

**Special Education Policy  
Recommendations for the  
88th Texas Legislative  
Session**

**January 2023**

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## About the Continuing Advisory Committee (CAC) for Special Education

The CAC consists of 17 members from around the state who fulfill specific roles as outlined in the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and state law. A majority of the members of the CAC must be individuals with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities. Members of the committee are appointed for staggered four-year terms, with the terms of eight or nine members expiring on February 1 of each odd-numbered year. Members are appointed by the Governor.

### Members

**Aaron Bangor, Ph.D.** of Austin is Sr. Lead User Experience Researcher at AT&T. He is a member of the International Association of Accessibility Professionals, Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, and is board certified as both a Human Factors Professional and an Accessibility Professional. Additionally, he is the chair of Disability:IN Central Texas, past chair of the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities and has served as a technical and policy expert for accessibility and disability issues with the Federal Communications Commission and Council of State Governments, and is active in national and international standards. Bangor received a Bachelor of Arts in Economics, Bachelor of Science in Industrial and Systems Engineering, a Master of Science, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Human Factors Engineering from Virginia Tech.

**Agatha Thibodeaux** of Katy is the current chair of the Continuing Advisory Committee for Special Education and member of the Advisory Council on Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities Postsecondary Education and was a member of the Special Education Allotment Advisory Committee. A proud mother of two boys, her youngest having Autism has propelled her to be an advocate for the Special Needs community. Thibodeaux received a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing and Advertising from Metropolitan State University in Denver.

**Amy Litzinger** of Austin is a public policy specialist with Texas Parent to Parent. She is a member of the Health and Human Services Commission Intellectual and Developmental Disability (IDD) System Redesign Advisory Committee, and a former member of the Texas Children's Policy Council, and the Texas ABLE Act Advisory Committee. Additionally, she is the former membership chairman and governing board member of National Youth Leadership Network and former executive committee vice chairman and policy workgroup chairman of The National Council on Disability Youth Advisory Council. Litzinger received a Bachelor of Arts in English and political science from Southwestern University and a Master of Arts in theological studies from Austin Seminary.

**April Estrada, Ed.D.** of Wylie is the Director of Special Populations for Region 10 ESC. She is a member of Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education, the Council of Women School Executives, and the Texas Association of School

Administrators. Additionally, she volunteers for the special needs ministry at First Baptist Church of Wylie and is an adjunct professor at Dallas Baptist University. Estrada received a Bachelor of Science from the University of North Texas and a Master and Doctorate in Education Leadership from Dallas Baptist University.

**Barbie Ezell** of Portland is Director of Special Education for Gregory-Portland ISD. She is a member and House of Delegates Representative for Region 2 of the Texas Council for Administrators of Special Education. Additionally, she is a member of the First United Methodist Church of Portland and is a Zeta Tau Alpha alumna. Ezell received a Bachelor of Science from Southwest Texas State University and a Master of Science from Corpus Christi State University, with certifications as a Counselor and Special Education Counselor. She also obtained additional certifications as an Educational Diagnostician and Administrator from Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi.

**Claudia Cavazos** of Pearland is the Principal at St. Christopher Catholic School in Houston. She is a member of Kappa Delta Pi and the National Catholic Educational Association. Additionally, Cavazos serves as a Eucharistic Minister and Sacramental Teacher at St. Christopher Catholic Church and School. She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Houston in Interdisciplinary Studies with a Specialization in Bilingual Education and a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of St. Thomas in Houston.

**Diana Nelson** of Martindale is the Special Education Coordinator for the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. She is a member of the Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education. Nelson received a bachelor's degree and master's degree from The University of Texas – Pan American with Texas Educator Certificates in Secondary Biology, Secondary English and Educational Diagnostician PK-12.

**Jen Stratton** of Austin is CEO of StratSpeak, LLC, a strategic communication and speech consulting firm. As the mother of a uniquely disabled daughter, she has spent years advocating for the special needs population at the state and local levels. Stratton received a Bachelor of Arts in political science and a minor in speech communication from McKendree University.

**Jo Ann Garza Wofford** of New Braunfels is a vice president and senior fiduciary administrator for Wells Fargo Investment Fiduciary Services. She is a member of the New Braunfels Parent Teacher Association and the New Braunfels Independent School District's Special Education Parent Advisory Committee, a group which she was instrumental in creating. She is also a former member of New Braunfels Parent Advisory Committee and the District Education Improvement Committee. Garza Wofford received a Bachelor of Business Administration in finance from The University of Texas at Austin.

**Laura Villarreal** of Universal City is a program specialist for transition services for the Texas Workforce Commission and is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. Villarreal received a Bachelor of Arts in sociology from Purdue University and a

Master of Education from The University of Texas (UT) at Austin and is currently pursuing a degree in behavioral therapy from UT at San Antonio.

**Marissa Esquivel** of Beeville is the Director of Special Education Programs at St. Mary's Academy Charter School. She is a member of the Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education and the Council of Exceptional Children. Esquivel received a Bachelor of Liberal Arts from The University of Texas at Brownsville and a Master of Special Education from The University of Texas Permian Basin and is currently pursuing a diagnostician certification.

**Shemica S. Allen** of Allen is CEO and founder of Personalized Learning Solutions, LLC. She is a former educator with 15 years of teaching and administration experience working with students with disabilities and their parents and guardians. She is certified to teach Special Education and Physical Education and also received her Principal certification in 2010. She is also a member of the National Association for Professional Special Education Advocates. Allen received a Bachelor of Science in education from the University of Arkansas and a Master of Science in kinesiology with a specialization in adapted physical activity from Texas Christian University.

**Sheryl Kubala** of Austin is the parent of a medically complex/special needs child. She is a clinic ambassador and government advocate for Tuberous Sclerosis Complex (TSC) Alliance, a member of the Family Advisory Council for Children's Comprehensive Care Clinic, and a volunteer at Dell's Children's Hospital and Friends of Magnolia Parent Teacher Association. Kubala is the founder of the Austin TSC Family Council. Kubala received a Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Sciences from The University of Texas at Austin.

**Susan Nichols, Ph.D.** of Carrollton is currently serving as the Interim Executive Director at the University of North Texas Kristin Farmer Autism Center in Denton. She is a member of the Texas Association of Behavior Analysts and Association of Professional Behavior Analysts and is a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)/Licensed Behavior Analyst (LBA). Nichols received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Texas Woman's University and a Master of Education and Doctor of Philosophy in Special Education from the University of North Texas.

**Teresa Bronsky** of Plano is head of school for Bridge Builder Academy in Richardson. She is a member of the Plano ISD Special Education Advisory Committee and House District 67 Educational Advisory Board. She is also a member of the Council for Exceptional Children, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and the National Association of Special Education Teachers. Bronsky received a Bachelor of Science in elementary education with a specialization in special education from Texas Woman's University.

# Continuing Advisory Committee for Special Education

The Continuing Advisory Committee for Special Education (CAC) is the state advisory panel required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to:

- advise the Texas Education Agency (TEA) of unmet needs within the state in the education of children with disabilities;
- comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities;
- advise TEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary of Education under Section 1418 of IDEA 20 U.S.C. §1418;
- advise TEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in federal monitoring reports under Part B of IDEA; and
- advise TEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.

The CAC also advises TEA on standards related to significant disproportionality determination and is required by state statute to submit a report to the legislature biennially with recommended changes to state law and agency rules relating to special education.

## Statutory and Regulatory Authority

[20 U.S.C. Section 1412 \(a\) \(21\)](#)

[34 C.F.R Part 300](#)

[Texas Education Code, Sec. 29.006](#)

## Policy on Encouraging Public Participation

The CAC meets approximately four times each year. The committee encourages public participation by

- including a public comment period at meetings;
- receiving written comments from the public; and
- convening meetings that are accessible to the public.

### Procedures and General Guidelines for Public Comment

Anyone interested in making a public comment must inform the Chair between 9:00 and 9:30 AM of the intent to give public comments. The public comment period will begin at 11:00 and will last no more than 30 minutes. Each speaker will have a maximum of three minutes to speak, and speakers will be heard in the order they sign up. Individuals who wish to provide written comments to the CAC during the meeting should email copies of the

written comments to the CAC mailbox at [cac@tea.texas.gov](mailto:cac@tea.texas.gov) before the meeting so that it can be distributed to the committee members. As many speakers as possible will be heard within that period. A speaker who signs up by the deadline but is unable to speak will be given the opportunity to speak first at the next meeting. The CAC chair may ask individuals who wish to speak on the same topic to consolidate their comments.

The public may submit comments to the CAC care of TEA using the following email address: [CAC@tea.texas.gov](mailto:CAC@tea.texas.gov). TEA will forward public comments to all committee members. Comments sent to the CAC must not include personally identifiable student information.

## Vision and Values Statement

The Continuing Advisory Committee, in our efforts to advise the Texas Education Agency (TEA), presents a description of our values and aspirations for the students of Texas and those who support them, including but not limited to, students with disabilities and other support needs.

- We support TEA and school districts in their efforts to identify, evaluate and support students who may have disabilities. This includes preparing staff to fill the role of appropriately guiding families to testing and other resources when a student is reasonably suspected of having a disability that will affect their education. We support the right of students to be viewed by educators and members of the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee as a whole person, and the right to be evaluated and assessed for services in all areas in which they are suspected of having disabilities or other support needs.
- We support efforts to disentangle the identification process with concerns about the financial and staffing resources needed to serve a subsequently identified student. We applaud TEA's recognition that failure to identify a student, due to academic standing, funding and other resource related concerns has widespread and long-term ramifications that reach well beyond a student's time in public education.
- We support the right of students and their families to receive information and documentation in an accessible (i.e. barrier-free for the person with disability), user-friendly, and culturally competent manner. This includes availability of documentation in preferred languages and access to translation, as well as communication that is easily understood and avoids use of jargon or insider language. Communication should refer to students as individuals, rather than reducing them to paperwork the school, as an organization, must handle or improve.
- We support efforts to ensure that every public education staff member is prepared to interact with every student in school to some degree. This should include efforts to prepare educators, paraprofessionals and staff for the students they may encounter in the course of performing their duties. Special education services are no longer relegated to specific locations with specialized staff and instead students are often being educated across multiple settings, with access to a range of graduation plans. Like their peers, an identified student's school day may include supports during participation in advanced placement, gifted, or endorsement programs.



- We support TEA in their efforts to ensure all students receive a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment with adequate and appropriate supports, as agreed upon by the ARD committee. This should be a strengths-based and individualized plan that is future-oriented and student-centered; based on personal goals, desires; and should include specific support needs related to each student's education, to include both academic and non-academic school activities.
- We support students and families in their efforts to seek educational opportunities that are innovative, integrated and inclusive, while maintaining access to specialized supports when necessary. We support creative educational programming where entry is based on individual student characteristics, rather than using eligibility criteria that is purely diagnosis based.
- We support schools, students and families in their effort to foster communication, self-determination and advocacy skills needed to communicate needs and desires to peers, paraprofessionals and support staff, and other professionals. This is vital to aid students in their learning at school and to prepare them to continue to contribute to their communities as they transition to adult life.
- We support the disability rights concept of "nothing about us, without us," meaning that people with disabilities should be part of discussions that affect their lives. We believe that decisions about students with disabilities should not be made by personnel that do not have disability related knowledge and experience, nor without active input from those closest to the student, and especially in decisions regarding placement and long-term planning.
- We support the efforts of advocates to ensure that students with disabilities and their support needs are part of planning discussions across the educational system, so they are more fully present schoolwide, regardless of academic setting. This should include any safety and emergency planning as well.
- We support efforts to implement safety plans for the benefit of all students, including plans that are designed to support the individualized safety and emergency needs of students with disabilities on each campus. We also support the right of students to avoid being unfairly targeted by threat assessment teams, because of specific diagnoses, rather than individual student characteristics and actions.
- We support the efforts of teachers to institute positive behavior classroom management strategies. We support efforts to eliminate aversive behavior management strategies and reduce inappropriate use of in school and out of school suspensions, alternative out of school placements, and law

enforcement on school campuses.

- We support efforts to make education adaptable and accessible to every student, so that they are adequately prepared for a rapidly changing world, including access to technology and virtual learning. We support efforts to balance widespread and user-friendly access to technology with privacy concerns, as well as making digital curriculum accessible and usable for students with a variety of disability-related support needs.
- We support the rights of students and parents to maintain privacy of disability, medical and educational records, and the right to maintain control over the disclosure of those records. We support the creation of opportunities for students to learn about consent, disclosure and self-determination regarding personal information, as well as opportunities to practice these skills.
- We support schools and community partners in their efforts to ensure that all students, including students with disabilities, leave the Texas public education system ready to begin entry into the workforce, postsecondary education, military service, volunteerism, or other contributions to the community. This should include work studies, internships, or other transition-focused experiential opportunities as part of the educational curriculum. We support efforts to create opportunities for robust transition planning as a key component of ARD meetings during secondary education.
- We support Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in building relationships with community mental health services for in school training especially in regard to COVID-19 supports that may be needed. This is a good opportunity to reinforce the ideals of trauma informed care in education for students, families and staff.

## Executive Summary

The Continuing Advisory Committee (CAC), legislated in 1995, is a special education advisory committee to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Membership is composed of a special education director who serves multiple school districts, plus family members, self-advocates, and professionals with experience in the special education arena. Detailed biographies of current members can be found in this report.

The purpose of this report is to provide the legislature with recommended changes to state law and agency rules relating to special education that will further serve Texans with disabilities during their formal education and beyond. These recommendations are based on committee expertise, public testimony, and research and are consistent with the Vision and Values Statement of the Committee.

For this biennium, the Committee is making 32 policy recommendations. To ease access and reference to the recommendations, we have divided them into the following subject areas:

- School Safety
- Data Privacy
- Digital Literacy and Accessibility
- Staff Qualifications
- Full And Initial Evaluations
- Educator Certification and Educator Preparation Curriculum
- Transition-Graduation Requirements
- Impartial Hearing Officers
- Person-Centered Planning

For all recommendations, the report provides additional background information to support their understanding, adoption, and implementation.

# School Safety

## RECOMMENDATION 1

Recommend that Texas require the tracking of incidents of abuse and make available to the public the number of incidents of abuse.

## RECOMMENDATION 2

Recommend that Texas expand transparency to address potential abuses that would prevent timely investigation of school staff accused of alleged assault, abuse, and excessive use of force toward students with disabilities.

## RECOMMENDATION 3

Recommend that Texas expand the Texas Do Not Hire Registry (i.e., the Registry of Persons Not Eligible for Employment in Public Schools) to include all educators, certified and non-certified, who abuse students with disabilities so they cannot move from district to district.

## BACKGROUND

The Texas Education Agency has investigated over 100 cases of educators unlawfully restraining special education students since 2015. As of April 2022, state records reflect there are as many as 10 open investigations involving districts across the state.

Incidents of abuse of Special Education students in the news and on social media continue, including:

- Fort Worth ISD staff restrained student with disability who subsequently died (March 2021)
- Killeen ISD teacher assaulted student with disability (April 2021)
- Manor ISD teacher hit student with Autism (November 2021)
- Burleson ISD teacher and aide acted inappropriately with nonverbal students (November 2021)
- Weslaco ISD teacher hit a student with Autism (December 2021)
- Aldine ISD teacher and assistant charged with abusing two young children with autism. (May 2022)
- Hutto ISD director of special education charged with unlawfully restraining a student with severe autism (2020). Pleaded no contest to failing to properly

report the incident as a part of a plea deal. (2022)

#### **RECOMMENDATION 4**

Recommend that Texas require schools annually to notify parents and guardians of “Cameras in the Classroom” law.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 5**

Recommend that Texas require schools to keep the footage on file for longer periods of time. For a period of 12 calendar months.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 6**

Recommend that Texas address the challenges many parents face when trying to access the recordings from the school, such as having to provide specific date and time and specific reason.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 7**

Recommend that Texas require Education Service Centers (ESCs) to provide school staff training to interact appropriately and safely with students with disabilities.

#### **BACKGROUND**

A law passed in 2015 requires schools to place cameras in self-contained classrooms upon the request of parents or school districts. Texas law Sec. 29.022., “VIDEO SURVEILLANCE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SETTINGS,” requires school districts and public charter schools to place video cameras in certain self-contained special education classrooms and settings upon request from a parent, staff member, principal, or school board. This law is intended to protect students who, because of the nature of their disability, might not be able to report abuse or neglect by district employees or other students.

As well intended as this law is, unfortunately, many parents of special education students are still not aware this law exists, which both protects students and school staff.

# Data Privacy

## RECOMMENDATION 8

Recommend that the legislature add language that protects limited access to attendance, genetic information, mental health data, behavioral, emotional, or attitudinal data, geographic information, as documents required for a student under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

## RECOMMENDATION 9

Recommend adding a section D to the Texas Administrative Code;

(D)created by or provided by machine generated data or artificial intelligence that combines or infers data that personally identifies a student.

## RECOMMENDATION 10

Recommend the legislature add language that defines breach of data and how it is to be disclosed to families and language that removes incentives to sell or share student data.

## RECOMMENDATION 11

Recommend the legislature also add language surrounding parental and student consent to share specific data.

## RECOMMENDATION 12

Recommend that TEA and LEAs create a short-term and long-term plan to improve data security and privacy standards, as well as a plan for audits and data retention.

## RECOMMENDATION 13

Recommend the addition of civil penalties, where applicable.

See the Appendix for possible language.

## BACKGROUND

Some questionable behaviors have happened over the last few years in regards to lack of privacy with student information, which has gotten the committee's attention. First, during the summer of 2017 the TEA entered into a no-bid contract with a company named SPEDx. They handed over hundreds of student Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) to SPEDx without proper parental notification or consent. IEPs include student diagnoses, medications, behavioral intervention plans, school accommodations, health data, and more. The SPEDx mission was to data-mine the information from the student's IEPs and come up with a plan to "fix" special

education in Texas. TEA terminated the contract after concerned parents and the

media spoke out. The owner and founder of SPEDx, Dr. Richard Nyankori, has since started a new company that sells special education software. The state of Texas has not received notification from SPEDx that the student IEP data was ever destroyed.

Secondly, in 2018 a lawsuit was filed against ACT (i.e., the college admissions test maker) claiming that ACT illegally sold detailed student disability data to colleges, scholarship programs, and other third parties who use the information for college

recruitment and marketing. Colleges must practice “disability-blind” admissions under federal civil rights laws, however they have gotten around this by buying student information from ACT, which is a direct violation of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), among other laws. The COVID-19 crisis, which has led to an increased use of technology, has made data privacy exponentially more critical to protect students.

## **CONCLUSION**

Current data privacy preservations are not adequate to protect health and education information of students. We understand that disability and health information may be necessary for schools to retain in order for schools to retain in order to best serve students, but every effort should be made to protect this information from unauthorized access or access without informed consent.

# Digital Literacy and Accessibility

## RECOMMENDATION 14

### *Accessible Digital Technology Policy*

Recommend that TEA should require through administrative rule that every local education agency (LEA) adopt (or review and revise, as needed) a digital accessibility policy that includes:

- statement of purpose
- scope
- accountability for compliance

At minimum, scope must include:

- electronic documents
- audio/visual materials
- mobile apps
- web-based content

whether used as primary, secondary, or supplemental material. The policy must also address procurement of in-scope materials from third parties.

## BACKGROUND

Digital technology is ubiquitous in the lives of today's students, whether inside or outside the classroom. However, students have little control over the software and content that support their learning. Whether developed, chosen, or procured by classroom, campus, district, or other educational staff, without an intentional focus on digital accessibility, there is ample experience that demonstrates students with hearing loss are still provided videos without closed captioning, students that use screen readers are given untagged PDF documents, that students with physical disabilities are referred to web sites incompatible with their assistive technology, among many other examples of barriers to a free and appropriate education. This is not a problem that can be overcome by heroic efforts of teachers and parents by a series of one-off solutions. This is a widespread issue that needs a solution that can be scaled to the size of the special education population in Texas. A substantive first step is to establish a clear policy that digital technology, regardless of where and how it was developed, must be accessible when used with students with disabilities. The elements put forth in this recommendation are in-line with best practices that have been widely adopted by both the public and private sectors, including both how to construct a quality compliance policy, the scope of materials that should be included in a digital accessibility policy, and the critical need to address procurement in any such program.



## CONCLUSION

Establishing a digital accessibility policy is a first, foundational step to maintaining processes and controls that help ensure that students with disabilities have equitable access to learning opportunities. Although there likely exist generalized non-discrimination policies, organizational change and sustained commitment are driven by clear expectations, specific requirements, and ultimate accountability for results.

## RECOMMENDATION 15

### *Digital Accessibility Barrier Remediation*

Recommend that TEA should identify, at minimum, the top five most critical barriers to the accessibility of digital materials used with students. For each of these barriers, TEA or a qualified designee should

- 1) develop or procure self-guided training (not to exceed 15 minutes for any one barrier) for faculty/staff
- 2) a job aid / checklist to assist in determining acceptable accessibility of digital materials

## BACKGROUND

One of the largest hurdles to the design and development and/or procurement of accessible technology as well as incorporating it into the learning program of students with disabilities is a knowledge gap about accessibility barriers themselves. This makes sense because faculty and staff are domain experts, whether in the subject area they teach or a function that supports education, not in the latest advancements in technology or the even more niche area of accessibility. However, rather than resigning ourselves that this gap cannot be closed, a tractable solution must be found, otherwise the achievement gap for students in special education will persist. A reasonable approach to tackling any large problem is to break it down into more manageable challenges. This recommendation calls for identifying and then initially focusing on the top five most crucial barriers and then creating complementary, self-guided materials to provide the necessary understanding and guidance to educators. These resources could be developed or procured at the state level by TEA or by other capable entities, such as education service centers.

## CONCLUSION

Educator preparation and training on accessibility is key to removing barriers to a free and appropriate education. But the entire scope of this need is far more than any single educator can be expected to manage on their own for their student(s) with disabilities. The recommendation seeks to break down the challenge into more

manageable parts by 1) addressing the top five most important barriers to start, 2) to provide for training that is time-limited and self-guided to focus on efficient use of educator time, and 3) to provide for a referenceable resource that supports educators.

## **RECOMMENDATION 16**

### *Proficiency with Accessible and Assistive Technology*

Recommend that TEA should establish a template of procedures for ARD committees for when assistive technologies and/or built-in accessibility features are an integral part of the student's education plan, that sufficient training is provided to the student, faculty/staff, and their support network to work toward and ultimately achieve proficiency with the technical solution.

## **BACKGROUND**

Providing the student with accessible and/or assistive technology and the training to use it properly is foundational to their academic success. In addition, the ARD committee is a natural way to identify who makes up a student's educational support network and generally defines their roles. Since members of this network rarely already have practical knowledge of accessible and/or assistive technologies used by the student, a set of best practices for training by role would be an effective way to elevate their knowledge and skills to complement the student's. Such training would be independent of the source of the accessible or assistive technology (e.g., personally provided, school-provided, etc.).

## **CONCLUSION**

Preparation and training for the student's entire educational support network is key to their proficiency with accessible and assistive technology and ultimately their education success. While each ARD committee is unique, there is a common need for the student to effectively use accessible and/or assistive technology. There is also a common gap in understanding such technology. Thus, establishing best practices for how their network can become more educated will ultimately support the student's goals.

# Staff Qualifications

## RECOMMENDATION 17

Recommend that TAC Title 19, Chapter 230 be amended to require paraprofessionals to complete continuing education and professional staff development hours in special education each school year in order to renew their educational aide certificates.

## RECOMMENDATION 18

Recommend amendment of 19 TAC §230.65 to require professional development as a requirement for reissuance of an educational aide certificate.

## BACKGROUND

We suggest that existing staff be encouraged to complete relevant or specialized training to work with the individual student populations they are assigned, which will include virtual learning and technological skills.

In order to achieve this vision, and in conjunction with the recommendation listed above that would require additional training for paraprofessionals and co-teachers, we recommend that TEA issue a legislative appropriations request for funding of stipends for continuing education for co-teachers and paraprofessionals to improve their qualifications to teach students with specialized and differentiated learning needs, including students qualified to receive special education services and those identified as eligible to receive services under Section 504 of the ADA. This will enhance the quality of teaching and interactions between staff and students, which will greatly improve the lives of students and their access to a high quality free and appropriate public education.

## RECOMMENDATION 19

Recommend that TEA request that all educators, including co-teachers and paraprofessionals who are given responsibility for teaching groups of students in a classroom, be given instruction in differentiated learning strategies and lesson plans.

## RECOMMENDATION 20

Recommend that TEA remind all school administrators of this best practice so that all students have access to teachers who have been given information on how to best teach various learners and create inclusive lesson plans.

## RECOMMENDATION 21

Recommend the following amendment to 19 TAC §89.1131(c) Qualifications of Special Education, Related Service, and Paraprofessional Personnel:

- Paraprofessional personnel must be certified and may be assigned to work with eligible students, general and special education teachers, and related service personnel. Educational aides may also be assigned to assist students with special education transportation, serve as a job coach, or serve in support of community-based instruction. Educational aides paid from state administrative funds may be assigned to special education clerical or administrative duties.

## **BACKGROUND**

We support efforts across Texas to help ensure that every paraprofessional is prepared to support the education of assigned students. This includes efforts to prepare educators, paraprofessionals, and staff for the students they may encounter in the course of performing their duties, because special education services are no longer relegated to specific locations with only specialized staff, and are instead often being educated across multiple settings, with access to a range of graduation plans. Like their peers, an identified student's school day may include supports during participation in advanced placement, gifted, or endorsement programs.

## **RECOMMENDATION 22**

Recommend that all certified educators in Texas should be required to be prepared to detect and educate students with disabilities, as well as understand and implement positive behavior interventions and supports, as required by the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Transform educator preparation programs to reflect our student population more accurately by preparing our educators to instruct students with dyslexia, dyslexia and related disorders, and students with disabilities.

## **BACKGROUND**

Update: HB 159 passed as permissive, it is the responsibility of the principal to decide. This was already an option for administrators to implement without legal language, so the law doesn't change options and likely won't expand Universal Design for Learning beyond campus that wouldn't otherwise implement.

Discussion regarding least restrictive environment and staff training needed: Paraprofessionals/educational aides who are assigned to work with students eligible for special education services to attend annual training in the areas of child development, instruction methods, behavior interventions & management, trauma-informed care, and disability specific. The CAC has been informed that many paraprofessionals are supporting students in general education, inclusive, and co-teach settings. The Texas Education Code (TEC) states that paraprofessionals are required to have certification training authorized and recognized by Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Chapter 230, but requires no continuing

education. Paraprofessionals, especially those with an Educational Aide II or III Certification, are delivering and reinforcing instruction to students. According to TAC §230.61 educational aides with an Educational Aide II or III Certification can perform the following job duties including working with individual students and groups, working with individual students in drills and exercises, assisting the teacher with instructional activities, and helping the teacher implement methodology. Currently educational aides are not required to obtain continuing professional education hours to renew their certificates every five years like professional employees of the district such as superintendents, principals, teachers, etc.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE**

While it is agreed that paraprofessional staff needs to be paid for high quality work, and be paid a living wage, in order to reduce further harm to students caused by staff shortages, further and more specific training is needed, rather than requiring bachelor's degrees for entry level staff.

Additionally, concerns have been expressed that increasing requirements may exacerbate existing staffing shortages within schools. While such a relationship has not been firmly demonstrated to the Committee, it is certainly not in the interest of special education students to reduce the number of qualified educators available to support their education. The Appendix provides strategies and examples of how other states have attempted to address this concern, including one program in Hawaii where special education teacher vacancies dropped by 45% during the 2020-2021 school year.

### **CONCLUSION**

Base hiring practices on ability to perform necessary tasks and the desire to care for students, which are not always linked to the completion of a formal degree.

# Full and Initial Evaluations

## RECOMMENDATION 22

Recommend the following addition to the TEC §29.004. Full Individual and Initial Evaluation

(c) If a parent or legal guardian makes a verbal and/or written request to a school district's director of special education services or to a district administrative employee for a full individual and initial evaluation of a student, the district shall, not later than the 15th school day after the date the district receives the request....

## BACKGROUND

The Provision of Services for Students with Dyslexia and Related Disorders – Revised June 6, 2018 letter concludes that, every LEA (Local Education Agency) has an obligation to refer any student who is suspected of having a disability and needing special education services for an evaluation under IDEA.

The existing TEC State Statute 29.004 states that a parent must make a written request to the school district for full individual and initial evaluation of a student for the process of evaluation to begin. However, many parents/guardians are not aware or made aware of this. To mitigate this confusion, offer parents or guardians access to a written request form addressed to a school administrator stating they would like their child evaluated.

Most parents are made aware of their children's academic struggles during parent/teacher conferences and meetings as a teacher/administrator has made a suggestion to have a student evaluated. However, if the parent initiates a formal request for the student to be evaluated during the meeting, the parent is told to contact in writing a school district director or special education services. The sole responsibility falls on the parent to formulate a written request and get it to the proper administrators. This process can be impeded by a language barrier, lack of resources in writing the request, and/or availability of technology or other resources, which negatively impacts the child in seeking a timely and proper diagnosis. It is important for parents to be able to address these concerns verbally at the point of contact with teachers and/or other school administrators.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PERSPECTIVE

While it is important that families have access to the ability to request evaluation, administrators have brought to the committee's attention that this would create an undue burden when tracking information and ensuring that requests for evaluations are implemented. It is suggested that a uniform format for written requests be implemented so that administrators can document a verbal request themselves, or that verbal requests be taken on a case-by-case basis and further documented and

processed when written requests are otherwise inaccessible. It creates problems with the relationship between the parties because a verbal request absent a written request boils down to hearsay.

## **CONCLUSION**

When a verbal request is made by a parent/guardian for a full and initial evaluation to any faculty/staff of the student's LEA, TEA policy should require that they be provided the following information in writing: A) that a written request is required, B) that a process be provided that completely suffices for making the written request, and C) the specific physical and electronic contact/address where the form must be sent.

# Educator Certification and Educator Preparation Curriculum

## RECOMMENDATION 23

Recommend the following addition to Texas Education Code §21.044.

Educator Certification:

- (a) The board shall propose rules establishing the training requirements a person must accomplish to obtain a certificate, enter an internship, or enter an induction-year program. The board shall specify the minimum academic qualifications required for a certificate.
- (b) Any minimum academic qualifications for a certificate specified under Subsection (a) that require a person to possess a bachelor's degree must also require that the person receive, as part of the training required to obtain that certificate, instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia, dyslexia related disorders, and students with disabilities eligible under the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. sec. 1412, in accordance with 20 U.S.C. sec. 1412(a)(3) (sec. 300.111), the Child Find provision of IDEA.
- (c) The instruction under Subsection (b) must:
  - (1) be developed by a panel of experts in the diagnosis and treatment of dyslexia and other disabilities as listed in 34 CFR §300.8 of IDEA who are:
    - (A) employed by institutions of higher education; and
    - (B) approved by the board; and
  - (2) include information on:
    - (A) characteristics of dyslexia and other disabilities as listed in 34 CFR §300.8 of IDEA;
    - (B) identification of dyslexia and other disabilities as listed in 34 CFR §300.8 of IDEA; and
    - (C) effective, multisensory, evidence-based strategies for teaching students with dyslexia and other disabilities as listed in 34 CFR §300.8 of IDEA; and
    - (D) effective, evidence-based strategies and methodologies for teaching students with varying abilities including, but not limited to, differentiated instruction, co-teach instruction, development and implementation of appropriate curriculum modifications, and development and implementation of appropriate classroom and other educational accommodations.
- (c-1) Any minimum academic qualifications for a certificate specified under Subsection (a) that require a person to possess a bachelor's degree must also require that the person receive, as part of the training required to obtain that certificate, instruction regarding mental health, trauma-informed care,



substance abuse, and youth suicide.

(g) Each educator preparation program must provide information regarding:

(1) the skills that educators are required to possess, the responsibilities that educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students in this state;

(2) the effect of supply and demand forces on the educator workforce in this state;

(3) the performance over time of the educator preparation program;

(4) the importance of building strong classroom management skills and the skills necessary for the implementation of positive behavior intervention and supports, including understanding and implementation of student behavior intervention plans.

(5) the framework in this state for teacher and principal evaluation, including the procedures followed in accordance with Subchapter H; ~~and~~

(6) appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students.; and

(7) teacher's responsibility related to implementing a student's Individualized Education Program.

## **RECOMMENDATION 24**

Recommend the following addition to 19 TAC §228.30. Educator Preparation Curriculum:

(a)The educator standards adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) shall be the curricular basis for all educator preparation Continuing Advisory Committee for Special Education Report to the Governor of Texas and Texas Legislature Page 19 and, for each certificate, address the relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

(b)The curriculum for each educator preparation program shall rely on scientifically-based research to ensure educator effectiveness.

(c) The following subject matter shall be included in the curriculum for candidates seeking initial certification in any certification class:

(1)the code of ethics and standard practices for Texas educators, pursuant to Chapter 247 of this title (relating to Educators' Code of Ethics), which include:

(A)professional ethical conduct, practices, and performance;

(B)ethical conduct toward professional colleagues; and

- (C)ethical conduct toward students;
  - (2)instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia, dyslexia related disorders, and students with disabilities as indicated in the Texas Education Code (TEC), §21.044(b);
  - (3)instruction regarding mental health, trauma-informed care, substance abuse, and youth suicide, as indicated in the TEC, §21.044(c-1);
  - (4)the skills that educators are required to possess, the responsibilities that educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students in this state;
  - (5)the importance of building strong classroom management skills; ~~and~~
  - (6)the framework in this state for teacher and principal evaluation; and
  - (7)instruction in detection and education of students with disabilities as indicated in TEC §21.044(b).
- (d)The following subject matter shall be included in the curriculum for candidates seeking initial certification in the classroom teacher certification class:
- (1)the relevant TEKS, including the English Language Proficiency Standards;
  - (2)reading instruction, including instruction that improves students' content-area literacy;
  - (3)understanding and implementation of positive behavior intervention supports;
  - (4)for certificates that include early childhood and prekindergarten, the Prekindergarten Guidelines; and\_
  - (5)the skills and competencies captured in the Texas teacher standards in Chapter 149, Subchapter AA, of this title (relating to Teacher Standards), which include: \_
    - (A)instructional planning and delivery;
    - (B)knowledge of students and student learning;
    - (C)content knowledge and expertise;
    - (D) learning environment;
    - (E)data-driven practice; and
    - (F)professional practices and responsibilities.

## **BACKGROUND**

It has been brought to the committee's attention that Individual Education Plans (IEPs), including Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), are not always implemented or documented appropriately nor are they timely re-evaluated to ensure the plan is yielding the desired results. In addition, general education teachers are not effectively implementing positive behavior interventions as required by IDEA, which results in an increased rate of failure of students. Failure to implement an update

BIPs can result in negative academic and disciplinary consequences for the student, including in-school or out-of-school suspensions. A single out of school suspension in 9th grade is associated with a 50% increase in the chance a student will drop out of school and a 19% decrease in enrollment in postsecondary education. Controlling for other risk factors (e.g., antisocial behavior, deviant peer group), receipt of an out of school suspension is a significant predictor of future antisocial behavior. Out of school suspensions are more strongly related to negative outcomes than in school suspension.

## **CONCLUSION**

Require all certified educators in Texas be prepared to detect and educate students with disabilities, as well as understand and implement positive behavior interventions and supports, as required by the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Transform educator preparation programs to reflect the student population more accurately by preparing educators to instruct students with dyslexia, dyslexia related disorders, and students with disabilities.

## Transition-Graduation Requirements

### RECOMMENDATION 25

Recommend the following addition to the TAC §74.11. High School Graduation Requirements:

(g) Elective credits may be selected from the following:

(1) High school courses not required for graduation that are listed in the following chapters of this title:

(K) Chapter 127 of this title (relating to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Career Development); and

(i) Vocational Readiness and On the Job Training (up to four state credits), as determined by the student's admission, review, and dismissal committee in the student's individualized education program. A Special Education teacher certification is required for this class.

(ii) Transition/Vocational Readiness – 1 to 4 state credits. Potential content: college access/readiness, self-advocacy, social skills for work, soft skills for work, career exploration.

A. Regarding School finance, we recommend to include in the CAC legislative report a statement that includes the following;

1. The CAC recognizes that funding formulas for special education have not changed since 1984.

2. The CAC recognizes that the 2 hr / 4 hr rule for average daily attendance during typical school days (Monday - Friday) does not adequately address the following: a. students ages 18-21 who continue to receive instruction from ISD and b. whose schedule resembles a young adult schedule (i.e. not typical school hours from Monday-Friday)

3. The CAC recommends a revision to the Student Attendance Accounting Handbook to incorporate the following additions:

- Page 37: 3.2.1.2 Code 1 Eligible for Full-Day Attendance Code 1 indicates that a student is eligible to generate full-day attendance. Code 1 applies to all students entitled to enroll under the TEC, §25.001, who are scheduled and provided instruction at least four hours each school day.

- Note 1: Districts that offer half-day kindergarten programs must not count students who attend both the

morning and afternoon half-day sessions as [for] eligible for full-day attendance.

- Note 2: Districts that offer 18+ Transition programs for students who receive special education services can count a cumulative total of 20 hours within a calendar week as eligible for full-day attendance.

- Page 37-38: Code 3 3.2.1.3 Code 2 Eligible for Half-Day Attendance Code 2 indicates that a student is eligible to generate half-day attendance. Code 2 applies to all students entitled to enroll under the TEC, §25.001, who are scheduled for and provided instruction at least two hours but fewer than four hours each school day for the purposes of ADA. These students include prekindergarten (pre-K) students who meet the eligibility requirements in Section 7 Prekindergarten (Pre-K) (see 7.5 Eligible Days Present and ADA Eligibility). Additionally, districts providing a full-day pre-K program to eligible four year olds would need to provide 75,600 operational minutes unless they have received a waiver from the agency.

- New Note: Districts that offer 18+ Transition programs for students who receive special education services can count a cumulative total of not less than 10 and up to 20 hours within a calendar week as eligible for half-day attendance.

B: Vocational credits for students who receive special education: 1. The CAC recognizes that while many students who need special education will be able to access the general CTE program, there are a significant number of students who will not be able to participate in general education CTE programs to the same, or any, extent.

2. Currently, alternative classes for students unable to fully or partially participate in general education CTE classes are considered “innovative courses” and must be applied for and approved by the TEA. This is not a stable system, and the credits do not have “state credit” status, that is, these credits are local credits only.

3. The CAC recommends consideration of creating a “Subchapter R” under the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 130. All of the relevant innovative vocational or transition classes would be included within this subchapter. A draft of the proposed Subchapter R is attached.

## **BACKGROUND**

Experience tells us that students with disabilities are most likely to be successful in employment when they possess a strong work concept and real work experience, before they leave high school. One could make the argument that this applies to all students, but it is particularly impactful for students with disabilities and the

research supports this assertion.

In 2009, the then-National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC) (now the National Technical Assistance Center for Transition – NTACTION) conducted a systematic literature review to identify in-school predictors of post-school success in the areas of employment, education, and independent living for secondary students with disabilities. From this, 16 evidence-based predictors of post-school employment, education, and independent living success were identified.

Many of these identified predictors support the CAC's recommendations, specifically:

- Students with two or more paid jobs during high school were more likely to graduate from high school.
- Students who participated in paid work experience and had a job at the time of graduation were five-times more likely to be engaged in post-school employment.
- Students who participated in paid or unpaid work experiences in the spring semester were more likely to have work experience opportunities in the summer.
- Students who participated in programs with pre-vocational training, job search training, specific job skills training, and student internships were more likely to have work experience opportunities in school.
- Students who participated in school-based programs that included career major (sequence of courses based on occupational goal), cooperative education (combines academic and vocational studies with a job in a related field), school-sponsored enterprise (involves the production of goods or services by students for sale to or use by others), and technical preparation (a planned program of study with a defined career focus that links secondary and post-secondary education) were 1.2 times more likely to be engaged in post-school employment.
- Students who participated in vocational education were two times more likely to be engaged in full-time employment.
- Participation in work study increased the likelihood of full-time employment more than two times.
- Students with higher self-determination skills were more likely to be engaged in post-school employment and independent living.

Currently, the Vocational Adjustment Class (VAC) can only be used for local credit and does not satisfy graduation requirements. This means the only vocational option available to students with disabilities are courses offered through Career and

Technical Education (CTE). Having VAC as an option would provide a State elective credit to satisfy State graduation requirements.

## **CONCLUSION**

Broaden the scope of state credits available as graduation credits of special education students. See Appendix for suggested rule language.

# Impartial Hearing Officers

## RECOMMENDATION 26

The CAC is recommending the following addition to the TAC State Statute 89.1170(a). Impartial Hearing Officer.

- (a) The Texas Education Agency (TEA) will maintain a pool of impartial hearing officers to conduct due process hearings. The TEA will assign cases to hearing officers who are private practice attorneys with experience in the field of special education based on an alphabetical rotation. The TEA will assign cases to hearing officers with experience in the field of special education who are employed by the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) in accordance with the procedures specified in the interagency contract between the TEA and SOAH. If, however, a request for a hearing relates to the same student who was involved in another hearing that was filed within the last 12 months, the TEA will assign the recently filed hearing request to the same hearing officer who presided over the previous hearing, unless a party has an objection that hearing officer being assigned in the subsequent hearing. In addition, the same hearing officer may be assigned to hearings involving siblings that are filed within 12 months of each other.

## BACKGROUND

Attorneys without such experience in special education law are less likely to understand the education framework, implementation of special education laws and regulations and the practical effects of what is being requested and/or denied in a specific case regarding a child with disability. Therefore, it is crucial that impartial hearing officers have experience in the field of special education to better assist the parties in resolving disputes and better evaluate the facts and evidence presented to the officer.

## CONCLUSION

It is crucial that hearing officers have experience in the field of special education to better assist the parties in resolving disputes. Attorneys without such experience are not as likely to understand the education framework, implementation of special education laws and regulations, and the practical effects of what is being requested and/or denied in a specific case.



# Person-Centered Planning

## RECOMMENDATION 27

### *Short-Term*

Recommend that educational opportunities be offered to students and families based on meaningful participation in the least restrictive environment, with adequate supports and services, in accordance with a family's right to receive a free and appropriate public education. In addition, education plans and classroom lesson plans should be strengths-based, student centered, and focused on the growth of students academically and as a whole person. This should include providing information in a culturally competent and fully accessible format. This includes availability of documentation in preferred languages and access to translation, as well as communication that is easily understood and avoids use of jargon or insider language. Communication should refer to students as individuals, rather than reducing them to paperwork the school as an organization must handle or improve. TEA needs to communicate with districts that this is still a priority, even during the COVID-19 emergency.

## RECOMMENDATION 28

Recommend that TEA remind districts that IEP goals and services are to be based on individual student needs, not on a primary diagnosis, the location of centralized services, or the availability of current resources. This is especially true when decisions are being made regarding access to compensatory services.

## RECOMMENDATION 29

Recommend that a representative from the staff or faculty serving students receiving special education services be present at all planning meetings for educational or extracurricular activities for students. When students are involved in planning committees, schools should be strongly encouraged to also include input directly from students with disabilities as well.

## RECOMMENDATION 30

Recommend that all discussions of safety planning for faculty and students include specific considerations of the needs of individuals in the setting who have disabilities. They should be encouraged to be represented or directly involved in planning for their own safety needs.

### *Long-Term*

## RECOMMENDATION 31

Recommend that Person-Centered Thinking training be added to professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals at all levels, in order to better

serve students, especially students with disabilities. Discussion of the

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person-centered thinking and transition to long-term services and supports when necessary be emphasized during transition ARD meetings for students age 14 and above. A person centered plan should be produced at the end of the transition period, and if applicable, should migrate with the student into adult services and/or postsecondary education.

### **RECOMMENDATION 32**

Recommend a task force be created among TEA, Texas Health and Human Service Commission (HHSC), and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to facilitate communication among agencies, and more easily implement robust transition plans for students. This may include discussions regarding person-centered planning, coordinating training among paraprofessionals and personal care attendants, and coordinating with local businesses to provide internships, work studies, job placements, and/or experiential learning to foster employment first goals and self advocacy skills for students, families, and interested community members. This will further TEA's plan to ensure that all Texas students, including students with disabilities, will leave the Texas public education system ready to begin entry into the workforce, postsecondary education, military service, volunteerism, or other contributions to the community.

### **BACKGROUND**

We recognize that part of the intent of the education system is to prepare students to enter a fulfilling and meaningful adult life. Part of that includes a transition to participating in long-term and short-term life decisions and setting individualized priorities and goals. For some students this will mean beginning to access services within other agencies in Texas. Some other agencies use Person-Centered Thinking and planning tools to create service plans for individuals. In some ways, this looks like an IEP for adults, but is expanded to include a person's preferences and interests rather than being limited to safety considerations, disability needs, or goals that seek to normalize based on the medical model of disability. It has come to the attention of the committee that students may benefit from more coordinated education regarding person centered planning before they graduate, as part of a robust transition plan.

However, it is important that self-determination not be limited to students above the age of 14, or to students who receive services due to a disability. All students can benefit from access to classrooms and educators that recognize the value of student participation and engagement. People become more invested when given choices and opportunities to lead. It is also key that this also not be limited to locations or placements of specific students.

In order to foster the inclusion of students with disabilities and support needs

school-wide, it is imperative that students be represented or present in planning discussions across the educational system, regardless of academic setting, including any safety and emergency planning.

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## **CONCLUSION**

It has been demonstrated in other agencies in Texas that person-centered practices are beneficial in helping people with disabilities develop self-determined lives and well-rounded service plans. The CAC believes that the same positive outcomes are possible for students in the public education system.

# Appendix

## School Safety

- [House Bill \(HB\) 785: Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities](#)
- [Why criminally charged special ed staff still work at Texas school | KXAN Austin](#)
- [Texas teacher, school aide charged with abusing students with autism](#) • [Increased Arrests of School Staff for Violent Restraint of Texas Students](#) • [Texas special education employees plead no contest in unlawful restraint case](#)
- [How to Request a Camera in Your Child's Special Education Classroom - Disability Rights Texas](#)
- [Harmful Restraint of Students with Disabilities in Texas Schools](#)
- [Organizing and Changing Your School! | Toolkit](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion - Texas | State Policy Database](#)

## Staff Qualifications



### RESEARCH MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Aaron Bangor, Texas Continuing Advisory Committee for Special Education

From: Sydney Blodgett, Project Manager, [sblodgett@csg.org](mailto:sblodgett@csg.org)

Andrew Johnson, Policy Analyst

The Council of State Governments, Center of Innovation

Re: Your request for an analysis of state policies addressing the special education teacher shortage.

Date: November 14th, 2022

**Please note The Council of State Governments (CSG) is a nonpartisan**

***organization and therefore takes no position on state legislation or laws mentioned in linked material, nor does CSG endorse any third-party publications; resources are cited for information purposes only. CSG provides unbiased research that is based on evidence-informed and objective analysis.***

## **Executive Summary**

Analysts at The Council of State Governments (CSG) conducted research on state policies addressing the shortage of special education teachers (SETs).

Analysts identified 19 pieces of legislation enacted since 2005 concerning the special education workforce, specifically as it relates to recruitment and retention, as well as compensation and workload considerations. States policies are:

- 1) expanding recruitment and retention efforts through supporting school districts and teacher preparation programs in their recruitment and retention efforts, and providing scholarships, loans and/or loan forgiveness opportunities for potential SETs.
- 2) implementing incentives for SETs, including,
  - a) compensation
  - b) workload support

## **Method of Research**

CSG analysts conducted research on state policy considerations to address the teacher shortage specific to special education (SPED). Studies identify a variety of solutions the wide-spread SET shortage. Notable considerations include:

- [focused bonuses and loan forgiveness](#) programs are proven to successfully reduce attrition of SETs,
- [providing scholarships](#) for SET credentialing can reduce barriers to recruitment,
- [supporting the workload](#) of SETs, especially beginning teachers, can support retention, and
- [increasing compensation](#), i.e., salary increases, bonuses or differential pay, can grow the workforce and notably [attract already credentialed teachers](#).

Analysts identified examples of state actions that can impact the special education teacher (SET) shortage through a scan of bills with provisions relating to teacher shortages or recruitment and retention, including incentives and pipelines to address shortages. Relevant bills focus on policies related to SETs specifically.

## **Findings and Analysis**

This analysis identifies 19 policies with provision that directly or indirectly address the special education teacher (SET) shortage. Policies either (1) sought to support

recruitment and retention efforts, including scholarship and loan opportunities, or (2) implemented incentives, such as compensation or workload support, for SETs. 1) States are legislating an **expansion of recruitment and retention efforts**. Some states, such as **New Mexico** and **Virginia** are asking state agencies to study and evaluate specific teacher shortages and solutions. Others are providing funding to school districts and institutions of higher education directly, or funding programs to provide scholarships, loans or loan forgiveness to potential SPED credential seekers.

- [Arizona](#) provided specialized loans up to \$7 thousand to students pursuing a teaching degree. Loan recipients must agree to teach math, science or special education. [Senate Bill 1040](#) modifies eligibility from the agreement to teach in a specific content, rather, candidates must agree to teach at a low-income, rural or Native American reservation.
- In [Assembly Bill 1808](#), **California** allocates funds for grant programs to address teacher shortages; funding is used for financial incentives and scholarships.
  - *Local Solutions Grant Program*: \$50 million is allocated to provide grants to local education agencies to address the need for special education teachers. Grantees can allocate \$20 thousand per-teacher for supports. Funds can be used for various efforts to recruit and retain SETs, including teacher career pathways, mentors for existing teachers, professional learning communities, service awards, teacher service scholarships, student debt payment, and living stipends/signing bonuses for newly credentialed teachers who earn an education specialist credential. Allocations provided are to be matched 100%.
  - *Teacher Residency Grant Program*: \$75 million is appropriated for grants to address shortage areas, \$50 million specific to SPED. Grantees can allocate \$20 thousand per-teacher for supports. Allocations provided are to be matched 100%
- [Assembly Bill 130](#) expands the program. Appropriations rise to \$350 million and removes the specified requirement of fund allocation for SPED. Per-teacher allocation is expanded to \$25 thousand, and grantees are only required to match 80% of funds.
- **California's** [Assembly Bill 130](#) also allocates \$15 million to support grants to special education teachers through the [Golden State Teacher Grant Program](#).
- [California](#) also requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to award grant to colleges/universities to support the creation of four-year integrated preparation programs leading to more credentialed teachers, emphasizing shortage fields such as special education.
- [Illinois](#) awards 250 special education teacher scholarships annually. Scholarships are available to certified teachers seeking additional

licensure in SPED, as well as students seeking initial certification. Awardees must teach for at least two out of five years upon exiting the preparation program. Teaching requirement can be met in a state public, private or parochial school, and includes preschool.

- [New Mexico](#) requests a taskforce to convene that will evaluate pipelines and incentives for shortages, specifically teacher preparation programs for SETs and compensation incentives such as salary differentials.
- [North Carolina](#) reestablished the [North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program](#) that recruits and trains college students to be effective STEM or SPED teachers. The program provides forgivable loans. Participants are required to teach for one year at a state public school identified as low-performing or two years at a public school not identified as low-performing. Loans of \$8,250 are awarded on a competitive basis. Various individuals are eligible to apply, including state high school seniors and individuals with a bachelor's degree seeking STEM/SPED teacher licensure.
- [Ohio](#) provides grant funds to schools and districts to help implement various innovations, such as using incentives to recruit SETs. ● [Utah's](#) Public Education Job Enhancement Program provides scholarships and cash awards to secondary STEM teachers, SETs and grades 4-6 teachers with math endorsements. The program includes an award up to \$20 thousand or a scholarship to cover the tuition costs for a master's degree, endorsement or graduate education in the specified areas. Award recipients are required to teach in the specified area in the state for four years.
- [Virginia](#) funds scholarship loans of up to \$10 thousand for full-time students (prorated for part-time) seeking certification in critical shortage areas, such as special education, or for minority students seeking any teaching certification. Recipients are obligated to teach in a school in a critical shortage subject or a school with more than half of students eligible for free or reduced lunch. For the scholarship loan to be fully forgiven, recipients must teach for two years.
- In [Senate Bill 1288](#), **Virginia** added developing and maintaining a strategic plan for recruiting and retaining SETs to the duties of the state's Department of Education. The plan is to consider strategies such as tuition assistance, differentiated pay for SETs, and expanding SET mentorship programs. [House Bill 1800](#) allocates \$395,991 to help school divisions with significant teacher recruitment and retention challenges and implement the state wide.
- [Washington, D.C.](#) provided a grant of \$350 thousand to support a teacher preparation program that provides training for SETs, intending to create a pipeline of highly effective special education teachers to work in the district.

2) States also are implementing various **incentives** for special education teachers.

a. Increasing or providing additional **compensation**

- [Hawaii](#) established a shortage differential salary incentive program to support licensed teachers who provide instruction in special education, Hawaiian immersion and hard-to-staff locations. SETs were paid an [additional \\$10,000](#) annually. In [House Bill 2401](#) (2022, failed sine die) the legislative findings present data from the Department of Education highlighting the impact of the pay differentials. The findings identify the percentage of special education teacher vacancies dropped by 45% during the 2020-2021 school year, with 43% more teachers choosing to move into a special education teaching line than the year before.
- [Maryland](#) recognized there was a pay disparity between SETs in public and nonpublic schools. The bill requires a 4% increase for Fiscal Year 23 to support direct classroom related services, and general support positions.
- [Ohio](#) provides an educational pay supplement of 5% of the employee's classification salary base may be applied when the employee is performing as a special education teacher.
- [Utah](#) provides salary bonus to eligible teachers (both general and special education) in high poverty K-8 schools who meet specified performance requirements in student assessments.
- [West Virginia](#) considers fully certified and full-time special education teachers to have three additional years of experience for the purposes of salary schedules. Gifted and talented teachers and special education co-teachers are considered to qualify for the salary schedule step increase.
- [Wyoming](#) adds special education teachers and related service providers that provide services to children with disabilities necessitating education outside of the regular classroom to the list of extra hazardous employment under the Wyoming Worker's Compensation Act.

b. Reducing or supporting special education teacher **workload**

- [Minnesota](#) requires the development of a streamlined data system for uniform statewide reporting of required due process compliance data. The system is intended to also reduce the amount of paperwork burdening SETs, which can provide them more time to focus on teaching students with disabilities.
  - [Utah](#) provides SETs with stipends for additional days of work. Stipends are set at \$200 per day, for 10 days. The 10 additional days are to be before/after the school year, outside the regular contract days. They are for duties related to the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process. The purpose is to recognize the



added duties and legal regulations of working with students with disabilities and the need to attract and retain qualified SETs.

## **Educator Certification and Educator Preparation Curriculum**

- [Texas Legislature Online - 87\(R\) Text for HB 159](#)

## **Transition-Graduation Requirements**



February 8, 2018

To The Governor's Advisory Committee for Special Education:

Dickinson High School would like to bring an issue of great concern to the attention of the Governor's Advisory Committee for Special Education.

Under current State graduation requirements, we cannot offer State elective credit for the Vocational Adjustment Class (VAC). Currently the VAC can only be used for local credit and does not satisfy graduation requirements. This means the only vocational option available to our special education students are courses offered through Career and Technical Education (CTE).

These CTE courses are advanced courses that typically lead to a career pathway and a practicum experience. Even with accommodations and modifications, these advanced level CTE courses are often inappropriate for special education students based on the students' identified disability. Having VAC as an option would provide a State elective credit to satisfy State graduation requirements.

Thank you for your consideration and your attention to this need.

Sincerely,

Billye Smith Ed.D., Principal

Angie Estes Ed.D., Lead Counselor

Patricia Lankford, CTE Director

Laurie Rodriguez, Special Programs Director

Dickinson High School · 3800 Baker Drive, Dickinson, TX 77539  
Phone: 281-229-6400 · Fax: 281-229-6401 · [www.dickinsonisd.org](http://www.dickinsonisd.org)

- [Texas Legislature Online - 87\(R\) Text for HB 1603](#)

## Impartial Hearing Officers

- [Texas Legislature Online - 87\(R\) Text for HB 3446](#)

## **Person-centered planning**

- [Person-Centered Practices - home page](#)
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## **Suggested TAC Revision/Additions**

### **TITLE 19 EDUCATION**

### **PART 2 TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY**

### **CHAPTER 130 TEXAS ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

### **SUBCHAPTER R CAREER READINESS INDIVIDUALIZED for TRANSITION, EMPLOYMENT READINESS**

## **RULES**

**§131.401 Background and Explanation for C-RITER, Proposed 2021**

**§131.402 Making Connections I (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

**§131.403 Making Connections II (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

**§131.404 Making Connections III (One Credit), Proposed 2021 §131.405 Making Connections IV (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

**§131.406 Methodology for Academic and Personal Success (MAPS) (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

**§131.407 Community Transportation (One Credit), Proposed 2021 §131.408 General Employability Skills (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

**§131.409 Student to Industry Connection (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

## **§131.401**

### **Background and Explanation for C-RITES, Proposed 2021**

(a) Background and Explanation: Traditionally, students who receive special education services who are not able to fully meet the certification requirements offered under other CTE courses of study have had to rely on a unstable selection of innovative coursework in order to access coursework that can be individualized to meet student specific needs. The proposed "Subchapter R" would collect the applicable courses, as well as proposed classes, in one area, housed under the CTE umbrella.

General requirements. These courses are recommended for students in Grades 9-12.

Students shall be awarded one-half credit per semester of state elective credit for successful completion of each course.

(b) Introduction.

(1) Career and technical education instruction provides content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills for students to further their education and succeed in current or emerging professions. Students who need specially designed instruction and may not be able to complete a certificate are frequently unable to participate in these courses.

(2) The Transition and Employment Readiness Cluster focuses on meeting the student's individualized student's needs while introducing them to Texas's diverse economic landscape, potential employment and transition resources and...

## **§131.402**

### **Making Connections I (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

(a) Course Description: The Making Connections course sequence serves students who have an autism spectrum disorder, specific learning disability or a related disorder such as social (pragmatic) communication disorder, which causes them to have difficulty with social skills or communication. The courses also assist the students with developing and generalizing appropriate and beneficial social skills and in turn increases that student's postsecondary outcome. Making Connections I assists the students in developing an understanding of the student's disability and how to request reasonable accommodations in a post-secondary or workplace setting. The course also assists the students in developing and generalizing appropriate and beneficial social skills and in turn increases that student's postsecondary outcome.

(b) General requirements. Students shall be awarded one-half credit for successful completion of the course. The Making Connections courses do not have to be taken in a sequential manner, however it is recommended.

(c) Knowledge and Skills

1. Disability Awareness. The student develops an understanding of autism and other related disorders. The student is expected to: a. use various resources to research autism and related disorders; b. identify and describe the typical deficits consistent in autism and related disabilities such as social (pragmatic) communication disorder; and c. identify and describe the atypical behaviors of autism and related disorders such as restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities.

2. Personal Growth and Awareness. The student analyzes how autism spectrum disorder or a related disorder has impacted the student. The student is expected to:

a. analyze the student's current social skills by completing a social skills inventory;

b. analyze the results of the social skills inventory and observations of the student's behavior to recognize specific strengths and deficits ;

c. identify the student's individual strengths;

d. compare strategies and skills that will allow the student to mediate the disability;

e. summarize what impact the student's social deficits may be having on academic and social success;

f. identify any environments or situations in which the student's atypical behaviors, such as stemming, are useful or socially acceptable; and

g. evaluate various strategies to increase the student's prosocial behaviors and decrease problematic behaviors.

3. Personal Growth and Awareness. The student develops a plan to eliminate or decrease the frequency and intensity of the atypical behaviors deemed inappropriate, nonfunctional, or detrimental to the student's academic and social success. The student is expected to: a. practice the formulated plan to eliminate or decrease the frequency and intensity of the atypical behaviors within the classroom; b. implement the plan across all settings for a set period of time;

c. record and analyze data such as frequency of implementation of plan, antecedent of each incident, or consequence of each incident as observed during plan implementation;

d. evaluate the success of the plan at decreasing the frequency and intensity of atypical behaviors; and e. make any adjustments to the plan and employ the new plan for a period of time while recording the data.

4. Social Awareness. The student demonstrates an understanding of academic and social expectations in the student's high school. The student is expected to:

a. discuss, observe, and roleplay socially appropriate and expected behaviors in each school setting under various circumstances;

b. demonstrate socially appropriate and expected behaviors in prescribed situations across various educational settings such as initiating a conversation, ending a conversation, joining a conversation, making a phone call to a peer, making a phone call to a teacher, sending an email to a peer, sending an email to a teacher, using humor appropriately, participating in a group activity, or participating in a competitive activity; and

c. record and analyze data as to when the student demonstrated socially appropriate and expected behaviors and what the results of those behaviors were.

5. Personal Growth and Awareness. The student compares various organizational strategies and determines an organizational strategy that will best work for the student. The student is expected to:

a. apply organizational strategies successfully in order to meet assignment deadlines, locate needed supplies, and maintain an orderly work area;

b. examine the outcome of the organizational strategy by comparing previous strategies used and whether or not the current strategy was successful;

c. document if the student has missing assignments and zeros in grade books;

d. determine the effectiveness of the strategy by monitoring student success using the selected strategies; and

e. make adjustments to the strategy in order to increase its effectiveness such as decreasing number of missing assignments and having all needed supplies.

6. Social Success. The student employs and demonstrates appropriate interactions with peers, teachers, and other school personnel. The student is expected to:

- a. identify the steps to build positive relationships with peers, teachers, and other school personnel;
- b. practice skills needed to initiate, and maintain relationships with peers, teachers, and other school personnel;
- c. identify and describe various social organizations and clubs in the school;
- d. summarize the pros and cons of joining social organizations and the social expectations of those groups;
- e. apply social strategies in various settings;
- f. evaluate the strategies used and continue to refine the skills;
- g. demonstrate socially appropriate behaviors with increased frequency while demonstrating a reduction in frequency or intensity of socially inappropriate behaviors in various school settings during authentic situations; and
- h. compare the student's resulting social skills with the student's initial social skills by completing a second social skills inventory.

7. Social Awareness in the Community. The student demonstrates an understanding of social expectations in various community settings. The student is expected to:

- a. observe, discuss, and roleplay socially appropriate and expected behaviors in various community settings under various circumstances;
- b. record and analyze data as to when the student demonstrated socially appropriate and expected behaviors and what the consequences of those behaviors were;
- c. develop a plan to modify appropriate social skills during the next community experience in order to build and maintain relationships as well as successfully participate in social or professional networks; and
- d. evaluate the employed strategies and continue to refine the skills.

8. Future Planning. The student investigates postsecondary options. The student is expected to:

- a. identify postsecondary options in school, living arrangements, and community;
  - b. discuss the pros and cons of the various postsecondary options;
- and

- c. identify the student's individual areas of strength and need for each of the various options.

### **§131.403**

#### **Making Connections II (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

(a) General requirements. Students shall be awarded one-half credit for successful completion of the course. The Making Connections courses do not have to be taken in a sequential manner, however it is recommended.

(b) Introduction. The Making Connections courses serve students who have an autism spectrum disorder or a related disorder, such as social (pragmatic) communication disorder, which causes them to have difficulty with social skills. These courses assist the students in developing and understanding autism spectrum disorder and other related disorders. The courses also assist students with developing and generalizing appropriate and beneficial social skills and increase student's postsecondary outcomes. Making Connections II assists students with understanding true friendships. Their enrollment in this course assists students to develop and maintain relationships.

(c) Knowledge and Skills.

1. Disability Awareness. The student examines the impact that autism and other related disorders can have on the ability to develop, maintain, and understand relationships. The student is expected to:

- a. use various resources to research;

- b. express an understanding of explain the student's specific manifestations of autism how they impact the student's social progress;

- c. research the impact that deficits related to autism such as social communication deficits or adaptive skill deficits have on individuals with autism in various aspects of their lives including school, family, and postsecondary settings;

- d. examine the number and quality of personal interactions that occur during and after school; and e. determine if increased efforts toward understanding, developing, and maintaining relationships would be beneficial to the student.

2. Social Awareness. The student demonstrates an understanding of friendship. The student is expected to:

- a. identify the student's interests or skills that may be of interest to peers;

- b. identify activities in which the student is currently involved that may



enable the student to develop friendships based on shared interests;

c. analyze aspects of the student's behavior that may solicit or prevent friendships;

d. identify behaviors that the student wants to change to allow the student to develop more appropriate friendships; and

e. identify, develop, and employ strategies to address the student's problem behaviors that prevent appropriate friendships.

3. Social Awareness. The student demonstrates an understanding of appropriate friendships versus inappropriate friendships. The student is expected to:

a. compare and contrast the qualities of appropriate and inappropriate friendships;

b. identify and discuss behaviors that make others appropriate friends to pursue;

c. identify and discuss behaviors that make others inappropriate friends;

d. analyze the behaviors of peers through modeling, roleplay, and natural opportunities and describe those behaviors as demonstrating social acceptance or rejection; and

e. roleplay and participate in natural opportunities of initiating conversation, and sharing information with a peer regarding each other, and the student's individual experiences or interests.

4. Personal Growth and Awareness. The student demonstrates an understanding of negative attention from peers and identifies multiple ways in which to cope with that attention. The student is expected to:

a. identify various ways that students receive negative attention from peers such as teasing, physical bullying, cyber bullying, and rumors or gossip;

b. differentiate between peer rejection and bullying;

c. analyze roleplay situations involving negative attention from peers to another;

d. compare and contrast possible action plans for the student to pursue when receiving negative attention such as accessing available support systems, ignoring the peer, or attempting to have a

conversation with the peer;

e. characterize personality traits and behaviors that inspire confidence and trust in others and identify those traits and behaviors in current personal relationships; and

f. roleplay scenarios of peer interaction and discuss actions or steps the student could take in the scenarios or in previous circumstances to practice preventative as well as coping strategies.

5. Social Success. The student engages in conflict resolution. The student is expected to:

a. identify strategies for remaining calm in stressful situations such as deep breathing, counting backwards, or taking a break;

b. discuss, observe, and roleplay the behaviors such as the appropriate use of prosody, tone, volume, and cadence a person employs when engaging in effective conflict resolution;

c. discuss, observe, and roleplay the appropriate use of body language such as proximity, facial expressions, arms and hand movements, eye contact, and shoulder placement during effective conflict resolution;

d. discuss, observe, and roleplay the use of appropriate conflict resolution phrases to express frustration;

e. discuss, observe, and roleplay the use of statements that express an interest and empathic understanding another person's point of view to resolve conflict;

f. discuss, observe, and roleplay expressing an opinion in a respectful manner;

g. discuss, observe, and roleplay listening respectfully to another person's opinion;

h. discuss, observe, and roleplay developing a mutually agreed upon plan of action to resolve a conflict and to prevent further conflict; and

i. discuss, observe, and roleplay coping skills to employ when a conflict does not end in a resolution.

6. Social Awareness in the community. The student develops strategies for initiating, maintaining, and understanding relationships. The student is expected to:

a. describe the various settings in which the student has the

opportunity to develop friendships;

b. discuss strategies for developing friendships in various community settings;

c. employ strategies for developing friendships in various settings; and

d. examine the effectiveness of each strategy or developing friendships in natural settings.

7. Future Planning. The student describes the importance of developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships. The student is expected to:

a. identify current appropriate friendships;

b. develop a plan for developing more appropriate friendships in multiple settings such as school and work; and

c. develop a plan for maintaining friendships throughout high school.

### **§131.404**

#### **Making Connections III (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

(a) General requirements. Students shall be awarded one-half credit for successful completion of the course. The Making Connections courses do not have to be taken in a sequential manner, however it is recommended.

(b) Introduction. The Making Connections courses serve students who have an autism spectrum disorder or a related disorder, such social (pragmatic) communication disorder, which causes them to have difficulty with social skills. These courses assist the students in developing and understanding autism spectrum disorder and other related disorders. The courses also assist students with developing and generalizing appropriate and beneficial social skills, which may lead to increased postsecondary outcomes. Making Connections III assists students in understanding how their specific disability impacts their learning style. Students learn to employ the proper accommodations and modifications to be more successful. Additionally, they develop skills to effectively self-advocate for the accommodations and modifications they require.

(c) Knowledge and Skills

1. Disability Awareness. The student develops an understanding of autism and specific implications concerning an individual's learning style. The student is expected to:

a. identify and describe the common relative strengths and weaknesses consistent to those on the autism spectrum;

b. use various resources to research the typical learning styles of individuals on the spectrum; and

c. compare various effective interventions for individuals on the spectrum.

2. Personal Growth and Awareness. The student analyzes the learning style and study skills, and accommodations that would most benefit the student. The student is expected to:

a. analyze study skill preferences by completing a learning inventory;

b. identify the student's preferred learning style;

c. compare learning strategies such as typing notes or listening to audio lectures and discuss how the strategies align with the student's preferred learning style; and

d. identify the strategies including accommodations that will be most effective in each of the student's classes.

3. Social Awareness. The student demonstrates self-advocacy skills in roleplay scenarios and in authentic situations. The student is expected to:

a. compare advocacy and self-advocacy;

b. discuss the benefits of becoming an effective self-advocate; c. discuss, observe, and roleplay the steps of effective self-advocacy;

d. demonstrate appropriate and effective self-advocacy in real situations;

e. evaluate the student's effectiveness in self-advocacy; and

f. develop a plan for improvement in future situations requiring self-advocacy such as developing a list of the available support systems to access in various scenarios or environments or developing a task analysis to effectively communicate frustration.

4. Personal Growth and Awareness. The student explains the purpose and goals of the Admission Review and Dismissal Committee (ARD-C). The student is expected to:

a. identify the essential components of the student's IEP such as academic goals, behavior intervention plan, behavior and social skills goals, autism supplement, and transition plan;

b. demonstrate the ability to discuss the student's disability, including identifying strengths, acknowledging needs, and participating in the development of plans to address those needs; and

c. evaluate each accommodation and modification to determine the student's need for that service based on its effectiveness and appropriateness; and

d. communicate effectively and respectfully the student's needs and rights according to law and the student's IEP.

5. Self-Advocacy. The student advocates for appropriate accommodations and modifications in the classroom. The student is expected to:

a. discuss various self-advocacy strategies;

b. employ self-advocacy strategies to ensure all needed and agreed upon accommodations and modifications are available;

c. roleplay respectful approaches in informing teachers of the appropriate accommodations or modifications the student receives; and

d. review and articulate disability rights for Texas students with disabilities.

6. Social Awareness in the Community. The student explains that accommodations and modifications needed in the educational setting may also be needed in other community settings. The student is expected to:

a. compare the student's needs in community settings to the student's needs in the educational setting;

b. identify how accommodations provided to the student at school can be used to mitigate demands in other settings;

c. roleplay the use of accommodations and modifications in various community settings;

d. practice the use of accommodations and modifications in community settings; and e. analyze the effectiveness of accommodations and modifications and make necessary changes.

7. Future Planning. The student discusses transition goals and adjusts goals based on various feedback. The student is expected to:

a. identify the student's graduation plan;

- b. identify all credits and assessments needed for graduation;
- c. develop a plan for the completion of required courses;
- d. discuss the importance of having a state identification card and develop a plan to obtain one;
- e. discuss the components of an effective resume such as work experience, volunteer work, involvement in school organizations, and mastery of marketable skills;
- f. practice completing a job application and developing a resume;
- g. discuss, observe, and roleplay socially appropriate and marketable behaviors to demonstrate in an interview such as appropriate dress for various interviews, promptness, eye contact, and answering questions regarding marketable strengths and weaknesses;
- h. practice skills in real-world situations and analyze how the interactions were successful and/or unsuccessful; and
- i. develop a plan for how the student will engage in real-world situations in the future.

### **§131.405**

#### **Making Connections IV (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

(a) General requirements. Students shall be awarded one-half credit for successful completion of the course. The Making Connections courses do not have to be taken in a sequential manner, however it is recommended. Enrollment in Making Connections IV is recommended for students grades 11-12.

(b) Introduction. The Making Connections courses serve students who have an autism spectrum disorder or a related disorder such as social (pragmatic) communication disorder which causes them to have difficulty with social skills. These courses assist the students in developing and understanding autism spectrum disorder and other related disorders. The courses also assist the students with developing and generalizing appropriate and beneficial social skills and in turn increases that student's postsecondary outcome. Making Connections IV assists students with developing skills to effectively employ collaborative problem solving.

(c) Knowledge and Skills

1. Disability Awareness. The student develops an understanding of how autism

may impact a person's ability to engage in collaborative problem solving. The student is expected to:

- a. research repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities and how these factors may impact an individual with autism's ability to use collaborative problem solving skills; and
- b. explain how collaborative problem solving skills may impact an individual with autism's education and employment success.

2. Personal Growth and Awareness. The student identifies personal abilities and weaknesses related to collaborative problem solving. The student is expected to:

- a. evaluate statements regarding an individual with Autism's ability to engage in collaborative problem solving and compare to the student's experience;
- b. identify aspects of the student's behavior and belief system which may need to be modified to successfully engage in collaborative problem solving; and
- c. develop a plan to effectively employ collaborative problem solving strategies in various circumstances.

3. Social Success. The student engages in collaborative problem solving techniques. The student is expected to:

- a. identify multiple facets of an identified problem;
- b. generate multiple possible strategies to solve an identified problem;
- c. identify and discuss the pros and cons of each generated strategy;
- d. determine a strategy to employ; e. delineate the roles of each member in a collaborative group;

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f. employ the agreed upon strategy and record observations or resulting data;

g. discuss the results and effectiveness of the selected strategy in solving an identified problem;

h. evaluate the outcomes and effectiveness of different collaborative problem solving strategies; and

i. determine what strategy may be most effective in the future; and

j. assist other students with identifying and developing skills to employ collaborative problem solving.

4. Social Awareness. The student engages in social, or group, problem solving. The student is expected to:

- a. identify the who, what, when, where, and why of a given social situation;
- b. document the student's behavior in response to a social situation;
- c. compare the outcome of a social situation with the student's intended outcome;
- d. analyze the perspective of other individuals involved in the social situation;
- e. analyze the cause-and-effect relationship between one's behaviors and the student's relationships with others;
- f. identify potential solutions to a problem in a social situation;
- g. describe the pros and cons of various solutions, including analyzing the perspective of others and predicting the likelihood that the student can effectively employ the solution;
- h. analyze past social interaction by employing strategies such as social autopsies for real-world situations and roleplays of interactions that are not successful;
- i. roleplay the solution in which the student should have engaged in; and
- j. determine the student's course of action for potential problems that may occur in upcoming social settings.

5. Social Awareness in the Community. The student assists a peer in a mentor-mentee relationship in the school environment. The student is expected to:

- a. demonstrate empathy and use knowledge of the school, and understanding of the student's disability to build a mentor relationship with a student mentee;
- b. assist the student mentee with navigating the school, including highlighting routines, expectations, and social skills of each setting;
- c. use conversation strategies to learn about and build rapport with the



student's mentee;

- d. assist the student mentee in identifying the mentee's area of needs and what available support systems such as teachers and counselors are available in the school to address those needs; and
- e. identify and discuss the student's personal experience with having a disability and how that recognition and understanding has positively impacted the student's success in school and community such as enabling the student and teachers to ensure the adequate and effective implementation of accommodations and modifications and promoting the student's ability to self-advocate.

6. Future Planning. The student identifies a post-secondary plan and takes steps to succeed in that plan. The student is expected to:

- a. identify and discuss the student's post-secondary plan;
- b. identify the steps necessary to successfully initiate the post-secondary plan;
- c. identify steps that can be taken prior to graduation such as completing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application, meeting with a transition specialist, comparing colleges with the student's desired degree, scheduling and completing college entrance exams, completing job applicants, and comparing available living arrangements in the college or work area;
- d. participate in mock interviews and utilize critiques appropriately to increase the student's employment opportunities; e. research available accommodations at the post-secondary institution or work place; and f. compare the student's current accommodations and/or modifications with the available accommodations at the post-secondary institution or work place the student is interested in.

## **§131.405**

### **Methodology for Academic and Personal Success (MAPS) (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

(a) Introduction

1. The course focuses on the skills and strategies necessary for students to make a successful transition into high school and an academic career.

2. Students will explore the options available in high school, higher education, and the professional world in order to establish both immediate and long-range personal goals.

(b) Knowledge and Skills

1. Learning and Communication Styles. The student explores and analyzes the basic concepts of learning and communication styles based on current research and practices effective communication. The student is expected to:

- a. determine the student's personal learning style;
- b. determine the student's personal communication style;

c. demonstrate effective communication in a variety of situations with varied audiences;

d. formulate and provide effective verbal and nonverbal feedback and respond appropriately to presentations of peers;

e. synthesize research and self-analysis in order to establish individual strategies for academic and personal success;

f. demonstrate tolerance and appreciation of other's motivation and strengths; and

g. identify and monitor behaviors of personal academic success that are critical in maintaining a passing average.

2. Self-Discipline and Attitude. The student reviews campus policies and rules of conduct and defines attitude and the effects of personal attitude on conduct. The student is expected to:

a. brainstorm and compile a code of conduct for a model campus;

b. demonstrate understanding of existing campus policies;

c. define attitude and explore the potential effects of personal attitude on human interactions;

d. identify the student's personal attitude and the positive and negative effects of attitude on self and others;

e. identify the student's personal ability to adhere to campus policies and design a plan

of improvement as needed;

f. define anger and analyze positive and negative methods for handling anger; g. define change and identify steps necessary to accomplish change; and h. analyze situations regarding campus policies and rules of conduct to determine the basic issue or problem involved in each, outline possible responses, and propose a positive solution.

3. Resiliency. The student reviews and understands personal and environmental resiliency builders to use in establishing and realizing goals. The student is expected to:

a. identify and discuss elements of personal and environmental resiliency;

b. explain the concept of self-image and its potential impact on life choices;

c. apply conflict resolution skills both orally and in writing;

d. demonstrate an awareness of and explain primary causes of stress and identify healthy stress management skills;

e. identify and clearly articulate a balanced set of personal and academic goals, including both short-term and long-term goals; and

f. outline an action plan, including a proposed time frame, to achieve a specific goal.

4. Time Management and Organization. The student understands the skills of time management and the tools of organization. The student is expected to:

a. demonstrate an understanding of time management skills including prioritizing and scheduling;

b. define and demonstrate responsibility and accountability in time management;

c. describe tools of organization including different methods of organization;

d. prioritize personal and academic goals; and

e. develop a personal organization system, including creating and maintaining an ongoing calendar of assignments and projects for all academic courses.

5. Study Skills. The student analyzes the characteristics of a successful student and practices effective study skills. The student is expected to:

- a. define the characteristics of a successful student;
- b. analyze the benefits of good study habits and the costs of poor ones;
- c. discuss and apply the learning cycle;
- d. discuss and demonstrate use of a variety of memory techniques;
- e. demonstrate the ability to follow directions and to listen for a specific purpose;
- f. demonstrate and use reading strategies, including rereading and questioning;
- g. demonstrate and practice study strategies such as skimming, note-taking, outlining, and using study-guide questions;
- h. discuss and apply test-taking strategies; and
- i. present on the use and benefits of one of the study skills.

6. Leadership. The student explores and analyzes the role and characteristics of an effective leader in order to demonstrate leadership in a group setting. The student is expected to:

- a. define leadership;
- b. list and analyze the characteristics of an effective leader, including the interpersonal skills required for leadership;
- c. evaluate personal strengths and weaknesses to determine one's own leadership style;
- d. define what it means to delegate and identify the purpose and benefit of delegating; and
- e. participate in group projects as both the leader and a supporting member.

7. Character. The student explores and analyzes positive character. The student is expected to:

- a. define positive character traits including responsibility, perseverance, caring, self-discipline, citizenship, honesty, courage, fairness, respect, and trustworthiness
- b. define character and describe someone in history who can be considered a person of character;

- c. identify positive and negative strategies for dealing with failure and with success;
- d. evaluate personal strategies for dealing with failure and with success, identifying specific strengths and weaknesses;
- e. analyze positive and negative influences that others have on personal action and beliefs;
- f. identify areas in which personal responsibility may be exercised or improved;
- g. formulate five personal standards of conduct for which the student will not compromise;
- h. discuss ethical behavior and integrity;
- i. define citizenship and discuss the positive traits that indicate good citizenship; and
- j. critique examples of people who display positive traits of citizenship and who fail to display the positive traits of citizenship.

8. Academic Exploration. The student explores and analyzes interests and goals in order to establish a plan for academic success that continues throughout high school into postsecondary education. The student is expected to:

- a. determine individual talents, abilities, skills, and interests;
- b. complete a college choice survey;
- c. select a university, college, community college, trade school or internship and develop a plan to enter or start selected post high school career plan;
- d. identify high school courses related to career choices in the student's interest area;
- e. write professional letters requesting information from the programs listed in his/her college choice survey; and
- f. write a college entrance essay and complete a college application.

9. Career Exploration. The student researches, analyzes, and applies career

information. The student is expected to:

- a. complete a career interest and aptitude assessment or survey;
- b. match interests and aptitudes to career opportunities;
- c. recognize and understand the impact of career choice on lifestyle, including budget;
- d. create a personal career portfolio by conducting an in-depth study of the varied aspects of occupations related to the student's interest areas;
- e. research careers available with and without a college/university degree using print and online resources as well as personal interviews;
- f. analyze the personal characteristics, knowledge and skills necessary for the workplace;
- g. learn how to search for a job, collect personal references, complete a job application, or apply for an internship;
- h. identify and practice the skills necessary for a job interview and participate in a formal mock job interview;
- i. prepare and deliver presentations individually and in groups to demonstrate knowledge of career possibilities and the decision process involved in identifying career goals; and
- j. develop a model resume for a career opportunity in the student's area of interest.

### **§131.407**

#### **Community Transportation (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

(a) General Requirements. Students shall receive one half credit for the successful course completion.

(b) Introduction.

1. Instruction provides relevant technical knowledge and skills for students to increase knowledge, skills, and competence with accessing various forms of travel within the community setting while exercising safety standards.

2. Instruction focuses on applying skills acquired with authentic community-based experiences in ways that prepare students for post-secondary employment, education, and

training.

(c) Knowledge and Skills.

1. Introduction to Public Transportation. The student applies knowledge of public transportation systems to explain the need for and how to access public transportation, including bike share, personal transporters, demand response, fixed route, and ride hailing services. The student is expected to:

- a. describe the components of and the need for public transportation;
- b. examine the relationship between the advances in transit technology, changes in transportation enterprises, and U.S. urban development;
- c. describe the positive and negative impacts of the changes in urban travel methods and patterns during the past 90 years;
- d. investigate the historic and current trends impacting public transportation including safety concerns, environmental concerns, customer convenience, and cost-effectiveness;
- e. categorize the types of public transportation available in communities, including bike share, personal transporters, demand response, fixed route, and ride hailing;
- f. compare public transportation needs and public transportation services in urban, suburban, and rural communities;
- g. research public transportation options for a given route; and
- h. research and demonstrate the use of technology options available that aid in public transportation,

2. Technology Applications. The student investigates and evaluates technology applications that aid in transportation planning. The student is expected to:

- a. investigate websites related to local transportation options;
- b. compare and contrast websites for accessibility, ease of use, and level of information;
- c. propose the most efficient mode of transportation for need based on transportation websites;

- d. evaluate transportation and mapping apps for navigation planning;
- e. rate various mobile applications based on accessibility, ease of use, and level of information; and
- f. design a navigation plan using local transportation websites or transportation and mapping applications.

3. Navigational Strategies. The student examines navigational strategies to plan and execute cost- and time-efficient trips within the community. The student is expected to:

- a. compare and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of various modes of public transportation;
- b. interpret public transportation maps and schedules to determine the cost and time to reach various destinations;

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- c. calculate transit vehicle and passenger capacity;
- d. create a navigation plan comparing cost of transportation options and time allotment to determine the most efficient mode of transportation; and
- e. use directional skills, transportation applications, and mapping tools to plan and follow best route to destination.

4. Community Awareness. The student will apply travel skills to access points of interest. The student is expected to:

- a. identify and explain the function for various community offices and agencies that are needed in employment or personal pursuits;
- b. research the location of and create a navigation plan to relevant community offices and agencies such as Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), Social Security Administration, Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), and Mental Health/Mental Retardation (MH/MR); and



c. research the location of and create a navigation plan to employment opportunities, education and training locations, and recreational and social activities.

5. Pedestrian Safety. The student applies pedestrian safety awareness for independent travel within the community. The student is expected to:

- a. research the purpose and availability of sidewalks;
- b. investigate sidewalk design and Americans with Disabilities Acts (ADA) guidelines;
- c. explain the various sidewalk zones and the functions of each;
- d. identify various types of intersections being crossed and various types of traffic control at intersections;
- e. explain the meaning of street safety signage;
- f. judge the distance and speed of moving vehicles;
- g. predict needed adaptations to safety precautions during adverse weather and various times of day;
- h. compare needed adaptations to safety precautions when traveling in urban, suburban, and rural areas; and i. compare mapping applications to plan a walking route.

6. Rider Safety. The student demonstrates skills for safely riding public transportation. The student is expected to:

- a. wait for passengers to exit before boarding;
- b. stand behind white line at the front of the bus;
- c. hold onto the handrail when standing;
- d. leave front seats available for elderly and disabled passengers;
- e. keep noise level at a minimum;
- f. pay attention to surroundings; and
- g. keep hands and feet to self.

7. Bike Share. The student evaluates bike share as an option for public

transportation. The student is expected to:

- a. define bikeshare and the need for it as a public transportation option;
- b. investigate bicycle safety regulations, including right of way and bike lanes;
- c. calculate the cost and time efficiency of using bike share as a transportation option;
- d. evaluate applications related to bike share use;
- e. demonstrate how to locate and access bike share locations using technology applications;
- f. compare mapping applications to plan a route using bike share; and
- g. demonstrate use of bike share following safety protocols and regulations.

8. Personal Transporters. The student analyzes personal transporters as an option for public transportation. The student is expected to:

- a. define personal transporter, such as a scooter or Segway, and the need for it as a public transportation option;
- b. examine the history and development of technology for personal transporters;
- c. categorize types of personal transporters and the functions for each;
- d. explain safety requirements and sidewalk regulations for personal transporter use;
- e. evaluate applications related to personal transporter use; f. demonstrate how to locate and access personal transporter stations using applications;
- g. calculate cost and time efficiency of using a personal transporter as a transportation option;
- h. compare mapping applications to plan a route using a personal transporter; and

i. demonstrate use of personal transporters following safety protocols and regulations.

9. Demand-Response. The student investigates and evaluates demand-response and paratransit transportation as options for public transportation. The student is expected to:

a. define demand-response transportation and the need for it as a public transportation option;

b. examine the types of demand-response transportation, including shuttles, vanpools, and Dial-a-Ride and the functions for each;

c. define paratransit and the need for it as a public transportation option;

d. explain ADA guidelines for paratransit eligibility;

e. calculate cost and time efficiency of using demand-response transportation;

f. compare and contrast demand-response and fixed route transportation;

g. determine and apply communication skills needed to access demand-response transportation; and

h. develop environmental awareness to assess for safety, including personal space and boundaries.

10. Fixed Route. The student researches and assesses fixed route transportation as an option for public transportation. The student is expected to:

a. define fixed route transportation and the need for it as a public transportation option;

b. compare and contrast fixed route and flex route transportation;

c. examine the types of fixed route transportation, including buses, vans, and light rail and the functions for each;

d. explain ADA guidelines for fixed route accessibility;

e. calculate cost and time efficiency of using fixed route transportation;

f. evaluate applications related to fixed route use;

g. demonstrate how to locate and access fixed route stops and stations using applications; and

h. compare mapping applications to plan a route using fixed route transportation.

11. Ride Hailing. The student investigates and assess ride hailing as an option for transportation. The student is expected to:

a. define ride hailing and the need for it as a transportation option;

b. analyze the types of ride hailing services such as Uber and LYFT and the functions for each;

c. assess cost and time efficiency for using a ride hailing service;

d. compare and contrast applications related to ride hailing services; and

e. demonstrate effective use of applications for accessing a ride hailing service.

12. Communication. The student demonstrates appropriate social and communication skills in relationship to safe travel skills. The student is expected to:

a. ask the driver or operator for help as needed;

b. communicate appropriately with fellow riders;

c. compare and contrast the positive and negative ways the physical environment can affect communication and describe situations when communication would be difficult;

d. identify and apply appropriate communication techniques for specific relationships such as using slang with peers and words that are more formal with adults; and

e. demonstrate safety procedures and communication skills needed while using various types of public transportation.

13. Self-Advocacy. The student demonstrates self-advocacy skills necessary when using public transportation. The student is expected to:

- a. role play effective safety procedures if lost including asking for help;
- b. create a resource list of phone numbers, websites, and applications and justify the need for each;
- c. identify the procedures for filing positive feedback or a complaint if needed; and
- d. explain personal rights and responsibilities.

### **§131.408**

#### **General Employability Skills (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

(a) Introduction: This course provides students with knowledge of the prerequisite skills for general employment as well as the means of obtaining those skills. Employability skills include fundamentals of maintenance of personal appearance and grooming. The course also includes the knowledge, skills, and

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attitudes that allow employees to get along with their co-workers, make important work-related decisions, and become strong members of the work team. Discovering job possibilities that link skills, abilities, interests, values, needs, and work environment preferences is a part of the process of obtaining employability skills and abilities and is experiential learning that takes place over time. This course is designed to guide students in obtaining the knowledge and the needed employability skills that are transferable among a variety of jobs and careers and are considered essential in any employment situation. Students will learn and apply basic knowledge of what is expected in the workplace.

(b) It is crucial for students to acquire general employability skills as a part of their educational foundation before they can be successful in career development and CTE courses that have been designed to prepare high school students for the workplace. This course is designed to educate students on the skills that are considered essential in any employment situation, including personal appearance, job-related social skills, working as a member of a team, organization, and work ethic. Students learn and apply basic knowledge of what is expected in the workplace to prepare for future career success.

(c) Knowledge and skills

1. The student demonstrates general employability skills by maintaining basic requirements of personal health, hygiene, and grooming. The student is expected to:

- a. evaluate the importance of grooming, hygiene, and appearance in personal and professional settings;

b. select and maintain clothing to maximize appearance for a variety of possible employment experiences; and

c. evaluate the effects of a balanced diet on health, appearance, and effective job performance.

2. The student demonstrates social interaction skills necessary for personal and career success. The student is expected to:

a. demonstrate conventional social behaviors when interacting with peers and adults in work-based scenarios by:

- i. using appropriate greetings;
- ii. saying please and thank you;
- iii. giving and receiving compliments;
- iv. giving and receiving apologies;
- v. accepting consequences for actions and learning from mistakes;
- vi. differentiating between interactions at work and outside of work;
- vii. accepting feedback concerning various job behaviors; and

b. practice social skills in work-based scenarios by:

- i. working effectively under different styles of supervision;
- ii. working cooperatively as a member of a team;
- iii. working effectively with people who have different personalities;
- iv. helping others when asked or without being asked; and v. demonstrating appropriate interactions with authority figures.

3. The student demonstrates personal characteristics that will result in success in the workplace. The student is expected to:

a. apply effective management skills, such as time management and organization, to facilitate task completion;

b. use specific verbal and written language to communicate needs and ideas;

c. apply problem-solving strategies for effective decision making;

d. practice strategies for negotiation and conflict resolution;

e. demonstrate effective communication skills including verbal, non-verbal, written, and electronic;

f. set long-term goals and short-term objectives for personal growth;

and

g. apply stress management techniques.

4. The student demonstrates employability skills for success in a variety of job settings. The student is expected to:

a. evaluate interests, abilities, values, and work environment preferences related to career choices;

b. identify expectations of employers such as having a positive attitude, self-reliance, staying on task, being punctual, and displaying initiative;

c. set long-term goals, short-term objectives, and develop action plans related to professional growth;

d. exhibit general employability skills such as regular attendance, team member contributions, and timely task completion;

e. practice the development of positive interpersonal skills in the workplace through role-play; and f. demonstrate appropriate self-advocacy skills.

5. The student explores the Career Clusters as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. The student is expected to:

a. identify at least two Career Clusters that correlate to the results of career interest and aptitude assessments;

b. conduct in-depth studies of one or more Career Clusters of interest to determine career opportunities in that cluster;

c. analyze employability skills found in employment advertisements and databases such as Help Wanted Online in the individual career areas of interest;

d. present an analysis of employability skill findings related to personal career interests;

e. research and present on current topics in employability skills using human resources

publications and other sources of scholarly and professional material;

f. identify academic and technical high school courses related to career choices of interest to the student;

g. compare the educational requirements for careers of personal interest; and

h. create and present an individualized plan of study for at least one career, including the results of personal, financial, and career planning resources, such as Reality Check.

6. The student explores topics related to job searches and interviews. The student is expected to:

a. experiment with the various modes by which a thorough job search can be conducted;

b. identify the different types of employment interviews that are possible;

c. practice possible answers to anticipated questions asked at interviews;

d. demonstrate understanding of the components of interviews including before, during, and after the interview, such as preparation/research, initial interview questions, employers' expectations, and listening and responding; and

e. engage in successful interview strategies through various activities, such as role playing, practice interviews, demonstrations, and evaluations of sample interview case studies.

7. The student demonstrates an understanding of the transition to new employment. The student is expected to:

a. describe the purpose and importance of new employee orientation;

b. describe how group initiation may occur in the workplace; c.

discuss employee benefits, such as pay and health insurance; d.

explain the purpose of a new employee introductory period;

e. describe the need to understand jargon, language, and vocabulary particular to a



position;

f. research the kinds of policies and procedures typically found in a workplace;

g. interpret organizational charts;

h. compare various work styles and settings such as working alone versus working collaboratively; working indoors versus working outdoors; or being a team lead versus a team member;

i. define and explain the various emotions that may accompany new or initial employment, such as feeling overwhelmed, lonely, anxious, dependent, excited, and/or motivated; and

j. research and present on various topics related to work/life balance

### **§131.409**

#### **Student to Industry Connection (One Credit), Proposed 2021**

(a) General Requirements. This course is recommended for students in grades 11 and 12. Recommended prerequisite: successful completion of two career and technical education courses. The course may include a work-based learning component. Students shall be awarded one credit for successful completion of this course.

(b) Introduction.

1. Career and technical education instruction provides content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills for students to further their education and succeed in current or emerging professions.

2. Career development is a lifelong pursuit of answers to the questions: Who am I? Why am I here? What am I meant to do with my life? It is vital that students have a clear sense of direction for their career choice. Career planning is a critical step and is essential to success.

3. The Student to Industry Connection course provides opportunities for students to participate in a work-based learning experience that combines instruction with business and industry employment experiences. The goal is to provide students with a variety of skills for a changing workplace. This course preparation is relevant and rigorous, supports student attainment of academic standards, and effectively prepares students for college and career success.

4. Students are encouraged to participate in extended learning experiences such as career and technical organizations and other leadership or extracurricular organizations.

5. Statements that contain the word "including" reference content that must be mastered, while those containing the phrase "such as" are intended as possible illustrative examples.

(c) Knowledge and Skills.

1. The student demonstrates professional employability skills for the workplace. The student is expected to:

a. discuss how personal integrity affects human relations in the workplace;

b. research characteristics of successful working relationships such as teamwork, conflict resolution, self-control and ability to accept criticism;

c. discuss and analyze employer expectations;

d. identify and demonstrate ways to respect the rights of others in the workplace;

e. explain the importance of applying effective listening skills in the workplace;

f. identify ethical standards that can be demonstrated in the workplace; and

g. describe the importance of complying with organization policies and procedures.

2. The student understands the importance of developing professional relationships with industry mentors who provide career guidance related to the student's career pathway. The student is expected to:

a. describe appropriate professional interaction, both online and face to face, with an industry mentor;

b. describe successful meeting facilitation strategies for industry mentor interactions;

c. describe how the guidance provided by an industry mentor can affect the student's career;

d. describe the role of a mentor in a job search;

e. explain the importance of having a career plan with actionable targets and next steps that can be shared with an industry mentor; and

f. explain how conducting periodic reviews/updates with an industry mentor can affect career success.

3. The student analyzes effective meeting facilitation strategies necessary to be successful in a face to face or a virtual workplace. The student is expected to:

a. identify and apply technical writing skills through electronic communication;

b. management strategies such as agenda creation, establishment of meeting norms, and inclusion of interactive activities;

c. identify and describe group meeting facilitation strategies such as team building skills, managing break-out sessions, and conducting ice breaker activities;

d. identify and apply effective telephone and virtual meeting etiquette; and

e. describe appropriate use and care of company technology and equipment used in a virtual workplace setting.

4. The student exhibits growth mindset strategies for career success. The student is expected to:

a. identify and describe the differences between a growth mindset and a fixed mindset;

b. discuss growth mindset in relation to the occupation of interest;

c. discuss how persistence affects career growth opportunities; and

d. describe how grit can be demonstrated in a workplace setting.

5. The student describes various payroll practices. The students are expected to:

a. describe payroll options such as hourly compensation, commission-based compensation and salaried (exempt) compensation;

- b. distinguish between withholding and deductions; and
  - c. describe the relationship between hours worked and wages earned.
6. The student evaluates how an employer's mission and priorities lead to business success. The student is expected to:
- a. identify and evaluate a company mission statement;
  - b. describe how a company mission statement drives employee actions; and
  - c. develop a list of company priorities based on the company mission statement.
7. The student understands how work-life balance affects employee morale. The student is expected to:
- a. explain the principles of a flexible work schedule and how a flexible work schedule contributes to employee morale in the workplace;
  - b. describe workplace policies/standards that lead to enhanced work-life balance for employees; and
  - c. describe workplace benefits that contribute to employee morale such as family leave or company provided childcare and food services.
8. The student understands the effect of management style on employee performance. The student is expected to:
- a. discuss the different management styles and identify exemplars of each style;
  - b. discuss how different management styles may influence employee productivity, morale, motivation, and job satisfaction;
  - c. analyze various leadership styles in relation to different personality traits;
  - d. evaluate personal leadership style strengths and opportunity areas; and
  - e. develop a plan of action to strengthen the student's leadership style.

9. The student identifies and describes common financial documents used in the workplace. The student is expected to:

- a. identify primary sources of expenses and revenue for the business from reviewing financial documents such as an operating statement;
- b. interpret business financial documents such as balance sheet, income statement, or cash flow statement; and
- c. hypothesize recommendations for increased profitability.

10. The student understands workplace organizational culture and practices including department/teams and their responsibilities. The student is expected to:

- a. describe the workplace structure and hierarchy;
- b. identify the various departments or teams of a workplace and describe how their duties and responsibilities are interrelated; and
- c. describe how collaboration among departments or teams impacts work productivity and quality of work.

11. The student understands professional workplace exit strategies. The student is expected to:

- a. explain the importance of advance written notice and professional ways of submitting notice;
- b. describe proper return of worksite resources;
- c. describe the elements of an exit interview with a supervisor;
- d. compose departure email and voice mail messages as appropriate; and
- e. create follow-up correspondence after exiting a company.

12. The student investigates the impact of community involvement on the success of the business. The student is expected to:

- a. identify ways in which the company engages with the community; and

b. connect community service opportunities to the success of the business