

## **5.02 Special Education Specialist (Ages 5-21)**

To be endorsed as a special education specialist, an applicant shall hold a Colorado initial or professional teacher license as a special education generalist or demonstrate through multiple performance measures the competencies required for a special education generalist endorsement; hold an earned master's or higher degree in special education from an accepted institution of higher education; have completed an approved program for the preparation of special education specialists, including prescribed field experience requirements; ensure that instruction is consistent with Colorado Academic Standards, Colorado accreditation requirements and school district and school priorities and objectives; and have demonstrated the competencies specified below:

5.02(1) The special education specialist is knowledgeable about professional leadership; the critical roles and responsibilities of effective ethical leadership; best instructional practices; how to effectively address outcomes for all learners, including those with disabilities; and is able to:

5.02(1)(a) use the Colorado standards to develop individualized educational plans (IEPs) for students with diverse educational needs.

5.02(1)(b) recognize limitations of professional expertise and collaborate and consult with appropriate support services to meet the needs of students and their families.

5.02(1)(c) effectively coach and mentor other education professionals to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to and appropriately participate in the general education curriculum and instructional programs.

5.02(1)(d) initiate effective collaborative relationships with other community agencies and programs, where appropriate, to gain access to resources and to promote improved quality of education for students with disabilities.

5.02(1)(e) effectively articulate and model to other professionals the legal and ethical aspects of the special education profession.

5.02(1)(f) demonstrate effective consultation and collaboration skills with students, families and professional colleagues in administrative, instructional and intervention settings.

5.02(1)(g) provide leadership in transitioning students within and across systems so that students have the skills, knowledge and ability they need to achieve desired outcomes.

5.02(1)(h) develop and effectively use accountability systems to document the academic and related success of students with disabilities, and to improve instruction and the provision of services.

5.02(1)(i) assume proactive roles in management, governance and leadership within relevant professional organizations and educational systems.

5.02(1)(j) develop and implement professional development programs and constructive evaluation procedures designed to improve instructional content and practices.

5.02(1)(k) mentor colleagues using a variety of adult learning methods including, but not limited to, coaching and demonstrating effective instructional delivery.

5.02(1)(l) engage in ongoing and sustained professional development.

- 5.02(2) The special education specialist is knowledgeable about the foundations of special education and the legal framework, historical precedents, curricular foundations and cultural and socio-economic factors affecting students with disabilities, and is able to:
- 5.02(2)(a) develop, implement and supervise individualized education planning.
  - 5.02(2)(b) consult and collaborate effectively, with educators, families and community members to facilitate learning.
  - 5.02(2)(c) modify and create successful learning environments for all children and youth, and incorporate knowledge of effective and proven past practices, cultural influences and socio-economic factors.
  - 5.02(2)(d) evaluate and select effective appropriate curriculum-related materials to improve student learning.
- 5.02(3) The special education specialist is knowledgeable about learning needs and effective instructional approaches for learners with special needs and is able to:
- 5.02(3)(a) assess the influence of economic, cultural, sociological and linguistic factors on learning and address this in planning for student learning.
  - 5.02(3)(b) use a variety of continuous monitoring strategies to measure learning, adjust instruction and enhance student progress towards standards' acquisition in literacy and numeracy.
  - 5.02(3)(c) effectively demonstrate, effectively implement and evaluate a wide variety of appropriate instructional strategies.
  - 5.02(3)(d) develop and effectively implement instructional programs for acquisition, maintenance, generalization and application of knowledge and skills.
  - 5.02(3)(e) effectively teach students methods of attaining educational goals, and assist them in developing the means to act independently.
  - 5.02(3)(f) design, communicate and implement effective accommodations for use in a variety of environments.
  - 5.02(3)(g) effectively teach the assessment, use and implementation of assistive technology to students and colleagues.
- 5.02(4) The special education specialist is knowledgeable about cognition, communication and language; proven documented theories of cognition, communication and language development; curriculum planning; instruction and evaluation and is able to:
- 5.02(4)(a) assess and evaluate the communicative and cognitive skills of students with disabilities in coordination with other related-profession specialists.
  - 5.02(4)(b) assist in the design of curriculum and instruction based on cognitive, communicative and language assessment results.
  - 5.02(4)(c) incorporate principles of speech and language acquisition into the teaching of literacy skills including the graphophonemic, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic aspects of language development and communicative competence.

- 5.02(4)(d) use assessment strategies to identify cognitive, language and communication needs affected by cultural, language-diversity, neurological and psycholinguistic factors and address these needs in planning.
- 5.02(5) The special education specialist is knowledgeable about social and emotional needs including the behavioral, social and emotional needs inherent in the development of learners with disabilities, and is able to:
- 5.02(5)(a) assess the impact of psychological, sociological, cultural and ecological factors on the development and implementation of educational interventions to positively affect the behavior of students with special needs.
  - 5.02(5)(b) develop, implement and coordinate functional behavioral assessments.
  - 5.02(5)(c) choose, use and interpret behavior and social assessment tools.
  - 5.02(5)(d) develop, implement, supervise, evaluate and modify individual behavior support plans.
  - 5.02(5)(e) apply effective educational practices designed to improve the acquisition of social skills.
  - 5.02(5)(f) apply fair, consistent and effective systemic management strategies to prevent problem behavior.
  - 5.02(5)(g) select, apply and monitor educational interventions to safely, effectively manage students in crisis.
  - 5.02(5)(h) assess and monitor the impact of psychopharmacological interventions on student learning and behavior.
  - 5.02(5)(i) apply information about mental illness to the development, evaluation and implementation of educational interventions.
- 5.02(6) The special education specialist is knowledgeable about specialized educational needs and the unique characteristics of learners with significant health, physical, sensory and communication concerns across learning environments, and is able to:
- 5.02(6)(a) assess, develop and implement appropriate and effective accommodations for learners with health, physical and sensory needs.
  - 5.02(6)(b) analyze, select and implement effective assistive technologies to facilitate students' learning communication.
  - 5.02(6)(c) demonstrate and implement strategies that enhance mobility, appropriate positioning and environmental access for learners with significant physical and health needs.
  - 5.02(6)(d) collaborate with appropriate health professionals to assist in the development and implementation of health care plans.
  - 5.02(6)(e) analyze, select and implement strategies that effectively support access to the general education curriculum for learners with health, physical and sensory needs.

5.02(7) The special education specialist is knowledgeable about practice-based inquiry, is a reflective practitioner and is able to:

5.02(7)(a) engage in professional discourse about effective and proven research-based practices.

5.02(7)(b) use qualitative and quantitative forms of inquiry to collect, analyze and synthesize data to improve practice.

5.02(7)(c) collaborate with colleagues and parents to study, analyze and respond to data that positively affect practices and policies for whole school improvement.

5.02(7)(d) utilize proven and effective research to guide practice and create appropriate and effective learning experiences for students.

5.02(7)(e) select and use appropriate inquiry tools.

5.02(7)(f) design and implement documented and effective research models that constructively challenge hypotheses about teaching and learning.

5.02(7)(g) disseminate documented, proven, effective practice(s).

5.02(7)(h) gain access via technology and other means to a range of databases to acquire relevant information and support practice.

5.02(7)(i) adhere to ethical principles for conducting research with human subjects.

5.02(7)(j) involve students, parents and colleagues in the design, implementation and analysis of effective classroom practice.

5.02(7)(k) evaluate the effects of choices and actions on student learning and modify learning and related plans accordingly.