
Discipline-Based Professional Teaching Standards For Teachers Of Special Education

I. **Content Knowledge**

Special education teachers must have a knowledge of:

- various disabilities, the impact of disabilities on classroom performance;
- the implementation of strategies to facilitate student learning and behavior management;
- negotiation and conflict resolution skills;
- the appropriate use of formal and informal assessment strategies and instruments;
- legal provisions, regulations and guidelines regarding student assessment;
- how students learn to read and respond to text; understanding of reading and writing as interactive processes;
- how students learn mathematics, including mathematical reasoning and problem solving, mathematical concepts, procedures and tasks;
- instructional materials including adaptive equipment and technological resources; and
- occupational/life skills curriculum and relevance to independent living and employment.

II. **Collaboration**

Special education teachers work collaboratively in classroom settings as partners with other teachers and related service providers and share responsibility for meeting student outcomes, through the design and modification of instruction to meet the needs of students with and without disabilities.

III. **Consultation within the School Community**

Special education teachers collaborate with members of the school community, conveying and receiving information, in the design and implementation of instructional and behavioral adaptations for students with disabilities.

IV. **Instruction**

Special education teachers teach language arts, mathematics and occupational/life skills, and use their knowledge of learning strategies and adaptations to modify the instructional methods and materials of these and other subject areas to foster the independence of the student. Teachers know and use a variety of strategies and resources, including task analysis and other specialized instructional approaches, as well as a variety of materials and adaptive equipment, alternative and augmentative communications systems and assistive technology to meet students' particular learning needs and goals.

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V. Students and Their Needs

Special education teachers use their understanding of the impact of various disabilities on learning and classroom performance, as well as their knowledge of the continuum of education program options and services in the implementation of students' Individual Education Programs (IEP).

VI. Assessment

Special education teachers understand and use formal and informal assessment techniques, and they interpret and communicate the results of assessments to students, parents and colleagues to analyze and modify instruction, and to ensure the continuous cognitive, social, emotional and physical development of the learner.

VII. Environment

Special education teachers use their understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create learning environments that maximize opportunities for students' academic, behavioral and personal success.