

8710.5500 TEACHERS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION: EARLY CHILDHOOD.

Subpart 1. **Scope of practice.** A teacher of special education: early childhood is authorized to provide evaluation and specially designed instruction to eligible children, birth through age six, who exhibit a broad range of developmental delays or disabilities, including those with a diagnosed physical or mental condition or disorder that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay. Teachers collaborate and consult with families, other classroom and special education teachers, and specialized service providers in designing and implementing individualized education program plans for children and families.

Subp. 2. **License requirements.** An applicant seeking a license to teach special education: early childhood must meet the requirements in parts 8710.0311 to 8710.0314 and Minnesota Statutes, sections 122A.181 to 122A.184.

Subp. 3. [Repealed, 47 SR 903]

Subp. 3a. **Subject matter standards.**

A. **Child Development and Learning.** The teacher must:

(1) demonstrate an understanding of the impact that different theories and philosophies of early learning and development have on assessment, curriculum, intervention, and instruction decisions;

(2) apply knowledge of normative sequences of early development; individual differences; and families' social, cultural, and linguistic diversity to support each child's development and learning across contexts;

(3) apply knowledge of biological and environmental factors that may support or constrain children's early development and learning as they plan and implement early intervention and instruction; and

(4) demonstrate an understanding of characteristics, etiologies, and individual differences within and across the range of abilities, including developmental delays and disabilities, their potential impact on children's early development and learning, and implications for assessment, curriculum, instruction, and intervention.

B. **Partnering with Families.** The teacher must:

(1) apply their knowledge of family-centered practices, family systems theory, and the changing needs and priorities in families' lives to develop trusting, respectful, affirming, and culturally responsive partnerships with all families that allow for the mutual exchange of knowledge and information;

(2) communicate clear, comprehensive, and objective information about resources and supports that help families to make informed decisions and advocate for access, participation, and equity in natural and inclusive environments;

(3) engage families in identifying their strengths, priorities, and concerns;

(4) support families to achieve the goals they have for their family and their child's development and learning; and

(5) promote families' competence and confidence during assessment, individualized planning, intervention, instruction, and transition processes.

C. Collaboration and Teaming. The teacher must:

(1) apply teaming models, skills, and processes, including appropriate uses of technology, when collaborating and communicating with families; with professionals representing multiple disciplines, skills, expertise, and roles; and with community partners and agencies;

(2) use a variety of collaborative strategies when working with other adults that are evidence-based, appropriate to the task, culturally and linguistically responsive, and take into consideration the environment and service delivery approach; and

(3) partner with families and other professionals to develop individualized plans and support the various transitions that occur for the child from birth through age six and for their family.

D. Assessment Processes. The teacher must:

(1) understand the purposes of formal and informal assessment, including ethical and legal considerations, and use this information to choose developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate, valid, and reliable tools and methods that are responsive to the characteristics of the child, family, and program;

(2) develop and administer informal assessments and select and use valid, reliable formal assessments using evidence-based practices, including technology, in partnership with families and other professionals;

(3) analyze, interpret, document, and share assessment information with families and other professionals using a strengths-based approach; and

(4) in collaboration with families and other team members, use assessment data to determine eligibility, develop child and family-based outcomes and goals, plan for interventions and instruction, and monitor progress to determine efficacy of programming.

E. Application of Curriculum Frameworks in the Planning of Meaningful Learning Experience. The teacher must:

(1) collaborate with families and other professionals in identifying an evidence-based curriculum addressing developmental and content domains to design and facilitate meaningful and culturally responsive learning experiences that support the unique abilities and needs of all children and families; and

(2) use their knowledge of early childhood curriculum frameworks, developmental and academic content knowledge, and related pedagogy to plan and ensure equitable access to universally

designed, developmentally appropriate, and challenging learning experiences in natural and inclusive environments.

F. Using Responsive and Reciprocal Interactions, Interventions, and Instruction. The teacher must:

(1) in partnership with families, identify systematic, responsive, and intentional evidence-based practices and use such practices with fidelity to support child learning and development across all developmental and academic content domains;

(2) engage in reciprocal partnerships with families and other professionals to facilitate responsive adult-child interactions, interventions, and instruction to support child learning and development;

(3) engage in ongoing planning and use flexible and embedded instructional and environmental arrangements and appropriate materials to support the use of interactions, interventions, and instruction addressing developmental and academic content domains, which are adapted to meet the needs of each and every child and their family;

(4) promote children's social and emotional competence and communication, and proactively plan and implement function-based interventions to prevent and address challenging behaviors;

(5) identify and create multiple opportunities for children to develop and learn play skills and engage in meaningful play experiences independently and with others across contexts;

(6) use responsive interactions, interventions, and instruction with sufficient intensity and types of support across activities, routines, and environments to promote child learning and development and facilitate access, participation, and engagement in natural environments and inclusive settings; and

(7) plan for, adapt, and improve approaches to interactions, interventions, and instruction based on multiple sources of data across a range of natural environments and inclusive settings.

G. Professionalism and Ethical Practice. The teacher must:

(1) engage with the early childhood special education profession by participating in local, regional, national, or international activities and professional organizations;

(2) engage in ongoing reflective practice and access evidence-based information to improve their own practices;

(3) exhibit leadership skills in advocating for improved outcomes for children, families, and the profession, including the promotion of and use of evidence-based practices and decision-making; and

(4) practice within ethical and legal policies and procedures.

Subp. 4. [Repealed, 47 SR 903]

Subp. 4a. **Placements for candidates completing an initial licensure program.** A candidate completing a board-approved initial licensure program in special education: early childhood must have experiences teaching children who exhibit a broad range of developmental delays or disabilities at the following three levels: infant and toddler (birth to age three), preschool (ages three through five), and primary (kindergarten through age six), and across a range of service delivery models.

Subp. 4b. **Placements for candidates completing an additional licensure program.** A candidate completing a board-approved additional licensure program in special education: early childhood must have experiences teaching at the following three levels: infant and toddler (birth to age three), preschool (ages three through five), and primary (kindergarten through age six). The candidate must complete a practicum teaching children who exhibit a broad range of developmental delays or disabilities in at least one of the following three levels: infant and toddler (birth to age three), preschool (ages three through five), and primary (kindergarten through age six).

Subp. 5. [Repealed, 47 SR 903]

Statutory Authority: *MS s 122A.09; 122A.092; 122A.18*

History: *23 SR 1928; 36 SR 1243; L 2017 ISp5 art 12 s 22; 47 SR 903*

Published Electronically: *November 12, 2025*