

Special Education Director Quality Standards

Standard One: Foundations of Leadership

The Special Education Director will have a solid foundation for leadership by: (a) demonstrating a comprehensive knowledge of special education organization, programs, laws, and best practices; and (b) setting high standards and a positive direction for special education consistent with the values, mission and vision of the state and administrative unit. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

1.1	Promote and reinforce the belief that a free and appropriate education is the fundamental right of all students.
1.2	Recognize and accept personal and professional accountability to direct, monitor and continually work to improve the educational processes and practices for which he/she is responsible.
1.3	Articulate and model a clear set of core professional values.
1.4	Demonstrate ethical behavior by acting with integrity of word and action.
1.5	Articulate comprehensive knowledge of the significant elements of special education; its history, organization, programs, laws, and best practices.
1.6	Build mutually respectful relationships through effective listening and empathetic responses.
1.7	Participate in ongoing quality professional development.
1.8	Collaborate with others to ensure there is continued awareness of the latest research regarding special education, learning theory and best instructional practices.

Standard Two: Special Education and School Systems

The Special Education Director shall: (a) demonstrate knowledge of organizational culture; (b) apply a systems approach to the development of special education programs and processes; and (c) facilitate effective systems change. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

2.1	<p>Develop organizational relationships between and among:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • federal, state, intermediate and local educational agencies; • district and building levels and the various schools and schooling levels; • special and general education; • the greater community, including but not limited to families, advocates and agencies, and potential employers.
2.2	Demonstrate an understanding of leadership roles, hierarchies, authority, and chain-of- command relationships.

2.3	Promote positive culture within special education and in the greater organization, in alignment with district vision, mission and values.
2.4	Support systems thinking at all levels of the organization.
2.5	Lead change processes consistent with proven change theories at all levels of the organization, inclusive of all stakeholder groups.

Standard Three: Law and Policy

The Special Education Director shall be knowledgeable about and able to apply relevant federal and state statutes, regulations, case law and policies that impact all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

3.1	Implement requirements of federal, state and case law in public education, with an emphasis on special education.
3.2	Demonstrate knowledge of policies and procedures required to implement legal requirements.
3.3	Describe legislative processes at local, state and national levels.
3.4	Demonstrate skills in networking and advocating on behalf of students with disabilities in order to develop, influence and impact laws and policies.
3.5	Facilitate the development of student-centered Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to include procedures, processes and legal requirements.
3.6	Identify resources of national organizations in the field of special education.
3.7	Execute federal, state and local data collection, analysis and reporting requirements.

The Special Education Director shall be knowledgeable about and able to apply relevant federal and state statutes, regulations, case law and policies that impact all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

3.8	Provide for an educational environment that is safe, secure, healthy and accessible.
3.9	Implement principles of universal design to assure equal access to students across all educational settings that include specialized transportation, health needs, safety procedures and proactive approaches for students with disabilities in emergency situations.

Standard Four: Instructional Leadership

The Special Education Director shall be able to integrate general education and special education, including curriculum, instructional strategies, and individualized instruction in support of all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

4.1	Facilitate the attainment of state standards, expanded benchmarks and access skills.
4.2	Promote high standards for the instruction of all students, including students with disabilities, and for continuously improving their academic achievement.
4.3	Implement assessment systems for identification and programming.
4.4	Develop data driven, evidence-based instructional practices, including behavioral support systems.
4.5	Develop comprehensive approaches to educational planning, including student involvement and self-determination.
4.6	Implement transition plans for individuals with disabilities across the educational continuum and other programs from birth through adulthood.
4.7	Provide leadership to guide appropriate instructional decision-making, focusing on individualization for students with disabilities.

The Special Education Director shall be able to integrate general education and special education, including curriculum, instructional strategies, and individualized instruction in support of all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

4.8	Facilitate staff development related to evidence-based practices, rigorous content and effective outcomes for all learners, including those with disabilities.
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Standard Five: Program Planning and Organization

The Special Education Director shall be able to evaluate the efficacy and efficiency of special education programs, facilities, services and monitoring systems and to use the evaluation data to improve the programs and services for all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

5.1	Apply program evaluation strategies for determining efficacy and efficiency.
5.2	Implement continuous improvement monitoring processes.
5.3	Develop special education programs, facilities, services, and monitoring systems that are complementary to and mutually supportive of one another and of general education.

5.4	Facilitate strategic planning for program development and implementation to encompass all stakeholders.
5.5	Demonstrate and extend collaborative consultation principles with all stakeholders.
5.6	Facilitate professional development to implement, improve and expand programs.

Standard Six: Human Resource Functions

The Special Education Director shall have the knowledge and ability to recruit, retain and evaluate qualified personnel in order to effectively implement programs and services for all children, including those with disabilities. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

6.1	Recruit and retain qualified personnel.
6.2	Screen, interview and select qualified staff.
6.3	Facilitate professional development of staff members.
6.4	Implement alternative procedures to ensure appropriate personnel when fully qualified individuals are not available.
6.5	Delineate roles and responsibilities of all special education instructional and related services personnel.
6.6	Adhere to established ethical and legal considerations of human resource management.
6.7	Provide supervision and evaluation of personnel serving students with disabilities.

Standard Seven: Parent, Family and Community Engagement

The Special Education Director shall be knowledgeable about and able to facilitate partnerships and engage parents, families and communities in the implementation of special education programs and delivery of special education services. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

7.1	Implement a comprehensive communication infrastructure to organize and distribute the flow of information coming from and to the district.
7.2	Facilitate collaborative relationships with all stakeholders.

7.3	Promote parent training and support services to support parents in understanding rights, responsibilities, processes and decision-making within special education.
7.4	Develop interactive opportunities with the local and/or state Special Education Advisory Council, parent advocacy groups, the Parent Training and Information Centers, and the Protection and Advocacy Agency.
7.5	Disseminate current research and best practices to improve student achievement.
7.6	Demonstrate conflict resolution in a variety of contexts.
7.7	Develop and implement intra-agency and interagency agreements.

Standard Eight: Budget and Resources

The Special Education Director shall be knowledgeable and able to demonstrate school district budgeting and resource allocation, including those related to special education. The performance indicators for this standard include the following:

8.1	Identify fiscal issues relevant to the provision of services to learners with disabilities.
8.2	Manage human resources to align appropriate expertise with the individualized needs of learners with disabilities.
8.3	Apply knowledge of local, state and federal reporting requirements to promote responsible fiscal management.
8.4	Develop proposals to external agencies to secure supplemental resources to enhance the services available to students with special needs.
8.5	Implement agreements for contractual services from outside agencies to benefit students with disabilities.
8.6	Establish linkages between preschool, school age and post-secondary programs and services.
8.7	Develop program budgets that allocate adequate resources to school sites and programs and demonstrate sound fiscal management and planning.
8.8	Allocate available Full Time Equivalency (FTE) positions to special education programs and services to ensure a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to students identified with disabilities.