

The Framework for PK-12 Instructional Program Guidelines

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Introduction

The fundamental purpose of an Educator Preparation Program (EPP) approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is to admit, prepare, and support candidates for the profession who, upon graduation, have the knowledge and skills to enable PK-12 students in Pennsylvania to achieve academic success. Pennsylvania's preparation of new teachers is one component of a standards-based instructional system.

Effective PK–12 teachers design developmentally appropriate learning experiences for students across all age groups, creating classroom environments that are positive, inclusive, and supportive of diverse learners. They purposefully use instructional materials and technology to enhance learning, communicate clearly with students to build understanding and engagement, and establish collaborative partnerships with families to share meaningful information that supports each learner's growth and success.

This document has been created to provide the professional knowledge, skills, and competencies that PK-12 teachers will learn by completing a prescribed sequence of courses (including field placements). In addition to specific requirements and competencies, these guidelines discuss the PK-12 program design, professional core rationale, candidate competencies, Pennsylvania Academic Standards and Assessments in a standards-aligned system, faculty, field experiences and student teaching, and new teacher support. To develop PK-12 Instructional Preparation Programs, EPP providers should utilize the material contained in this document and consult these existing guidelines:

- [Subject Specific Guidelines](#);
- [Accommodations and Adaptations and ELL Program Framework Guidelines](#);
- [Common Ground Framework Guidelines](#);
- [Structured Literacy \(SL\) Program Framework Guidelines](#) (if applicable),
- [Professional Ethics \(PE\) Program Framework Guidelines](#); and
- [Field Experience Guidelines: Stage 1 - 4](#).

Philosophy for Preparing Effective Pennsylvania Teachers

Pennsylvania's standards-based instructional system is built on six interconnected elements. These six elements are standards, curriculum, instruction, materials and resources, assessments, and interventions. Together, these system components support strong student outcomes.

In the case of EPPs and their contribution to (1) *instruction*, all programs are expected to align their course content with (2) *state standards*. All preparation programs are expected to provide all candidates with the knowledge and skills to teach a (3) *standards-based curriculum* effectively and successfully. Through university coursework and extensive, well-designed clinical experiences, all candidates for the profession are expected to learn how to use (4) *materials and resources for instruction* (including technology) to meet the individual needs of each student in their classroom. Each EPP is expected to give considerable attention to helping

all candidates acquire and use (5) *assessment skills*, enabling them to understand and respond to pupil results on standardized tests (PSSA and others), local school or district assessments, and individualized assessments of the achievements and challenges of each pupil. Taken together, this set of knowledge, skills, and competencies must enable every candidate for the teaching profession in the Commonwealth to implement (6) *appropriate interventions* in the classroom to improve student learning. EPPs and the new teachers who complete them will be judged according to their success in achieving the six key goals described above.

Program and candidate success do not happen by accident. Program design, the components of that design, and the ongoing assessment of their effectiveness must all point in the same direction. The needs and interests of PK-12 students and their schools are at the center of the program. This means that PK-12 teachers and administrators must be involved in program assessment activities, decisions about selection and use of clinical sites, and asked regularly for their feedback on candidate and program performance. Program outcomes must include strong subject matter content preparation, more extensive clinical experiences for students, and the use of technology in curriculum and instruction.

Because teaching is a clinical profession, candidates for the profession are expected to spend extensive time in school settings—beginning early in their preparation program sequence—guided by university faculty and appropriately prepared PK-12 mentor teachers. EPPs must be able to demonstrate how they use evidence about program graduates and evidence about the PK-12 students of their graduates to make continuous program improvements. Continuous program improvement depends on gathering feedback from school partners, monitoring candidate performance, and evaluating the impact of program graduates on their PK-12 students. Strong subject-matter preparation, meaningful clinical practice, and purposeful use of evidence are essential to preparing new teachers who are capable of applying appropriate interventions and contributing effectively to student learning across Pennsylvania’s schools.

Program Design and Delivery

PK-12 EPPs in Pennsylvania are structured around the Professional Core. The Professional Core is the essential set of learning experiences. These learning experiences are the **essential courses, defined competencies, and field experiences**.

Courses

Courses within the Professional Core should be grounded in knowledge of how children and adolescents grow and learn, provide candidates with opportunities in designing effective lessons using sound teaching practices and technology, give candidates experiences assessing student learning in multiple ways, build their knowledge of supporting diverse and English-learning students, offer candidates opportunities learning how elementary, middle, and secondary schools operate, and provide candidates with experiences working with families and the broader community.

Competencies

Within the Professional Core structure, the competency is a clearly defined skill or ability that teacher candidates must be able to *demonstrate* by the time they complete their program. Additionally, the competency describes what candidates should *know* and what they should be able to *do* in real teaching situations. Programs must teach these competencies through coursework and hands-on field experiences, and candidates must show evidence that they can apply these skills in classrooms, especially during student teaching.

Field Experiences

The Professional Core also includes field experiences. Field experiences are sequenced and scaffolded, culminating in a **minimum 12-week student teaching placement**, ensuring candidates apply their learning under qualified mentor guidance in real classrooms. See the section on Field Experiences for more information.

Ultimately, PK-12 preparation programs are comprehensive and delivered through a combination of classroom, school, and other appropriate settings. The PK-12 programs are intentionally structured around the Professional Core. In the PK-12 preparation programs the Professional Core includes everything future teachers must learn and be able to do to teach effectively across all grade levels. Therefore, the PK-12 preparation program must address the major ideas, issues, and knowledge relevant to PK-12 teaching and prepare teachers to help students master academic standards. The PK-12 preparation program must also assess whether candidates have acquired the required knowledge, skills, and competencies.

Professional Core Rationale

Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code, §354.25(a), as well as §354.32 (a)(1) and §354.33(1)(i)(A)-(H) enumerate aspects of the knowledge, skills, and competencies that candidates for teaching in the Commonwealth are expected to learn and demonstrate. While this set of knowledge, skills, and competencies is developed in university academic classroom settings and clinical practice, the program curriculum is expected to reflect this centrality to the process of educator preparation. The candidate competencies detail specific assessable skills, concepts, and foundational understandings of the following four areas: 1) Development, Cognition, and Learning, 2) Subject Matter Content and Pedagogy, 3) Assessment, and 4) Professionalism. This section provides an overview of these four areas and is meant to provide a context for the Candidate Competencies.

I. Development, Cognition, and Learning

Cognitive Development and Learning Theory

Through the content and experiences in the PK-12 professional core, candidates must learn and be able to apply the major concepts and theories related to the development of young children. They must become familiar with research on human development, motivation, and learning. The

courses should be designed and taught in such a way that faculty and candidates are able to integrate their knowledge of child development theory and make explicit connections with content areas, cognitive development, literacy, special education, and English Language Learning. Educator preparation in this area should be geared toward the social, emotional, and intellectual development of the child, and should be grounded in the notion of communities of practice.

Essential knowledge and skills are needed to provide appropriate environments that support learning in each content area for all children. PK-12 professionals must know the essential concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of their content area. Basic knowledge of the research base underlying the content area is needed, as well as an understanding of the core concepts and standards of professional organization in the content area. Candidates must be able to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curricula that promote comprehensive developmental learning outcomes for all children, and must be adept at using assessment and incorporating results into ongoing classroom instruction and practice.

Adolescent Development

The study of adolescent development is critical for any PK-12 level educator. An educator should have a working knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of adolescent development, which will support the teacher in ensuring the healthy social, intellectual, sexual, emotional, and moral development of all students. Likewise, awareness of diversity issues supports the motivation and self-esteem of students in PK-12, as well as encouraging academic excellence.

Organizational Structure of Schools

Understanding the different organizational structures of the elementary, middle, and high school is central to the work of PK-12 teachers. Such work is guided by knowledge of the philosophical, historical, and social foundations of education, including the development of the high school, the philosophy of the middle school, the philosophies of early learning that exist in elementary settings, the diverse needs of students, and the particularities of the need for active citizens and community members, as well as the labor market.

II. Subject Matter Content and Pedagogy

PK-12 Student Matter Content: Wide and Conceptual in Scope

Educators at the PK-12 level are expected to have expertise in the subject matter they teach. This expertise is critical for assuring the acquisition of core competencies. All candidates interested in teaching at the PK-12 level must be prepared to frame student inquiry, prompt critical thinking, and assist in learning transfer while motivating and challenging students with a variety of evolving 21st century applications of the subject matter. This expertise may be a result of an EPP that requires subject matter coursework or the result of an undergraduate major in the subject area that is accompanied or followed by a preparation program.

PK-12 Subject Matter Specific Guidelines: Detailed and Programmatic in Scope

PDE has subject-specific guidelines that PK-12 education programs are expected to follow to ensure that the required discipline-level content is completed prior to the completion of the program. In developing the guidelines, efforts were made to align the discipline-level content with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards, the standards of the professional organizations, and specific language and conditions of the state's professional education community.

Refer to the Subject Specific Program Framework Guidelines for each PK-12 individual content area below:

- [Agriculture PK-12](#)
- [American Sign Language PK-12](#)
- [Art Education PK-12](#)
- [Business, Computer, and Information Technology PK-12](#)
- [Dance Certification PK-12](#)
- [Environmental Education PK-12](#)
- [Family and Consumer Science PK-12](#)
- [Foreign Language PK-12](#)
- [Health Education PK-12](#)
- [Health and Physical Education PK-12](#)
- [Library Science PK-12](#)
- [Music Education PK-12](#)
- [Reading Specialist PK-12](#)
- [Special Education PK-12](#)
- [Special Education – Visually Impaired PK-12](#)
- [Special Education – Hearing Impaired PK-12](#)
- [Special Education – Speech and Language Impaired PK-12](#)
- [Technology Education PK-12](#)

Pedagogy

Institutions are charged with producing evidence to demonstrate that their graduates understand and apply the knowledge, concepts, and skills essential for successful grade PK-12 instruction.

Pedagogy includes understanding how a particular content area's concepts are related to one another and to other content areas; the historical and evidence-based variety of approaches to teaching the content; engaging and maintaining the interest of typical and atypical learners; utilizing a range of resources and technology to facilitate learning; knowing how to differentiate instruction; and supporting literacy development in a variety of contexts (e.g., textual, media).

Curriculum Development

Candidates must be able to develop, implement, assess, and modify curriculum and lessons for a wide variety of students at various ages. This includes the ability to explain how individuals

acquire and process information. Candidates should be able to describe the developmental stages of learners and the physical, cognitive, and psychosocial implications. Candidates must also relate how attention, memory, conceptual knowledge and its formation, reasoning, decision making, problem solving, executive functioning, principles and mechanisms of development, intelligence, action, and motor control influence learning. Candidates must be able to identify appropriate interactions with adults and peers, the teaching methods and curricula that are appropriate for the various age groups, and interventions that support learning and development. All candidates must demonstrate an understanding of the legal rights and responsibilities of the teacher for special educational referral and evaluation, as well as the rights and procedural safeguards that students are guaranteed, so as to not misinterpret behaviors that represent cultural or linguistic differences as indicative of learning problems.

Required Coursework and Credit Requirements of Academic Majors

Coursework in majors will differ in part because of the professional goals or concentrations of the student. Chapter 354.24(3) states that “academic content area courses for the preparation of professional educators shall include all required core courses and required elective courses” in the “major academic area.” In addressing this requirement, institutions must provide evidence, usually in the form of advisement sheets that demonstrate a consistent core of courses for any student declaring a major in the academic field that is consistent with a preparation program.

III. Assessment

Assessment skills, extensive practice, and the application of assessment results to design effective individualized interventions are essential PK-12 level teaching skills. Successful demonstration of these abilities is an expected outcome through the PDE 430, *Pennsylvania Statewide Evaluation Form for Student Professional Knowledge and Practice*.

The preparation program course content should be organized to provide candidates with the knowledge, skills, and competencies to recognize students having difficulty, identify student challenges, design interventions (with collaborative assistance from colleagues when needed), and test the effectiveness of appropriate interventions. Course content must enable candidates to learn how to understand and use data about student learning (standardized tests and other assessment practices), adapt and modify instruction, use technology appropriately, and adapt curriculum successfully. Translating diagnostic information about student learning into successful teaching strategies that will improve student learning requires formal preparation, proficiency with assessment tools, and extensive practice under careful supervision and mentoring. The content must also include explicit attention to [Pennsylvania's Standards-Aligned System for Grades PK-12](#), as well as be consistent with authentic, screening, diagnostic, formative, benchmark, and summative assessments.

Definitions of Assessments

The following definitions describe different types of assessments used in classroom settings. The definitions for diagnostic, benchmark, formative, and summative can also be found on the

[Standards-Aligned System website](#). Candidates are expected to understand the differences between screening, authentic, diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. The design of a program must include instruction and assessments of candidates demonstrating the appropriate use of each type of assessment.

1. **Authentic Assessment:** A form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills. The assessment usually includes a task for students to perform, and a rubric is used to evaluate their performance.
2. **Screening Assessment:** Screening assessments are used to determine which students may be at risk. Poor performance on the screening assessment identifies those students needing additional, in-depth assessment of strengths and weaknesses. The primary purpose of screening assessments is to identify those students who need additional instructional (or behavioral) intervention. As adolescents develop, additional screenings may be necessary. An essential element of using a screening assessment is implementing additional identified intervention(s) (instructional, behavioral, or medical).
3. **Summative Assessment:** Summative assessments seek to make an overall judgment of progress made at the end of a defined period of instruction. They occur at the end of a school level, grade, or course, or are administered at certain grades for purposes of state or local accountability. They are designed to produce clear data on the student's accomplishments at key points in his or her academic career. Scores on these assessments usually become part of the student's permanent record and are statements as to whether or not the student has fallen short of, met, or exceeded the expected standards. Whereas the results of formative assessments are primarily of interest to students and the teachers, the results of summative assessments are also of great interest to parents, the faculty as a whole, the central administration, the press, and the public at large. It is the data from summative assessments on which public accountability systems are based. If the results of these assessments are reported with reference to standards and individual students, they can be used as diagnostic tools by teachers to plan instruction and guide the leadership team in developing strategies that help improve student achievement. Examples of summative assessment are PSSA, PASA, Keystone Exams, end of unit tests, midterm and final exams.
4. **Formative Assessment:** Formative assessment is used by teachers and students during instruction to provide feedback, which guides the teacher to adjust ongoing instruction to improve students' achievement of intended instructional outcomes. CCSSO in "Revising the Definition of Formative Assessment" (2026) contextualizes formative assessment as follows:

Formative assessment is a planned, ongoing process used by all students and teachers during learning and teaching to elicit and use evidence of student learning to improve student understanding of intended disciplinary learning outcomes and support students to become self-directed learners.

Effective use of the formative assessment process requires students and teachers to integrate and embed the following practices in a collaborative and respectful classroom environment:

- *Clarifying learning goals and success criteria within a broader progression of learning;*
- *Eliciting and analyzing evidence of student thinking;*
- *Engaging in self-assessment and peer feedback;*
- *Providing actionable feedback; and*
- *Using evidence and feedback to move learning forward by adjusting learning strategies, goals, and next instructional steps.*

The key is how the results are used. Results should be used to shape teaching and learning. Under this definition, formative assessment encompasses questioning strategies, active engagement check-ins, (such as response cards, white boards, random selection, think-pair-share, and numbered heads) and analysis of student work based on set rubrics and standards including homework and tests. Assessments are formative when the information is used to adapt instructional practices to meet individual student needs, as well as providing individual students corrective feedback that allows them to “reach” set goals and targets. Ongoing formative assessment is an integral part of effective instructional routines that provide teachers with the information they need to differentiate and make adjustments to instructional practice to meet the needs of individual students.

5. **Benchmark Assessments:** Benchmark assessments are designed to provide feedback to both the teacher and the student about how the student is progressing towards demonstrating proficiency on grade level standards. Well-designed benchmark assessments and standards-based assessments measure the degree to which a student has mastered a given concept; measure concepts, skills, and/or applications; reported by referencing the standards, not other students' performance; serve as a test to which teachers want to teach; and measure performance regularly, not only at a single moment in time. An example of a benchmark assessment is the Firefly Progress Indicator. Firefly is designed to provide a prediction for the end of year assessments (PSSA and Keystone Exams).
6. **Diagnostic Assessment:** Diagnostic assessment ascertains, prior to instruction, each student's strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills. Establishing these permits the instructor to remediate students and adjust the curriculum to meet pupils' unique needs. An example of a diagnostic assessment is the Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDTs).

IV. Professionalism

PK-12 candidates need to develop professional attitudes and behaviors. Candidates will demonstrate knowledge of and competence in fostering professionalism in school and community settings. Because students in grades PK-12 are developing childhood and

adolescence into adulthood and may exhibit behavior and interests that resemble adult relationships, it is vital for all PK-12 education candidates to become thoroughly aware of the [Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators](#), as well as the [Professional Ethics \(PE\) Program Framework Guidelines](#).

Professional practice is influenced by the work of professional education associations. PK-12 education candidates should become familiar with the work of the various professional associations that conduct research, prepare resources for grades PK-12 teachers and provide professional development opportunities. Professional education candidates should be guided to think of themselves as lifelong learners who continue to develop deep understanding of the content and pedagogy that relates to their area of secondary education.

Candidate Competencies

This section outlines the competencies required for certification by Chapter 354 regulations: “The preparing institution shall ensure that candidates complete a well-planned sequence of professional educator courses and field experiences to develop an understanding of the structure, skills, core concepts, facts, methods of inquiry and application of technology related to each academic discipline the candidates plan to teach.” (22 Pa. Code § 354.25(b)(3)).

Aligned resources and tools to support the acquisition of these competencies can be found on the [Standards Aligned System \(SAS\) portal](#).

I. Development, Cognition, and Learning

A. Child Development

1. Effectively apply the principles and theories of child development including:
 - a. Developmentally appropriate practices;
 - b. Constructivism;
 - c. Socio-cultural theory;
 - d. Attachment theory;
 - e. Activity theory; and
 - f. Play.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of physical and motor development (stages of physical growth, gross and fine motor skills).
3. Demonstrate an understanding of social emotional development (self-regulation, self-concept, self-awareness, resilience, and stress).

B. Early Childhood Theory

Candidates will be able to implement lessons based on early childhood education foundations, theory and policy, including:

1. Current issues with historical and philosophical background, including inclusionary practices;
2. Theory, research, analysis, and practice; and
3. Social, economic, and cultural diversity, and implications for learning.

C. Adolescent Development

1. Recognize and implement the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to adolescent cognitive, social, sexual, emotional, and moral development.
2. Design and implement strategies that encourage students' positive self-esteem, self-efficacy, and motivation.
3. Identify and respect the range of individual and cultural differences of all adolescents and the implications of those differences in teaching and learning.
4. Identify how the development of all adolescents occurs in the context of classrooms, families, peer groups, communities, and society.
5. Design and implement strategies that provide students with appropriate skills in making the transition from elementary to middle level to high school, and lastly, to adulthood (work, college, military, etc.).
6. Incorporate knowledge of adolescent development into educating students in goal setting and decision making.
7. Create and support learning environments that promote the healthy development of all adolescents.
8. Demonstrate effective adolescent behavior strategies for the classroom.

D. Organizational Structure of the School

1. Make curricular decisions that are grounded in the social, philosophical, and historical foundations of education.
2. Engage children in activities related to their interpersonal, community, and societal responsibilities.
3. Develop classrooms as communities of practice that are learner oriented.

4. Use student assistance and student support programs that attend to the intellectual, social, and emotional needs of children.
5. Interact with various professionals that serve children (e.g., school counselors, school social workers, home and school visitors, etc.).
6. Understand the philosophy of grades PK-6 and 7-12.
7. Identify the multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning.
8. Implement multiple approaches to learning.
9. Create environments that are educationally focused, respectful, supportive, and challenging for all children.
10. Demonstrate awareness of the roles of building-specific personnel and staffing patterns within different grade bands and building configurations (e.g. elementary schools, middle schools, high schools).
11. Demonstrate awareness of facilities planning, budgeting, scheduling, and ordering of equipment within different grade bands and building configurations (e.g. elementary schools, middle schools, high schools).
12. Demonstrate awareness of program safety, injury prevention and treatment, and liability.
13. Demonstrate awareness of the ways different building configurations emphasize public relations.

I. Subject Matter Content and Pedagogy

A. Subject-matter content for each PK-12 subject area is found in the [Subject Specific Guidelines](#).

B. Pedagogy

1. Use effective instructional principles, especially those that draw on the research on pedagogical content knowledge in course content.
2. Employ teaching and learning strategies, including the use of technology, that consider and capitalize upon the developmental characteristics of all children.
3. Use effective comprehensive instructional principles responsive to the needs of students.
4. Incorporate technology into instruction appropriately.
5. Use materials designed explicitly for the grade levels assigned.

6. Make decisions about curriculum and resources that reflect an understanding of child and adolescent development.
7. Utilize subject-specific methodologies.
8. Deliver curriculum that is relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory.
9. Incorporate the ideas, interests, and experiences of children and/or adolescents into instruction.
10. Design successful interventions responsive to the needs of individual students.
11. Integrate technology and other resources appropriately in order to prepare students for further education, higher education and the workforce.
12. Apply PA standards into both short-term and long-term instructional goals.
13. Create lessons that support literacy across the curriculum.
14. Prepare students to gain, process, and use information in different contexts.
15. Design educational experiences that help students communicate using various tools and means.
16. Create lessons that demonstrate an understanding of literacy both broadly and in discipline contexts.
17. Utilize literature, classic texts in different genres, commercial reading materials, electronic-based information, and locally created materials.
18. Demonstrate the adaptation of educational or subject-specific research in lessons.
19. Differentiate instruction, assessment, and management strategies to represent a broad spectrum of learning abilities, learning styles, multiple intelligences, and interests.
20. Develop inclusionary practices that respect differences and encourage students to work together to maximize their own and one another's learning.

C. Curriculum Development

Candidates will be able to develop, implement, assess, and modify curriculum and lessons as evidenced by their ability to:

1. Delineate how individuals acquire and process information;
2. Make decisions about curriculum and resources that reflect an understanding of child and adolescent development;

3. Design learning environments to facilitate encoding, storage, and retrieval of knowledge and information for memory, attention, perception, action, and problem solving.
4. Describe the developmental patterns of change, physical, cognitive, and psychosocial areas that have been identified for each stage of development.
5. Apply concepts of human development to education and learning regarding attention, memory, conceptual knowledge and its formation, reasoning, decision making, problem solving, executive functioning, and principles and mechanisms of development, intelligence, action, and motor control;
6. Deliver curriculum that is relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory.
7. Identify interactions with adults and peers, the PK-12 teaching methods and curricula, and comprehensive interventions that support learning and development, specifically in domains that prepare children from diverse backgrounds for school success.
8. Create lessons that support literacy across the curriculum.
9. Demonstrate an understanding of and ability to plan for type, identification, prevalence, effective, evidenced-based instructional practices and adaptations;
10. Demonstrate understanding of the legal rights and responsibilities of the teacher for special educational referral and evaluation and the rights and procedural safeguards that students are guaranteed.
11. Demonstrate an understanding of overrepresentation of minorities in special education so as to not misinterpret behaviors that represent cultural or linguistic differences as indicative of learning problems.
12. Know and understand young children's characteristics and needs.
13. Know the range of development, including special learning and developmental needs, in the following areas of language:
 - a. Receptive vocabulary;
 - b. Expressive vocabulary;
 - c. Auditory comprehension; and
 - d. Pragmatic language.
14. Implement lessons based on students' stages of cognitive development, use of senses for exploration and understanding of the world, and development of age-appropriate problem solving and critical thinking skills.

III. Assessment

- A. Utilize assessment practices which match instructional strategies which are culturally relevant and authentically measure student performance.
- B. Continuously monitor the results of interventions and alter instruction accordingly.
- C. Use multiple assessments (authentic, screening, diagnostic, formative, benchmark, and summative) that are developmentally appropriate for all learners, including graduation and end-of-course examinations.
- D. Implement technology in student assessment and measures.
- E. Use assessment data to guide instruction.
- F. Strategically tutor students whose assessments indicate need for additional instruction.
- G. Use multiple assessment strategies that effectively measure student mastery of the curriculum in more than one way.
- H. Design assessments that target academic standards and content standards in subject areas.
- I. Develop assessments that impact instruction, facilitate learning communities, and support diverse students' development and learning.
- J. Apply assessments that help reveal readiness in making the transition from school (to work, to higher education, to military service, to full citizenship, etc.).

IV. Professionalism

Refer to the Candidate Competencies listed in the Professional Ethics Program Framework Guidelines.

Alignment with Pennsylvania's Academic Standards

The PK-12 teacher must have a deep understanding and mastery of the Academic Standards and the Content Standards for those grade levels, including Alternate Academic Content Standards (see below). Title 22, section 49.14 (4)(iii) of the Pennsylvania Code identifies how the Academic Standards are included in certification programs: "Institutions are able to demonstrate that educator candidates have participated in instructional activities that enable the candidates to provide instruction to students to meet the provisions of Chapter 4 (relating to academic standards and assessment)." Furthermore, EPPs must be designed to enable candidates to integrate general and academic coursework so the candidate can teach and assist public school students in achieving the academic standards under Chapter 4 (22 Pa. Code §354.25(b)).

Pennsylvania Academic Standards (22 Pa. Code § 4.12)

- 1) Science & Technology
- 2) Environment & Ecology
- 3) Social Studies
 - a) History
 - b) Geography
 - c) Civics & Government
 - d) Economics
- 4) Arts & Humanities
- 5) Career Education & Work
- 6) Health, Safety & Physical Education
- 7) Family & Consumer Science
- 8) Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening
 - a) Reading
 - b) Writing
 - c) Speaking & Listening
- 9) Mathematics

The EPP should enable candidates to identify the difference between the Academic Standards. Candidates must also be able to demonstrate their awareness of standards for the earlier and later grades to ensure that there is a continuum of PK-12 student academic growth. Knowing the continuum of grade level standards is especially important for the PK-12 teacher. This knowledge will enable the candidate to address the needs of students who have not met the standards, including students with disabilities or English Learners (ELs) in inclusive settings.

Candidates must demonstrate mastery beyond superficial levels in order to be able to prepare students to be successful on state and local assessments. This mastery will allow the candidate to guide and assist the public-school student in achieving proficiency on all state assessments.

EPP requirements must function together so that candidates understand and make effective use of the Academic Standards, have the skills to develop and implement appropriate interventions to improve student learning, have the content and pedagogical knowledge to teach the curriculum effectively, understand and make regular use of standardized and curriculum-based assessment data, and use the instructional materials and resources necessary to support standards-based instructional practices.

Preparing institutions must provide evidence that there is an alignment of the candidates' coursework, clinical experiences, and assessments with the standards adopted by the Commonwealth. Collaboration among "professional educator faculty and faculty from liberal arts and other academic disciplines . . . in program planning and evaluation of all facets of the curriculum" is essential to facilitating deep understanding of the standards by candidates (as regulated by 22 Pa. Code §354.26(a)(1)).

Faculty

EPPs submitted for review to the Department must include the qualifications of faculty assigned to teach each course within the professional core of the program. Faculty who teach in the professional core must have demonstrated expertise in education methods appropriate to engaging the minds of all learners and in the PK-12 grade subject-matter content they are teaching, as well as a minimum of a master's degree in disciplines appropriate to teaching in the program. Evidence of qualification includes related academic degrees, public school certification(s), professional experience in basic (Pre K-12) and/or higher education, and professional development pertaining to the competencies assigned to a course. Additionally, program proposals will be expected to include evidence of significant collaboration between arts and sciences faculty and education faculty, along with current practicing PK-12 level teachers and administrators in all content areas (refer to Chapter 354 sections 354.25 and 354.26).

Field Experiences

Candidates completing PK-12 Instructional preparation programs will complete stages of field experiences. These stages are Stage 1: Observation, Stage 2: Exploration, Stage 3: Pre-Student Teaching, and Stage 4: Student Teaching. Providers of PK-12 Instructional programs must include Stages 1-4 in undergraduate-level programs and include Stage 3-4 in post-baccalaureate-level programs. Therefore, the EPP is required to provide evidence of the candidate's participation in developmental field experiences and student teaching, under the supervision of college personnel and cooperating teachers who are well trained, highly qualified, and demonstrate competence in teaching and mentoring in the field of PK-12 education. The program must also provide evidence that the criteria and competencies required for exit from the PK-12 certification programs are assessed through coursework, field experiences, and student teaching. In addition to incorporating a self-reflective emphasis, the EPP is expected to require candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and competence in fostering student learning and adolescent well-being. Thus, field experiences must be aligned with the required competencies for the certificate being sought, and the program provider must assess and evaluate each candidate on his/her ability to demonstrate the competencies in the field placements.

The requirements of the field experiences are located in the [Field Experience Guidelines: Stage 1 – Stage 4](#).

New Teacher Support

Induction is a requirement in Pennsylvania schools. According to 22 Pa. Code §49.16, all school entities (LEAs) must submit a plan for the induction experience for first-year teachers. This plan is written every 6 years as required by Chapter 4. The regulation further states that preparing institutions shall provide "...ongoing support for novice educators in partnership with local education agencies during their induction period, including observation, consultation and assessment" (22 Pa. Code §49.14(4)(ix); see *also* 22 Pa. Code § 354.26 (d)). Therefore, EPPs

are connected to new teacher induction to provide new teachers with support and assistance in beginning their professions successfully.

In the first two years of teaching, new teacher support is more a process than a program, involving the period of transition where new teachers evolve from being students of teaching to teachers of students. For these reasons, PK-12 education preparation programs must develop and maintain a support program for their new teacher candidates for a minimum period of two years. This support is to provide access to professional networking, resource information, and job placement services. It may include graduate surveys that the program uses to assess its own effectiveness. The program is expected to attempt active outreach to its graduates.