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Requirements for an Education Specialist Clear Credential Candidate who completed an Education Specialist Level I Preparation Program (1996-2008)

The Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) for a candidate who holds an **Education Specialist Level I teaching credential** and is completing an approved Teacher Induction program to earn the Education Specialist Clear Credential must address the content that was previously provided in the Level II program. **Factors to Consider** are provided for each of the topics identified below. Click on the title of the topic to see the scope of what the candidate must understand and be able to do.

Data-Based Decision Making: Each candidate demonstrates the ability to continually analyze assessment and performance data to determine whether to maintain, modify or change specific instructional strategies, curricular content or adaptations, behavioral supports and/or daily schedules to facilitate skill acquisition and successful participation for each student.

Advanced Behavioral, Emotional, and Environmental Supports: Each candidate demonstrates advanced knowledge and the ability to implement systems that assess, plan, and provide academic and social skill instruction to support students with complex behavioral and emotional needs. Each candidate works with educational, mental health, and other community resources in the ongoing process of designing, implementing, evaluating and modifying identified supports to ensure a positive learning environment.

Current and Emerging Research and Practices: Each candidate demonstrates knowledge of and ability to interpret, apply and disseminate current and emerging research, theory, legislation, policy and practice.

Transition and Transition Planning: Each candidate demonstrates knowledge of and the ability to implement factors associated with successful planning and implementation of transitional life experiences for students with mild/moderate/severe disabilities. Each candidate collaborates with personnel from other educational and community agencies to plan for successful transitions by students.

Assessment of Students: Each candidate identifies, describes, selects, and administers a variety of standardized and non-standardized, formal and informal assessment procedures, and uses and interprets these in a manner that is responsive to the cultural, socio-economic, and linguistic characteristics of individual students.

Curriculum and Instruction: Each candidate teaches, adapts, modifies and integrates curriculum appropriate to the educational needs of students with mild/moderate disabilities.

Collaboration and Consultation: Each candidate demonstrates skills in communication, collaboration and consultation with teachers and other school personnel, community professionals, and parents. Each candidate is able to communicate relevant social, academic, and behavioral information in the areas of assessment, curriculum, behavior management, social adjustment, and legal requirements. Each candidate is prepared to serve in a coordination function before, during and after special education placement has been made.

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The approved Teacher Induction program is responsible for ensuring that each candidate recommended for the Education Specialist Clear Teaching Credential has completed an ILP which addresses the content described above. The Commission's accreditation system monitors all approved educator preparation programs. In addition, Level I candidates must meet the statutory requirements related to health, CPR, and technology.

Data Based Decision Making Rationale

Effective education is a dynamic process requiring teachers to plan, implement, evaluate, and modify curricula, instruction, and instructional contexts on an ongoing basis to meet the unique needs of individual learners. Prior to being fully credentialed at the professional level, candidates must demonstrate these abilities across the range of ages, abilities, learning characteristics, and disabling conditions covered by the Educational Specialist Credential and any emphasis specialization selected by the candidate.

Factors to Consider

- Each candidate analyzes student performance data and uses the analysis to determine whether targeted outcomes have been met and to make necessary modifications in instructional strategies on an ongoing basis.
- Each candidate conducts outcome driven educational programs including actively collecting, analyzing and synthesizing input from colleagues, families, students, performance data, and observations to adjust curricula, instruction and/or daily routines for the efficient and effective learning and educational experiences.
- Each candidate utilizes informal assessment and collaborates with specialists and IEP team members to meet the ongoing needs and preferences of students in the areas of communication, social/behavioral, health care, motor, mobility and sensory functioning.
- Each candidate assesses typical school and community environments and creates adaptations or modifications necessary for active participation of individual students.
- Each candidate adapts general education curriculum via both pre-planned and on-the-spot modifications in general education instructional settings.
- Each candidate uses and evaluates a variety of group instructional strategies, such as cooperative learning and other heterogeneous grouping strategies, to maintain active participation and learning of diverse groups of learners.
- Each candidate utilizes validated practices that maximize academic learning time, teacher-directed instruction, student success, and content coverage.
- Each candidate designs, implements, and evaluates instructional sequences for effective teaching of concepts, rules, and strategies in reading, math, and other content areas.

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Advanced Behavioral, Emotional, and Environmental Supports Rationale

Level I coursework and field experiences prepare candidates to begin careers in special education. In order to effectively support those students with extremely complex behavioral and emotional needs, candidates must acquire advanced knowledge and skills in the areas of comprehensive behavioral supports, social skills instruction, crisis management, effective instruction, curricular adaptations, and creating positive learning environments. Ongoing assessment and data-based modifications are critical components of effective implementation and must be demonstrated by each candidate prior to earning the professional level credential.

Factors to Consider

- Each candidate participates as a member of behavior intervention teams, implementing, evaluating, and adjusting behavior support plans so they result in the acquisition of appropriate replacement behaviors, increased health and safety, improved quality of life, and reductions in problem behavior.
- Each candidate works collaboratively with other agencies, such as Mental Health or Regional Center, to address the social, behavioral and emotional needs of individual students.
- Each candidate, along with the IEP team and mental health specialists, identifies indicators of crisis or life threatening situations as a part of the functional assessment process and develops a proactive plan to provide any needed and immediate supports.
- Each candidate is familiar with a variety of programs and strategies for teaching specific social skills and implements them according to individual student needs.
- Each candidate teaches students strategies, such as organization of materials, listening strategies, notetaking, and textbook reading, for responding to consistent class demands and for gaining information in classes.
- Each candidate demonstrates procedures to promote transfer and generalization of learning strategies, study skills, and social behaviors.
- Each candidate demonstrates knowledge about the integration of academic instruction with affective development and behavior management techniques.
- Each candidate demonstrates the use of a variety of non-aversive procedures, including voice modulation, facial expressions, planned ignoring, proximity control, and tension release, for the purpose of modifying target behaviors.
- Each candidate demonstrates effective procedures for providing corrective feedback to students.
- Each candidate communicates closely with physicians to monitor the impact of medication, carefully observing the student's behavior and documenting behavioral changes to report to physicians.

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- Each candidate utilizes non-intrusive crisis management techniques to diffuse potential crisis situations.
- Each candidate develops appropriate activities to be implemented before, during and following a crisis episode.
- Each candidate describes the effects of prescription and non-prescription medication/drugs on student behaviors.
- Each candidate demonstrates the ability to work with the IEP/ITP team to examine the viability and value of needed accommodations to assure post school behavior/social supports.
- Each candidate identifies issues, resources, and techniques for transitioning students with complex emotional and behavioral needs from restrictive environments, including special centers, nonpublic schools, psychiatric hospitals, and residential treatment programs to lesser restrictive settings.
- Each candidate delineates theoretical approaches, such as biogenic, psychodynamic, behavioral, and etiological, and their applications for students with complex emotional and behavioral needs.

Current and Emerging Research and Practices

Rationale

The education of students with disabilities reflects an evolving knowledge base, and it is essential that all candidates seeking a credential become knowledgeable of this critical information. In order for teachers to remain abreast of effective current and emerging practices, candidates must be expected to read and interpret research for applied use in the field.

Factors to Consider

- Each candidate demonstrates knowledge and application of current and emerging theories and research related to the education of students with and without disabilities.
- Each candidate demonstrates knowledge of and implications for teachers of legislation, results of litigation, and policies impacting education of students with mild to severe disabilities.
- Each candidate demonstrates the ability to effectively implement educational programs that reflect current best practices; updating programs as new practices emerge.
- Each candidate participates actively within the school district and local community to facilitate the development of policies and implementation of practices that reflect current information.

Transition and Transition Planning

Rationale

It is essential that educators understand the sequential and continuous nature of preparing students with mild to severe disabilities for successful adult transition and continuing educational, social, behavioral, and career development. Programs must facilitate the development of candidates who are knowledgeable about and sensitive to the unique transition needs of individual students and their families.

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Factors to Consider

- Each candidate examines factors that effect all stages of development in the life of individual students with mild/moderate and/or moderate/severe disabilities relative to planning for educational and transitional experiences.
- Each candidate demonstrates the ability to collaborate with educators and related services personnel, families, and community agencies in developing and implementing transition plans for movement from one educational environment to another and from school to community.
- Each candidate demonstrates the appropriate development of individualized transitional plans and the use of transition planning teams in assisting students to move successfully toward independent living in society.
- Each candidate demonstrates knowledge of promoting student choice-making, self-direction, and student self-advocacy skills prior to and during the post-secondary transitional period.
- For the moderate/severe credential, each candidate demonstrates the ability to work with the ITP team to examine the viability and value of needed accommodations such as personal attendants, supported living environments and assistive technology devices during and after the transitional phases.

Assessment of Students

Rationale

The experienced teacher must demonstrate advanced skills in planning, conducting, reporting, and utilizing a variety of assessments and evaluations that pertain to student learning. The teacher must demonstrate an understanding of assessment bias and the research, law, and policies and procedures pertaining to conducting, interpreting, and utilizing assessments.

Factors to Consider

- Each candidate develops and implements individualized assessment plans that provide for non-biased, non-discriminatory assessment of students with mild and moderate disabilities to evaluate student performance, learning environment and teacher performance.
- Each candidate demonstrates skill in selecting, designing, administering, and interpreting informal assessments, including anecdotal records, questionnaires, direct behavioral observations, performance graphs, work samples, portfolio assessments, and student records.
- Each candidate identifies and utilizes strategies for promoting non-biased assessment of students from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Each candidate writes assessment reports that include background information, results of current assessment, conclusions, and recommendations for instruction.
- Each candidate effectively communicates assessment results and their implications for regular classroom teachers, parents, and other educational professionals.

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- Each candidate demonstrates knowledge of research, issues, law, policies and procedures related to non-biased and non-discriminatory screenings and referral assessment for students with mild and moderate disabilities.
- Each candidate uses performance data and teacher, student and parent input to make or suggest appropriate modifications in learning environments.
- Each candidate uses various types of assessment procedures, such as norm-referenced and curriculum-based assessments, work samples, observations, and task analysis, appropriate to students with mild and moderate disabilities.
- Each candidate demonstrates skill in evaluating, selecting, administering and interpreting assessment devices and processes in terms of a range of socio-economic, cultural, linguistic and other considerations of relevance to students with mild and moderate disabilities.

Curriculum and Instruction

Rationale

In order to fully serve special education students with mild to moderate disabilities, candidates must demonstrate advanced skills in utilizing and integrating instruction and in assisting students to become independent learners. They must address broad curricula areas, including vocational development and community living preparation, and utilize a variety of instructional approaches, including various technologies. They must acquire the knowledge and skills to teach, adapt, modify and integrate appropriate curricula to meet the individual needs of students with mild to moderate disabilities.

Factors to Consider

- Each candidate teaches and maintains school success and survival strategies such as the organization of materials, note taking, study skills, learning strategies, for students with mild to moderate disabilities.
- Each candidate selects, modifies and evaluates validated curriculum that is specific and appropriate for projected outcomes.
- Each candidate teaches life skills relevant to independent, community and personal living with an emphasis on future employment and/or post-secondary education.
- Each candidate describes a variety of instructional procedures and demonstrate the ability to utilize appropriate instructional processes and strategies for students from ethnolinguistically diverse backgrounds across a variety of settings.
- Each candidate implements strategies for generalizing positive school behaviors, organizational skills, and learning strategies to a variety of educational and community settings.
- Each candidate evaluates instructional software and develops lesson plans that incorporate software programs and other technologies.
- Each candidate encourages students to become self-advocates at IEP, ITP and similar meetings.

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Collaboration and Consultation Rationale

Students with mild to moderate disabilities typically spend a large portion of their school day in regular classrooms. It is therefore critical that their special education teachers be prepared to communicate and collaborate with these teachers, as well as with the range of other school and community personnel, including parents, who participate in the education of these students.

Factors to Consider

- Each candidate demonstrates the use of group process strategies necessary for collaboration among educators, disciplines, and agencies.
- Each candidate demonstrates the ability to use culturally competent strategies in working with families whose culture or language differ from their own.
- Each candidate demonstrates a systematic and collaborative problem-solving approach.
- Each candidate demonstrates competence in coordinating referral and assessment procedures and in facilitating IEP team meetings
- Each candidate demonstrates competence in planning and supervising the duties of classroom paraprofessionals.
- Each candidate plans and presents special education in-service workshops to parents, school staff, and community members.
- Each candidate collaborates with community agencies to provide resources and services to students with special needs.
- Each candidate collaborates with general education teachers in obtaining and utilizing evaluation data for the modification of instruction and curriculum.
- Each candidate describes factors involved in conflict resolution or problem-solving and evaluates his/her own effectiveness in this area.
- Each candidate assists other teachers with the development of classroom management plans.