



UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHERN COLORADO

Special Education Master of Arts

**Intervention Specialist:  
Academic Coaching & Leadership Emphasis**

**Student Handbook**

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## WELCOME TO THE MA INTERVENTION SPECIALIST PROGRAM



Dr. Todd Sundeen, Ph.D.  
Intervention Specialist Coordinator

Dear Intervention Specialist Student,

Welcome to the MA Intervention Specialist: Academic Coaching & Leadership Program! This program was created with the intent to provide current Special Educators with a Masters of Arts (MA) degree program that prepares educational leaders to take the next step with their career. The program is an advanced degree that is directly aligned with the Council for Exceptional (CEC) Advanced Preparation Standards and graduates are eligible for a specialist degree through the state of Colorado.

Program courses emphasize teacher leadership and instructional coaching competencies that utilize evidence-based intervention strategies to support students, teachers, service providers, and parents across settings, ages, and areas of educational, social or behavioral need. The program infuses action research, leadership and policy, as well as intensive strategies that can be implemented at the class, school, or district level.

At UNC, we provide cutting edge theory and evidence-based practices in all of our courses. This Master of Arts degree is 34 credits and can be completed in two years (six terms) around your busy schedule. Courses are delivered entirely online with one 8-week course at a time. This means you will take two courses each semester. Additionally, due to small class sizes (maximum 20-25 students per course), faculty maintain a high level of personal interaction with the students.

By the end of the MA Intervention Specialist: Academic Coaching & Leadership Program, you will have completed coursework in the following areas: behavior support and intervention systems; response to intervention; mathematics content and strategies; literacy content and strategies; teacher leadership, action research and reflection; advanced assessment approaches; meeting the needs of learners with autism and significant support needs; adapting instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse learners with disabilities; leadership for transition services; and applied instructional coaching skills. **This program will prepare you to become a leader in your work setting!**

I look forward to working with you throughout the program!  
Sincerely,  
Todd Sundeen, Ph.D.

## Tasks to Complete Upon Admission to the MA Intervention Specialist Program

- ✓ **Step 1. Read through the MA Intervention Specialist (IS) Handbook**  
Be sure to pay close attention to the Comprehensive Exam/LiveBinder and coaching practicum information
- ✓ **Step 2. Email your advisor and request an initial program meeting to discuss the overview of the program and any logistical questions.**
- ✓ **Step 3. Sign up for the program ListServ**  
Sign up for the MA Intervention Specialist listserv by following the directions below:

Send a message to: [listserv@listserv.unco.edu](mailto:listserv@listserv.unco.edu)

- Leave the subject line blank
- In the body of the message type: SUBSCRIBE MA\_IS last name, first name
- **REMOVE your signature if you are using one**
- Send the message

You will receive a welcome message, **print** and **keep** this message.

Known subscribe problems: You must be using an e-mail client (software) that sends messages in plain text. LISTSERV will not accept subscribe information in HTML or Rich Text format. Contact your advisor if you receive an error message when trying to subscribe.

## **MA Intervention Specialist Program Information**

### ***Program Information***

The Intervention Specialist: Academic Coaching & Leadership Program is a comprehensive program that provides current educational professionals with the knowledge and skills that are needed to work with students across a broad range of disabilities as well as supervise, coach, and provide assistance to other educators.

This Master of Arts degree can be completed in two years (six terms) around your busy schedule. Courses are delivered entirely online with one 8-week course at a time. This means you will take two courses each semester. Additionally, due to small class sizes (maximum 20-25 students per course) faculty maintain a high level of personal interaction with the students.

### ***Required Classes (34\* CREDITS)***

SRM 600 Introduction to Graduate Research (3)

EDSE 670 Legal and Policy Foundations of Special Education (3)

EDSE 672 Leadership in the School community (3)

EED 610: Interventions in Literacy (3)

MED 645: Interventions in Mathematics (3)

EDSE 673 Research and Reflective Practice (3)

EDSE 675 Issues in Special Education Assessment (3)

EDSE 676 Assessment and Interventions for Students with Challenging Behaviors (3)

EDSE 677 Transition to Adulthood for Youth with Exceptionalities (3)

EDSE 678 Leadership Strategies in Significant Support Needs/Autism (3)

EDSE 679 Interventions for Students with Culturally and Linguistic Differences (3)

\*EDSE 696 Practicum in Instructional Coaching (1-9)

*\*(1-9 variable credit hours with a minimum of 1 credit is required)*

## **MA Intervention Specialist Course Descriptions**

### **EDSE 670 Legal and Policy Foundations of Special Education (3)**

This course is designed for school personnel who are impacted by special education law. The course provides in-depth research of federal and state special education statutes, regulations, and case law.

### **EDSE 672 Leadership in the School community (3)**

**Course Description:** Foundational grounding for prospective teacher leaders to function as highly facilitative special educators who demonstrate leadership necessary to effectively interact with diverse populations including students, teachers, administrators, and parents.

### **EDSE 673 Research and Reflective Practice (3)**

**Course Description:** The role of inquiry in identifying promising practices is examined. Action research is highlighted, culminating in a work sample in which scientifically based interventions are designed, assessed, and described.

### **EED 610 Interventions in Literacy (3)**

**Course Description:** This course will help individuals effectively select and implement research-based literacy interventions as they related to students' strengths and needs at an individual student, classroom and school-wide level.

### **MED 645 Interventions in Numeracy (3)**

This course constitutes a mathematics education component of the Intervention Specialist degree program within the College of Education and Behavior Sciences, School of Special Education. The course examines theoretical and practical approaches to mathematics instruction for youth with disabilities at the secondary school level. This course is designed to enable graduate students to effectively select and implement research and evidence-based mathematics interventions for individuals and groups of secondary school students.

### **EDSE 675 Issues in Special Education Assessment (3)**

Develop a comprehensive perspective of assessment development, implementation, interpretation, and implications of results to inform educational practices. Including the practice of monitoring progress and collaborating with individuals, families and professionals.

### **EDSE 676 Assessment and Interventions for Students with Challenging Behaviors (3)**

Learners are provided the skills and knowledge to supervise, coach, assess, and model a continuum of behavior support for teachers, paraprofessionals and other educators in the school, home, and community.

**EDSE 677 Transition to Adulthood for Youth with Exceptionalities (3)**

This course includes in-depth investigation into the provision of transition services and secondary services. Topics include transition-focused standards-based IEP development, self-determination, interagency coordination, career educational strategies, and content enhancement routines.

**EDSE 678 Leadership Strategies in Significant Support Needs/Autism (3)**

This course provides mentoring and coaching strategies when planning and collaborating for students with severe disabilities and/or autism. Topics include meeting student academic, communication, and medical needs in K-12 settings.

**EDSE 679 Interventions for Students with Culturally and Linguistic Differences (3)**

This course critically analyzes issues of equity through a culturally responsive lens as it applies to assessment, interventions, and education of all students including those with diverse backgrounds.

**EDSE 696 Practicum in Instructional Coaching (1-9)**

Supervised program of orientation, observation, and participation in an assigned placement to develop instructional coaching roles and responsibilities.

## **Admission Procedures & Requirements**

The MA Intervention Specialist: Academic Coaching & Leadership Program is offered entirely online with a revolving admittance date. This means you can apply and join the program at any time, without having to wait for a full year. For more information about the program, please contact program coordinator, Dr. Todd Sundeen (todd.sundeen@unco.edu)

In addition to meeting the admission requirements of the Graduate School, individuals interested in the Intervention Specialist: Academic Coaching & Leadership Program must provide verification of the following:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in teacher education or a related field.
- Provide evidence of licensure/endorsement as a special education generalist teacher or documented evidence of 24 semester hours of college level coursework from a regionally credited college or university in each of the areas (overview of special education; behavior; assessment and identification of children with disabilities; differentiating instruction for learners with diverse needs; transition and secondary services; reading, math; and oral and written language) with 2.6 overall degree GPA – which may include a maximum of 6 semester hours of documented professional development or work experience.
- All official transcripts.
- Grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 in the last 60 semester hours of academic work OR GRE scores of 900 or above and a 3.5 on Analytical Writing.
- Resume.
- A minimum of two letters of recommendation are required.
- A 1-2 page statement of educational goals and philosophy (this should focus on who you are as an educator and how the intervention specialist program can assist you with your future goals).



## **Program Logistics**

### ***Advisor***

When you are admitted to a program, you will be assigned an advisor by the Director of the School of Special Education. It is your responsibility when admitted to the program to read and follow the School of Special Education, Graduate School and University guidelines. Therefore, it is your responsibility, not your advisor's, to be sure all program requirements are met before applying for graduation. Program requirements include: meeting with your advisor to review your plan of study, to prepare a schedule, to plan for comprehensive examinations, and to complete the Application for Graduation form. You may change advisors at any time in the program by completing a Change of Advisor form available in the School of Special Education Office in McKee 29.

### ***Plan of Study***

A Plan of Study form will be completed when you are admitted. Needed coursework will be determined based on your current transcripts and the requirements of your program. A minimum of 30 hours is required for a master's degree. Should you have changes or substitutions in your coursework, it is your responsibility to make sure any deviations are documented in your advisement file and to keep copies for your own records.

### ***Transfer of Credit***

A maximum of 9 semester hours of unclassified graduate credit taken at the University of Northern Colorado and six semester credit hours (nine quarter hours) of graduate credit from another accredited graduate institution may transfer into your Plan of Study. The transfer credit must be compatible with your program and you must have received a grade of "A" or "B". Also, when you finish your degree, only coursework completed within the last five years (including transfer credits) can be counted toward degree requirements. Transfer credits will not be accepted for: (a) coursework completed more than five calendar years before the completion of the current graduate degree program, (b) correspondence courses, or (c) credits used to obtain a previous degree at any institution. To request transfer of credit into your current program, obtain a form titled Petition to Count Work in a Degree Program from the School of Special Education Office in McKee 29 (or online) and submit the petition with appropriate official transcripts to the Graduate School.

### ***Course Load***

Nine semester hours of credit are considered the minimum credit load to be classified as a full-time student. The maximum load permitted for a graduate student enrolled in a regular semester is 17 hours. Maximum loads are also established for summer sessions. See your advisor or the summer session Schedule of Classes for details. To carry more than the maximum credits per term, you must file a Petition for Overload. Forms are available in the School of Special Education Office in McKee 29 (or online). Complete

the form and obtain the signature of your advisor and the chairperson prior to registration.

### ***Directed Studies***

A Directed Study is a course in which a student may receive university credit for undertaking an individualized investigation under the direct supervision of a UNC faculty member. The course number used is EDSE 622: Directed Studies. To undertake a directed study, obtain a form from the School of Special Education Office in McKee 29 (or online). Complete the form and obtain signature approvals before taking the forms to the registration center to register for the course. No faculty member will be authorized to supervise a directed study during a semester in which he or she is not actually employed on campus at UNC.

A Directed Study investigation must be on a specific topic that is not duplicated by an existing course within the university's curriculum. The nature of the study must involve intensive use of relevant literature, materials, or techniques and the study report must reflect a synthesis of the information or techniques acquired. Credit for a directed study can vary from one to three credit hours. No more than two directed studies with a combined total of six credit hours may be taken in a semester. Two copies of a final report must be submitted to the supervising faculty member.

### ***Change of Major/Emphasis Area***

To request a change of major to another program, obtain a Request for a Change of Major form from the School of Special Education Office or online. Complete the form and return it to the Graduate School with the appropriate approvals. If you request new time limits by checking that choice on the form, none of your previous work will be included in the new program. However, you may request a transfer of up to ten specific semester credit hours. If you request the continuation of the existing time limit by checking that choice on the form, all applicable previous work will be included in your new requirements. With the continuation of the existing time limit choice, you must plan to graduate within five years of the earliest work in the previous program.

### ***Restricted Enrollment***

Some courses in the School of Special Education are restricted in the number of persons who can be enrolled and/or the student must have met specific prerequisites to enroll in the course. Restricted enrollment courses are usually designated in the course schedule as "permission of instructor" to enroll. Contact the faculty member listed as instructor of the class and ask to be released into the course. If no instructor is listed, contact the School of Special Education Office in McKee 29 (351-2691) for the name of the appropriate faculty person. If the restricted class is a practicum, the application for the practicum must be completed, submitted and approved the semester before you can enroll.

### ***Graduation***

One semester prior to the anticipated semester of graduation, you should file an Application for Graduation (available in the School of Special Education Office in McKee 29 or online). This form must be submitted to the Graduate School at least 45 calendar days before the end of the semester preceding the semester in which you plan to graduate. If you miss the filing date, you will pay a late fee. After filing the application for graduation, you will receive notification of approval or conditions that need to be met by the Graduate School. Attendance at a graduation ceremony and rental of a cap and gown are optional. Your name will be listed in the commencement program whether or not you attend the commencement ceremony.

### ***Career and Placement Services***

The UNC Career Services Center is available for all students and alumni. The center provides information about careers, employment opportunities, firms and agencies; opportunities to meet with prospective employers; assistance in assessing your career decisions; and follow-up services. You can improve your employment potential by acquainting yourself early with the wide array of services and special opportunities available to you through the center. The Career Services Center is located in The University Center. For information on the purchase of the job hotline, appointments for preparation of your resume, development of interviewing skills, enhancement of your job search, date for career fairs or on-campus recruiting, and testing services call (970) 351-2127 or visit <http://www.unco.edu/careers/index.html>.

### ***Program Termination***

According to University regulations, a student's program of study may be terminated under the following conditions:

- Students are allowed 12 months from the date of being admitted to begin taking classes before their program is terminated by the Graduate School.
- Students are allowed five years from the date they start their first class to fully complete their program. Programs that exceed this limit are terminated by the Graduate School. Extensions may be granted by the Graduate School upon application.
- Programs may be terminated by request of the program faculty when evidence of unethical or unprofessional behavior on the part of a student has been established.
- When the grade point average (G.P.A.) drops below 3.0, the student is warned and given a specific time limit for raising the G.P.A.. If this is not done, the program will be terminated by the Graduate School.

- Students are given two chances to pass the comprehensive examination; if they fail their first and second attempt their program will be terminated by the Graduate School. If students have been terminated from their program, an appeal may be made following the procedures outlined in the Student's Rights and Responsibilities statement, which is available in the Dean of Students Office (Carter Hall 3005).
- For student Honor Code visit:

<https://www.unco.edu/dean-of-students/pdf/Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

### ***Endorsement Only Plan of Study***

If you hold a Master's degree, you may apply for an endorsement only program. The Plan of Study will be developed to meet the requirements of study in the emphasis area. You must also pass the written comprehensive examination.

### ***Academic Appeals***

Students may appeal any academic decision that they consider arbitrary or capricious, or contrary to University policy. The procedures of the Academic Appeals Board are published in the Student's Rights and Responsibilities statement, which is available in the Dean of Students Office (Carter Hall 3005) or visit the Academic Appeal Procedure page.

The University of Northern Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, individual disability or veteran status in the recruitment and admission of students, the recruitment and employment of faculty and staff, and the operation of any of its programs and activities, as specified by federal laws and regulations.

## **Practicum/Coaching**

All Intervention Specialist students must complete a coaching practicum. The number of credit hours of practicum will vary according to an individual's professional experience and preference. The minimum number of practicum hours is 1 credit. The coaching practicum should take place in your current teaching placement. In other words, students do not need to leave their teaching placement to complete the practicum.

The Practicum in Instructional Coaching is a supervised program of orientation, observation, and participation in an assigned placement, which provides an opportunity to expand experience and learning of the knowledge bases regarding instructional coaching beyond the University of Northern Colorado into applied settings. Particular emphasis is placed on increasing students' understanding and experiences with economically, socially, and ethnically diverse populations of students with disabilities. Candidates will have opportunities to work in collaboration with other school professionals, parents, and families to apply evidence-based strategies and interventions in the areas of behavior, academics, and social/emotional development at the local school site. **The Practicum Student, Cooperating Professional, and University Consultant work in collaboration to develop a proposal for completion of all course goals, objectives, and course requirements.**

### **When Should I Apply for the Practicum?**

Practicum applications are due the semester prior to the practicum period. Check with your program advisor for deadline dates. Late applications will NOT be accepted.

### **When Should I Register for Practicum?**

Register Students should register for practicum coaching credits during the semester in which the practicum is begun.

To complete the practicum application process:

- Visit website for general information, forms, and etc.
- Meet with your advisor to determine the number of semester hours and the type of practicum required.
- Obtain an appropriate application form from the School of Special Education office.
- Complete the application with all requested information and give it to your advisor for further processing.

## Information about the Comprehensive Process Using LiveBinder

### 1. When will I complete the Comprehensive Exam?

You will complete the comprehensive exam at the end of your program when you are enrolled in EDSE 696. EDSE 696 is the last class you will take and is offered during the semester you plan to graduate. You will not be able to access the required forms until you are enrolled in EDSE 696.

### 2. What do I need to do to prepare for the exam?

At the very start of your Intervention Specialist Academic - Coaching and Leadership coursework, you need to create a personal Comprehensive Exam digital folder for your comps that will be accessed at the end of your program. You will add to your comps folder throughout your program by adding the “designated artifact” for each class (see below) into your electronic folder.

This folder should be stored in a safe place that is not dependent on the life of your computer (i.e., LiveBinders.com, Google docs, Digital Drop Box, Flashdrive, external hard drive, etc.). Because you will be completing assignments for your comprehensive examination at the end of your program, you must save these assignments along the way in your folder. Failure to have them at the end of your program, will result in having to redo the assignment, and may delay your graduation.

### 3. What does the Comprehensive Exam look like?

The Comprehensive Examination is not a test to take. Rather, all Intervention Specialist students are required to create a **LiveBinder** account ( <http://www.livebinders.com> ) and submit the designated artifacts from their classes completed during their MA Intervention Specialist program into their **LiveBinder** account that is linked to EDSE 696. Each artifact for **LiveBinder** is directly tied to one of the six CEC Advanced Standards (see below).

### 4. An artifact and reflection will be uploaded for specific courses in the Intervention Specialist program.

The comprehensive exam will require Intervention Specialist candidates to upload the designated **LiveBinder artifact** and a brief reflection that discusses the relationship of the standard to the class artifact/overall course experience (for specific courses in the program as shown in the chart below).

For example EDSE 670 requires the Policy Issues Analysis and a Reflection about the relationship between the EDSE 670 class assignment to the CEC Advanced Standard 6: Professional and Ethical Practice. The objective of the reflection is for the student to describe how the class prepared the Intervention Specialist candidate to meet the Advanced Standard and thus apply it to his/her own work in the field of education.

### 5. What are the artifacts for each class and the corresponding advanced CEC standard?

Type and Number of Assessment	Name of Assessment	CEC Advanced Standard	Type or Form of Assessment	When the Assessment Is Administered
Assessment #1:	Educational Evaluation Case Study	Standard 1: Assessment	Case Study Project	Required Course: EDSE 675
Assessment #2:	Action Plan Research Project	Standard 4: Research &	Action-research project	Required Course: EDSE 673

Type and Number of Assessment	Name of Assessment	CEC Advanced Standard	Type or Form of Assessment	When the Assessment Is Administered
		Inquiry		
Assessment #3:	Behavior Coaching Project	Standard 3: Programs, Services, and Outcomes	Action-research project	Required Course: EDSE 676
Assessment #4:	Problem of Practice Case Study	Standard 5: Leadership & Policy	Case study project	Required Course: EDSE 672
Assessment #5:	Policy Analysis	Standard 6: Professional & Ethical Practice	Legal paper	Required Course: EDSE 670
Assessment #6:	Collaborative Literature Review	Standard 7: Collaboration	Literature Review	Required Course: EDSE 679
Assessment #7:	Student GPA-Degree Works transcript	Standard 2: Curricular Content Knowledge	GPA (upload Degree Works transcript)	Student GPA based on all completed courses

## 6. What are the CEC Advanced Standards?

### CEC Advanced Preparation Standards:

Standard 1: **Assessment:** Special education specialists use valid and reliable assessment practices to minimize bias.

Standard 2: **Curricular Content Knowledge:** Special education specialists use their knowledge of general and specialized curricula to improve programs, supports, and services at classroom, school, community, and system levels.

Standard 3: **Programs, Services, and Outcomes:** Special education specialists facilitate the continuous improvement of general and special education programs, supports, and services at the classroom, school, and system levels for individuals with exceptionalities.

Standard 4: **Research & Inquiry:** Special education specialists conduct, evaluate, and use inquiry to guide professional practice.

Standard 5: **Leadership and Policy:** Special education specialists provide leadership to formulate goals, set and meet high professional expectations, advocate for effective policies and evidence-based practices and create positive and productive work environments.

Standard 6: **Professional and Ethical Practice:** Special education specialists use foundational knowledge of the field and professional Ethical Principles and Practice Standards to inform special education practice, engage in lifelong learning, advance the profession, and perform leadership responsibilities to promote the success of professional colleagues and individuals with exceptionalities.

Standard 7: **Collaboration:** Special education specialists collaborate with stakeholders to improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

## 7. How is LiveBinder used for the comprehensive examination?

Your **LiveBinder** will be used as the cumulative capstone of your MA program and will be required to graduate.

### **LiveBinder Instructions:**

To create your free **LiveBinder**, go to this website: <http://www.livebinders.com>

In your **LiveBinder**, you are to create and upload the following components:

1. **Introduction** to your LiveBinder. Provide a brief (paragraph) introduction about yourself and your educational philosophy
2. Your current **resume**
3. Your Degree Works **transcript** (available through URSA). Check to be sure your transcript indicates all courses have been completed with the exception of the comprehensive exam. Also, be sure your application for graduation has been received. Failure to do so will delay your graduation.
4. **Artifacts** from each course listed above, including the designated CEC standard
5. A brief **reflection** for each artifact 1-2 pages

NOTE: The comprehensive exam will require Intervention Specialist candidates to **submit each designated artifact, along with a brief reflection** that discusses the relationship of the CEC standard to the class artifact/overall class experience.

The student's **LiveBinder** assignment for each Intervention Specialist class will be graded in the portfolio using a rubric designed to measure the attainment of your course goals.

Make sure that you provide **access** to LiveBinder for your advisor so that they can review your work. Then, email your advisor to let them know that you are ready for your Comprehensive Examination review.

### **8. What do I do when I am ready for the comprehensive examination?**

In order to complete your written comprehensive examination you must obtain and complete the Written Comprehensive Request form and submit it to your advisor. Your advisor will sign the form and submit it to the Special Education office. **This process must be completed no later than two weeks before the scheduled exam.** You cannot access the permission form until you are enrolled in EDSE 696. Check the deadlines in the course.

Make sure that you provide access to LiveBinder for your advisor. Let your advisor know you are ready to have your comprehensive examination review by sending an email.



## CEC Advanced Preparation Standards

### CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 1: Assessment

<b><i>1.0 Special education specialists use valid and reliable assessment practices to minimize bias.</i></b>
Key Elements
1.1 Special education specialists minimize bias in assessment.
1.2 Special education specialists design and implement assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of practices and programs.

#### **Supporting Explanation:**

The reason for special education lies in the specialized professional knowledge and skills to individualize or personalize learning in both specialized and general curricula for individuals with exceptionalities.

Since its earliest days, special education has been based on the understanding of individuals and the contexts in which they live and learn in order to plan for the education of individuals with exceptionalities. This begins with the understanding of and respect for similarities and differences in human growth and development, and it extends to designing and implementing assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of practices and programs. To assure relevant and valid assessment information, nonbiased procedures are critical in the selection of assessment instruments, methods, and procedures for both individuals and programs. Frequently, special education specialists are a resource to school teams in selecting accommodations in assessments to minimize bias and ensure validity.

Special education specialists bring experience and engage in reflection to inform their understanding of human diversity and its influence on families, cultures, and schools, and their interaction with the delivery of education services. They use this experience to personalize instruction for individuals with exceptionalities. The identification and use of strategic accommodations and modifications depend on the understanding of specific individuals and their contexts.

With respect to assessment of individuals with exceptionalities, special education specialists apply their knowledge and skill to all stages and purposes of assessment in

decision-making including: pre-referral and screening, pre-placement for special education eligibility, and monitoring and reporting learning progress in the general education curriculum and in other individualized educational program goals.

## **CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 2: Curricular Content Knowledge**

<b><i>2.0 Special education specialists use their knowledge of general and specialized curricula to improve programs, supports, and services at classroom, school, community, and system levels.</i></b>
<b>Key Elements</b>
2.1 Special education specialists align educational standards to provide access to challenging curriculum to meet the needs individuals with exceptionalities.
2.2 Special educators continuously broaden and deepen professional knowledge, and expand expertise with instructional technologies, curriculum standards, effective teaching strategies, and assistive technologies to support access to and learning of challenging content.
2.3 Special education specialists use understanding of diversity and individual learning differences to inform the selection, development, and implementation of comprehensive curricula for individuals with exceptionalities.

### **Supporting Explanation:**

Special education specialists have a comprehensive knowledge of special education as an evolving and changing discipline based on philosophies, evidence-based principles and theories, relevant laws and policies, diverse and historical points of view, and issues that have influenced and continue to influence special education and the education of and services for individuals with exceptionalities both in school and in society. Special education specialists use their deep understanding of how to coordinate educational standards to the needs of individuals with exceptionalities to support all individuals with exceptionalities to access challenging curriculum standards.

Special education specialists work within the limits of their professional skill, and facilitate access to the general education curricula and special supplementary curricula, e.g. academic, strategic, social, emotional, transition, independence curricula to individualize meaningful and challenging learning for individuals with exceptionalities.

Special education specialists continuously broaden and deepen their professional knowledge, and expand their expertise with instructional, augmentative, assistive technologies, curriculum standards, and effective teaching strategies to support learning.

### CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 3: Programs, Services, and Outcomes

<b><i>3.0 Special education specialists facilitate the continuous improvement of general and special education programs, supports, and services at the classroom, school, and system levels for individuals with exceptionalities.</i></b>
<b>Key Elements</b>
3.1 Special education specialists design and implement evaluation activities to improve programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.
3.2 Special education specialists use understanding of cultural, social, and economic diversity and individual learner differences to inform the development and improvement of programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.
3.3 Special education specialists apply knowledge of theories, evidence-based practices, and relevant laws to advocate for programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.
3.4 Special education specialists use instructional and assistive technologies to improve programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.
3.5 Special education specialists evaluate progress toward achieving the vision, mission, and goals of programs, services, and supports for individuals with exceptionalities.

#### **Supporting Explanation:**

Special education specialists apply their knowledge of cognitive and behavioral science, learning theory, evidence-based practice, and instructional technologies to improve programs, services, and supports for individuals with exceptionalities.

Special education specialists continuously broaden and deepen their professional knowledge, and expand their expertise with instructional, augmentative, and assistive technologies, curriculum standards, and effective teaching strategies to support access to learning.

They use their understanding of the effects of cultural, social, and economic diversity and variations of individual development to inform their development of a continuum of programs and services to ensure the appropriate instructional supports for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

Special education specialists have a sufficient facility with the breadth and scope of instructional augmentative, assistive technologies so that they select alternatives that will improve programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities and their families, and facilitate others' selection and use.

### CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 4: Research & Inquiry

<b><i>4.0 Special education specialists conduct, evaluate, and use inquiry to guide professional practice.</i></b>	
Key Elements	
4.1	Special education specialists evaluate research and inquiry to identify effective practices.
4.2	Special education specialists use knowledge of the professional literature to improve practices with individuals with exceptionalities and their families.
4.3	Special education specialists foster an environment that is supportive of continuous instructional improvement and engage in the design and implementation of research and inquiry.

#### **Supporting Explanation:**

Research and inquiry inform the professional practice of special education specialists. As professionals, special education specialists view science as the principal source for information on effective practice.

Special education specialists know models, theories, philosophies, and research methods that form the basis for evidence-based practices in special education, and they use research to improve instructional techniques, intervention strategies, and curricula.

Special education specialists evaluate the appropriateness of research methodologies in relation to the validation of practices, and use the literature to inform professional practice.

Special education specialists foster a collegial environment supportive of continuous instructional improvement, and engage in the design and implementation of research with professional colleagues.

In addition, special education specialists design and implement research and evaluation activities to evaluate progress toward the organizational vision, mission, and goal, and the effectiveness of programs, services, and supports for individuals with exceptionalities.

## CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 5: Leadership and Policy

<b><i>5.0 Special education specialists provide leadership to formulate goals, set and meet high professional expectations, advocate for effective policies and evidence-based practices and create positive and productive work environments.</i></b>
<b>Key Elements</b>
5.1 Special education specialists model respect for and ethical practice for all individuals and encourage challenging expectations for individuals with exceptionalities.
5.2 Special education specialists support and use linguistically and culturally responsive practices.
5.3 Special education specialists create and maintain collegial and productive work environments that respect and safeguard the rights of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.
5.4 Special education specialists advocate for policies and practices that improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities.
5.5 Special education specialists advocate for the allocation of appropriate resources for the preparation and professional development of all personnel who serve individuals with exceptionalities.

### **Supporting Explanation:**

Special education specialists model respect for all individuals and encourage challenging expectations for individuals with exceptionalities. Special education specialists use their knowledge of the needs of different groups in a pluralistic society to support and use linguistically and culturally responsive practices.

Special education specialists hold high professional self-expectations and help others more completely understand the needs of individuals with exceptionalities.

Special education specialists create and maintain collegial and productive work environments that respect and safeguard the rights of individuals with exceptionalities and their families,

They support quality education for individuals with exceptionalities, and advocate for policy based on solid scientific evidence. In addition, they advocate for appropriate resources to ensure that all personnel involved have effective preparation.

Special education specialists use their knowledge of the needs of different groups in a pluralistic society to promote evidence-based practices and challenging expectations for individuals with exceptionalities.

## CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 6: Professional and Ethical Practice

<i>6.0 Special education specialists use foundational knowledge of the field and professional Ethical Principles and Practice Standards to inform special education practice, engage in lifelong learning, advance the profession, and perform leadership responsibilities to promote the success of professional colleagues and individuals with exceptionalities.</i>
Key Elements
6.1 A comprehensive understanding of the history of special education, legal policies, ethical standards, and emerging issues informs special education specialist leadership.
6.2 Special education specialists model high professional expectations and ethical practice, and create supportive environments that safeguard the legal rights and improve outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.
6.3 Special education specialists model and promote respect for all individuals and facilitate ethical professional practice.
6.4 Special education specialists actively participate in professional development and learning communities to increase professional knowledge and expertise.
6.5 Special education specialists plan, present, and evaluate professional development focusing on effective and ethical practice at all organizational levels.
6.6 Special education specialists actively facilitate and participate in the preparation and induction of prospective special educators.
6.7 Special education specialists actively promote the advancement of the profession.

### Supporting Explanation:

A deep understanding of the history of special education, legal policies, ethical standards, and emerging issues informs the leadership of special education specialists.

They use this broad foundation to construct their own professional understanding of special education professional practice and to facilitate others' understanding the education of and services for individuals with exceptionalities and their families in both school and society.

Special education specialists understand how and why special education organizes its programs and services in relation to school systems and other agencies. They model and facilitate high professional expectations and ethical practice to create supportive environments that safeguard the legal rights and improve outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

They design and deliver ongoing professional development designed to improve practice at all relevant organizational levels. Special education specialists plan, present, and evaluate professional development based on models that apply the principles of adult learning theory and focus on the use of effective practice at all organizational levels.

Special education specialists view themselves as lifelong learners, and model their commitment to improving their own professional practice by participating in professional development continuously. Special education specialists actively plan and engage in activities that foster their own as well as their colleagues' professional growth with evidence-based practices. In addition, they develop and use personalized professional development plans and facilitate the development and use of personalized professional development plans of colleagues.

Special education specialists recognize their responsibility to promote the advancement of the profession including facilitating and participating in the preparation and induction of prospective special educators.

### **CEC Advanced Preparation Standard 7: Collaboration**

<b><i>7.0 Special education specialists collaborate with stakeholders to improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.</i></b>	
Key Elements	
7.1	Special education specialists use culturally responsive practices to enhance collaboration.
7.2	Special education specialists use collaborative skills to improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities
7.3	Special education specialists collaborate to promote understanding, resolve conflicts, and build consensus for improving program, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities.

#### **Supporting Explanation:**

Special education specialists have a deep understanding of the significance of collaboration for education colleagues, families, related service providers, and others from the community and use collaboration to promote understanding, resolve conflicts, and build consensus.

Based on the theory and research on elements and models of effective collaboration, special education specialists use their skills to improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities. They possess current knowledge of the related ethical and legal issues, and use culturally responsive practices to enhance collaboration.