

Texas Educator Certification Examination Program

Field 292: Early Childhood: PK–3

Examination Framework

January 2020

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DOMAIN I—CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Competency 001 (Foundations of Child Development): *Understand foundational concepts of early childhood development from birth to age 8 and factors that influence student development.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of key theoretical foundations, curriculum and program models, and scientifically based research regarding the development and learning of students from birth to age 8 (e.g., Bruner, Piaget, and Vygotsky; Montessori, Reggio Emilia, constructivist, social-learning, and environmental theories) upon which developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education are based.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of characteristics, progressions, and variations of development in the physical, cognitive, social, language, sensory, aesthetic, and emotional domains and of the interrelationships between these domains and student learning.
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of exceptionalities, including common health conditions, and factors related to over- and underrepresentation of specific student populations in special education and gifted and talented programs and use this knowledge to promote child development, learning, social skills, and emotional resilience skills for all students.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of the specific needs of English learners (ELs) and of practices that build on home language systems to develop academic and social skills.

Competency 002 (The Early Learning Process): *Understand the developmental processes and characteristics of learning of young children from birth to age 8.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the learning processes of young children, including the multiple functions, value, and role of play in constructing knowledge, building social skills and relationships, and developing problem-solving skills.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of the continuum of teaching strategies for promoting learning—from child-initiated activities to adult-guided instruction; methods to capitalize on incidental and spontaneous opportunities for teaching; and ways to use the environment, daily routines, and interactions to support learning and development (e.g., developmentally appropriate homework practices).
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of the influence of stress and trauma, protective factors, resilience, and supportive relationships on the cognitive and emotional development of young children.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of risk factors impacting mental health in young children, including identifying behaviors that signify the need to intervene and/or engage in collaboration with others in order to provide responsive and developmentally appropriate intervention and support.
- E. Demonstrate knowledge of methods for identifying students' readiness for learning and understand how development in one area may affect students' learning and performance in other areas.
- F. Demonstrate knowledge of the roles of parents/guardians as primary caregivers and informal teachers of children, including factors in the home and community that may affect children's development and learning.

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Competency 003 (Family Engagement): *Understand the role and importance of the family in supporting the learning and development of young children from prekindergarten to grade 3.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of how to create meaningful, respectful, and reciprocal relationships for families and how to use family-centered strategies to promote effective, ongoing communication and involvement with families to support young children's learning and social skills and emotional development.
- B. Apply knowledge of skills and strategies for working collaboratively and effectively with families, including families with linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds, and of how to build positive relationships by advocating for families and by respecting and valuing families' preferences and goals.
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based practices that support families in meeting their children's learning benchmarks and provide families with tools to enhance and extend children's learning at home (e.g., home visits by teachers and school staff, consistent in-person and written communication on student progress).

DOMAIN II—THE INSTRUCTIONAL SETTING

Competency 004 (Social Skills, Emotional Development, and Behavior Support): *Understand how to create positive environments and relationships that help develop interpersonal skills, autonomy, and initiative to explore and learn in young children from prekindergarten to grade 3.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of factors related to the development of executive function and self-regulation skills in young children, including motivation, autonomy, and decision-making and self-help skills.
- B. Apply knowledge of strategies and principles for teaching and using problem-solving and conflict resolution skills and for providing individual and schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), including monitoring the effectiveness of PBIS, as well as making modifications and adaptations to interventions as needed.
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate and effective individual and group management strategies, including best practices for teaching and supporting young children with additional behavioral needs and factors contributing to equitable and inequitable responses to behavior.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of the role of positive relationships and supportive interactions as a crucial foundation for teaching, and in developing social skills and emotional resilience, with a focus on children's individual strengths, needs, and interests.
- E. Demonstrate knowledge of the relationships between communication, behavior, and learning, as well as the ability to use developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive positive behavior strategies, conflict resolution skills, and instructional methods to manage classroom behavior.

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Competency 005 (The Instructional Setting): *Understand how to create positive learning environments that promote the development and learning of young children in prekindergarten to grade 3.*

For example:

- A. Apply knowledge of strategies for structuring the physical environment and selecting appropriate learning curricula, materials, and technologies to promote active participation and independence in young children.
- B. Apply knowledge of practices for creating and adapting safe indoor and outdoor learning environments that encourage active involvement, initiative, responsibility, and a growing sense of autonomy in young children.
- C. Apply knowledge of the use of schedules, routines, and effective transitions to support children's emotional development, effectively manage instructional activities, and promote children's sense of security and independence.
- D. Apply knowledge of methods for creating a physical environment and instructional procedures that are linguistically and culturally responsive and meet the needs of all young children, including those with exceptionalities (e.g., disabilities, gifts, talents) and English learners (ELs).
- E. Demonstrate knowledge of practices and procedures for effectively planning and managing flexible student groupings, including pairings, individualized, and small-group instruction, to facilitate learning.
- F. Demonstrate knowledge of activities, practices, materials, and technology to support the integration of oral, written, graphic, kinesthetic, and tactile methods into the teaching of key concepts and vocabulary and to assess student learning.

DOMAIN III—EDUCATING ALL LEARNERS

Competency 006 (Differentiation Strategies in Planning and Practice): *Understand how to identify and implement developmentally appropriate strategies and practices to effectively teach and engage young children from prekindergarten to grade 3.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) and how to apply UDL guidelines to incorporate the flexibility necessary to maximize learning opportunities for all students.
- B. Apply knowledge of effective methods for fostering students' active participation and individual academic success in one-to-one, small-group, and large-group settings and for facilitating students' inclusion in various settings (e.g., academic, social).
- C. Apply knowledge of activities and instruction that build on students' individual interests, primary language, experiences, and prior knowledge; respond to students' strengths and needs; and promote the development of prerequisite skills and positive dispositions toward learning in the content areas.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of how and when to adjust and scaffold instruction, instructional activities, and assessment in response to various types of feedback from young children.

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- E. Demonstrate knowledge of how to identify, select, and implement appropriate and effective accommodations for students with 504 plans or Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), including collaborating with other professionals to meet the needs of all students.
- F. Demonstrate knowledge of the various categories of disabilities as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), including Child Find obligations and educational implications specific to young children with unique learning differences (e.g., developmental delays, autism spectrum disorder, dyslexia, intellectual disabilities).

Competency 007 (Culturally Responsive Practices): *Understand how to identify and implement culturally responsive, developmentally appropriate practices to effectively teach and engage young children from prekindergarten to grade 3 across all content areas.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of strategies and practices that acknowledge and respect diversity (e.g., cultural, economic, linguistic) and support inclusion in order to promote students' overall development and learning, including understanding of the benefits of primary and secondary languages and bilingualism to learning.
- B. Recognize the role personal bias plays in potential learning expectations for students in order to promote safe, positive, and supportive interactions and learning environments for all students.
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of activities, approaches, and resources that encourage and support exploration and engagement and promote a positive disposition toward learning for all students.
- D. Demonstrate understanding of the role of language and culture in learning, as well as how to modify instruction to support language acquisition to ensure that both language and instruction are accessible across the content areas.
- E. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to work collaboratively with parents/guardians, teachers, school and community service providers, and students to support all students, including but not limited to English learners (ELs), and programs such as ESL, bilingual, and dual language.
- F. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to work collaboratively with teachers, related service providers, parents/guardians, and students to effectively support the implementation of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and instructional accommodations and strategies.

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DOMAIN IV—DATA-DRIVEN PRACTICE AND FORMAL/INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

Competency 008 (Developmentally Appropriate Assessment and Practice): *Understand the types, selection, and uses of developmentally appropriate assessments and assessment practices to effectively support young children's learning in prekindergarten to grade 3.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the various purposes of the use of developmentally appropriate assessment for evaluating young students across domains.
- B. Apply knowledge of basic assessment terminology and of types, characteristics, uses, and limitations of formal, informal, and alternative assessments (e.g., developmental screenings, formative and summative assessments, observations, portfolios, state-mandated assessments, types of assessment accommodations, curriculum-based measures).
- C. Apply knowledge of ways to develop and select developmentally appropriate assessments and assessment strategies (e.g., use of TEA resources such as formative assessment banks), ensure that assessments are aligned to instructional objectives and outcomes, and use assessment results to inform instruction and measure student progress throughout the content areas.
- D. Apply knowledge of considerations and strategies for effectively administering assessments and documenting assessment outcomes.
- E. Recognize legal and ethical issues related to assessment, responsible assessment practices, and confidentiality.

Competency 009 (Progress Monitoring and Data-Driven Instructional Practice): *Understand how to design, implement, and evaluate learning experiences and instruction in order to promote development and learning of all students in prekindergarten to grade 3.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the foundational elements of Response to Intervention (RtI) and the ability to apply this knowledge to differentiate tiered instruction for all students based on data.
- B. Interpret and use information from formal and informal assessments, including the use of multiple measures of assessment, to inform decisions and plan and evaluate student learning.
- C. Interpret assessment results to enhance knowledge of students; evaluate and monitor development, learning, and progress; establish goals; and plan, differentiate, and continuously adjust learning activities and environments for individuals and groups.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of types of systematic observation and documentation (e.g., anecdotal notes, checklists, data collection) and the ability to use these processes and procedures to gain insight into students' development, strengths, needs, and learning.

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DOMAIN V—LEARNING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Competency 010 (English Language Arts and Social Studies): *Understand the foundational principles, concepts, and methods in English language arts and social studies to provide developmentally appropriate instruction for students in prekindergarten to grade 3.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the Emergent Literacy – Writing domain of the *Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines* and of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) (Kindergarten through Grade 5), including the development of the writing process (i.e., §110.2:10 and §110.3–7:11), as well as ways to scaffold and sequence skills and concepts to teach writing to young children.
- B. Apply knowledge of developmentally appropriate strategies for fostering students' ability to listen and speak for various purposes (e.g., expressing needs, interacting with others, responding to experiences, developing concepts).
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of strategies and technology for developing and reinforcing young children's language acquisition (e.g., oral language, listening comprehension, expressive and receptive vocabulary, pragmatic language skills).
- D. Apply knowledge of strategies and activities for infusing opportunities for purposeful, child-oriented, meaningful language and communication into all areas of the curriculum (e.g., purposeful conversations, dramatic play, word games, storytelling, songs, poetry, questioning).
- E. Demonstrate knowledge of the developmental stages in children's acquisition of writing skills (e.g., scribbling, mock letters, letter formation, invented spelling) and of different ways that individual students may vary in their rates of acquiring these stages.
- F. Apply knowledge of effective instructional strategies, materials, and activities for supporting explicit spelling instruction at various stages of a student's development and within the context of meaningful written expression.
- G. Apply knowledge of instructional strategies, materials, and developmentally appropriate activities for teaching students English writing conventions (e.g., grammar, capitalization, punctuation).
- H. Apply knowledge of how to teach and develop students' writing through planning, drafting, revision, editing, rewriting, and publishing.
- I. Demonstrate knowledge of the Social Studies domain of the *Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines* and of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Social Studies (Kindergarten through Grade 5), as well as ways to scaffold and sequence skills and concepts to teach social studies to young children.
- J. Apply knowledge of developmentally appropriate strategies and activities for teaching major concepts and processes of geography, including features of students' immediate environment, characteristics of major human and physical features of Texas, and how people adapt and live in the physical environment.
- K. Apply knowledge of developmentally appropriate strategies and activities for developing students' understanding of the purpose of government and the key concepts of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and the beliefs and ideals of a democratic republican form of government (e.g., the rule of law, equality, human dignity).
- L. Apply knowledge of developmentally appropriate strategies and activities for teaching basic concepts of economics, including scarcity, opportunity costs, markets, factors of production, and trade, as well as how these concepts relate to everyday life.

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Competency 011 (Mathematics): *Understand foundational principles, concepts, and methods in mathematics to provide developmentally appropriate instruction for students in prekindergarten to grade 3.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the Mathematics domain of the *Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines* and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Mathematics (Kindergarten through Grade 5), as well as ways to scaffold and sequence skills and concepts to teach mathematics to young children.
- B. Demonstrate knowledge of foundational characteristics and processes in children's mathematical development, including elements of mathematical understanding (e.g., conservation, one-to-one correspondence, counting, cardinality), and indicators that a student may be experiencing difficulties or demonstrating advanced abilities in mathematics.
- C. Apply knowledge of developmentally appropriate strategies and activities, including the progression of conceptual to procedural understanding specific to areas of mathematical content (e.g., number sense, numeracy, whole-number operations, geometry, spatial sense, fractions, algebraic reasoning), and mathematical language for developing children's knowledge and skills in these areas through a variety of meaningful, authentic learning experiences and real-world applications.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of instructional resources, tools, and materials, including manipulatives, children's literature, and technology for teaching mathematics.
- E. Apply knowledge of ways to build on children's interests by creating meaningful opportunities and experiences that promote the development of students' conceptual understanding and mathematical thinking, including incorporating play and manipulatives into daily activities.
- F. Apply knowledge of teaching practices that enhance children's mathematical problem solving and reasoning and promote their ability to represent, communicate, and connect mathematical ideas in their everyday lives.
- G. Apply knowledge of developmentally appropriate strategies for encouraging students to view themselves as competent mathematical thinkers and activities for promoting students' ability to think and communicate mathematically.
- H. Apply knowledge of approaches for integrating mathematical content with other areas of the curriculum and with everyday activities, including written expression.
- I. Demonstrate knowledge of ways to foster collaboration with families and with other professionals to promote and encourage all students' development of mathematical thinking and numeracy.
- J. Demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate activities for teaching mathematical language, vocabulary, and key concepts specific to financial literacy.

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Competency 012 (Science and Technology Applications): *Understand the foundational principles, concepts, and methods of teaching science and technology applications to provide developmentally appropriate instruction to students in prekindergarten to grade 3.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the Science domain of the *Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines* and of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Science (Kindergarten through Grade 5), as well as ways to scaffold and sequence skills and concepts to teach science to young children.
- B. Apply knowledge of how to plan and implement inquiry-based science lessons that are responsive to children's diverse interests, knowledge, skills, and experiences and that promote children's development of scientific knowledge, inquiry, and skills.
- C. Demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate strategies for encouraging children to explore and make discoveries about their world (e.g., exploratory play, using senses, using simple tools or technology to gain information about environment, incorporating children's literature, making predictions and/or drawing conclusions on the basis of observation).
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of instructional resources, tools and materials, including technology, for teaching science and procedures for ensuring the proper use of safety equipment and safe practices during classroom science activities.
- E. Apply knowledge of key concepts of physical science, Earth and space science, and life science to select strategies and methods for developing children's knowledge and skills in these areas through a variety of developmentally appropriate, meaningful, authentic learning experiences and real-world applications.
- F. Apply knowledge of developmentally appropriate strategies for encouraging students to view themselves as competent scientific explorers and activities for promoting students' ability to think and communicate scientific knowledge through written expression (e.g., providing opportunities to observe and describe objects and phenomena; engaging in simple investigation; applying skills such as collecting, classifying, and interpreting data; recognizing patterns and drawing conclusions).
- G. Demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate strategies and procedures for implementing scientific inquiry methods in classroom laboratory and outdoor investigations, including understanding and applying terminology common to scientific investigations.
- H. Demonstrate knowledge of types of digital tools and resources and strategies for using them to enhance teaching effectiveness, create learning experiences that facilitate creativity, and promote student achievement across the content areas.
- I. Demonstrate knowledge of developmentally appropriate digital tools and resources and strategies to help children explore real-world issues, solve authentic problems, develop global awareness, participate in local and global learning communities, and develop the ability to pursue and manage their own learning, while understanding safety and privacy risks.

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Competency 013 (Fine Arts, Physical Education, and Health): *Understand foundational skills, concepts, and methods to provide developmentally appropriate instruction for fine arts, physical education, and health to students in prekindergarten to grade 3.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the Fine Arts domain of the *Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines* and of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Fine Arts (Art, Music, and Theatre) (Kindergarten through Grade 5), as well as ways to scaffold and sequence skills and concepts to teach fine arts to young children.
- B. Apply knowledge of developmentally appropriate strategies and meaningful activities, including children's literature, for promoting children's creativity, knowledge, and skills in visual arts, music, creative movement, dance, and theatre.
- C. Apply knowledge of how to use the fine arts to help children achieve desired outcomes in various developmental domains (e.g., with regard to individual expression and motor skill development, language development, written expression, expressing feelings, awareness of the body, acknowledging one's own and others' cultures).
- D. Demonstrate knowledge of methods for selecting and using technology resources to teach students strategies for creating, selecting, viewing, and sharing visual art, music, dance, and theatre.
- E. Demonstrate knowledge of the Physical Development and Health domain of the *Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines*, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Physical Education (Kindergarten through Grade 5), and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Health Education (Kindergarten through Grade 5), as well as ways to scaffold and sequence skills and concepts to teach physical education and health to young children.
- F. Demonstrate knowledge of the development of physical skills (e.g., fine- and gross-motor skills, locomotor skills, nonlocomotor skills, perceptual awareness, object handling) and the instructional implications of children's varied levels of physical skills development.
- G. Apply knowledge of the components of fitness (e.g., muscular strength, flexibility) and activities for promoting children's health and fitness, physical skills development, and enjoyment of physical activity.
- H. Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of nutrition and the role of nutrition in children's fitness, health, development, and readiness for learning.

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DOMAIN VI—ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE

Competency 014 (Analysis and Response): *In a written response, analyze and interpret qualitative and quantitative data to identify a given student's strengths and needs and design developmentally appropriate instruction.*

For example:

- A. Demonstrate the ability to analyze and interpret formative and summative observational and assessment data for a given student in order to select and accurately describe a significant strength or need that the student demonstrates related to a foundational English language arts, mathematics, or science skill or objective.
- B. Demonstrate the ability to select and accurately describe a developmentally appropriate, effective instructional strategy, intervention, or enrichment to build on a student's identified strength or address a student's identified need in the foundational English language arts, mathematics, or science skill or objective.
- C. Using sound reasoning and knowledge of foundational English language arts, mathematics, or science skills, demonstrate the ability to explain the effectiveness of the selected instructional strategy, intervention, or enrichment to build on a student's identified strength and/or address a student's identified need.
- D. Demonstrate the ability to select and accurately describe a developmentally appropriate method of informal assessment to effectively monitor the student's progress toward the identified learning skill or objective.
- E. Demonstrate the ability to explain how the specific learning skill or objective in foundational English language arts, mathematics, or science can be integrated in other areas of the curriculum to support the generalization or enrichment of the identified learning skill or objective.