

Special Education Program

Graduate Goals

The Special Education Programs, as recommended by the Council for Exceptional Children, has adapted the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards for Exceptional Needs (for teachers of students ages birth-21+). Council for Exceptional Children, (2003). What every special educator must know: the international standards for the preparation and certification of special education teachers. Arlington, VA. p. 197-198:

PREPARING FOR STUDENT LEARNING

I. Knowledge of Students: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs consistently use their knowledge of human development and learning and their skills as careful observers of students to understand students' knowledge, aptitudes, skills, interests, aspirations, and values.

II. Knowledge of Special Education: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs draw on their knowledge of the philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education and their knowledge of effective special education practice to organize and design instruction. In addition, they draw on their specialized knowledge of specific disabilities to set meaningful goals for their students.

III. Communications: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs know the importance of communications in learning. They know how to use communication skills to help students access, comprehend, and apply information; to help them acquire knowledge; and to enable them to develop and maintain interpersonal relationships.

IV. Diversity: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs create an environment in which equal treatment, fairness, and respect for diversity are modeled, taught, and practiced by all, and they take steps to ensure access to quality learning opportunities for all students.

V. Knowledge of Subject Matter: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs command a core body of knowledge in the disciplines and draw on that knowledge to establish curricular goals, design instruction, facilitate student learning, and assess student progress.

ADVANCING STUDENT LEARNING

VI. Meaningful Learning: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs work with students to explore in purposeful ways important and challenging concepts, topics, and issues to build competence and confidence.

VII. Multiple Paths to Knowledge: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs use a variety of approaches to help students strengthen understanding and gain command of essential knowledge and skills.

VIII. Social Development: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs cultivate a sense of efficacy and independence in their students as they develop students' character, sense of civic and social responsibility, respect for diverse individuals and groups, and ability to work constructively and collaboratively with others.

SUPPORTING STUDENT LEARNING

IX. Assessment: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs design and select a variety of assessment strategies to obtain useful and timely information about student learning and development and to help students reflect on their own progress.

X. Learning Environment: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs establish a caring, stimulating, and safe community for learning in which democratic values are fostered and students assume responsibility for learning, show willingness to take intellectual risks, develop self-confidence, and learn to work not only independently but also collaboratively.

XI. Instructional Resources: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs select, adapt, create, and use rich and varied resources, both human and material.

XII. Family Partnerships: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs work collaboratively with parents, guardians, and other caregivers to understand their children and to achieve common educational goals.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND OUTREACH

XIII. Reflective Practice: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs regularly analyze, evaluate, and strengthen the quality of their practice.

XIV. Contributing to the Profession and to Education: Accomplished teachers of students with exceptional needs work independently and collaboratively with colleagues and others to improve schools and to advance knowledge, policy, and practice in their field.