

Teacher Preparation Program

Technical Standards

A candidate for teacher certification must possess certain abilities or skills in order to be able to provide high-quality, equitable learning opportunities for all K-12 students. These Technical Standards establish the essential qualities for teacher candidates at Michigan State University to achieve the knowledge, skills and levels of competency necessary both for teacher preparation and for certification.

Teacher candidates throughout the program are adults working with children and youth under the supervision of their mentor teachers and the university, and are charged with the reasonable care of those children. These standards are consistent with the professional expectations for working in schools and other educational settings.

These Technical Standards complement the other expectations of the program, outlined in the Program Standards and the Professional Conduct Policy. All teacher candidates are expected to demonstrate these Technical Standards in all of their work in Teacher Certification Program classes and field placements. Failure to consistently demonstrate these Technical Standards represents grounds for dismissal from the program.

Reasonable accommodation can be made in certain areas of the teacher certification program, if requested in advance. However, the teacher candidate must still be able to independently perform the essential requirements of the program with such accommodation. The use of a trained intermediary is not acceptable in many field-based settings because the candidate's judgment is then mediated by someone else's power of selection and observation. If you believe that you may need accommodations please consult the MSU Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities.

1. Observation Skills

A teacher candidate must be able to:

- Observe individual learners and groups of learners accurately at a distance and close at hand, both to assure learners' safety and to interact effectively with learners
- Hear a range of sounds in isolation and in complex auditory contexts, both to assure the safety of learners and to interact effectively with learners
- Acquire information from written documents, including those generated by learners
- Visualize information as presented in images from paper, films, slides or video, including those generated by learners

Such observation and information acquisition requires the functional use of visual, auditory, and somatic senses, enhanced by the functional use of other sensory modalities. When a teacher candidate's ability to observe or acquire information through these sensory modalities is

compromised, the student must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to acquire the essential information conveyed in this fashion.

2. Communication Skills

A teacher candidate must be able to:

- Skillfully communicate verbally, in English, both virtually and in person
- Skillfully communicate in written form, in English, including in electronic formats
- Speak to, hear and observe learners by sight to elicit information; detect and describe changes in mood, activity and posture; perceive nonverbal communications
- Model effective spoken and written communication skills for learners
- Understand the impact of, and utilize, appropriate non-verbal forms of communication (facial expressions, gestures, posture, proximity, etc.) for promoting the learning of K-12 students and in communicating with colleagues and other adults
- Understand the impact of, and maintain appropriate standards of, dress and personal hygiene necessary for maintaining effective conditions for learning
- Communicate effectively, efficiently and sensitively, in oral and written form, with learners, learners' families, and all members of the school faculty and staff

Such communication requires the functional use of visual, auditory, and somatic senses, enhanced by the functional use of other sensory modalities. When a teacher candidate's ability to communicate through these sensory modalities is compromised, the candidate must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to meet communication standards.

3. Motor Skills

A teacher candidate must possess the motor skills necessary to

- Grasp and manipulate small and large objects (such as student learning materials, tables and chairs, etc.)
- Utilize fine motor skills for writing or visually representing information, both for use in the course of instruction and to model the use of these skills for students
- Use relevant equipment for instruction and assist learners in using appropriate equipment
- Move appropriately about the learning environment to the degree needed to assure safety of K-12 students and a productive learning environment

Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and mobility. When a teacher candidate's ability to execute these motor movements is compromised, the candidate must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to meet motor skill standards.

4. Social and Behavioral Abilities

A teacher candidate must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities. In addition a teacher candidate must be able to:

- Exercise good judgment
- Promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the safety, learning and care of K-12 students.

- Develop mature, sensitive and effective relationships with learners
- Maintain a professional demeanor
- Function effectively under stress
- Tolerate physically, emotionally and mentally demanding workloads
- Adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the learning process.
- Communicate with, care for, and teach, in a nonjudgmental way, learners whose personal or family culture, spiritual beliefs, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and/or age are different from their own.
- Provide effective and sensitive feedback to learners and colleagues
- Use feedback to make behavioral and/or performance improvements

5. Intellectual-Conceptual and Integrative Abilities

A teacher candidate must be able to solve problems. Effective problem solving, a critical skill demanded of educators, requires all of the abilities above. In addition to the above, the teacher candidate must be able to:

- Remain awake and alert
- Measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate and synthesize
- Read, comprehend and interpret information accurately from written documents, oral presentations, demonstrations, and observation within a variety of settings (university courses, K-12 classrooms, K-12 professional development sessions, parent/teacher conferences, etc.)
- Perform these problem-solving skills in a timely fashion

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