

# **Standards for the Preparation of PK-12 Teachers**

**Professional Knowledge and Skills**

**Arts, Languages, Health/Physical  
Education, and Special Education**



# Introduction to Standards for the Preparation of PK-12 Teachers Professional Knowledge and Skills

## **Development of the Standards**

Since 2015, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), in collaboration with Michigan's stakeholders, have been working to revise Michigan's teacher certification structure and to improve the preparation of the educator workforce in Michigan. This is in direct alignment with the MDE's Top 10 Strategic Education Plan.

This collaboration has led to the design of a structure that places students at the heart of the system. A key goal of this structure is deeper preparation of teachers to meet the unique learning, developmental, and social-emotional needs of children at each grade level. This structure includes focused grade bands to provide new teachers with specialized knowledge about the students and the content they will teach and defined clinical experiences and foundational coursework for each grade band.

The work on the certification restructuring began with the development of [Early Elementary \(PK-3\)](#) and [Upper Elementary \(3-6\)](#) Standards for Teacher Preparation, which included Professional Knowledge and Skills Standards as well as content-specific standards. Following that work, secondary-level stakeholders convened and developed teacher preparation standards in [Professional Knowledge and Skills](#) for Middle Grades (5-9) and High School (7-12) grade bands as well as discipline-specific standards.

With the State Board of Education (SBE) approval of Professional Knowledge and Skills Standards for the PK-3, 3-6, 5-9, and 7-12 grade bands, MDE and educator preparation providers (EPP) turned their attention to Professional Knowledge and Skills Standards for the disciplines that cross multiple grade bands to encompass the full range of PK-12.

These include:

- Arts: Visual Arts, Music
- Languages: World Language, Bilingual Education, English as a Second Language
- Health/Physical Education
- Special Education: Cognitive Impairment, Speech/Language Impairment, Physical/Health Impairment, Emotional Impairment, Visual Impairment, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Learning Disabilities, Physical Education for Students with Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder

Beginning PK-12 teachers must have a strong understanding of the developmental stages of the students as well as sufficient depth and breadth of discipline-specific knowledge and skills. It is important to note that these teachers will work in a broad range of developmental levels, from preschool through high school completion, as well as in diverse specializations as noted above. For both reasons, powerful preparation programs will weave the Professional Standards into the content preparation coursework that is aligned with the related discipline-specific standards. To accomplish this, there is the need for collaboration that involves

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education faculty and discipline-specific faculty in shared conversations regarding content knowledge pedagogy.

In addition, the Professional Knowledge and Skills Standards reflect the integration of the [Clinical Experiences Requirements](#) and the [Core Teaching Practices](#). The Clinical Experiences Requirements call for stronger, mutually beneficial partnerships between EPPs and PK-12 settings, faculty, and administrators. The shared understanding of and commitment to the Professional Standards among those involved in these partnerships will strengthen the preparation of beginning teachers.

### **PK-12 Professional Knowledge and Skills**

The source document for developing the PK-12 Professional Standards was the 5-9/7-12 Professional Standards. This set was chosen over the PK-3/3-6 Professional standards for two reasons:

1. The 5-9/7-12 standards were written with broader stakeholder input throughout the entire standards development process than the corresponding PK-3/3-6 standards; and
2. The 5-9/7-12 standards encompass all the knowledge and skills enumerated in the PK-3/3-6 standards.

The three domains within the PK-12 Professional Standards – Learner-Centered Supports, Ethics and Professional Growth, and Strategic Partnerships – are the same as those that frame the Professional Standards for the PK-3, 3-6, 5-9, and 7-12 grade bands, providing consistency across the PK-12 span.

The first domain, P.1. Learner-Centered Supports, has 17 standards in both the 5-9/7-12 and PK-12 sets. There were wording changes in 10 of those standards, six of which adapted language referencing “adolescents” to “learners” or “whole child/whole learner” to reflect the broader age range for the new standards.

Similarly, “Individual Family Service Plan” was added to P.1.i as this tool is used with younger learners. P.1.k was revised slightly by tightening the wording to emphasize the use of the strategies. P.1.d saw the most changes, with “developmentally appropriate” replacing “learners’ needs, assets, and interests”, and other changes removing redundancy with core ideas from a previous standard. None of these changes fundamentally alter the meaning of the statement.

Four of the five standards in the second domain, P.2. Ethics and Professional Growth, are the same in 5-9/7-12 standards and the PK-12 standards. In P.2.c, “adolescent” was changed “whole child/learner” and “student” was changed to “learner”, both changes intended to reflect the broader age range for this set of standards.

All six standards in the third domain, P.3. Strategic Partnerships, are the same in the 5-9/7-12 standards and the PK-12 standards, although they are reordered.

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In summary, no standards were added, and none were removed. Changes in wording were made in 39% of the standards, although none of them fundamentally changed the meaning of the statements and were largely intended to reflect the application of the standards to the broader grade range.

### **Stakeholder Review**

Following the development of proposed Standards for the Preparation of PK-12 Teachers in Professional Knowledge and Skills, a group of 37 stakeholders representing the four PK-12 discipline areas listed above was invited to review and confirm the proposed standards. The proposed PK-12 Professional Standards include the same three domains that frame the Professional Standards for the four grade bands – Learner-Centered Supports, Ethics and Professional Growth, and Strategic Partnerships – to provide consistency across Professional Standards sets for each grade band.

The 37 stakeholders invited to participate in the review represent an appropriate range of disciplinary specializations and professional roles in the education ecosystem. Across the four target discipline areas, eight stakeholders represented Languages, 12 represented the Arts, five represented Health/Physical Education, and 12 represented Special Education. Across professional roles, 15 were PK-12 teachers, eight were PK-12 administrators, and 14 represented EPPs. Geographically, stakeholders represented the education ecosystems of the Upper Peninsula, northern Lower Peninsula, the thumb area, western Michigan, and southeastern Michigan.

An initial meeting provided an overview of the development of the standards and the review process. An online questionnaire, consisting of five open-ended questions, was sent to all participants along with presentation materials from the initial meeting. The questions and a summary of stakeholders' responses to each follows here:

1. *Do the proposed standards address the professional knowledge and skills needed to be a teacher of PK-12 students in the arts, languages, health/physical education, and special education, regardless of the specific discipline?*

The stakeholders indicated support for the proposed standards. Two stakeholders did express concerns regarding the reference to "core curriculum" in the standard related to English language learners for health/PE and the arts as well as the applicability of technology standards to those same fields. However, no strong objections were raised.

2. *Are the standards clearly written and understandable? If not, which standards require clarification or revision?*

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There was general support for the standards as written, although individual stakeholders did have comments and suggestions related to some specific statements, including recommendations for rewording if appropriate.

### 3. *What are redundancies in the standards that could be combined?*

There were two suggestions regarding consolidating standards in the first domain and one suggestion for moving one standard from the first to the second domain.

### 4. *What is missing that is critical for a well-prepared beginning teacher in these disciplines at the PK-12 level?*

Suggestions included specific statements regarding professional dispositions and additional standards on classroom management and parent communication. A need to clarify what is meant by Strategic Partnerships was evident.

### 5. *What are 3-5 terms, phrases, or words in the standards that should be included in a glossary that would accompany the standards?*

The following terms will be defined in glossaries accompanying individual grade band professional standards documents:

- ADA
- Collaboration
- Culturally Responsive Curriculum/Teaching
- Differentiation
- Diversity
- FERPA
- IDEA
- IEP
- Professional & Ethical Practice
- Reflective Practice for Continuous Growth
- Restorative Practices
- Social-Emotional Engagement
- Trauma
- Whole Child
- Whole Learner

In summary, the draft PK-12 Professional Knowledge and Skills Standards were affirmed by the stakeholders in their responses to the online questionnaire. There were a handful of stakeholder comments seeking clarification about specific standards and terminology. It is important to consider that these stakeholders represented different disciplines and may not have brought the same knowledge base of educational terminology and theory to their review of the standards.

While the professional education coursework is usually developed by faculty in the teacher education department, discipline-specific faculty focus on the content standards. This feedback is important, as it will be useful in informing the technical assistance to support EPPs in program revision to align with the standards and to

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facilitate coordination between faculty in teacher education and discipline-specific departments.

## **Professional Knowledge and Skills Standards**

### **P.1. Learner-Centered Supports**

Well-prepared beginning teachers will be able to:

- a. Purposefully incorporate approaches to address the cognitive, physical, behavioral, social, and emotional needs/development of the whole child/whole learner throughout all aspects of teaching and learning.
- b. Recognize and respond appropriately to the multiple influences on the development and learning of the whole child/learner, including but not limited to cultural, linguistic, religious, gendered, historic, economic, and social-emotional contexts.
- c. Evaluate and analyze available curriculum and demonstrate ability to adapt or design rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum that reflects learners' needs, assets, and interests, and connects the learners' language, culture, and experiences to learning.
- d. Design and implement challenging, standards-based instruction and developmentally appropriate learning environments aligned with curriculum to build learners' development in all areas.
- e. Cultivate and manage a learner-centered classroom that leads to learner empowerment/ownership, active engagement in exploration and learning, positive social interaction and behaviors, and an inclusive classroom community through norms, routines, restorative practices, and other non-punitive measures.
- f. Utilize individual and collaborative learning environments. Incorporate and model for learners' inter and intrapersonal problem-solving techniques and strategies for conflict resolution to develop positive and supportive relationships.
- g. Design and enact appropriate instruction (e.g., asset-based, inclusive instruction) that leverages the strengths and contributions of all learners including the unique developmental needs and related instructional and behavioral goals of learners with disabilities.
- h. Demonstrate knowledge of and apply a variety of strategies, instructional approaches, behavioral assessments, and positive behavioral interventions within the general education learning environment to promote the full participation of all learners, including exceptional learners such as learners with disabilities, English learners, and advanced learners.
- i. Demonstrate knowledge of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by engaging in the procedural development, assessment, and enactment of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) including the Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team process, Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), and/or 504 plans.
- j. Design, manage, and implement standards-based content instruction to support English learners' successful engagement with the core curriculum while developing English language proficiency, content-area literacy, and academic content knowledge.
- k. Utilize a variety of strategies to promote full participation of English learners in classrooms.

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- l. Acknowledge and reflect on the impact of personal beliefs, biases, privileges, and experiences on the equitable interpretation of learner communication and behavior.
- m. Address the impact of curriculum, policies, processes, and practices on the education of all learners with particular attention to historically underserved communities and social identity groups through culturally responsive curriculum, instruction, and advocacy.
- n. Identify signs of trauma in learners and respond with trauma-informed and resiliency-informed instruction that promotes communication, safety, and a sense of belonging in the classroom. Appropriately adjust instruction in response to the emotional and social distress in the classroom through positive relationships with learners and families.
- o. Administer and analyze outcome-aligned, systematic, formative, summative, and standardized observations and assessments. Use assessment data to monitor learners' progress, inform instruction, and provide timely and constructive feedback to learners and their families.
- p. Engage learners in using metacognitive strategies to reflect on their own learning and self-regulation including self-assessment, self-reflection, feedback from others, and goal setting (e.g., aligning with IEPs, 504 Plans, Personal Curricula, or other official goal documents) as part of the assessment process.
- q. Integrate instructional technology, aligned with International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards for Students to empower learners as knowledge constructors, creative and analytical thinkers, collaborators, and good digital citizens.

### **P.2. Ethics and Professional Growth**

Well-prepared beginning teachers will be able to:

- a. Enact ethical practices aligned with professional, ethical, and legal codes of conduct for educators including but not limited to maintaining student and family privacy (in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), and adhering to the Michigan [Policy for the Emergency Use of Seclusion and Restraint](#) and [Michigan Code of Educational Ethics](#).
- b. Use reflective practices to design, monitor, and adapt instruction as a means for gauging professional growth.
- c. Engage in formal and informal ongoing professional learning opportunities that strengthen instructional practice, understanding of whole child/learner development, and learner outcomes.
- d. Model responsible digital citizenship as outlined in [ISTE Standards for Educators](#).
- e. Enact ethical practices aligned with state laws related to the responsibilities and rights of the teacher in reporting known or suspected abuse, neglect, or maltreatment (mandated reporting).



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### **P.3. Strategic Partnerships**

Well-prepared beginning teachers will be able to:

- a. Identify valuable contributions and input that all families, caregivers, and community stakeholders provide for learners by engaging with them as partners and agents in their learners' education.
- b. Use a variety of communication strategies to create mutually beneficial relationships with learners, families, caregivers, and communities that promote engagement, learning, and agency.
- c. Describe the roles and responsibilities of school professionals and utilize them as resources to support learners, classroom instruction, and positive classroom climate and culture.
- d. Demonstrate intentional collaborative approaches aimed at assisting a learner's unique social-emotional health, well-being, and academic growth through mutually beneficial partnerships with colleagues.
- e. Identify appropriate agencies and other resources in the larger community in partnership with school resources to support academic growth, social-emotional growth, and well-being of the whole child/learner.
- f. Engage in intentional community and business partnerships beyond the school setting to support learners' interests, expose learning opportunities and skills not offered in the classroom, scaffold college and career readiness, and develop pipelines to the workforce.