

**TEXES**  
**Texas Examinations of Educator Standards**

**Field 161: Special Education EC–12**  
**Test Framework**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Range of Competencies</b>
I. Understanding Individuals with Disabilities and Evaluating Their Needs	001–002
II. Promoting Student Learning and Development	003–007
III. Promoting Student Achievement in English Language Arts and Reading and in Mathematics	008–009
IV. Foundations and Professional Roles and Responsibilities	010–012

# TEST FRAMEWORK FOR FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12

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- Domain I Understanding Individuals with Disabilities and Evaluating Their Needs**  
(approximately 13% of the test)
- Standards Assessed:**
- Special Education EC–12 Standard IV:**  
The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of the characteristics and needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Special Education EC–12 Standard V:**  
The special education teacher understands formal and informal assessment procedures and knows how to evaluate student competencies to make instructional decisions.
- Domain II Promoting Student Learning and Development**  
(approximately 33% of the test)
- Standards Assessed:**
- Special Education EC–12 Standard VI:**  
The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of procedures for planning instruction and managing the teaching and learning environment.
- Special Education EC–12 Standard VII:**  
The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of issues and procedures for teaching appropriate student behavior and social skills.
- Special Education EC–12 Standard VIII:**  
The special education teacher understands assistive technology as defined by state and federal regulations.
- Special Education EC–12 Standard IX:**  
The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of transition issues and procedures across the life span.
- Special Education EC–12 Standard X:**  
The special education teacher promotes students' academic performance in all content areas by facilitating their achievement in a variety of settings and situations.
- Domain III Promoting Student Achievement in English Language Arts and Reading and in Mathematics**  
(approximately 33% of the test)
- Standards Assessed:**
- Special Education EC–12 Standard XI:**  
The special education teacher promotes students' performance in English language arts and reading.
- Special Education EC–12 Standard XII:**  
The special education teacher promotes students' performance in mathematics.

**Domain IV Foundations and Professional Roles and Responsibilities  
(approximately 20% of the test)**

**Standards Assessed:**

**Special Education EC–12 Standard I:**

The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of the philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education.

**Special Education EC–12 Standard II:**

The special education teacher applies knowledge of professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.

**Special Education EC–12 Standard III:**

The special education teacher knows how to communicate and collaborate effectively in a variety of professional settings.

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**DOMAIN I—UNDERSTANDING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND EVALUATING THEIR NEEDS**

**Competency 001**

**The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of the characteristics and needs of students with disabilities.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Knows characteristics of individuals with different types of disabilities, including individuals with different levels of severity and multiple disabilities across eligibility categories, and analyzes the impact of various disabilities on learning and experience.
- Knows how the developmental, academic, social, career, and functional characteristics of individuals with disabilities relate to levels of support needed, and applies knowledge of human development and disabilities to plan and implement appropriate curriculum.
- Knows theoretical explanations for behavioral disorders, and analyzes the varied characteristics of behavioral disorders and their effect on learning.
- Knows the different ways that students with and without disabilities learn.
- Applies knowledge of human development and the effects of various types of disabilities on developmental processes in order to identify the needs of individuals with and without disabilities.
- Understands the effects of cultural and environmental influences (e.g., linguistic characteristics, socioeconomic issues, abuse/neglect, substance abuse) on the child and family.
- Understands normal, delayed, and disordered communication patterns, including nonsymbolic communication, and the impact of language development on the academic and social skills of individuals with disabilities.
- Knows aspects of medical conditions affecting individuals with disabilities, including the effects of various medications on behavior and functioning and the implications of medical complications for student support needs (e.g., seizure management, tube feeding, catheterization, cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR]).

## FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12 TEST FRAMEWORK

- Understands ways in which physical disabilities and health impairments relate to development and behavior, and knows the etiologies and effects of sensory disabilities and other conditions affecting individuals with disabilities.

### Competency 002

**The special education teacher understands formal and informal assessment and evaluation procedures and knows how to evaluate student competencies to make instructional decisions.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Applies knowledge of basic terminology used in assessment and evaluation, the uses and limitations of various types of instruments and techniques, and methods for monitoring the progress of individuals with disabilities.
- Understands ethical concerns related to assessment and evaluation, including legal provisions, regulations, and guidelines regarding unbiased evaluation and the use of psychometric instruments and instructional assessment measures with individuals with disabilities.
- Identifies appropriate evaluation strategies for individual students with diverse characteristics and needs (e.g., related to culture, language, personal beliefs, nature, severity of disabilities).
- Applies knowledge of procedures for screening, prereferral intervention, referral, and determining eligibility, including criteria used to determine eligibility.
- Knows how to gather background information regarding academic, medical, and family history, collaborate with parents/guardians and with other professionals to conduct assessments and evaluations, document ongoing student assessment, and maintain accurate records.
- Knows how to interpret and apply information from formal and informal assessment and evaluation instruments and procedures, including interpreting various types of scores (e.g., standard scores, percentile ranks, age/grade equivalents).
- Knows how to communicate assessment and evaluation results appropriately to individuals with disabilities, parents/guardians, administrators, and other professionals.
- Understands the reciprocal nature of assessment and instruction; applies skills for developing individualized assessment strategies to evaluate the results of instruction; and knows how to use assessment and evaluation results to design, monitor, and modify instruction for individuals with disabilities.
- Knows how to design and use ecological assessments, portfolio assessments, task analyses, and functional assessments (e.g., behavioral, social, communication) to accommodate the unique abilities and needs of individuals with disabilities.

## FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12 TEST FRAMEWORK

- Applies skills for using assessment and evaluation information from various sources (e.g., teachers, other professionals, parents/guardians, individuals with disabilities) to make instructional decisions, plan effective programs for individuals with disabilities, including those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and identify supports needed for integration into various program placements.

### DOMAIN II—PROMOTING STUDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

#### Competency 003

##### **The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of procedures for planning instruction for individuals with disabilities.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Knows how to select, develop, and apply instructional content, materials, resources, and strategies that are responsive to cultural and other factors (e.g., language, religion, gender, personal beliefs, nature and severity of disability).
- Knows curricula for developing cognitive, academic, social, language, affective, motor, functional, transition, and career life skills for individuals with disabilities.
- Knows the role of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) in developing Individual Education Programs (IEPs) for students with disabilities, and applies skills for sequencing, implementing, and evaluating individual learning objectives.
- Applies procedures for developing and using Individual Education Program (IEP) objectives to plan instruction for individuals with disabilities.
- Prepares, adapts, and organizes materials to implement developmentally appropriate and age-appropriate lesson plans based on Individual Education Program (IEP) objectives for individuals with disabilities.
- Applies knowledge of issues, resources, and appropriate strategies for teaching students with disabilities in specialized settings (e.g., alternative schools, special centers, hospitals, residential facilities), including transitions to and from school- and community-based settings.
- Knows how to collaborate with other professionals to interpret and use sensory, mobility, reflex, and perceptual information to create appropriate learning plans (e.g., sensory stimulation, physical positioning, lifting).
- Knows how to collaborate with other professionals to plan, adapt, and implement effective instruction in the least restrictive setting for individuals with disabilities.

## FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12 TEST FRAMEWORK

- Knows how the general or special classroom and other learning environments (e.g., home, job site, cafeteria, transportation, community) impact student learning and behavior, and applies strategies for planning educational environments that promote students' learning, active participation, communication, self-advocacy, increased independence, and generalization of skills.
- Identifies ways in which technology can assist in planning and managing instruction for individuals with disabilities.
- Knows how to use local, state, and federal resources to assist in programming for individuals with disabilities.

### Competency 004

**The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of procedures for managing the teaching and learning environment, including procedures related to the use of assistive technology.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Applies procedures for ensuring a safe, positive, and supportive learning environment in which diversities are valued, and knows how to address common environmental and personal barriers that hinder accessibility for and acceptance of individuals with disabilities.
- Knows how to use instructional time efficiently and effectively for individuals with disabilities.
- Knows how to design, structure, and manage daily routines, including transition time, for students in a variety of educational settings, and applies procedures for monitoring behavior changes across activities and settings.
- Applies knowledge of basic classroom management theories, methods, and techniques for individuals with disabilities, research-based best practices for effective management of teaching and learning, and management procedures that are appropriate to individual needs.
- Identifies ways in which technology can assist in managing the teaching and learning environment to meet the needs of individual students.
- Knows various types of assistive technologies, devices, services, and resources and their role in facilitating students' educational achievement, communication, positioning, mobility, and active participation in educational activities and routines.
- Knows how to make informed decisions about types and levels of assistive technologies, devices, and services for students with various needs, collect and analyze information about a student's environment and curriculum to identify and monitor assistive technology needs, and support the use of assistive technologies, devices, and services.
- Applies procedures for participating in the selection and implementation of assistive technologies, devices, and services for students with various needs.

## FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12 TEST FRAMEWORK

- Applies procedures for coordinating activities of related services personnel and directing the activities of paraprofessionals, aides, volunteers, and peer tutors.
- Under the direction of related services personnel, applies knowledge of appropriate body mechanics to ensure student and teacher safety in transfer, lifting, positioning, and seating.

### Competency 005

**The special education teacher knows how to promote students' educational performance in all content areas by facilitating their achievement in a variety of settings and situations.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Analyzes cultural factors and perspectives that affect relationships among students, parents/guardians, schools, and communities with regard to providing instruction for individuals with disabilities.
- Knows how to serve as a resource person for families, general education teachers, administrators, and other personnel in recognizing the characteristics of and meeting the needs of individuals with learning differences in the general education classroom.
- Knows how to use assessment results to design, monitor, and adapt instruction to enhance student learning, and applies skills for selecting, adapting, and using effective, research-based instructional strategies, practices, and materials that are developmentally appropriate and age appropriate and that meet individual needs.
- Knows instructional, compensatory, enrichment, and remedial methods, techniques, and curriculum materials, and applies strategies for modifying instruction based on the differing learning styles and needs of students.
- Applies knowledge of techniques for motivating students, including the effects of high teacher expectations on student motivation.
- Knows life-skills and self-help curricula and strategies for providing students with life-skills instruction relevant to independent or assisted living and employment.
- Knows how to select and use appropriate technologies to accomplish instructional objectives, and applies skills for appropriately integrating technology into the instructional process.
- Applies strategies for integrating affective, social, and career/vocational skills with academic curricula, teaching students with disabilities to solve problems and use other cognitive strategies to meet their individual needs, and facilitating maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments.
- Knows how to adapt lessons to maximize the physical abilities of individuals with specialized needs.

**FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12  
TEST FRAMEWORK**

- Knows how to integrate related services into all types of educational settings.
- Knows how to provide community-referenced and community-based instruction as appropriate.
- Knows how to design and implement instruction in independent living skills, vocational skills, and career education for students with physical and health disabilities and how to promote the use of medical self-management procedures for students with specialized health care needs.

**Competency 006**

**The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of issues and procedures for teaching appropriate student behavior and social skills.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Applies knowledge of how culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds of students impact behavior management and social skills instruction.
- Recognizes ways in which teacher attitudes and behaviors and personal cultural biases influence the behavior of students.
- Applies knowledge of ethics, laws, rules, and procedural safeguards related to planning and implementing behavior management and discipline for individuals with and without disabilities.
- Knows theories relating to student problem behavior (e.g., noncompliance, self-stimulation, self-injury, withdrawal, aggression, defiance) and the theoretical basis of behavior management techniques (e.g., positive behavioral support, reinforcement, proactive strategies, reductive strategies that decrease negative behaviors).
- Develops and/or selects social skills and behavioral curricula and strategies that promote socially appropriate behavior, and prepares individuals to live cooperatively and productively in society.
- Incorporates social skills instruction across settings and curricula and knows how to design, implement, and evaluate instructional programs that enhance an individual's social participation in family, school, and community activities.
- Identifies realistic expectations for personal and social behavior in various settings, and applies procedures for increasing an individual's self-awareness, self-control, self-management, self-reliance, and self-confidence.
- Knows strategies for modifying learning environments (e.g., schedule, physical and instructional arrangements) to promote appropriate behaviors.
- Knows the impact of language on an individual's behavior and learning and knows how the communication skills of nonspeaking/nonverbal individuals affect their behavior.

**FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12  
TEST FRAMEWORK**

- Understands functional behavior assessments and evaluations and their role in developing behavior intervention plans.
- Knows strategies for crisis prevention, intervention, and postvention; applies procedures for developing, implementing, and evaluating individual behavior crisis-management plans in educational settings; and implements the least intensive intervention consistent with individual needs.

**Competency 007**

**The special education teacher understands and applies knowledge of transition issues and procedures across the life span.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Knows how to plan, facilitate, and implement transition activities as documented in Individualized Family Services Plans (IFSPs), Individual Education Programs (IEPs), and Individual Transition Plans (ITPs).
- Knows how to plan for and link students' current and previous developmental and learning experiences, including teaching strategies, with those of subsequent settings.
- Knows programs and services available at various levels and how to assist students and families in planning for transition.
- Knows how to teach students skills for coping with and managing transitions.
- Knows sources of unique services, networks, and organizations for individuals with disabilities, including career, vocational, and transition support.
- Applies knowledge of procedures and supports needed to facilitate transitions across programs and placements.
- Knows how to collaborate with the student, the family, and others to design and implement transition plans that meet identified student needs and ensure successful transitions.
- Applies skills for communicating with families about issues related to transition and strategies for helping their children make successful transitions.

**FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12  
TEST FRAMEWORK**

**DOMAIN III—PROMOTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS  
AND READING AND IN MATHEMATICS**

**Competency 008**

**The special education teacher promotes students' performance in English language arts and reading.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Applies knowledge of developmental processes associated with communication systems (e.g., listening, speaking, writing), including emergent and preliteracy skills, and knows how to provide a variety of opportunities for students with disabilities to learn communication skills.
- Knows how to use a variety of assessment practices and procedures to plan and implement instruction in English language arts and reading that is responsive to the strengths and needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Knows the nature and stages of literacy development, and various contexts and methods for promoting students' literacy development.
- Applies knowledge of phonological and phonemic awareness and strategies for promoting the phonological and phonemic awareness of students with disabilities.
- Applies knowledge of the alphabetic principle and word analysis skills (e.g., decoding, structural analysis, sight word vocabulary), and knows how to provide students with disabilities with systematic instruction that promotes their ability to apply the alphabetic principle and word analysis and decoding skills.
- Applies knowledge of reading fluency and the relationship between reading fluency and reading comprehension, and knows how to provide students with disabilities with systematic instruction that promotes their reading fluency.
- Knows the importance of comprehension in reading, and knows how to provide students with disabilities with instruction in the use of skills and strategies (e.g., critical/creative thinking) to promote their reading comprehension.
- Knows how to provide students with disabilities with systematic instruction to develop skills in writing conventions and competence in written communication.
- Knows the relationship between learning and effective study, critical-thinking, and inquiry skills, and knows how to use various methods and strategies to teach students with disabilities to apply study, critical-thinking, and inquiry skills.
- Knows skills for interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and providing visual images and messages, and knows how to provide systematic instruction that helps students with disabilities learn to interpret, analyze, evaluate, and create visual images and messages in various media and technologies.

**FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12  
TEST FRAMEWORK**

**Competency 009**

**The special education teacher promotes students' performance in mathematics.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Knows how to use a variety of assessment methods to monitor the mathematical understanding of students with disabilities and adapt mathematics instruction to address individual strengths and needs.
- Knows how to provide mathematics instruction that is based on principles of children's learning and development and that reflects recognition of common misconceptions and sources of error in mathematics.
- Knows how individuals learn and develop mathematical skills, procedures, and concepts.
- Understands numbers, number systems and their structure, operations and algorithms, and quantitative reasoning, and uses various instructional strategies and resources, including technology, to help students with disabilities understand and apply related content and skills.
- Understands patterns, relations, functions, and algebraic reasoning and analysis, and uses various instructional strategies and resources, including technology, to help students with disabilities understand and apply related content and skills.
- Understands geometry, spatial reasoning, and measurement concepts and principles, and uses various instructional strategies and resources, including technology, to help students with disabilities understand and apply related content and skills.
- Understands principles and applications of probability and statistics, and uses various instructional strategies and resources, including technology, to help students with disabilities understand and apply related content and skills.
- Applies knowledge of methods, strategies, and resources for teaching students with disabilities to engage in mathematical reasoning and problem solving, apply mathematics in a variety of contexts, and communicate mathematically.

**FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12  
TEST FRAMEWORK**

**DOMAIN IV—FOUNDATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Competency 010**

**The special education teacher understands the philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Knows the historical foundations of special education, major contributors to the literature, major legislation relevant to knowledge and practice in the education of individuals with disabilities, and current issues and trends in special education.
- Applies knowledge of models, theories, and philosophies that provide the basis for special education practice.
- Applies current educational terminology and definitions regarding individuals with disabilities, including professionally accepted classification systems and current incidence and prevalence figures.
- Analyzes issues relating to definition and identification procedures for individuals with disabilities, including individuals from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Understands factors that influence the overrepresentation of culturally and/or linguistically diverse students in programs for individuals with disabilities.
- Recognizes various perspectives (e.g., medical, psychological, behavioral, educational) regarding definitions and etiologies of disabilities.
- Understands cultural variations in beliefs, traditions, and values and their effects on the relationships among child, family, and school.
- Applies knowledge of the continuum of placement and services for individuals with disabilities.

## FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12 TEST FRAMEWORK

### Competency 011

**The special education teacher applies knowledge of professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Knows how to exercise objective professional judgment, maintain a high level of competence and integrity in professional practice, and participate in professional activities and organizations that may benefit individuals with disabilities, their parents/guardians, and/or colleagues.
- Knows consumer and professional organizations, publications, and journals relevant to individuals with disabilities, and knows how to access information on cognitive, communicative, physical, cultural, social, and emotional characteristics and needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Applies skills for participating effectively in identifying, diagnosing, placing, and developing programming for students with disabilities, including using advocacy skills and competencies to support the education of students in least restrictive environments.
- Applies knowledge of assurances and due process rights related to assessment, eligibility, and placement, and knows the rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians, students, teachers, other professionals, and schools.
- Knows legal and ethical issues (e.g., liability) relevant to working with individuals with disabilities, and knows how to conduct instructional and other professional activities consistent with the requirements of laws, rules and regulations, and local district policies and procedures, including complying with local, state, and federal monitoring and evaluation requirements.
- Knows the roles of and relationships among federal, state, and local entities with regard to the regulation and provision of special education and related services, including specialized health care services.
- Applies knowledge of practices that conform to standards and policies of the profession, including the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Code of Ethics.
- Demonstrates awareness of personal cultural biases and differences that may affect one's teaching, and knows how to demonstrate respect for the culture, gender, and personal beliefs of individual students.
- Applies procedures for safeguarding confidentiality with regard to students with disabilities (e.g., by maintaining the confidentiality of electronic correspondence and records, ensuring the confidentiality of conversations), and recognizes the importance of respecting students' privacy.
- Knows laws, regulations, and policies related to the provision of specialized health care in the educational setting.

**FIELD 161: SPECIAL EDUCATION EC–12  
TEST FRAMEWORK**

**Competency 012**

**The special education teacher knows how to communicate and collaborate effectively in a variety of professional settings.**

The beginning special education teacher:

- Understands the collaborative roles of students, parents/guardians, teachers, and other school and community personnel in planning and implementing an individualized program, and applies effective strategies for working collaboratively in various contexts.
- Applies knowledge of factors that promote effective communication and collaboration with students, parents/guardians, teachers, paraprofessionals, and other school and community personnel.
- Knows how to foster respectful and beneficial relationships between families and professionals in the school and community.
- Knows typical concerns of families of individuals with disabilities and appropriate strategies to support families in dealing with these concerns.
- Applies knowledge of strategies for encouraging and assisting parents/guardians in their role as active participants in their children's education, and applies procedures for planning and conducting collaborative conferences with parents/guardians.
- Applies knowledge of effective communication in various professional contexts, and knows ethical practices for confidential communication regarding individuals with disabilities.
- Knows the types of information generally available from parents/guardians, school officials, the legal system, and community service agencies.
- Applies knowledge of the collaborative and consultative roles of special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and other school personnel in integrating individuals with disabilities into general educational settings.
- Knows how to collaborate with teachers in the general educational setting and other school and community personnel to integrate individuals with disabilities into various learning environments.
- Knows how to serve as a resource person for families, general education teachers, administrators, and other school personnel regarding the characteristics and needs of individuals with disabilities.