



**Pennsylvania**  
**Department of**  
**Education**

*Inspiring productive, fulfilled, life-long learners*

ACCOMMODATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS  
FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN AN INCLUSIVE SETTING  
AND MEETING THE NEEDS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS  
PROGRAM GUIDELINES

## INTRODUCTION

Pennsylvania's teacher preparation programs must include the competencies and skills needed to equip teachers to accommodate and adapt instruction for students with disabilities in an inclusive setting and to assist English language learners.

Final rulemaking of the State Board of Education published in the *The Pennsylvania Bulletin* on September 22, 2007 requires **all instructional and educational specialist preparation programs to include the following by January 1, 2011:**

1. At least 9 credits or 270 hours regarding accommodations and adaptations for students with disabilities in an inclusive setting (instruction in literacy skills development and cognitive skill development for students with disabilities must be included); and
2. At least 3 credits or 90 hours regarding the instructional needs of English language learners. (22 PA Code, Chapter 49, §49.13(b) (relating to policies)).<sup>1</sup>

Competencies and skills to accommodate and adapt instruction for students with disabilities in an inclusive setting and to assist English language learners must be identifiable during the program review process.

## DESIGN

Applicable hours are limited to a combination of seat hours of classroom instruction, field observation experiences, major research assignments and development and implementation of lesson plans with accommodations and adaptations for diverse learners in an inclusive setting. In order to help all teachers better understand ways to accommodate and adapt learning for students with disabilities in an inclusive setting, it is essential that courses and course content be developed and taught by faculty who have thorough knowledge and expertise in using evidence-based practices to teach individuals with disabilities. The preferred approach is the use of faculty with post-graduate training and certification in special education. While preparation programs may infuse the candidate competencies related to accommodations and adaptations for students with disabilities into existing courses or add additional courses as appropriate, it is the explicit application and relationship to students with disabilities that require faculty who deliver the content to have thorough knowledge and expertise in Special Education. Training for higher education faculty may include the use of modules and other educational activities prepared by special education faculty.

## COMPETENCIES: ACCOMMODATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN AN INCLUSIVE SETTING

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<sup>1</sup> (4) Evaluation and approval of teacher education programs leading to the certification and permitting of professional personnel.

(i) The evaluation by the Department will provide assurance that, on or before January 1, 2011, teacher education programs will require at least 9 credits or 270 hours, or an equivalent combination thereof, regarding accommodations and adaptations for students with disabilities in an inclusive setting. Within the content of these 9 credits or 270 hours, instruction in literacy skills development and cognitive skill development for students with disabilities must be included, as determined by the institution. At least 3 credits or 90 additional hours, or an equivalent combination thereof, must address the instructional needs of English language learners. For purposes of this requirement, 1 credit equals 30 hours of coursework. Applicable hours are limited to a combination of seat hours of classroom instruction, field observation experiences, major research assignments, and development and implementation of lesson plans with accommodations and adaptations for diverse learners in an inclusive setting. (22 Pa. Code §49.13(4)(i)).

## (9 CREDITS OR 270 HOURS)

The following outline includes the competencies for the 9 credits or 270 course hours addressing the academic needs and adaptations for students with disabilities.

### I. Types of Disabilities and Implications for Learning

**Candidates will be able to:**

- A. Demonstrate an understanding of and ability to plan for: type, identification and characteristics of different types of disabilities, as well as effective, evidence-based instructional practices and adaptations.
- B. Demonstrate an understanding of the legal rights and responsibilities of the teacher related to special education referral and evaluation and the rights and procedural safeguards that students are guaranteed.
- C. Demonstrate an understanding of possible causes and implications of over-representation of minorities in special education to avoid misinterpretation of behaviors that represent cultural, linguistic differences as indicative of learning problems.

### II. Cognitive Skill Development to Ensure Achievement of Students with Disabilities in Standards Aligned System to include All School Environments

- A. **Cognitive** – Delineate how individuals acquire and process information.
  - 1. Design learning environments to facilitate encoding, storage and retrieval of knowledge and information for memory, attention, perception, action, and problem solving.
  - 2. Describe the developmental patterns of change, physical, cognitive, and psychosocial areas that have been identified for each stage of development.
  - 3. Apply concepts of human development to education and learning regarding attention, memory, conceptual knowledge and its formation, reasoning, decision-making, problem-solving, executive functioning, principles and mechanisms of development, intelligence, action, and motor control.
  - 4. Specify the experiences children need from birth to age eight to prepare them to learn, read, and succeed in school.
  - 5. Identify early interactions with adults and peers, the early childhood education teaching methods and curricula, and comprehensive early childhood interventions that support learning and development, specifically in domains that prepare children from diverse backgrounds for kindergarten and the early grades.
- B. **Physical** – Recognize patterns of typical physical developmental milestones and how patterns of students with disabilities may be different, and plan effectively for possible accommodations and/or modifications which may be necessary to implement effective instructional practices.
- C. **Social** – Initiate, maintain and manage positive social relationships with a range of people in a range of contexts.
  - 1. Recognize areas of development for students with disabilities and plan effectively for: interpersonal processes, forming and maintaining relationships (including parent-child, caregiver, peer, friend, sibling), and attachment models and their effects on learning.
  - 2. Apply principles in social competence, social withdrawal, social role formation and maintenance, and prosocial behaviors, and aggression as they affect learning.
- D. **Behavioral** – Recognize patterns of typical behavioral milestones and how patterns of students with disabilities may be different, and plan effectively for positive teaching of appropriate behaviors that facilitate learning.

**E. Language** – Apply reading predictors, analyzing the effect of individual differences in specific perceptual, linguistic, and cognitive skills and how they affect a child's ability to read.

1. Apply principles of early learning to language development in the following areas: language comprehension, language expression, language form and syntax, morphology and semantics.
2. Apply and teach skills of spoken language as a precursor of reading and academic development.

**F. Positive Environments for Learning for Students with Disabilities**

1. Define the scientific principles influencing academic and social behavior.
2. Implement positive behavioral interventions based on a functional analysis of behavior.
3. Create an optimal learning environment by utilizing, evaluating, modifying and adapting the classroom setting, curricula, teaching strategies, materials, and equipment.

**G. Collaboration and Communication**

1. Identify effective co-planning and co-teaching strategies.
2. Identify collaborative consultative skills and models (i.e., understanding role on the IEP team; teaming; parallel teaching).
3. Identify instructional levels of students through collaboration with members of the IEP team.
4. Understand the role of the general educator as part of the team for transition planning across transition points (i.e., preschool to school entry, grade level to grade level, school to school, to post school outcomes).
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the meaningful roles that parents and students play in the development of the student's education program.
6. Demonstrate sensitivity for multicultural and economic perspectives in order to encourage parent participation.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of how to support student and family communication and meaningful participation into the student's educational program.
8. Work collaboratively with all members of the student's instructional team including parents and non-educational agency personnel.

### **III. Assessments**

Candidates will be able to:

**A.** Identify, administer, interpret, and plan instruction based on each of the following assessment components in a standards aligned system.

1. **Authentic** – A form of assessment in which, students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills. The assessment usually includes a task for students to perform, and a rubric is used to evaluate their performance.
2. **Screening**- Screening assessments are used to determine which students may be at risk. Poor performance on the screening assessment identifies those students needing additional, in-depth assessment of strengths and weaknesses. The primary purpose of screening assessments is to identify children early who need additional instructional (or behavioral) intervention. An essential element of using a screening assessment is implementing additional identified intervention(s) (instructional, behavioral, or medical).
3. **Diagnostic** – The purpose of diagnostic assessments is to ascertain, prior to instruction, each student's strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills. Using diagnostic assessments enable the instructor to remediate students and adjust the curriculum to meet each pupil's unique needs. (Examples of diagnostic assessments are: DRA's; Running Records; GRADE; GMADE)

4. **Formative-** Pennsylvania defines formative assessments are classroom based assessments that allow teachers to monitor and adjust their instructional practice in order to meet the individual needs of their students. Formative assessments can consist of formal instruments or informal observations. The key is how the results are used. Results should be used to shape teaching and learning. Black and William (1998) define formative assessments broadly to include instructional formats that teachers utilize in order to get information that are used diagnostically to alter instructional practices and have a direct impact on student learning and achievement. Under this definition, formative assessment encompasses questioning strategies, active engagement check-ins (such as response cards, white boards, random selection, think-pair-share, popsicle sticks for open-ended questions, and numbered heads), and analysis of student work based on set rubrics and standards including homework and tests. Assessments are formative when the information is used to adapt instructional practices to meet individual student needs as well as to provide individual students corrective feedback that allows them to "reach" set goals and targets. Ongoing formative assessment is an integral part of effective instructional routines that provide teachers with the information they need to differentiate and make adjustments to instructional practice in order to meet the needs of individual students. When teachers know how students are progressing and where they are having trouble, they can use this information to make necessary instructional adjustments, such as re-teaching, trying alternative instructional approaches, or offering more opportunities for practice. The use of ongoing formative classroom assessment data is an imperative. Effective teachers seamlessly integrate formative assessment strategies into their daily instructional routines.
  5. **Benchmark** – Assessments that are designed to provide feedback to both the teacher and the student about how the student is progressing towards demonstrating proficiency on grade level standards. Well-designed benchmark assessments and standards-based assessments: measure the degree to which students have mastered a given concept; measure concepts, skills, and/or applications; are reported by referencing the standards, not other students' performance; serve as a test to which teachers want to teach; measure performance regularly, not only at a single moment in time. (Examples of benchmark assessments are: 4Sight, Riverside 9-12, DIBELS)
  6. **Summative** –Summative Assessments seek to make an overall judgment of progress at the end of a defined period of instruction. Often the summative assessment occurs at the end of a school level, grade, or course, or is administered at certain grades for purposes of state or local accountability. Summative assessments are considered high-stakes assessments and the results are often used in conjunction with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). They are designed to produce clear data on the student's accomplishments at key points in his or her academic career. Performance on these assessments are often part of the student's permanent record and serve as an indication of overall performance on a set of standards. Results from summative assessments are of interest to parents, faculty, administration, the press, and the public. The data from summative assessments are the basis of accountability systems. (Examples of summative assessment: PSSA; Terra Nova)
- B.** Demonstrate an understanding of the types of assessments used (e.g., screening, diagnostic, formative, summative) and the purpose of each assessment in a data-based decision making process.
  - C.** Demonstrate the use of formal and informal assessment data for instructional, behavioral, and possible eligibility for special education based on the type of assessment, level of the students being assessed, and the purpose of and the quality of instruction.
  - D.** Demonstrate an understanding of the multi-disciplinary evaluation process and an ability to articulate the findings presented in an evaluation report including grade-level equivalents, percentile rank, standard scores, and stanines.
  - E.** Demonstrate an understanding of the components of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process, with emphasis on understanding measurable goals based on present levels, specially designed instruction, adaptations, accommodations, supplementary aids and services, and supports for school personnel.

- F. Articulate differences between achievement tests, aptitude tests, and observational data used in special education placement decisions.
- G. Create an instructional plan using assessment information related to individual student achievement.
- H. Analyze and interpret formative assessment (e.g., curriculum based assessment, CBA).
- I. Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose and intent of standardized assessments and progress monitoring as one of the multiple indicators used in overall student evaluation.
- J. Systematically monitor student performance to identify areas of need.
- K. Use evaluative data on an individual, class and district level to identify and implement instructional and/or programmatic revisions for quality improvement.
- L. Demonstrate an understanding of legally acceptable modifications and accommodations for assessment for students with disabilities.
- M. Demonstrate an understanding of ethical practice for assessment.
- N. Recognized the need to consult with multi-disciplinary team when cultural, economic, or linguistic differences are present in order to avoid biased assessment.

#### **IV. Literacy Development and Instruction in Core and Intervention Areas**

Candidates will be able to:

- A. Demonstrate an ability to match instructional research-validated literacy interventions to identified student needs.
- B. Demonstrate a conceptual understanding of the components of reading and describe how these areas pose challenges for students with disabilities:
  - Phonological Awareness & Phonics
  - Fluency
  - Vocabulary
  - Comprehension
  - Language
  - Word Study (investigate & understand the patterns in words)
- C. Demonstrate an ability to review and evaluate literacy programs for purpose, quality, effectiveness, and research-base and show knowledge of commonly available programs.
- D. Identify evidence-based instructional practices to be used with students with disabilities in the area of literacy.
- E. Demonstrate an understanding of the evidence-based connection between literacy and behavior.
- F. Demonstrate a conceptual understanding of the components of writing and describe how these areas pose challenges for students with disabilities:
  - Text production
  - Spelling
  - Composition for different types of writing
- G. Clearly articulate and model the use of explicit and systematic instruction in the teaching of literacy (reading and writing) for students with disabilities across all reading levels.
- H. Clearly articulate and model the use of explicit and systematic instruction in the teaching of content area literacy for all students with disabilities across all reading levels.
- I. Demonstrate instructional strategies to enhance comprehension of material.
- J. Demonstrate an understanding of the challenges that students with specific disabilities face in content area literacy.
- K. Assess the readability of content area reading materials.
- L. Demonstrate the ability to adapt content area material to the student's instructional level.
- M. Utilize assessment tools with appropriate accommodations in the area of literacy to identify effectiveness of the standards based curriculum (core literacy program for students with disabilities).

- N.** Establish and maintain progress monitoring practices aligned with the identified needs of each student to adjust instruction and provide rigor in the area of literacy for students with disabilities.
- O.** Establish and maintain progress monitoring practices within the content area aligned with the identified needs of each student to adjust instruction and provide rigor in the area of literacy for all students with disabilities.

**V. Effective Instructional Strategies for Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings**

Candidates will be able to:

- A.** Identify effective instructional strategies to address areas of need.
- B.** Scaffold instruction to maximize instructional access to all students.
- C.** Monitor student progress to provide mediated scaffolding and increase academic rigor when appropriate.
- D.** Provide feedback to students at all levels to increase awareness in areas of strength, as well as areas of concern.
- E.** Strategically align standard based curriculum with effective instructional practices.
- F.** Identify and implement instructional adaptations based on evidence-based practices (demonstrated to be effective with students with disabilities) to provide curriculum content using a variety of methods without compromising curriculum intent.
- G.** Analyze performance of all learners and make appropriate modifications.
- H.** Design and implement programs that reflect knowledge, awareness and responsiveness to diverse needs of students with disabilities.
- I.** Use research supported methods for academic and non-academic instruction for students with disabilities.
- J.** Develop and implement universally designed instruction.
- K.** Demonstrate an understanding of the range and the appropriate use of assistive technology (i.e., no tech, low tech, high tech).
- L.** Demonstrate efficient differentiated instruction and an understanding of efficient planning, coordination and delivery for effective instruction required for inclusive settings.

## **MEETING THE INSTRUCTIONAL NEEDS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL) (3 CREDITS OR 90 HOURS)**

The following outline includes the competencies for the 3 credits or 90 course hours addressing the academic needs and adaptations for ELL students.

### **I. Foundations for Preservice Candidates**

**Candidates will be able to:**

#### **A. Language**

1. Demonstrate knowledge of language systems, structures, functions, and variation.
2. Identify the process of acquiring multiple languages and literacy skills, including the general stages of language development.
3. Identify the differences between academic language and social language.

#### **B. Culture**

1. Identify sociocultural characteristics of ELLs including educational background and demographics.
2. Describe how ELLs' cultural communication styles and learning styles affect the learning process.
3. Describe how ELLs' cultural values affect their academic achievement and language development.
4. Identify bias in instruction, materials and assessments.
5. Demonstrate cross-cultural competence in interactions with colleagues, administrators, school and community specialists, students and their families.
6. Observe culturally and/or linguistically diverse instructional settings.

### **II. Applications for Pre-service Candidates**

**Candidates will be able to:**

#### **A. Standards-based Instruction**

1. Apply research, concepts and theories of language acquisition to instruction.
2. Implement appropriate research-based instructional strategies to make content comprehensible for all ELLs.
3. Demonstrate effective instructional planning and assessment integrating the PA Language Proficiency Standards for English Language Learners PreK-12 (ELPS) (<http://www.able.state.pa.us/esl/cwp/view.asp?a=3&Q=110015&esINav=|6449|&esINavPage=|>) and PA academic standards.

#### **B. Assessment specific to ELL**

1. Use PA ELPS to design content assessment.
2. Identify issues related to standards-based formative and summative assessment for *all* ELLs.
3. Use assessment data to differentiate and modify instruction for optimal student learning.

#### **C. Professionalism**

1. Describe the legal responsibilities related to serving ELLs.
2. Demonstrate collaborative, co-teaching models for serving ELLs.
3. Define common terms associated with English Language Learners.
4. Identify professional resources and organizations related to serving ELLs.