

Texas Educator Certification Examination Program

Field 810: Core EC–6 Special Education

Examination Framework

September 2025

Domain	Range of Competencies
VI. Special Education	001–006

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DOMAIN VI—SPECIAL EDUCATION

Competency 001 (Legal and Ethical Guidelines): *Apply knowledge of applicable state and federal laws and procedures that pertain to special education services.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the major state guidelines (e.g., Texas Administrative Code [TAC]; Admission, Review, and Dismissal [ARD] committee guidelines), federal legislation (e.g., Every Student Succeeds Act [ESSA], Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA], Child Find, Section 504, Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA], Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act [ADAAA]), and key court cases (e.g., *Board of Education v. Rowley*, *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*) that have affected special education.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) eligibility categories for special education and related services and of the similarities and differences between Section 504 plans and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of confidentiality, components, and maintenance of special education eligibility folders (e.g., documentation of receipt of Individualized Education Programs [IEPs] by required staff, storage of folders according to local education agency [LEA] and Texas Education Agency [TEA] requirements).
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of the components of Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and procedures for developing, implementing, and amending IFSPs in collaboration with the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) team and for developing, implementing, and amending IEPs in collaboration with the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee.
- E. Apply knowledge of auditing student class schedules to ensure compliance with least restrictive environment (LRE) and schedule of services in the Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- F. Demonstrate knowledge of the legal responsibility of all school staff to fully implement Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and protect the confidentiality and dignity of students with disabilities.
- G. Apply knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the required members of an Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee and the required components of a standard ARD committee meeting agenda.

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Competency 002 (Knowledge of Learners): *Apply knowledge of understanding how to address each student's developmental, communication, and learning needs.*

For example:

- A. Apply knowledge of how disabilities can impact students' developmental milestones, executive functioning, social skills, and learning.
- B. Apply knowledge of the multiple influences (e.g., biological, physical, emotional, psychological, social, environmental, linguistic) that may affect the individual strengths and needs of students who need varying levels of support in learning and development across the continuum of instructional options (e.g., one-on-one, high support needs, collaborative teaching model) from birth through adolescence.
- C. Apply knowledge of the multiple influences (e.g., biological, physical, emotional, psychological, social, environmental, linguistic) that may affect the individual strengths and needs of students with other identifiers (e.g., gifted and talented, emergent bilingual, highly mobile, at risk) in learning and development from birth through adolescence.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of factors contributing to stress and trauma and differentiate these factors from disabilities, and apply knowledge of how to address stress, trauma, protective factors, resilience, and supportive relationships and of how these factors may impact learning, behavior, motivation, and development in students.
- E. Apply knowledge of how brain development from birth through adolescence impacts students' learning and development (e.g., decision making, problem solving, impulse control, executive functioning, interpersonal relationships).

Competency 003 (Assessment and Program Planning): *Apply knowledge of the evaluation and assessment process; appropriate assessment strategies to inform instructional design and support students; and how to contribute to, monitor, and report on individualized programming for students.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of various forms of assessments (e.g., formative, summative) and their purposes, interpretation, and applications to inform development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to plan and deliver instruction.
- B. Apply knowledge of and strategies for assessing students' learning, behavior, and preferred mode of communication and the structure of the learning environment to evaluate and support classroom and school-based intervention and instruction.
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of administering, interpreting, and gathering baseline data from screening instruments and diagnostic assessments, such as reading, mathematics, and behavior assessments.
- D. Apply knowledge of formative and summative assessments administration, data collection, and record maintenance and of how to use a variety of formative and summative assessment data to identify learning goals and to plan, design, adjust, and adapt instruction or intervention.
- E. Apply knowledge of how to obtain additional expert guidance and promote collaboration (e.g., English as a Second Language [ESL] specialists, bilingual specialists, translators, interpreters, speech-language pathologists [SLPs], behavior specialists, related service specialists), as needed, to ensure an appropriate and valid assessment process.
- F. Apply knowledge of how to interpret results of multiple assessments and evaluation data (e.g., state assessments; district assessments; measures of student functioning; students' educational, physical, and medical needs) to determine if a student is making progress toward measurable outcomes in functional, academic, and/or behavioral goals.

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- G. Apply knowledge of identifying, recommending, and implementing appropriate accommodations and/or modifications during assessment (e.g., for classroom, behavior, state, district, or other assessments) as determined by the Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee.
- H. Apply knowledge of interpreting the results of a variety of assessment data (e.g., classroom, state, and district transition assessments) to describe students' present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP) and progress on annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals.
- I. Interpret and respond to the results of multiple points of assessment data to inform instructional decision making and describe students' progress on and mastery of grade-level Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
- J. Apply knowledge of supporting students in understanding their own assessment data and using these results to self-monitor, self-regulate, self-advocate, and build self-efficacy.
- K. Apply knowledge of the special education teacher's role in creating and implementing the Individualized Education Program (IEP) with fidelity, including collecting data and monitoring students' progress toward IEP goals, and reporting interpretable progress to students and their parents/guardians throughout the year.
- L. Apply knowledge of how students' academic, social, communication, and functional developmental characteristics impact their levels of support needs in Individualized Education Program (IEP) development, and demonstrate knowledge of coordinating effectively with staff and service providers to utilize assessment data to provide appropriate academic, social, communication, and behavioral supports.
- M. Apply knowledge of using a variety of assessment data to inform the drafting of students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) (e.g., writing measurable annual goals, describing present levels of academic achievement and functional performance [PLAAFP], identifying accommodations and modifications, taking into consideration the continuum of placement and least restrictive environment [LRE]).
- N. Apply knowledge of preparing for an Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee meeting (e.g., collecting required data, interpreting the results of progress monitoring and classroom assessment data, visually representing and interpreting data to show student progress) and of preparing and supporting students to participate in and lead ARD committee discussions regarding progress on Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals, mastery of grade-level Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), appropriate accommodations (e.g., academic, behavior, state and district assessments), and other supplements as needed.

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Competency 004 (Curricular Knowledge and Instructional Practices): *Apply knowledge of how to implement curriculum through relevant and appropriate content and specialized instructional strategies to guide and promote students' development and learning; plan instruction based on students' strengths and needs that is meaningful and challenging; and use practices to create safe learning environments and support students' positive behavior.*

For example:

- A. Apply content-specific knowledge to develop specially designed instruction, goals, and objectives that are aligned with early numeracy, early literacy, and pre-academic skills according to the *Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines* and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for students receiving special education services and those suspected to have a disability, including students with high support needs.
- B. Apply knowledge of designing appropriate learning and performance accommodations and modifications to differentiate and/or develop specially designed instruction for students across academic subject-matter content of the general education curriculum and to provide access to instructional materials for a wide range of student performance levels (e.g., content-specific vertical alignment).
- C. Apply knowledge of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) subject matter and specialized curricula to inform programmatic and instructional decisions for students receiving special education services and to integrate TEKS subject matter with specialized instructional strategies and specialized curricula implementation to address individual students' needs in different contexts (e.g., center-based, home-based, and school-based classrooms; specialized and general education classrooms).
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of specialized curricula, including curriculum and specialized instructional strategies for social skills, life skills, orientation and mobility, independence, and self-advocacy, and of how to accommodate, modify, and/or adapt the curricula across contexts based on individual students' strengths and needs, as well as knowledge of barriers to accessibility for students receiving special education services and how to plan for ways to address those barriers through the implementation of specialized curricula (e.g., low-incidence and high-incidence supports).
- E. Apply knowledge of the key differences between Individualized Education Program (IEP) accommodations and modifications and how to plan instruction with appropriate delivery of accommodations and modifications according to the requirements of an IEP (e.g., supplements, assistive technology, related services).
- F. Apply knowledge of designing explicit, scaffolded, systematic, and individualized instruction that adapts instructional intensity and/or intervention to build on students' strengths and accommodate students' needs based on various factors (e.g., learning processes, content, pedagogy, assessment results).
- G. Apply knowledge of developmentally appropriate instructional strategies to promote high academic expectations for students and active student engagement, motivation, self-reliance, and self-advocacy, and apply knowledge of learning processes to select and use a variety of grouping strategies (e.g., whole group, small group, individual) to meet the learning needs of each student.
- H. Apply knowledge of creating opportunities for students to demonstrate knowledge and skills using different modalities (e.g., kinesthetic, visual, auditory, olfactory, equilibrioception) and allowing each student to advance in rigor and depth of knowledge as they demonstrate understanding.
- I. Apply knowledge of the universal design for learning (UDL) guidelines to create and incorporate strategies for making content and instruction accessible and challenging for students with all support needs in a range of instructional and educational settings (e.g., co-teaching classroom, self-contained classroom, special education resource room, content mastery program).

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- J. Apply knowledge of types of assistive technology (e.g., low-tech, medium-tech, high-tech) and how to plan for strategic integration of assistive technology into daily teaching practices based on students' developmental and learning needs.
- K. Apply knowledge of promoting and supporting the transfer (e.g., generalization) of concepts and skills across content areas, educational settings (e.g., co-teaching classroom, self-contained classroom, special education resource room, content mastery program), and environmental settings (e.g., community, home).
- L. Apply knowledge of planning, adapting, and delivering high-quality, equitable, meaningful, and age-appropriate learning experiences for students with high support needs across instructional settings to develop the highest possible learning outcomes.
- M. Apply knowledge of developmentally appropriate and effective procedures and routines (e.g., visual supports, schedules) to create safe, organized, and universally accessible learning environments and experiences to support and engage students and to facilitate safe and efficient transitions to promote independence, self-regulation, and executive functioning with students in varying environments.
- N. Apply knowledge of strategies and methods for establishing, teaching, and maintaining high expectations for students' behavior; providing constructive, specific, and developmentally appropriate feedback to guide students' behavior; and building positive relationships with students based on understanding of individual strengths and needs, mutual respect, and rapport.
- O. Demonstrate knowledge of how factors (e.g., family, community, trauma) may impact students' behavior in the learning environment and of the impact of behavior on the development and learning of students and classmates.
- P. Demonstrate knowledge of effective preventative practices to address possible traumas, including harassment, maltreatment, violence, sexual assault, and bullying (e.g., physical, racial, emotional, digital); report any instances through appropriate channels; and access appropriate school and community resources for students who need social, physical, and/or emotional learning support.
- Q. Demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate preventative and responsive practices, such as positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), that promote students' social competence and communication and contribute to a positive and safe learning environment, as well as knowledge of research-based de-escalation strategies, key components and purposes of nonviolent crisis intervention, and restorative discipline practices to prevent and address externalizing behavior.
- R. Demonstrate knowledge of the key components and purposes of functional behavioral assessments (FBAs), behavioral intervention plans (BIPs), and behavioral intervention practices that align with legal and ethical guidelines, and apply knowledge of how to interpret FBAs to develop effective BIPs.
- S. Demonstrate knowledge of monitoring the effectiveness of behavioral interventions through progress-monitoring data, as defined in the behavioral intervention plan (BIP), to evaluate the effects of behavioral interventions.

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Competency 005 (Professional Collaboration, Learning, and Responsibilities): *Apply knowledge of strategies, approaches, and techniques for effective consultation and collaboration with students, parents/guardians, school personnel, and other professionals to support students' development and learning, and apply knowledge of the professional roles and responsibilities of the early childhood–grade 6 special education teacher.*

For example:

- A. Apply knowledge of collaborating and promoting a shared partnership with parents/guardians, school personnel, and specialists to address students' instructional, emotional, behavioral, and social needs in a variety of situations (e.g., during meetings, when making content and instruction accessible and challenging).
- B. Apply knowledge of supervising, collaborating with, and mentoring paraprofessionals to identify and define the responsibilities, skills, and professional development needed for their roles.
- C. Apply knowledge of how to consult, co-plan, and co-teach with campus staff and/or colleagues using collaborative strategies, supports, and implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- D. Apply knowledge of coordinating effectively with administrators, school counselors, and related service providers to build students' schedules according to identified least restrictive environment (LRE) as stated in students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- E. Apply knowledge of various co-teaching strategies and models based on setting and the individual needs of students (e.g., all support needs, high support needs) when delivering, adapting, differentiating, and/or developing specially designed instruction to meet students' needs (e.g., instructional, emotional, behavioral, social).
- F. Apply knowledge of effective collaboration with general education teachers to deliver, adapt, differentiate, co-teach, and/or develop specially designed instruction to address students' instructional, emotional, behavioral, and social needs, and understand the reciprocal relationship with general education teachers for effective and equitable practices.
- G. Apply knowledge of collaborating and consulting with multidisciplinary teams to plan and implement instruction (e.g., electives, extracurriculars, community resources) in accordance with students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- H. Apply knowledge of selecting and utilizing resources to improve communication and collaboration with families and the community.
- I. Demonstrate knowledge of coordinating with related service providers and community agencies to identify and access services, resources, and supports to meet the needs of students who receive special education services.
- J. Demonstrate knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the early childhood–grade 6 special education teacher and of other professionals who deliver special education services, including related and instructional service providers.
- K. Demonstrate knowledge of effective strategies to advocate for improved outcomes for students who receive special education services needing varying levels of support and their families while considering their social and linguistic background.
- L. Apply knowledge of the importance of and the process involved in setting short-term and long-term professional goals based on ongoing analysis of student learning, self-reflection, and professional standards.
- M. Demonstrate understanding of the barriers that exist for students who receive special education services needing varying levels of support from early childhood to grade 6 and how to work with stakeholders to design environments and select curriculum resources that include supports that address a range of student needs.

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- N. Apply knowledge of advocacy for social, legal, and environmental changes and/or priorities for students who receive special education services needing varying levels of support and their families, recognizing students' identified needs.
- O. Apply knowledge of advocating for family and student participation in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process and in Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) committee meetings.

Competency 006 (Analysis and Response): *In a written response, analyze and interpret varying types of data (e.g., qualitative, quantitative) to identify a given student's strengths and needs and design appropriate instruction.*

For example:

- A. Analyze and interpret assessment information on a given student, including varying types of data (e.g., qualitative, quantitative) from a variety of formal and informal assessments (e.g., progress-monitoring data, progress reports, student work samples, anecdotal observation notes) to identify a student's strengths and needs.
- B. Synthesize data and information on the given student to generate one (1) recommendation for instruction and/or intervention.
- C. Describe how a teacher would implement and monitor the progress of the generated recommendation.