



National Certification *of*
Educational Diagnosticians

CEC and NCED ADVANCED CONTENT STANDARDS

The National Certification of Educational Diagnosticians Board (NCED) has adopted these Advanced Knowledge and Skills Standards for NCED Holders

After mastering initial special education professional standards, many special educators continue their professional growth toward mastery of advanced professional standards at the postbaccalaureate levels, including masters, specialists, and doctoral degree programs, as well as nondegree advanced certificate programs. For some, this means deepening their understanding and expertise and adding new responsibilities for leadership within the classroom. Some special educators choose to specialize their knowledge for educating individuals with a given disability, age-range or functional area. Others work toward assuming functions outside the classroom, moving into specializations, administering special education programs and services, or moving into teacher preparation and research roles.

At the advanced level, special educators share an array of functions and responsibilities. Reflecting this commonality, CEC has validated knowledge and skills that all special educators have mastered as a part of their preparation for advanced practice (see following Validated Advance Common Core Knowledge and Skill Set). The knowledge and skill sets are organized under six Advanced Content Standards (ARCS) that broadly describe in rich narrative what is expected of special educators preparing for an advanced role. Programs preparing special educators for advanced roles should ensure that their programs coordinate with the six ARCS as informed by the knowledge and skill sets. Although the six ARCS provide a rich narrative focus and organizing heuristic, CEC has validated specific knowledge and skills sets for each of the roles that differentiate the emphasis, focus, and contextualized skills for each role. These validated knowledge and skill sets inform and differentiate the specific skills and contextual expertise expected in the various roles. Programs preparing special educators for an advanced special education role¹⁰ should use the appropriate knowledge and skills set(s) within the

development of the preparation programs to inform the program's curriculum of study and to design the program assessment plan.

CEC uses the ARCS to organize the reviews of advanced preparation programs in partnership with the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Moreover, the six ARCS coordinate with the organized framework used by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards across the five Exceptional Educator pathways. This makes it reasonable for programs that prepare NBPTS candidates to address the CEC ARCS.

Similar to the 10 CEC Special Education Content Standards for initial roles, these 6 Special Education Advanced Roles Content Standards are identical across advanced special education roles. Each Standard is based on validated knowledge and skills in the Advanced Common Core Knowledge and Skill Sets. In addition, each specific advanced role will have knowledge and skills specific to that role.

Advanced Standard 1: Leadership and Policy¹¹

Special educators in advanced programs learn to use their deep understanding of the **history of special education, current legal and ethical standards, and emerging issues** to provide leadership. Special educators **promote high professional self-expectations and help others understand the needs of individuals with exceptional learning needs**. They **advocate for educational policy based on solid evidence-based knowledge** to support high quality education for individuals with exceptional learning needs. As appropriate to their role, they **advocate for appropriate resources** to ensure that all personnel involved have effective preparation. Special educators use their **knowledge of the needs of different groups in a**

¹⁰ Both initial and advanced special education professional content standards are the basis for recognizing quality special education preparation programs and for developing special educator licensure frameworks. The initial special education professional standards provide a benchmark that jurisdictions can use to ensure that licensed beginning special educators can practice safely and effectively. The advanced standards provide a benchmark to ensure that experienced special education professionals are able to practice at an accomplished level of skill. Every special educator should use the special education professional standards in guiding their own professional growth and development.

Initial special education professional content standards describe the minimal knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for individuals to enter initial practice safely and effectively as a special education professional.

Advanced special education professional content standards describe the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for individuals to practice at accomplished levels of special education and in advanced special education roles. After previously mastering initial special education professional standards, special educators work toward mastery of advanced professional standards at the post baccalaureate levels, including masters, specialists, and doctoral degree programs, as well as nondegree advanced certificate programs.

¹¹ The bolded phrases are important elements of the standards identified to provide guidance to performance-based program developers.

pluralistic society to promote evidence-based practices and challenging expectations for individuals with exceptional learning needs. They model **respect for all individuals and ethical practice**. They help to create **positive and productive work environments** and celebrate accomplishments with colleagues. They mentor others and promote high expectations for themselves, other professionals, and individuals with exceptional learning needs.

Advanced Standard 2: Program Development and Organization

Special educators apply their **knowledge of cognitive science, learning theory, and instructional technologies** to improve instructional programs. They **advocate for a continuum of program options and services** to ensure the appropriate instructional supports for individuals with exceptional learning needs. They **help design and deliver, as appropriate to their role, ongoing results-oriented professional development** designed to support the use of evidenced-based practices at all relevant organizational levels. They use their understanding of the **effects of cultural, social, and economic diversity and variations of individual development** to inform their development of programs and services for individuals with exceptional learning needs. Special educators **continuously broaden and deepen their professional knowledge, and expand their expertise with instructional technologies, curriculum standards, effective teaching strategies, and assistive technologies to support access to learning**. They use their deep understanding of how to **coordinate educational standards to the needs of individuals with exceptional learning needs** to help all individuals with exceptional learning needs to access challenging curriculum standards.

Advanced Standard 3: Research and Inquiry

Research and inquiry inform the decisions of special educators who have completed advanced programs in guiding professional practice. Special educators **know models, theories, philosophies, and research methods** that form the basis for **evidence-based practices** in special education. This knowledge includes **information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies**. Special educators evaluate the appropriateness of **research methodologies** in relation to **practices presented in the literature**. They **use educational research to improve instructional techniques, intervention strategies, and curricular**

materials. They foster an **environment supportive of continuous instructional improvement**, and engage in the **design and implementation of action research**. Special educators are able to use the **literature to resolve issues of professional practice, and help others to understand various evidence-based practices**.

Advanced Standard 4: Individual and Program Evaluation

Evaluation is critical to advanced practice of special educators. Underlying evaluation is the knowledge of **systems and theories of educational assessment and evaluation**, along with skills in the implementation of **evidence-based practices in assessment**. Effective special educators **design and implement research activities** to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional practices and, as appropriate to their role, to **assess progress toward the organizational vision, mission, and goals** of their programs. It is critical in evaluation that **nonbiased assessment procedures are used in the selection of assessment instruments, methods, and procedures** for both **programs and individuals**.

With respect to evaluation of individuals, special educators prepared at the advanced level are able to **apply their knowledge and skill to all stages and purposes of evaluation** including: prereferral and screening, preplacement for special education eligibility, monitoring and reporting learning progress in the general education curriculum and other individualized educational program goals.

Advanced Standard 5: Professional Development and Ethical Practice

Special educators are guided by the professional ethics and practice standards. Special educators have responsibility for promoting the success of individuals with exceptional learning needs, their families, and colleagues. They **create supportive environments that safeguard the legal rights of students and their families**. They **model and promote ethical and professional practice**. Special educators plan, present, and evaluate **professional development**, as appropriate to their roles, based on models that apply adult learning theories and focus on effective practice at all organizational levels. Special educators model their own commitment to continuously improving their own professional practice by **participating in professional development** themselves.

Advanced Standard 6: Collaboration

Special educators prepared at the advanced level have a deep understanding of the **centrality and importance of consultation and collaboration to the roles within special education** and use this deep understanding to **integrate services for individuals with exceptional learning needs**. They also understand the significance of the role of collaboration for both internal and external stakeholders, and **apply their skill to promote understanding, resolve conflicts, and build consensus among both internal and external stakeholders** to provide services to individuals with exceptional learning needs and their families.

They possess current knowledge of research on stages and models in both collaboration and consultation and ethical and legal issues related to consultation and collaboration. Moreover, special educators prepared at the advanced level have a deep understanding of the possible interactions of language, diversity, culture and religion with contextual factors and how to **use collaboration and consultation to enhance opportunities for individuals with exceptional learning needs**.

CEC and NCED Advanced Knowledge and Skill Set for Educational Diagnosticians

Standard 1: Leadership and Policy	
<i>Knowledge</i>	
ACC1K1	Needs of different groups in a pluralistic society
ACC1K2	Evidence-based theories of organizational and educational leadership
ACC1K3	Emerging issues and trends that potentially affect the school community and the mission of the school
ACC1K4	National and state education laws and regulations
ACC1K5	Current legal, regulatory, and ethical issues affecting education
ACC1K6	Responsibilities and functions of school committees and boards
ED1K1	Laws and policies related to assessing individuals with exceptional learning needs
ED1K2	Emerging issues and trends that impact assessment
ED1K3	Implication of multiple factors that impact the assessment process
ED1K4	Models, theories, and philosophies that form the basis of assessment
ED1K5	Issues in general and special education that impact placement decisions for individuals with exceptional learning needs
ED1K6	Policy and research implications that promote recommended practices in assessment
<i>Skills</i>	
ACC1S1	Promote a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment
ACC1S2	Promote high expectations for self, staff, and individuals with exceptional learning needs
ACC1S3	Advocate for educational policy within the context of evidence-based practices
ACC1S4	Mentor teacher candidates, newly certified teachers, and other colleagues
ED1S1	Design and evaluate procedures for effective participation in school, system, and statewide assessments
Standard 2: Program Development and Organization	
<i>Knowledge</i>	
ACC2K1	Effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the individual and the family on behavior and learning

ACC2K2	Theories and methodologies of teaching and learning, including adaptation and modification of curriculum
ACC2K3	Continuum of program options and services available to individuals with exceptional learning needs with exceptional learning needs
ACC2K4	Prereferral intervention processes and strategies
ACC2K5	Process of developing individualized education plans
ACC2K6	Developmentally appropriate strategies for modifying instructional methods and the learning environment
ED2K1	Assessment procedures that address all disabilities
ED2K2	Variability of individuals within each category of disability
ED2K3	Over- or underrepresentation of individuals with cultural and linguistic diversity who are referred for assessment
ED2K4	Characteristics of individuals with exceptional learning needs that impact the development of programs and services
Skills	
ACC2S1	Develop programs including the integration of related services for individuals based on a thorough understanding of individual differences
ACC2S2	Connect educational standards to specialized instructional services
ACC2S3	Improve instructional programs using principles of curriculum development and modification, and learning theory
ACC2S4	Incorporate essential components into individualized education plans
ED2S1	Synthesize information from multiple perspectives in developing a program assessment plan.
Standard 3: Research and Inquiry	
Knowledge	
ACC3K1	Evidence-based practices validated for specific characteristics of learners and settings
ED3K1	Best practices in research-based assessment
ED3K2	Resources and methods that address student learning, rates, and learning styles
Skills	
ACC3S1	Identify and use the research literature to resolve issues of professional practice
ACC3S2	Evaluate and modify instructional practices in response to ongoing assessment data

ACC3S3	Use educational research to improve instruction, intervention strategies, and curricular materials
ED3S1	Evaluate assessment techniques based on learning theories
Standard 4: Individual and Program Evaluation	
<i>Knowledge</i>	
ACC4K1	Evaluation process and determination of eligibility
ACC4K2	Variety of methods for assessing and evaluating individuals with exceptional learning needs' performance
ACC4K3	Strategies for identifying individuals with exceptional learning needs
ACC4K4	Evaluate a student's success in the general education curriculum
ED4K1	Standards of reliability and validity related to individual test measures
ED4K2	Procedures used in standardizing assessment instruments
ED4K3	Standard error of measurement related to individual test measures
ED4K4	Use and limitations of portfolios in assessment
ED4K5	Sources of test error
ED4K6	Uses and limitation of assessment information
ED4K7	Achievement assessment measures
ED4K8	Cognitive assessment measures
ED4K9	Language assessment measures
ED4K10	Motor skills assessment measures
ED4K11	Social, emotional, and behavioral assessment measures
ED4K12	Vocational and career assessment measures
<i>Skills</i>	
ACC4S1	Design and use methods for assessing and evaluating programs
ACC4S2	Design and implement research activities to examine the effectiveness of instructional practices
ACC4S3	Advocate for evidence-based practices in assessment
ACC4S4	Report the assessment of individuals with exceptional learning needs' performance and evaluation of instructional programs
ED4S1	Select and use formal and informal observation measures

ED4S2	Select and use formal and informal functional assessment measures
ED4S3	Assess basic academic skills formally and informally
ED4S4	Select, administer, and score assessment instruments accurately
ED4S5	Analyze error patterns
ED4S6	Prepare comprehensive assessment reports
ED4S7	Employ assistive technology in the assessment process
ED4S8	Select accommodations and modifications based on assessment results
ED4S9	Facilitate progress monitoring
ED4S10	Use progress monitoring data to develop and revise individual goals

Standard 5: Professional Development and Ethical Practice

Knowledge

ACC5K1	Legal rights and responsibilities of individuals with exceptional learning needs, staff, and parents/guardians
ACC5K2	Moral and ethical responsibilities of educators
ACC5K3	Human rights of individuals with exceptional learning needs and their families
ED5K1	Qualifications to administer and interpret test results
ED5K2	Organizations and publications relevant to the field of educational diagnosticians
ED5K3	Ethical considerations relative to assessment

Skills

ACC5S1	Model ethical behavior and promote professional standards
ACC5S2	Implement practices that promote success for individuals with exceptional learning needs
ACC5S3	Use ethical and legal discipline strategies
ACC5S4	Disseminate information on effective school and classroom practices
ACC5S5	Create an environment which supports continuous instructional improvement
ACC5S6	Develop and implement a personalized professional development plan
ED5S1	Respect individual privacy and confidentiality
ED5S2	Participate in professional development activities

ED5S3	Cite all sources of reported information
ED5S4	Inform individuals of the purpose of evaluation, rationale, and timelines for completion
ED5S5	Provide assessment results in a clear, cohesive, and timely manner
ED5S6	Update skills necessary to provide effective assessment
Standard 6: Collaboration	
Knowledge	
ACC6K1	Methods for communicating goals and plans to stakeholders
ACC6K2	Roles of educators in integrated settings
ED6K1	Roles of various agencies within the community
Skills	
ACC6S1	Collaborate to enhance opportunities for learners with exceptional learning needs
ACC6S2	Apply strategies to resolve conflict and build consensus
ED6S1	Communicate with team members to determine assessment needs
ED6S2	Communicate with team members to review assessment results
ED6S3	Assist with prereferral interventions and strategies
ED6S4	Assist teachers in interpreting data including large scale and individual assessments
ED6S5	Use interagency collaboration in planning intervention

NOTES:

“Individuals with exceptional learning needs” is used throughout to include individuals with disabilities and individuals with exceptional gifts and talents

“Exceptional Condition” is used throughout to include both single and co-existing conditions. These may be two or more disabling conditions or exceptional gifts or talents co-existing with one or more disabling conditions

“Special Curricula” is used throughout to denote curricular areas not routinely emphasized or addressed in general curricula; (e.g., social, communication, motor, independence, self-advocacy)