect formative assessment data by regularly monitoring students' performance to ensure appropriate progress towards goal attainment.

Candidates work with educational professionals (e.g., general educators, speech-language pathologists, assistive technology specialists, full Individualized Education Program teams) to conduct ongoing formal and informal assessments that are individualized to meet the needs of each student. They work collaboratively with teams to analyze and interpret results of multiple assessments across settings for each student. Candidates use results to determine if students are making adequate progress toward measurable outcomes.

Candidates are responsible for regularly monitoring students' ongoing progress as a critical component of the instruction and assessment cycle, inclusive of the planning, teaching, assessing, and analyzing. Conducting short-term assessment may involve daily, weekly, monthly, and/or other periodic evaluation of students' immediate learning needs and goals. Candidates use brief, formal or informal, curriculum-based (e.g., oral reading fluency), performance-based, criterion-referenced measures, and/or observational tools or methods (e.g., progress logs, interval recording, frequency counts) appropriate for the student. They use these data regularly to observe, document, synthesize, and analyze a student's performance to identify consistencies and/or inconsistencies, for purposefully guiding immediate instructional changes (e.g., increase, adjust, decrease targeted instruction) and supportive practices as needed.

Candidates support students in understanding their own assessment data and using those results to self-monitor and self-regulate. Candidates document students' performance outcomes and corresponding adjustments to instruction, for example, graphing instructional changes, and they use this documentation to provide detailed, task-specific feedback to learners

about their achievement and engagement. Candidates regularly communicate progress and adjustments to instruction with family members and other educational professionals to support individual student's progress towards short-term and long-term outcomes.

Candidates collaboratively use assessment results to inform students' long-term planning (e.g., Individualized Education Program development). As a member of a multidisciplinary team, candidates' evaluation of students' ongoing and annual academic, behavioral, social/emotional, and/or linguistic strengths and needs directly informs annual goal development and the type, frequency, location, and duration of students' special education services. Evaluation for long-term planning requires candidates to select formal and informal measures and methods that are culturally and linguistically appropriate and technically sound. Candidates consider sufficient opportunities for student learning and recognize the need for joint interpretation of data across settings and evaluations in collaboration with the multidisciplinary team.

Conducting ongoing assessment and progress monitoring requires candidates to use technology/ assistive technology for specific purposes, including test administration, testing accommodations, data storage, creating digital documents and logs, and charting and graphing results to identify patterns in learning and/or behavior. Candidates may use screening software programs as appropriate, considering ongoing advancements in technology.

#### Standard 5: Supporting Learning Using Effective Instruction

Candidates use knowledge of individuals' development, learning needs, and assessment data to inform decisions about effective instruction. Candidates use explicit instructional strategies and employ strategies to promote active engagement and increased motivation to individualize instruction to support each individual. Candidates use whole group instruction, flexible grouping, small group instruction, and individual instruction. Candidates teach individuals to use meta-/cognitive strategies to support and self-regulate learning.

- 5.1 Candidates use findings from multiple assessments, including student self-assessment, that are responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity and specialized as needed, to identify what students know and are able to do. They then interpret the assessment data to appropriately plan and guide instruction to meet rigorous academic and non-academic content and goals for each individual.
- 5.2 Candidates use effective strategies to promote active student engagement, increase student motivation, increase opportunities to respond, and enhance self-regulation of student learning.

- 5.3 Candidates use explicit, systematic instruction to teach content, strategies, and skills to make clear what a learner needs to do or think about while learning.
- 5.4 Candidates use flexible grouping to support the use of instruction that is adapted to meet the needs of each individual and group.
- 5.5 Candidates organize and manage focused, intensive small group instruction to meet the learning needs of each individual.
- 5.6 Candidates plan and deliver specialized, individualized instruction that is used to meet the learning needs of each individual.

### Supporting Explanations

- 5.1 Candidates use findings from multiple assessments, including student self-assessment, that are responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity and specialized as needed, to identify what students know and are able to do. They then interpret the assessment data to appropriately plan and guide instruction to meet rigorous academic and non-academic content and goals for each individual.*

Candidates effectively utilize an assessment-instruction cycle to examine, adjust, guide, and improve instruction by (1) interpreting formative assessments, (2) confirming the interpretation, (3) generating and selecting alternative instructional approaches, (4) considering and implementing instructional adaptations, (5) evaluating learning and engagement, and (6) providing feedback to students by communicating levels of proficiency and accomplishment.

Candidates specially design instruction for individual students based on a variety of formative and summative assessments (e.g., screening, identification, progress monitoring, curriculum based) and technologies. See Standard 4 for appropriate selection, administration, and interpretation of assessments to inform instruction. Candidates also identify learning goals and plan instruction aligned to academic, social, and behavioral standards as well as other appropriate academic and non-academic content to meet the needs of individual learners based on assessment data.

- 5.2 Candidates use effective strategies to promote active student engagement, increase student motivation, increase opportunities to respond, and enhance self-regulation of student learning.*

Candidates use effective strategies that promote active student engagement, nurture intrinsic motivation for learning, offer frequent, equitable opportunities to respond, and guide self-regulation. Active student engagement strategies, including effective questioning and guided discussion, are purposefully selected and incorporated into instruction to reflect students' learning profiles and activate prior knowledge. Candidates

use various strategies to maintain engagement and instructional focus across different group configurations (see component 5.4). Candidates explicitly teach, model, and reinforce self-regulation behaviors (e.g., turn-taking, assignment completion) for students in a variety of ways and settings. Digital technology is infused in instruction (e.g., use of interactive white boards, web-based documents, assistive and augmentative communication) and assessment (e.g., real-time response systems) to assist in and enhance learning and engagement based on individual student need and interest.

*5.3 Candidates use explicit, systematic instruction to teach content, strategies, and skills to make clear what a learner needs to do or think about while learning.*

Candidates use explicit, systematic instruction to focus on individualized and important academic and non-academic content and make clear what each student needs to do or think about when learning. They make content explicit by providing a clear statement regarding the purpose for learning the content, strategy, or skill, and making explicit connections to existing knowledge and skills. Candidates also provide a clear explanation of the content, strategy, or skill to be learned, focus instruction on the steps that lead to learning, and use scaffolds and feedback to guide the learner. The candidate is able to demonstrate, think aloud, and describe relationships among content and related concepts while using clear and precise language. This includes providing step-by-step demonstrations that model the content, skill, or strategy, and providing a range of examples and non-examples to establish boundaries regarding when and how a learner should apply the content, strategy, or skill. When using explicit instruction, candidates should logically sequence information within lessons, beginning with a statement of purpose and advance organizer. Candidates should then provide clear models and explanations of content, using a method such as “I do, we do, you do.” Using this method in math, for example, the candidate would initially provide a model for solving a math problem while ‘thinking aloud’ to describe steps used to solve the problem. The candidate then guides students through solving the problem with scaffolding and feedback. Students are then provided opportunities for independent practice with feedback from the candidate. Explicit instruction is used to increase content coverage and enhance engagement and opportunities to learn content. Explicit instruction facilitates learning to think and act in ways that accelerate student learning and enable greater academic success. Candidates use students’ cultural and linguistic diversity as an asset integrated into learning for all students. Candidates create opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skill using different modalities and are provided with feedback (e.g., immediate discussion, written notes).

*5.4 Candidates use flexible grouping to support the use of instruction that is adapted to meet the needs of each individual and group.*

Candidates understand that the purpose of small group instruction is to tailor teaching to meet the learning needs of each student by providing more focused, intensive instruction. Candidates reference learning goals, appropriate standards, and student learning profiles to configure groups effectively. This instruction is provided to heterogeneous and/or homogeneous groups. Group assignments are determined by factors such as knowledge of learner's backgrounds and data from formal and informal assessments, and are fluid depending on the content being addressed and student needs. Candidates hold learners accountable for both collective and individual learning and provide constructive feedback and scaffolding to support productive learning. Candidates regularly monitor each learner's progress and adjust their groupings and instruction accordingly. Candidates understand that groups are used for many purposes and take many forms to accommodate learning differences and promote in-depth academic learning. For example, candidates may use heterogeneous groups to allow students to participate in grade level conversations around content. When this is done, a candidate must define the purpose of the group and criteria used for heterogeneous grouping. Candidates identify and use an appropriate structure for the group (e.g., cooperative learning using a strategy such as think-pair-share, numbered heads together, jigsaw), prepare students to use the structure, and ensure that students equitably participate in the groups. An appropriate structure should support positive interdependence within groups, and use materials and directives that promote effective, efficient, and equitable opportunities for student participation. Candidates should monitor group interactions and student learning and hold students accountable individually and collectively for learning within the group. Within heterogeneous groupings, students learn to work collaboratively and to rely on each other to successfully complete the learning task. Candidates may set up homogenous groups to support common learner interests, preferences, or skill needs. Additionally, candidates can structure homogenous groups to provide more focused intensive instruction as discussed in Standard 5.6.

*5.5 Candidates organize and manage focused, intensive small group instruction to meet the learning needs of each individual.*

Candidates use homogeneous groups to provide focused, intensive instruction for children who have common instructional needs and configure these groups to address high priority short-term content goals and objectives. Candidates explicitly define the purpose for homogenous groups, criteria used for grouping, and the time per day that learners will participate in these groups. The size of homogeneous groups is appropriate based on the stated purpose of the group and designed to provide intensive, effective

instruction that accelerates achievement. Reliable and valid assessment data that directly measure students' skills related to the content being taught is used as a primary criterion to determine student groupings. Each learner's progress in learning content is frequently monitored and instruction is adjusted accordingly. Candidates use explicit instruction, appropriate feedback, and guided practice during small group instruction, and use strategies to maximize each learner's opportunities to respond. Candidates understand that learner benefits from small group instruction include effective and efficient learning, learning to take ownership, developing self-direction, and becoming actively engaged in the learning process.

*5.6 Candidates plan and deliver specialized, individualized instruction that is used to meet the learning needs of each individual.*

Candidates understand that the purpose of specialized, individualized instruction is to provide more intensive and different instruction to learners individually or in small groups whose needs are not sufficiently met in whole or small groups. Learners might need more practice with a skill, further clarification of a concept, or a more enriching learning opportunity. Candidates intentionally design individualized instruction based on informal and formal assessments and the learner profile by matching instructional intensity and/or intervention to build on student's strengths and accommodate needs. Candidates employ appropriate instructional strategies (e.g., structured tutoring, modeling, evidence-based practices, data-based individualization inquiry-based learning) to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of the learner. Candidates support and scaffold instruction through explicit instruction, modeling, and guided practice to increase student success and acquisition of specific learning outcomes. In addition, candidates provide specific feedback to students during instruction, especially during guided practice to support learning and mastery. Candidates should promote the application or generalization of knowledge and skills that are mastered into other content areas and/or other educational settings by the individual students.

**Standard 6: Supporting Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Growth**

Candidates create and contribute to safe, respectful, and productive learning environments for individuals with exceptionalities through the use of effective routines and procedures and use a range of preventive and responsive practices to support social, emotional and educational well-being. They follow ethical and legal guidelines and work collaboratively with families and other professionals to conduct behavioral assessments for intervention and program development.

- 6.1 Candidates use effective routines and procedures to create safe, caring, respectful, and productive learning environments for individuals with exceptionalities.
- 6.2 Candidates use a range of preventive and responsive practices documented as effective to support individuals' social, emotional, and educational well-being.
- 6.3 Candidates systematically use data from a variety of sources to identify the purpose or function served by problem behavior to plan, implement, and evaluate behavioral interventions and social skills programs, including generalization to other environments.

#### *Supporting Explanations*

- 6.1 *Candidates use effective routines and procedures to create safe, caring, respectful, and productive learning environments for individuals with exceptionalities.*

Candidates structure the environment to maximize success and safety for all students. They build positive, caring relationships by taking initiative to learn students' strengths, interests, and needs and by responding to them in authentic and respectful ways. Candidates actively engage with students' families to deepen their understanding of students' diverse cultures, backgrounds, and traditions. Through their words and actions, candidates create welcoming and inclusive classroom communities. Candidates understand the importance of preventive approaches to strengthen desired performance and address challenging behavior. They arrange physical space in their classrooms to promote learning and positive peer interactions. Candidates plan and implement positive behavioral interventions and supports. They apply proactive practices within their own classes and with individual students, and may actively participate in school-wide, multi-tiered systems, such as a Schoolwide Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) framework. Candidates state clear behavioral expectations and provide examples of desired behaviors in different settings. They explicitly teach students routines and procedures for recurring activities. For example, candidates may teach routines for entering the classroom, working in cooperative groups, or conducting science labs. Explicit instruction for behavioral routines parallels that used for academic skills, as it includes explanations, modeling, guided practice, corrective feedback, independent practice, and acknowledgements/reinforcement. Candidates collect and use data to monitor student behavior and the effectiveness of their management plans. Candidates also help students develop skills for self-monitoring their behavior and their progress toward identified goals. Candidates collaborate with teachers and other professionals, families, or caregivers in a team approach to address individual needs consistently across school, home, and

community settings. They are respectful of the varied aspects of diversity and recognize how intersectionality of gender, racial, cultural, disability, and other identities may make individuals and/or groups more vulnerable to discriminatory practices, particularly with regard to student behavior and discipline. Candidates take active measures to prevent bullying, maltreatment, violence, and sexual assault, and they report any instances through appropriate channels.

*6.2 Candidates use a range of preventive and responsive practices documented as effective to support individuals' social, emotional, and educational well-being.*

Candidates recognize how antecedent circumstances and events influence student performance and they create conditions to promote desired behaviors. They consider the students' surroundings, strengths, areas of need, communication and language abilities, and task demands as well as other triggers that could lead to potential challenges. Candidates create an environment where expectations are clear and predictable, where instructional routines and classroom procedures are used to support students and keep them actively engaged during instruction or other classroom activities. Candidates employ effective, proactive, and preventive strategies to manage challenging behaviors at the school-wide, classroom, and individual student levels. They use preventive approaches that focus on positive procedures, including prompting and cueing, positive reinforcement, nonverbal communication, and other surface management strategies such as proximity control and redirection. Candidates also recognize the impact of motivation, setting, teacher and peer interactions, and other events on student behavior. They provide frequent, positive, specific, and constructive feedback to influence student learning and behavior. Candidates consider a hierarchy of procedural alternatives when responding to challenging behavior or when teaching new social, emotional, or academic skills. They may begin with strategies such as differential reinforcement that teach alternate or more appropriate replacement behaviors, followed by extinction where the influencing reinforcer is withheld, then consequences such as penalty where access to preferred activities or desired items are removed, and then punishment as a last resort where students may receive an aversive consequence such as detention, extra work, repairing damage they committed, or having to overcorrect. Candidates promote generalization and maintenance of learned skills across time and settings. They teach specific self-regulation strategies, such as self-monitoring and goal setting, aimed at meeting students' academic, behavioral, or social needs. Candidates understand the influences of gender, race, culture, disability, familial, and other factors on student behavior and are conscious of biases in interventions and responses to student behavior. They are aware of issues such as disproportionate rates of suspension or expulsion and overuse of

procedures such as seclusion or restraint and consider these issues when using preventive and responsive practices. They conform to legal and ethical guidelines for all behavioral interventions.

*6.3 Candidates systematically use data from a variety of sources to identify the purpose or function served by problem behavior to plan, implement, and evaluate behavioral interventions and social skills programs, including generalization to other environments.*

Candidates use direct and indirect methods, as well as formal and informal assessment measures to determine purpose, motivation and/or function of student behavior. They may use tools such as behavioral rating scales or checklists to formally assess behavior. Candidates may use anecdotal records, interviews, or direct observation to collect other types of information on students' strengths and areas of need. Data sources might include direct observation with a clearly defined data collection method, such as frequency/event recording, rate recording, interval recording, or duration recording. Data from these multiple sources are compiled and used to identify the purpose or function served by the target behavior.

Candidates use multiple sources of data to identify or develop effective practices for class-wide or individual level interventions and to evaluate effects of behavioral interventions. Such interventions include, but are not limited to, social skills instruction, peer mediation, self-monitoring, and self-determination strategies. Candidates explicitly teach desired behaviors using modeling and scaffolding. They utilize technology as appropriate to assist in measurement, tracking, and instructional decision making related to student behavior. This technology may include, for example, web-based graphing tools or Excel software. Candidates may also collect data through the use of reinforcer surveys, via paper-and-pencil or electronic methods.

Candidates purposefully program for generalization of social, emotional, and behavioral skills to relevant environments. They follow legal and ethical guidelines when working with families, teachers, and other professionals to develop, implement, and monitor plans for generalization.

#### Standard 7: Collaborating with Team Members

Candidates apply team processes and communication strategies to collaborate in a culturally responsive manner with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals within the school, other educational settings, and the community to plan programs and access services for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

*7.1 Candidates utilize communication, group facilitation, and problem-solving strategies in a culturally responsive manner to lead effective meetings and share expertise and knowledge to build team capacity and jointly address students' instructional and behavioral needs.*

- 7.2 Candidates collaborate, communicate, and coordinate with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals within the educational setting to assess, plan, and implement effective programs and services that promote progress toward measurable outcomes for individuals with and without exceptionalities and their families.
- 7.3 Candidates collaborate, communicate, and coordinate with professionals and agencies within the community to identify and access services, resources, and supports to meet the identified needs of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.
- 7.4 Candidates work with and mentor paraprofessionals in the paraprofessionals' role of supporting the education of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

### Supporting Explanations

- 7.1 *Candidates utilize communication, group facilitation, and problem-solving strategies in a culturally responsive manner to lead effective meetings and share expertise and knowledge to build team capacity and jointly address students' instructional and behavioral needs.*

Candidates facilitate and participate in a range of meetings with families and other professionals, such as annual planning meetings, transition meetings, and ongoing collaborative meetings essential to instructional planning, meeting the student's behavioral needs and progress monitoring. As a facilitator, they use effective strategies to develop a meeting agenda, allocate time to meet the goals of the agenda, and use effective verbal and nonverbal communication strategies to lead in ways that are culturally responsive (e.g. understanding and communicating respect for cultural values, social expectations, and home language). They develop capacity in their team members by encouraging the sharing of multiple perspectives, soliciting feedback, and responding in a supportive manner to build consensus for the identification of student learning and behavioral needs and the development, implementation and monitoring of practices to meet students' individual needs.

- 7.2 *Candidates collaborate, communicate, and coordinate with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals within the educational setting to assess, plan, and implement effective programs and services that promote progress toward measurable outcomes for individuals with and without exceptionalities and their families.*

Candidates recognize that families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals possess diverse knowledge about, and expertise in, working

with individuals with exceptionalities. Their active participation as team members is thus essential. Effective teamwork requires ongoing information sharing, collaboration, and coordination with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals, including related service providers (e.g., physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, school psychologists), utilizing technology as appropriate to effectively assess and communicate assessment information in clear and understandable terms and plan for and implement effective individualized educational and transition programs and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

Candidates rely on their knowledge of human growth and development, multiple influences on development, individual differences and diversity, as well as information accessed from multiple sources such as other professionals, research, professional literature, and policies to actively share with families and colleagues to develop individual education, transition, and behavioral plans. Candidates determine what information is most relevant and can clearly articulate that information in a variety of modalities in order to advance the collaborative process.

Candidates understand that home, community, and other linguistic and cultural experiences play a critical role in an individual's growth and development. Candidates actively seek information from and about families and take primary responsibility for maintaining respectful, ongoing, open communication to jointly identify and meet learning goals that are informed by assessment data.

Candidates take the primary responsibility for mentoring and supervising paraprofessionals. They understand the importance of working with paraprofessionals and their potential roles based on the needs of individual learners and the educational setting. Candidates seek information from, and collaborate with, paraprofessionals to identify specific responsibilities and skills the paraprofessional needs for their roles, and determine professional development needs.

Candidates understand the reciprocal relationship with general educators for effective and inclusive practices. Candidates collaboratively assume different roles based on the continuum of services required to most effectively meet the needs of individuals with exceptionalities such as consultant, school wide problem-solving team member, co-teacher, resource teacher, lead teacher, or itinerant teacher.

*7.3 Candidates collaborate, communicate, and coordinate with professionals and agencies within the community to identify and access services, resources, and supports to meet the identified needs of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.*

Candidates are knowledgeable about a variety of national, state/provincial, and local resources such as professional associations, technology, support groups, recreational opportunities, social and health services, and post-secondary vocational programs that support individuals with exceptionalities and their families and how these resources and supports can be accessed. Candidates understand the importance of and need to communicate, coordinate, and collaborate on an ongoing basis with related services and other professionals and agencies within the community to remain current with what resources are available and how they can be accessed and used by individuals with exceptionalities and their families. Candidates assist as a team member to develop individual education programs, transition plans, and behavioral support plans that include relevant resources and agencies. They communicate with families in a variety of ways (e.g., email, phone calls, parent teacher conferences, home visits, annual reviews) about the use of these resources and their potential outcomes.

*7.4 Candidates work with and mentor paraprofessionals in the paraprofessionals' role of supporting the education of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.*

Candidates understand the importance of working with paraprofessionals and the potential roles of the paraprofessional based on the needs of individual learners and the educational setting. Candidates also understand and apply with supervision the various roles that they must assume in order to work effectively with paraprofessionals. For example, they understand the need to seek information from paraprofessionals in order to identify specific responsibilities and skills the paraprofessional needs for their roles. Candidates, at the direction of supervising teachers, may monitor, guide, or mentor paraprofessionals to ensure high fidelity of implementation for evidence-based practices and interventions. With scaffolding and collaborative support from supervising teachers, candidates may plan for and coordinate the activities of paraprofessionals in order to implement individualized plans, such as IEPs, behavioral intervention plans, and transition plans.