

# DRAFT CEC Initial Standards, Components and Supporting Explanations

As of January 2019

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

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

### Components

- 1.1 Beginning special education teachers **practice within ethical guidelines and legal policies** and procedures.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers work within, and have a strong knowledge of, all applicable federal (e.g. the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act [IDEA] and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and state/provincial/local laws, regulations, and policies pertaining to individuals with exceptionalities and how these laws affect the delivery of services and supports. For example, beginning special education teachers should understand that present levels of educational achievement and functional performance drive goals and lead to a plan for services. Beginning special education teachers maintain a high level of professional competence and integrity, exercise informed professional judgment, and practice within the profession's and other relevant codes of ethics. Beginning special education teachers practice with a commitment to understanding that individuals with exceptionalities deserve to be challenged with high expectations and provided with meaningful and inclusive participation opportunities to develop the highest possible learning outcomes. Using all available evidence on recommended and high leverage practices, beginning special education teachers utilize instructional data and professional knowledge to develop comprehensive programs of support for students with exceptionalities and hold themselves accountable for student achievement, learning, and growth.*

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

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers advocate for resources and the professional learning conditions to help individuals with exceptionalities meet instructional, behavioral, social, and transition goals and outcomes. For example, they work with colleagues, families, and others to adapt curricular materials, ensure service provisions, implement principles of universal design, and speak on behalf of children with exceptionalities in situations where their voice has been absent. They evaluate new technology options given student needs and advocate for administrative support in technology implementation. Additionally, beginning special education teachers respectfully advocate for social, legal, and environmental changes for students and families of people with exceptionalities recognizing students' multiple identities. For example, beginning special education teachers recognize that students with exceptionalities may also come from a different cultural background, speak another language than the dominant culture, come from a unique racial or ethnic group, or identify as a different gender or sexual orientation. Beginning special education teachers should understand barriers that exist for students with exceptionalities within educational settings and work with decision makers to remove them.*

- 1.3 Beginning special education teachers **design and implement professional learning activities** based on ongoing analysis of student learning, self-reflection, professional standards, research, and contemporary practices.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers engage in professional activities and participate actively in peer and professional learning communities that benefit individuals with exceptionalities and their families, colleagues and their own professional growth. They keep current with research and contemporary practices in multiple ways. For example, they participate in professional associations, conferences, online professional learning networks; and access resources in libraries, and on internet sites. They draw on that knowledge to design and construct a professional learning plan to improve their skills that includes areas for growth, goals, and strategies to accomplish those goals. They regularly reflect on their professional performance, why they used particular practices and the impact on students, families, and other professionals. They are able to adjust their practices based on this reflection and assessment of student performance. They recognize their own skill*

*limitations and know when to turn to others for guidance and support to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities and their families.*

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

Beginning special education teachers use their understanding of human growth and development, multiple influences on development, individual differences, and diversity to plan and implement inclusive learning environments and experiences that provide individuals with exceptionalities high-quality learning experiences reflective of each individual's strengths and needs.

### Components

- 2.1 Beginning special education teachers use their **knowledge and understanding of how individuals grow, develop, and learn** to plan and implement learning experiences and environments.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers know and understand how all individuals grow and develop and they recognize that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, ethical, and physical domains. Beginning special education teachers further understand that development in different domains occurs at different times for individuals in different contexts. Beginning special education teachers use this knowledge and understanding to design and implement developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences and environments.*

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

*From a framework of typical growth, development and learning, beginning special education teachers understand how exceptionalities can interact with development and learning and they create developmentally appropriate learning experiences relevant to the learners' strengths and needs which*

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

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

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers use their knowledge and understanding of multiple influences on individual development and learning to plan and implement learning experiences and environments.*

*Beginning special education teachers understand the multiple influences that affect learning and development when working with individuals with exceptionalities. Beginning special education teachers know that factors such as heredity, health issues, adverse childhood experiences, culture and language, nutrition, home environment, and the larger community can affect an individual's learning and development. Beginning special education teachers know and understand that diverse individuals with learning differences are those who, because of gender, language, cultural background, ability, learning approaches, and/or socioeconomic status may have academic needs that require varied instructional strategies to ensure their learning. Learning differences are manifested in areas such as differing rates of learning, motivation, attention, complexity of reasoning, persistence, foundational knowledge and skills, and preferred learning and response modes.*

*Beginning special education teachers plan, adapt, and deliver learning experiences for individuals with exceptionalities in an inclusive manner which reflects an understanding of the continuum of instructional settings and an understanding of how to engage individuals with exceptionalities in inclusive, meaningful learning activities regardless of the instructional setting. Beginning special education teachers use knowledge of individuals to provide opportunities for exceptional learners to demonstrate their learning in different ways and allow every individual to advance as they demonstrate their understanding. Beginning special education teachers provide appropriate and timely accommodations, adaptations, and provisions for individual learners with diverse learning needs.*

*Beginning special education teachers understand that the beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures can influence relationships among and between individuals, their families, and the school community. Beginning special education teachers not only understand these influences, but they structure and implement individualized instruction that reflects the diversity of the learner and make informed decisions about content, which includes attention to the learner's personal, family, and community experiences.*

- 2.3 Beginning special education teachers use their **knowledge and understanding of diversity, families and communities, and individual differences, including exceptionalities**, to plan and implement learning experiences and environments.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers understand individual differences and diverse families, cultures, and communities, and they use this understanding to plan and implement individualized instruction which includes attention to an individual's personal, family, and community experiences, and cultural norms. Beginning special education teachers know and understand how home language, family and culture interact with exceptionalities to influence the individual's academic and social abilities, attitudes, values, interests, and career and post-secondary options. Beginning special education teachers ensure inclusive learning environments that enable individual's with exceptionalities to meet high standards. Beginning special education teachers understand and identify differences in approaches to learning and performance, and they design instruction that uses each learner's strengths to promote growth. Beginning special education teachers understand that individuals bring assets for learning based on their unique experiences, abilities, talents, prior learning, and peer and social group interactions, as well as home language, family, culture, and community values.*

*Beginning special education teachers know that development and learning occur within the contexts of specific families, languages, cultures, and communities as well as within a larger societal context. They know that diversity is inclusive of individual differences (e.g., personality, interests, and life experiences), and group differences (e.g., race, ethnicity, ability, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, nationality, language, religion, political affiliation, and socio-economic background). Beginning special education teachers reflect on and understand how their own experiences, family, race, gender and culture biases may influence their instructional decisions and their relationships and interactions with learners and their families.*



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

## Standard 3: Demonstrating Curricular and Content Knowledge

Beginning special education teachers use their knowledge of general and specialized curricula to individualize learning for individuals with exceptionalities to plan, teach, accommodate, assess, and modify curricula based on the individual learner needs across all settings.

### Components

- 3.1 Beginning special education teachers use **rigorous content standards for planning, teaching, accommodating, and assessing** to individualize learning for individuals with exceptionalities across all settings.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers seek to clearly understanding the foundational knowledge of the curricular standards and sequencing. Beginning special education teachers understand a comprehensive knowledge of rigorous, professional curricular, and state content standards and assessments in educational attainment and practices for all students by planning, teaching, and assessing lessons that demonstrate student competency. Beginning special education teachers will accommodate materials and settings to meet the needs of individuals with exceptionalities. Beginning special education teachers demonstrate a solid knowledge of academic subject-matter content knowledge in their planning, teaching, and assessment to develop meaningful student progressions and to collaborate*

*with general educators. Beginning special education teachers design and implement appropriate accommodations for individuals with exceptionalities in academic subject matter content of the general education curricula to address the individual student need's for specially designed instruction of the subject content matter.*

- 3.2 Beginning special education teachers **modify general and specialized curricula** to make them accessible to individuals with exceptionalities in alignment with rigorous content standards.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers understand generalized and specialized curricula. Beginning special education teachers demonstrate that knowledge and use a variety of specialized curricula, resources, technologies, and materials (e.g., academic, strategic, social-emotional, etc.) to provide modified instruction aligned with the curricular and content standards to meet the individual needs of individuals with exceptionalities. Beginning special education teachers apply their knowledge of the individual learner to select, modify, and adapt specialized curricula that meets the individual's needs. Beginning special education teachers understand the specialized curricular options available to meet the needs of exceptional learners and analyze each option for implementation. Beginning special education teachers design and implement appropriate modifications for individuals with exceptionalities in academic subject matter content of the general education curricula to address the individual student needs for specially designed instruction of the subject content matter.*

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

Beginning special education teachers evaluate students to determine eligibility, communicate students' progress, inform short and long-term instructional planning, and make ongoing adjustments instruction using technology as appropriate. Beginning special education teachers evaluate students' learning, behavior, and the classroom environment to evaluate and support classroom and school-based problem-solving systems of intervention and instruction.

## Components

- 4.1 Beginning special education teachers develop, select, and administer multiple, formal and informal, culturally and linguistically appropriate measures and procedures that are valid and reliable, understanding their limitations, to **determine eligibility**.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers serve as part of a larger, multidisciplinary team when evaluating students for special education services. Beginning special education teachers contribute to eligibility determination by developing, selecting, and administering multiple assessments to evaluate students' academic, behavioral, and/or other strengths and needs. Beginning special education teachers develop informal assessments (e.g., observation tools, family interviews) to determine how students access and demonstrate knowledge in the core curriculum and other contextually relevant curricula (e.g., adaptive behavior skills). Beginning special education teachers work to develop appropriate assessments based on students' strengths, needs, and reason for referral.*

*Beginning special education teachers select and administer appropriate formal assessments (those that systematically measure how well a student has mastered learning outcomes) that are minimally biased (assessment does not give preference to one group over another). Beginning special education teachers understand constructs of validity (the extent to which an assessment accurately measures what it is supposed to measure) and reliability (degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results), and the impact of these constructs on assessment selection and interpretation of results. Beginning special education teachers use this knowledge as they work collaboratively with a team to administer assessments and interpret assessment results.*

*Throughout this process, beginning special education teachers incorporate informal and formal assessments that meet the individual needs of students and understand how cultural and linguistic diversity of students impacts the selection, administration, and interpretation of assessment results. Beginning special education teachers understand how these results contribute to eligibility determination, understand the limitations of formal and informal assessments (e.g., biases, test constructs), and consider contextual factors (socioeconomic status, family structure, previous instruction) that may influence accurate interpretation based on individual student characteristics (race, gender, cultural identity). Beginning special education teachers collaborate with professionals with additional expertise as needed (e.g., English as a Second Language Specialist, Bilingual specialists, translators) to ensure an appropriate assessment process.*



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

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers engage in ongoing data-based decision making to inform immediate classroom practices, short-term goal development, and long-term planning using data regarding students' performance and strengths. Beginning special education teachers regularly monitor students' performance to ensure appropriate progress towards goal attainment.*

*Beginning special education teachers work with educational professionals (e.g., general education team, speech/language pathologist, full Individualized Education Program team) to conduct ongoing assessments (formal and informal) that are individualized to meet the needs of each student. Beginning special education teachers work with a team to collaboratively analyze and interpret results of multiple assessments across settings for each student. Beginning special education teachers use results to determine if students are making adequate progress toward measurable outcomes. Beginning special education teachers communicate results of these assessments with students, families, and professionals. Beginning special education teachers support students in understanding the results of assessments and using those results to self-monitor and self-regulate. Beginning special education teachers also discuss and share assessment results with family members and other educational professionals to support individual student's progress towards short-term and long-term outcomes.*

*Beginning special education teachers are responsible for regularly monitoring students' ongoing progress. Conducting short term assessment may involve daily, weekly, monthly, and/or other periodic evaluation of students' immediate learning needs and goals. Beginning special education teachers use brief, formal or informal curriculum based (e.g., oral reading fluency), performance based, criterion referenced measures, and/or observational tools or methods (e.g., interval recording, frequency counts), appropriate for the student, to regularly document a students' performance and identify consistencies and/or inconsistencies, for purposefully guiding immediate instructional shifts (increase, adjust, decrease targeted instruction) and supportive practices as needed.*

*Beginning special education teachers collaboratively use assessment results to also inform students' long term planning (e.g., Individualized Education Program). As a member of a multidisciplinary team, beginning special*

*education teachers' evaluation of students' ongoing and annual academic, behavioral, social/emotional, and/or linguistic strengths and needs directly informs the type, frequency, location, and duration of students' special education services and annual goal development. Evaluation for long term planning requires beginning special education teachers to select formal and informal measures and methods that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, technically sound, considering sufficient opportunities for student learning, and recognizing the need for joint interpretation of data across settings and evaluations within the multidisciplinary team.*

*Conducting ongoing short term and long term assessment requires beginning special education teachers to use technology for specific purposes including test administration, testing accommodations, data storage, creating digital documents and logs, and charting and graphing results to identify patterns in learning and/or behavior. Beginning special education teachers may use screening software programs (e.g., easyCBM, AIMSweb) as appropriate, considering ongoing advancements in technology. Obtaining regular progress of students' learning and behavior may prompt beginning special education teachers to make necessary adjustments to instruction while documenting those adjustments (e.g., graphing instructional changes). This documentation serves to regularly communicate progress and adjustments to instruction with students, educational professionals, and families.*

- 4.3 Beginning special education teachers collaboratively select, administer, analyze, and interpret multiple measures of student learning, behavior, and the classroom environment to **evaluate and support classroom and school-based “problem-solving systems” of intervention and instruction** for students with and without disabilities.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers' training in progress monitoring, explicit and targeted instruction, data-based decision making, and supporting students with varying needs makes them ideal for contributing to their school-site's efforts in evaluating, monitoring, and improving intervention and instruction for all students. To this end, beginning special education teachers actively and collaboratively engage with educational professionals and families in ongoing, data-based decision making to evaluate and improve school and classroom environments, instruction, and intervention across varying levels of support (e.g., Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, MTSS). Beginning special education teachers work as a member of a school's site-based team (e.g., administrator, school psychologist, counselor, teacher leaders) and problem-solving team (e.g., Student Study Team, Teacher Assistance Team, Building Assistance Team) using evaluation data for the purpose of supporting students with and without exceptionalities. Beginning special education*

*teachers look for patterns and inconsistencies in data to collaboratively inform decisions and improve teaching-learning practices.*

*As a member of a school's site-based team, beginning special education teachers collaboratively contribute to the selection, analysis and use of data (e.g., universal screening, healthy school surveys, family surveys, state language and achievement reports, community resources) to inform building-level decisions around tiered behavioral and instructional practices (e.g., whole class accommodations, small group intervention, individualized support). These may include recognizing needs for professional development (e.g., professional learning communities, coaching) or resources (e.g., curriculum, technology) in specific areas (e.g., English language development, social skills) found to be lacking at the grade or building level. As part of this process, beginning special education teachers jointly evaluate the effectiveness of existing school resources, programs, supports, and initiatives, to improve school climate, professional development opportunities, academic, social/emotional, linguistic, and behavioral supports for all students.*

*As a member of a school's problem-solving team, beginning special education teachers support individual students without exceptionalities, who may experience difficulty in the classroom and at school, by collaborating with educational professionals and families through the problem-solving process (e.g., problem identification, problem analysis, plan development, plan implementation, and plan evaluation). To this end, beginning special education teachers jointly analyze multiple measures to document and critically examine school, classroom, curricular, instructional, home, and student factors that may contribute to a student's learning and behavioral strengths and needs. Beginning special education teachers use this data to make collaborative decisions to improve at risk students' learning and behavior.*

*As a member of a school's site-based and problem-solving teams, beginning special education teachers consider the appropriateness of measures and procedures selected when evaluating school level supports and systems and individual student learning and behavior to ensure they are culturally and linguistically appropriate, technically sound, valid and reliable for their intended populations. Beginning special education teachers analyze and interpret data, in conjunction with other measures of behavior and academic performance, considering the limitation of specific tools, evaluation conditions, students' strengths and opportunities for learning and success. As part of the ongoing evaluation process, beginning special education teachers consider individual and contextual factors that can directly and indirectly influence the teaching-learning process.*

## DRAFT Standard 5: Supporting Learning Using Effective Instruction

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

### Components

- 5.1 Beginning special education teachers use **multiple assessments, including student self-assessment**, that are responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity and specialized as needed, **to plan and guide instruction** to meet rigorous content goals for each individual.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers are knowledgeable about appropriate use and limitations of various types of formative and summative assessments (e.g., screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, curriculum based) and technologies to develop, implement, and assess specially-designed instruction for individual students.*

*Beginning special education teachers administer, interpret, and use multiple assessments that are responsive to individual, cultural, and linguistic diversity to meet individual student learning needs as a critical component of the instructional cycle (i.e., plan, teach, assess, and analyze).. These multi-sourced formative assessments should delineate individual student's strengths and academic and/or behavioral needs related to the curricular standards and goals, and be used to develop, implement, evaluate, and revise instruction and interventions, as needed, to assure rigorous content standards are met.*

*Beginning special education teachers collect formative assessment data by: (a) observing (e.g., eliciting performances assumed to depend on the desired competence, leading to a set of observations), (b) scoring (e.g., categorizing different observed performances and assigning them a relative value, or scores), (c) synthesizing (e.g., combining the values of the individual performances to yield measures of each competence), and (d) interpreting (e.g., using the measures to characterize how much of the desired expertise a student possesses).*

*Beginning special education teachers use assessment data to plan, monitor, guide, and revise instruction. Beginning special education teachers use all*

*assessment sources to provide detailed, task-specific feedback to learners about their achievement and engagement.*

*Beginning special education teachers effectively utilize data to examine, adjust, guide and improve instruction by (1) interpreting formative assessments, (2) confirming the interpretation, (3) generating and selecting alternative instructional approaches, (4) trying out instructional adaptations, (5) evaluating learning and engagement, and (6) providing feedback to students by communicating levels of proficiency and accomplishment.*

- 5.2 Beginning special education teachers use effective strategies to promote **active student engagement, increase student motivation, and enhance self-regulation of student learning.**

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers must be knowledgeable of and use effective strategies that promote active student engagement, nurture intrinsic motivation for learning, and guide self-regulation. Active student engagement strategies should be strategically selected and integrated into instruction to activate student prior knowledge and learning (e.g., effective questioning, guided discussion). Beginning special education teachers must be knowledgeable of various strategies for use during group instruction (e.g., effectively grouping students for cooperative learning) or individual instruction (e.g., conducting formative assessment using novel response methods) to increase student motivation and provide formative feedback to redirect and/or sustain student performance. Beginning special education teachers must explicitly teach, model, and reinforce self-regulation behaviors (e.g., turn-taking, assignment completion) for students in a variety of ways and settings.*

- 5.3 Beginning special education teachers use **explicit, systematic instruction** to teach content, strategies, and skills to make clear what a learner needs to do or think about while learning academic and social-behavioral content.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers use explicit, systematic instruction to focus on important academic content, and make clear what the student needs to do or think about when learning content. They make content explicit by providing a clear statement regarding the purpose for learning the content, strategy, or skill, and making explicit connections to existing knowledge and skills. Beginning special education teachers also provide a clear explanation of the content, strategy, or skill to be learned, focus instruction on the steps that*



lead to learning, and use scaffolds and feedback to guide the learner. The candidate is able to demonstrate, think aloud, and describe relationships among content and related concepts while using clear and precise language. This includes providing step-by-step demonstrations that model the content, skill or strategy, and providing a range of examples and non-examples to establish boundaries regarding when and how a learner should apply the content, strategy, or skill. When using explicit instruction, beginning special education teachers should logically sequence information within lessons, beginning with a statement of purpose and advance organizer. Beginning special education teachers should then provide clear models and explanations of content, using a method such as "I do, we do, you do". Using this method in math, for example, the candidate would initially provide a model for solving a math problem while 'thinking aloud' to describe steps used to solve the problem. The candidate then guides students through solving the problem with scaffolding and feedback. Students are then provided opportunities for independent practice with feedback from the candidate. Explicit instruction is used to increase content coverage and enhance engagement and opportunities to learn content. Explicit instruction facilitates learning to think and act in ways that accelerate student learning and enable greater academic success.

- 5.4 Beginning special education teachers use **multiple effective instructional practices** that are culturally responsive, specialized as needed, using technology as appropriate, to accommodate diverse learning needs.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers are knowledgeable about and have facility with a variety of instructional practices to meet the needs of each learner. Beginning special education teachers are clear about learning goals, appropriate standards, and student learning profiles and select appropriate instructional practices (e.g., direct instruction, modeling, guided practice) to increase student success and acquisition of content and appropriate skill. Beginning special education teachers differentiate instruction (e.g., adjusting content, process, and product) based on student backgrounds, strengths, and needs. Students' cultural and linguistic diversity is viewed as an asset and integrated into learning for all students. Learners have opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skill using different modalities and are provided with feedback (e.g., immediate discussion, written notes). Digital technology is infused in instruction (e.g., use of interactive white boards, web-based documents, audiobooks) and assessment (e.g., real-time response systems) to assist in and enhance learning based on individual student need and interest.*

- 5.5 Beginning special education teachers use **flexible grouping** to support the use of instruction that is adapted to meet the needs of each individual and group.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers understand that the purpose of small group instruction is to differentiate teaching to meet the learning needs of each student by providing more focused, intensive instruction. This instruction is provided to heterogeneous and/or homogeneous groups. Group assignments are determined by factors such as knowledge of learner's backgrounds and data from formal and informal assessments, and are fluid depending on the content being addressed and student needs. Beginning special education teachers hold learners accountable for both collective and individual learning and provide constructive feedback and scaffolding to support productive learning. Beginning special education teachers regularly monitor each learner's progress and adjust their groupings and instruction accordingly.*

*Beginning special education teachers understand that groups are used for many purposes and take many forms to accommodate learning differences and promote in-depth academic learning. For example, beginning special education teachers may use heterogeneous groups to allow children to participate in grade level conversations around content. When this is done, a candidate must define the purpose of the group and criteria used for heterogeneous grouping. Beginning special education teachers identify and use an appropriate structure for the group (e.g., cooperative learning using a strategy such as think-pair-share, numbered heads together, or Jigsaw) prepare students to use the structure, and ensure that students equitably participate in the groups. An appropriate structure should support positive interdependence within groups, and use materials and directives that promote effective, efficient, and equal student participation. Beginning special education teachers should monitor group interactions and student learning, and hold students accountable individually and collectively for learning within the group. Within heterogeneous groupings, students learn to work collaboratively and to rely on each other to successfully complete the learning task. Beginning special education teachers may set up homogenous groups to support common learner interests, preferences, or skill needs. Additionally, beginning special education teachers can structure homogenous groups to provide more focused intensive instruction as discussed in Standard 5.6.*

- 5.6 Beginning special education teachers organize and **manage focused, intensive small group instruction** to meet the learning needs of each individual.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers use homogeneous groups to provide focused, intensive instruction for children who have common instructional needs, and configure these groups to address high priority short-term content goals and objectives. Beginning special education teachers explicitly define the purpose for homogenous groups, criteria used for grouping, and the time per day that learners will participate in these groups. The size of homogeneous groups are appropriate based on the stated purpose of the group, and designed to provide intensive, effective instruction that accelerates achievement. Reliable and valid assessment data that directly measure students' skills related to the content being taught is used to determine student groupings. Each learner's progress in learning content is frequently monitored, and instruction is adjusted accordingly. Beginning special education teachers use explicit instruction, appropriate feedback, and guided practice during small group instruction, and use strategies to maximize each learner's opportunities to respond. Beginning special education teachers understand that learner benefits from small group instruction include effective and efficient learning, learning to take ownership, developing self-direction, and becoming actively engaged in the learning process.*

- 5.7 Beginning special education teachers **plan and deliver specialized, individual instruction** that is used to meet the learning needs of each individual.

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers understand the purpose of specialized, individual instruction is to provide more intensive or different instruction to learners whose needs are not sufficiently met in whole or small groups. Learners might need more practice with a skill (e.g., providing structured reading), further clarification of a concept (e.g., providing additional practice opportunities one-on-one), or a more enriching learning opportunity (e.g., assigning activities for more sophisticated mastery of concepts). Beginning special education teachers intentionally design individualized instruction based on in/formal assessments. Additionally, beginning special education teachers consider the learner profile by matching instructional intensity and/or intervention to build on student's strengths and accommodate needs. Beginning special education teachers employ appropriate instructional strategies (e.g., structured tutoring, modeling, inquiry-based learning) to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of the learner. In addition, beginning special education teachers should provide specific feedback to the learner as students engage in instruction, especially during guided practice to determine mastery of the rigorous content goal and/or to scaffold the learning task to assure mastery. Beginning special education teachers should promote*

*generalizability of knowledge and skill into other content areas and/or other educational settings by the individual students after mastery of skills.*

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

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

### Components

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

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers structure the environment to maximize success and safety of all students. They build positive, caring relationships by taking initiative to learn students' strengths, interests, and needs and by responding to them in authentic and respectful ways. Beginning special education teachers actively engage with students' families to deepen their understanding of students' diverse cultures, backgrounds, and traditions. Through their words and actions, beginning special education teachers create welcoming and inclusive classroom communities.*

*Beginning special education teachers understand the importance of preventive approaches to strengthen desired performance and address challenging behavior. They arrange physical space in their classrooms to promote learning and positive peer interactions. Beginning special education teachers plan and implement positive behavioral interventions and supports. This requires application of proactive practices within their own classes and with individual students, and it may also involve active participation in school-wide, multi-tiered systems, such as PBIS. Beginning special education teachers state clear behavioral expectations and provide examples of desired behaviors in different settings. They explicitly teach students routines and procedures for recurring activities. For example, beginning special education teachers may teach routines for entering the classroom, working in cooperative groups, or*

*conducting science labs. Explicit instruction for behavioral routines parallels that used for academic skills, as it includes explanations, modeling, guided practice, corrective feedback, independent practice, and acknowledgements/reinforcement. Beginning special education teachers collect and use data to monitor student behavior and the effectiveness of their management plans. Beginning special education teachers also help students develop skills for self-monitoring their behavior and their progress toward identified goals.*

*Beginning special education teachers collaborate with other professionals, families or caregivers in a team approach to address individual needs consistently across school, home, and community settings. They are respectful of the varied aspects of diversity and recognize how intersectionality of gender, racial, cultural, disability, and other identities may make students more vulnerable to discriminatory practices, particularly with regard to discipline. Beginning special education teachers take active measures to prevent bullying, maltreatment, violence, and sexual assault, and they report any instances through appropriate channels.*

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

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers recognize how antecedent circumstances and events influence student performance, and they create conditions to promote desired behaviors. They consider the students' surroundings, strengths, areas of need, and task demands as well as other triggers that could lead to potential challenges. Beginning special education teachers create an environment where expectations are clear, predictable, and where instructional routines and classroom procedures are used to support students and keep them actively engaged during instruction or other classroom activities.*

*Beginning special education teachers employ proactive and preventive strategies to manage challenging behaviors at the school-wide, classroom, and individual student levels. They use preventive approaches that focus on positive procedures, including prompting and cueing, positive reinforcement, nonverbal communication, and other surface management strategies, such as proximity control and redirection. Beginning special education teachers also recognize the impact of setting, teacher and peer interactions, and other events on student behavior. They provide frequent, positive, specific, and constructive feedback to influence student learning and behavior.*



*Beginning special education teachers consider a hierarchy of procedural alternatives when responding to challenging behavior or when teaching new social, emotional or academic skills. They may begin with strategies of differential reinforcement that teach alternate or more appropriate replacement behaviors, followed by extinction where the influencing reinforcer is withheld, then penalty where access to preferred activities or desired items are removed, and then punishment as a last resort where students may receive an aversive consequence such as detention, extra work, repairing damage they committed, or having to overcorrect.*

*Beginning special education teachers promote generalization and maintenance of learned skills across time and settings. They teach specific self-regulation strategies, such as self-monitoring and goal setting, aimed at meeting students' academic, behavioral, or social needs.*

*Beginning special education teachers understand the influences of gender, race, culture, familial, and other factors on student behavior and are conscious of biases in treatment and responses to student behavior. They are aware of issues such as disproportionate rates of suspension or expulsion and overuse of procedures such as seclusion or restraint. They conform to legal and ethical guidelines for all behavioral interventions.*

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

*Supporting Explanation:*

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

*Beginning special education teachers use multiple sources of data to develop or identify research validated practices for class-wide or individual level interventions and to evaluate effects of behavioral interventions. Such interventions include, but are not limited to, social skills instruction, peer mediation, self-monitoring, and self-determination strategies. Beginning special education teachers explicitly teach desired behaviors using modeling*

*and scaffolding. They utilize technology as appropriate to assist in measurement, tracking, and instructional decision making related to student behavior. This technology may include, for example, web-based graphing tools or Excel software. Beginning special education teachers may also collect data through the use of reinforcer surveys, via paper-and-pencil or electronic methods.*

*Beginning special education teachers purposefully program for generalization of social, emotional, and behavioral skills to relevant environments. They work with families and other professionals in developing, implementing, and monitoring plans for generalization.*

## Standard 7: Collaborating with Families, Paraprofessionals and Other Professionals

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

### Components

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

*Supporting Explanation:*

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

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

*Supporting Explanation:*

*Beginning special education teachers recognize that families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals possess diverse knowledge about, and expertise in, working with an individual with exceptionalities. Thus, their active participation as team members is essential. Effective teamwork requires ongoing information sharing, collaboration, and coordination with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals, including related service providers (e.g., physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, school psychologists), utilizing technology as appropriate, to effectively assess and communicate assessment information in clear and understandable terms and plan for and implement effective individualized programs and services for individuals with exceptionalities.*

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

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

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

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

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

*Supporting Explanation:*

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