

COMPETENCIES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR, GRADES P-12



Special Education Administrators in grades P-12 shall be able to meet the expectations set by the following competencies. These competencies reflect the National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) standards, which specify what novice leaders and program graduates should know and be able to do because of the completion of a high-quality educational leadership preparation program. The Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), which are standards for practicing educational leaders, are covered at an awareness level by the NELP Standards. Special Education Administrators require a master's degree or higher from an accredited college or university in Educational Leadership, education, or a licensure content area and other requirements as outlined in 6-2.0 of the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Educator Licensure.



1. MISSION, VISION AND IMPROVEMENT

NELP STANDARDS

PSEL FOR SWD STANDARDS 1 AND 10

1.1 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to work collaboratively to develop a mission and vision for the school that supports the success of students with disabilities

1.2 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to ensure a shared understanding of and mutual commitment to the mission and vision among faculty, and shape practice accordingly

1.3 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to include parents and other external stakeholders in the visioning process and consistently engage them as partners in this work

1.4 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to emphasize the “why” and “how” of improvement and change; motivate and empower staff to own improvement initiatives and share responsibility and accountability for their success

1.5 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to provide learning opportunities for teachers and staff to equip them to participate in strategic processes of improvement and to take part in implementing effective programs and practices for students with disabilities

1.6 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to address teacher capacity needs around the identification, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based interventions, and ensure that necessary conditions for teaching and learning exist in order to prepare students with disabilities for success in college, career, and life

1.7 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to ensure that the particular needs of students with disabilities are intentionally addressed within the school's broader plans for improvement

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2. ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL NORMS

NELP STANDARDS

PSEL FOR SWD STANDARD 2

2.1 Understand and demonstrate capacity to adhere to ethical and professional norms and uphold the moral imperative to acknowledge inequities and promote equality

2.2 Understand and demonstrate capacity to possess an ethical mindset to identify, interpret, and manage the ethical dilemmas in leadership for students with disabilities and address them by embodying the values of justice and care, equality and equity, and community in service of each student

2.3 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to lead with interpersonal and social-emotional competence, and develop productive relationships by communicating effectively, cultivating interpersonal awareness, and building trust

3. EQUITY, INCLUSIVENESS AND CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS

NELP STANDARDS

PSEL FOR SWD STANDARDS 3 AND 5

3.1 Understand and demonstrate capacity to ensure the academic success and well-being of students with disabilities through equitable access to effective teachers, culturally responsive learning opportunities and supports, and necessary resources

3.2 Understand and demonstrate capacity to hold asset-based rather than deficit-based perspectives of students, and recognize relationships among disability, cultural differences, and social inequities

3.3 Understand and demonstrate capacity to recognize, confront, and educate others about the institutional forces and historical struggles that have impeded equitable educational opportunities for students with disabilities

3.4 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to build and maintain a safe, caring, and healthy environment that meets the needs of students with disabilities and encourages them to be active, responsible members of their community

3.5 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to ensure that students with disabilities have opportunities to learn with their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate through inclusive practices, such as Universal Design for Learning ([UDL](#))

3.6 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote inclusive social environments that foster acceptance, care, and sense of value and belonging in adult-student and student-peer relationships

3.7 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to support teachers as they create productive and inclusive environments in their classrooms and throughout the school

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4. LEARNING AND INSTRUCTION

NELP STANDARDS

PSEL FOR SWD STANDARD 4

4.1 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to communicate high academic expectations for students with disabilities; promote high quality, intellectually challenging curricula and instruction; and provide opportunities for students with disabilities to achieve within the general education curriculum using a multi-tiered system of support

4.2 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to work collaboratively with classroom teachers to help them develop their capacity to use high-leverage practices in special education

4.3 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to ensure that high leverage practices in special education are implemented with integrity and are adapted to local needs

4.4 Understand and demonstrate capacity to promote appropriate, clear, and valid monitoring and assessment systems where teachers receive meaningful information about how students respond to instruction and where information is relevant to instructional improvement

4.5 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to implement state initiatives and interpret legislation to ensure that special education programs are in alignment. Examples include:

- Arkansas Dyslexia Law
- Reading Initiative for Student Excellence (RISE)
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC)
- Response to Intervention (RTI)

5. COMMUNITY AND EXTERNAL LEADERSHIP

NELP STANDARDS

PSEL FOR SWD STANDARD 8

5.1 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to create partnerships with families of students with disabilities and engage them purposefully and productively in the learning and development of their children in and out of school

5.2 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to engage families to provide insight about their children's specific disabilities that allows teachers to better understand their needs, make educationally sound instructional decisions, and assist in interpreting and assessing student progress

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6. OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

NELP STANDARDS

PSEL FOR SWD STANDARD 9

6.1 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to manage budgets and develop strong relationships with central offices in order to ensure the effective and efficient use of resources and that students with disabilities have access to appropriate transportation, classrooms, services, accommodations, and extracurricular activities

6.2 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to ensure that external resources are aligned with school goals and support core programs and services for special education students

6.3 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to assign roles and responsibilities to optimize staff capacity to address the learning needs of students with disabilities

6.4 Understand and demonstrate the capacity to develop and effectively manage school structures, operations, and administrative systems that support students with disabilities

7. BUILDING PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

NELP STANDARDS

PSEL FOR SWD STANDARDS 6 AND 7

7.1 Understand and have the capacity to hire and retain highly effective special education and general education teachers with a school-wide vision and a set of core values that support improving achievement and outcomes for students with disabilities

7.2 Understand and have the capacity to provide multiple sources of high-quality, meaningful professional learning and development opportunities, and participate alongside staff

7.3 Understand and have the capacity to identify strategies to motivate staff and encourage, recognize, and facilitate leadership opportunities for teachers and staff who effectively education students with disabilities

7.4 Understand and have the capacity to evaluate, develop, and implement systems of supervision, support, and evaluation designed to promote school improvement and student success

- Act quickly and effectively to remove an educator from learning community if educator does not respond to repeated attempts to remove obstacles to teaching (e.g., persistently displays a fixed mindset, inability to improve, low expectations for students, unwillingness to prioritize equity)
- Deliver actionable feedback about instruction and other professional practices via coaching approaches that:
 - Are job-embedded and use teacher leaders or partnerships with area education agencies to distribute leadership and responsibilities
 - Employ educators' ability to self-assess
 - Use multiple means of employing summative and formative data to understand individual educator's performance
 - Place ultimate accountability for learning in teams and groups of educators

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7.5 Understand and have the capacity to set high expectations for and engage in active self-assessment and reflective learning in order to promote mutual accountability

7.6 Understand and have the capacity to maintain a just and democratic workplace that gives teachers the confidence to exercise responsible discretion and be open to criticism

7.7 Understand and have the capacity to promote collaborative cultures focused on shared responsibility for achieving the mission and vision of the school, and for the success of students with disabilities

7.8 Understand and have the capacity to communicate clear expectations for collaboration within and among established teams of teachers without micromanaging, and encourage experimentation among teams

7.9 Understand and have the capacity to manage tensions and conflict while developing conditions for productivity, including effective professional development, practice, and support to staff



8. INTERNSHIP AND CLINICAL PRACTICE

NELP STANDARDS

8.1 Participate in a variety of coherent, authentic, field and or clinical internship experiences within multiple school environments that afford opportunities to interact with stakeholders and synthesize and apply the content knowledge and develop and refine the professional skills articulated in each of the components included in the Special Education Administrator P-12 Competencies described above

8.2 Complete a minimum of six-months of concentrated (10-15 hours per week) internship or clinical experiences that include authentic leadership activities within a school setting

8.3 Work with a mentor who has demonstrated effectiveness as a special education administrator; is present for a significant portion of the internship; is selected collaboratively by the intern, a representative of the school and/or district, and program faculty; and is provided with training by the supervising institution