

# **Standards for the Preparation of Teachers**

## **Professional Knowledge and Skills**

### **Middle Grades (5-9) and High School (7-12)**



Michigan State Board of Education

Approved

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## **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 improve the preparation of the educator workforce in Michigan. This is in direct alignment with the MDE's Strategic Plan for becoming a Top Ten Education State within Ten Years.

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 content they will teach and defined clinical experiences and foundational coursework for each grade band.

Building on the work of the certification restructuring and the revision and adoption of Early Elementary (PK-3) and Upper Elementary (3-6) Standards for Teacher Preparation, stakeholder committees consisting of individuals with expertise in secondary level teacher professional knowledge and skills, English language arts (ELA), and mathematics were convened to revise standards to align with the new middle grades (5-9) and high school (7-12) grade bands. These three areas were selected due to the primacy of importance to teacher preparation programs, the critical need subjects represented, and the alignment with MDE's Whole Child and Literacy foci.

In line with these initiatives, and in response to feedback from educators around the state, each of these sets of standards has a deep focus on equity, shifting the vision of a well-prepared beginning teacher at the secondary level from an emphasis on decontextualized content knowledge and toward an emphasis on classroom practices that address the diverse social, emotional, developmental, and learning needs of the whole child. These standards establish a vision of the middle school and high school classroom as an inclusive space, in which the individual, multifaceted identities of all children are recognized as assets to support their learning and development. The standards do not define the English language arts or mathematics curriculum for these grade bands, but rather define the knowledge, skills, and dispositions teachers must have in order to achieve this vision of an inclusive space that fulfills all children's needs across the several interacting dimensions of the [Whole Child](#).

While the preparation standards for middle grades and high school presented here are in most areas identical for both grade bands, they are not intended to be addressed in isolation from other core elements of the teacher preparation curriculum. Candidates seeking endorsement in either or both grade bands must engage in clinical experiences across the range of grades incorporated in these bands (in accordance with Michigan's [Clinical Experiences Requirements](#)) that allow them to demonstrate proficiency in these standards as well as the [Core Teaching Practices](#) in authentic classroom contexts. Expectations for K-12 student performance in these discipline areas also vary across the two grade bands, requiring that enactment of the core instructional competencies and dispositions detailed in these standards may

vary in accordance with the K-12 academic standards and locally adopted curriculum being addressed in a specific classroom context.

## **Professional Knowledge and Skills**

The purpose of the Standards for the Preparation of Teachers in Professional Knowledge and Skills in Middle Grades (5-9) and High School (7-12) is to establish a shared vision for the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions that entry-level teachers of middle level and high school students in Michigan should possess and demonstrate in their teaching. The standards reflect a vision of a well-prepared beginning teacher who is prepared to enact high-quality instruction in one or more content areas; address the needs of the whole child; use relevant, research-based criteria to establish a supportive, engaging environment that fosters learning; and use practices that meet individual adolescent's needs.

A stakeholder committee representing Michigan PK-12 educators and administrators, college and university teacher educators and researchers with specialized knowledge in secondary teacher education, special education, social-emotional learning, English-language learners, and trauma-informed instruction began meeting in January of 2019 to create a set of standards outlining professional knowledge and skills for teachers in grades 5-9 and 7-12. The committee began work by reviewing the Professional standards of Michigan's Standards for the Preparation of Teachers of Upper Elementary (3-6) and utilized the following documents as source material for this work:

- Michigan [Standards for the Preparation of Teachers of Upper Elementary \(3-6\) – Professional](#) (2018);
- Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) [Standards for Teacher Educators](#) (2008);
- Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) [Middle Level Teacher Preparation Standards](#) (2012);
- International Literacy Association (ILA) [Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals, Middle/High School Classroom Teacher](#) (2017);
- American Psychological Association [Developing Adolescents: A Reference For Professionals](#) (2002);
- Massachusetts Advocates for Children [Helping Traumatized Children Learn: Supportive School Environments for Children Traumatized by Family Violence](#) (2009);
- Center for American Progress [Preparing All Teachers to Meet the Needs of English Language Learners: Applying Research to Policy and Practice for Teacher Effectiveness](#) (2012); and
- Region X Equity Assistance Center at Education Northwest [Culturally Responsive Teaching: A Guide to Evidence-Based Practices for Teaching All Students Equitably](#) (2016).

These standards related to professional knowledge and skills in the areas of Learner-Centered Supports, Ethics and Professional Growth, and Strategic Partnerships were designed to describe what all beginning teachers should know and be able to do regardless of their specific discipline area.

In developing these Professional Knowledge and Skills standards, there are three key considerations that guided the work of the committee. First, there is the recognition that at the middle level, beginning teachers must have sufficient depth and breadth of content knowledge and skills; strong understanding of the social-emotional developmental stages of adolescents; a knowledge of culturally-responsive and trauma-informed instruction; and strategies to promote equitable learning for all students in the classroom.

Second, these standards reflect the integration of newly adopted [Clinical Experiences Requirements](#) and the [Core Teaching Practices](#). The full implementation of the [Clinical Experiences Requirements](#) in PK-12 classrooms where teacher candidates have opportunities to demonstrate and practice professional knowledge and skills, necessitates stronger, mutually beneficial partnerships between educator preparation programs and middle and high school faculty, and administrators. The shared understanding of and commitment to these Professional standards among those involved in these partnerships will strengthen the preparation of beginning teachers.

The final consideration that underlies the development of these standards is the need for intentional collaboration between general education, special education, and English as a second language preparation programs, as the focus on the whole child and on learner-centered supports blurs the traditional line between these aspects of the grade 5-9 and 7-12 school context. By building this integration into preparation programs, all beginning teachers will enter the work force better prepared to engage in inclusive, equitable teaching through collaboration with other professionals who are also focused on the needs of the whole child.

### **Public Comment**

Following the presentation of the proposed Standards for the Preparation of Teachers in Professional Knowledge and Skills, English Language Arts, and Mathematics in Middle Grades (5-9) and High School (7-12) at the February 11, 2020 State Board of Education (SBE) meeting, the Office of Educator Excellence solicited public comment on the proposed standards through April 29, 2020. A total of 201 individuals (PK-12 teachers, teacher candidates, school administrators, teacher educators, education organization representatives, parents, and interested citizens) participated in the public comment survey. Feedback was strongly positive, with 78% of respondents agreeing that the proposed standards would improve the preparation of middle grades (5-9) teachers, and 76% agreeing that the proposed standards would improve the preparation of high school (7-12) teachers.

Statements of support for the standards constituted the largest number of open-ended comments received for each set of standards in both grade levels. Eighteen respondents specifically praised the standards' inclusive vision of teaching practices to support the needs of individual students in Michigan's increasingly diverse classrooms.

Eleven respondents stated that the standards needed greater emphasis on knowledge and skills related to supporting English learners across content areas in

the general education classroom. Within the Professional Knowledge and Skills standards for both grade bands, multiple standards, such as P.1.j and P.1.k, explicitly call attention to the needs of English learners. Other standards, such as P.1.d, are intended to address multiple aspects of student diversity, including English learners. Within the English Language Arts standards, implicit references to English learners in standards ELA.2.b, ELA.2.c, ELA.2.d, ELA.4.b, and ELA.4.c were made explicit to emphasize the need for an intentional focus on preparing teacher candidates to support this population. The mathematics standards frequently reference “all learners” which is intended to be inclusive of English learners therefore changes were not made to these standards. Teacher preparation programs are advised to increase the curriculum’s emphasis in this area. Technical assistance resources will be provided to further emphasize the inclusivity of “all learners.”

Eleven respondents expressed general support for the standards but noted that their effectiveness will depend on how educator preparations implement them through coursework and clinical experiences. Michigan’s [Clinical Experiences Requirements](#) provide a detailed framework for clinically-based teacher preparation to ensure that candidates have extensive opportunities to engage with students representing the diversity of Michigan’s population in authentic school settings. These experiences are required to be distributed across the arc of a teacher preparation program, not solely isolated to student teaching. In addition to the Clinical Experiences Requirements, these standards should also be considered alongside the [Core Teaching Practices](#), which together with the Professional Knowledge and Skills standards form the basis for the professional education coursework all teacher candidates will experience, regardless of disciplinary specialization. Supplemental material to be developed during the implementation of these standards will include a glossary and recommended resources to support teacher educators’ and teacher candidates’ understandings of the standards.

Four respondents expressed concern for the balance between content knowledge and pedagogical training in the standards. All the English language arts and mathematics standards were written in such a way as to intersect the content knowledge and pedagogy needed to effectively deliver instruction. Institutions are expected to provide coursework to ensure beginning teachers have the content knowledge necessary to address the specific skills described in each of the standards. The Professional Knowledge and Skills standards address the teaching skills necessary to build relationships and manage classrooms.

Three respondents expressed concerns with the amount of emphasis the standards place on equity and advocacy. One respondent felt the emphasis was not strong enough, while two respondents argued that it was an unnecessary and harmful overreach in defining teachers’ knowledge and skills. At its March 12, 2019 meeting, the Michigan SBE adopted a [Resolution on Dignity in Schools](#), which “reaffirms its commitment to upholding all federal and state civil rights laws; helping school districts enact policies that improve school climate, safety, and do not have a disparate impact on students based on their race, sex, LGBTQ status, disability status, or age; and eliminating the use of ineffective exclusionary discipline and increasing equity for all students.” State board approved standards provide ways for the enactment of SBE resolutions supporting equity in schools at the state level.

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Teachers, as enactors of SBE policy, engage in advocacy for students at the classroom and school level in order to encourage and enact equity for all students in the state.

Furthermore, through its strategic priority of the [Whole Child](#), "MDE believes caring for, supporting, and educating the whole child is an essential part of promoting academic achievement and excellence throughout the Prenatal Through Age 20 (P-20) system." These standards are intended to support achievement of this priority by preparing teachers to meet all the needs of the whole child for each individual learner.

Twelve respondents expressed concerns not about the standards, but rather about teacher shortages and the effect narrower grade bands will have on the ability of small schools and districts to make appropriate staffing decisions. These concerns are addressed by the flexibilities and communications included as part of the OEE's proposed appropriate placement policies, which will accompany the implementation of these preparation standards.

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

Well-prepared beginning teachers of students in grades 5-9 & 7-12 will:

- a. Purposefully incorporate approaches to address the cognitive, physical, behavioral, social, and emotional needs/development of adolescents (5-9 whole learner, 7-12 whole learner) throughout all aspects of teaching and learning.
- b. Recognize and respond appropriately to the multiple influences on adolescent development, including but not limited to cultural, linguistic, religious, gendered, historic, economic, and social-emotional contexts throughout all aspects of teaching and learning.
- c. Evaluate and analyze available curriculum and demonstrate ability to adapt or design rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum that reflects students' needs, assets, and interests; and connects the learners' language, culture, and experiences to learning.
- d. Design challenging, standards-based instruction aligned with curriculum that reflects learners' needs, assets, and interests; and connects the learners' language, culture, and experiences to learning.
- e. Cultivate and manage a student-centered classroom that leads to student 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 intra- personal 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 adolescents 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 adolescents, including exceptional learners such as adolescents 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, 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. Demonstrate knowledge and use of a variety of strategies to promote full participation of English learners in classrooms.
- l. Acknowledge and reflect on the impact of personal beliefs, biases, privileges, and experiences on the equitable interpretation of learner communication and behavior.



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- m. Address the impact of curriculum, policies, processes, and practices on the education of all adolescents, with particular attention to historically underserved communities and social identity groups through culturally responsive curriculum, instruction, and advocacy.
- n. Identify signs of trauma in adolescents 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 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 of students in grades 5-9 & 7-12 will:

- a. Enact ethical practices aligned with professional 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), adhering to the Michigan [Policy for the Emergency Use of Seclusion and Restraint](#), and the [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 adolescent development, and student 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).

**P.3. Strategic Partnerships**

Well-prepared beginning teachers of students in grades 5-9 & 7-12 will:

- 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. Describe the roles and responsibilities of school professionals and utilize them as resources to support learners, classroom instruction, and positive classroom climate and culture.

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- c. 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.
- d. 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 learner.
- e. Use a variety of communication strategies to create mutually beneficial relationships with students, families, caregivers, and communities that promote engagement, learning, and agency.
- 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.