
ILLINOIS CERTIFICATION TESTING SYSTEM

FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEST FRAMEWORK

November 2003

Copyright © 2003 by the Illinois State Board of Education

Permission is granted to make copies of this document for noncommercial use by educators.

Illinois Certification Testing System
FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK

November 2003

Subarea	Range of Objectives
I. Special Education Program and School Environment	01–06
II. Laws, Ethics, Finance, and Service Provision	07–12
III. Collaboration and Management	13–18

ILLINOIS CERTIFICATION TESTING SYSTEM
FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK

Special Education Program and School Environment
Laws, Ethics, Finance, and Service Provision
Collaboration and Management

SUBAREA I—SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM AND SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

0001 Understand foundations of education and instruction for special populations.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the traditions of education (e.g., historical, moral, philosophical, political) including those that provide the basis for special education.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the role of public education in developing and renewing a democratic society.
- Demonstrate knowledge of theories and methodologies of teaching and learning and activities that promote appropriate educational standards and excellence for all students and staff.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the needs of differing populations in a pluralistic society and activities that promote the success of all students in the least restrictive environment based on the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.
- Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for supporting a nurturing and high-performing culture and climate through the use of symbols, ceremonies, stories, and similar activities reflecting the diversity of the school community.

**FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK**

0002 Understand the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of educational excellence.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of theories and research on organizational and educational leadership, ways to articulate and model core beliefs of the organization and strategies for developing vision and goals in collaboration with others (e.g., teacher, board members, families).
- Identify strategies for addressing barriers to achieving an educational vision and achieving educational goals through negotiation, collaboration, and consensus building.
- Identify principles for developing, implementing, and evaluating long-term educational programs, policies, and plans, including implementation plans, taking actions to realize the organizational vision, mission, and goals, and monitoring, evaluating, and revising those plans regularly.
- Demonstrate knowledge of human and financial resources and ways to obtain and organize the financial, human, and material resources needed to implement and support the realization of the organization's vision, mission, and goals.
- Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate channels and media for communicating plans, ideas, and goals to constituents (e.g., board of education, staff, parents/guardians, students, community), strategies for communicating and taking actions to achieve organizational goals, and approaches to shaping purpose and direction for individuals and groups.

0003 Understand the development of the learning environment in a school.

For example:

- Demonstrate understanding of the concept of school climate as it applies to student and staff performance.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of human growth and development, ranges of individual variation, and their application to the school environment and instructional program.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of the cultural and environmental milieu of the child and the family, including cultural and linguistic diversity, socioeconomic level, abuse/neglect, and substance abuse, on behavior and learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of methods for promoting an environment that encourages creativity and innovation and recognizes the value of treating all individuals with respect, dignity, and fairness.

**FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK**

0004 Understand strategies for developing and improving an instructional program for a school.

For example:

- Identify techniques for modifying instructional methods, curricular materials, technology, and the learning environment to meet students' needs, including techniques that are developmentally appropriate.
- Demonstrate knowledge of technology applications for administrators, staff, and students to enhance the learning and instructional program.
- Demonstrate knowledge of activities to promote the appropriate use of technology to enhance student learning.
- Recognize strategies that can be used to support the continuous improvement of the instructional program for all students.

0005 Understand the assessment and evaluation of school and student performance.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of systems and theories of educational assessment and evaluation.
- Demonstrate knowledge of methods for assessing and evaluating student performance.
- Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for collecting, organizing, and analyzing a variety of information, including student performance data, to assess progress toward organizational goals and evaluate the instructional program.
- Demonstrate knowledge of methods for aligning educational standards to specialized instructional services.
- Demonstrate understanding of strategies for systematically conducting, acting upon, and reporting assessment of individual student educational performance and evaluation of the instructional program.

**FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK**

0006 Understand educational research strategies and the process of educational change.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of cognition, learning theories, and interventions and their relationship to instruction.
- Demonstrate knowledge of activities that use sound educational research to promote best practice, improved instructional techniques, intervention strategies, and specialized curricular materials.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the educational change process and activities that can be applied to deal with the ambiguity and uncertainty of the educational change process.

SUBAREA II—LAWS, ETHICS, FINANCE, AND SERVICE PROVISION

0007 Understand federal statutes affecting the education of students with disabilities.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of federal legal and regulatory issues affecting education and the legal rights and responsibilities of students, staff, and parents/guardians.
- Demonstrate knowledge of parental and student rights regarding the discipline of students with disabilities, the use of lawful and appropriate strategies for disciplining students, and ways to ensure that these strategies are applied.
- Demonstrate knowledge of how the U.S. Constitution, organizational policies, and laws (i.e., statutory, common, case) regulate the behavior of students, staff, and administrators in the schools.

0008 Understand state statutes affecting the education of students with disabilities.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of state legal and regulatory issues affecting education and the legal rights and responsibilities of students, staff, and parents/guardians.
- Demonstrate knowledge of how the Illinois Constitution, organizational policies, and laws (i.e., statutory, common, case) regulate the behavior of students, staff, and administrators in the schools.
- Demonstrate knowledge of state laws and regulations, the system of governance in Illinois, and the legal aspects of school administration.

**FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK**

0009 Understand the legal, moral, and ethical responsibilities, actions, and policies regarding the education of students with disabilities.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the moral and ethical issues and responsibilities encountered by schools and members of the school community.
- Recognize effective methods for making decisions based on the legal, moral, and ethical implications of policy options and political strategies.
- Demonstrate knowledge of methods to establish and implement policies that promote ethical behavior and high professional standards through collaboration with constituents.
- Identify activities that create a collaborative relationship with staff to implement policies that promote professional behavior consistent with high ethical standards.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the responsibilities and functions of school committees and boards and procedures for formulating and implementing board policies.
- Apply knowledge of the distinction between board policies and operating procedures and of activities that foster a board/superintendent relationship that promotes and actualizes organizational vision, missions, and goals.
- Identify approaches to shaping public policy to provide quality education for students and models and strategies of change and conflict resolution as applied to schools.
- Demonstrate understanding of activities that will lead the school community to operate within the framework of applicable policies, laws, and regulations.

**FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK**

0010 Understand identification procedures for students with disabilities.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of strategies used to identify children from birth to graduation or 21 years of age who may have disabilities.
- Demonstrate knowledge of intervention strategies and processes that are prerequisite to a referral for a case study evaluation and activities that provide staff development in the use of effective intervention strategies.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the full and individual evaluation process (i.e., case study) and ways to ensure that all domains of that evaluation have been identified and utilized when determining eligibility for special education services.
- Demonstrate knowledge of activities that promote public awareness, sound screening practices, and early identification of students with disabilities.
- Demonstrate knowledge of parental and student rights regarding evaluation, eligibility, and services and activities that can be used to ensure that these rights are disseminated, understood, and implemented.

0011 Understand service delivery for students with disabilities.

For example:

- Demonstrate understanding of the continuum of placement options and array of services available to students with disabilities and knowledge of activities that promote a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of activities that promote special education and related services for students based on a thorough understanding of individual differences.
- Apply knowledge of the process of developing and monitoring an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- Apply knowledge of activities that ensure the legal components of an IEP are incorporated into a plan of services for individual students and ensure that IEPs are linked to Illinois State Learning Standards.
- Demonstrate knowledge of activities used to evaluate a student's success in participation in the general educational curriculum including the application of positive behavior supports.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the array of assistive technology options that can be used to facilitate the access of students with disabilities to the least restrictive environment, ways to identify resources for assistive devices, and methods for promoting the use of appropriate assistive technology.

**FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK**

0012 Understand school finance, special education funding, and budgeting strategies.

For example:

- Demonstrate understanding of general school finance and budget development procedures.
- Demonstrate understanding of various federal, state, and local funding sources and activities that result in monies from these sources.
- Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for developing and managing special education budgets and activities that obtain maximum reimbursement from all sources of funding.
- Demonstrate knowledge of principles of financial planning and management for efficient fiscal operation in support of the organization's vision, mission, and goals.
- Demonstrate knowledge of methods for identifying financial and material assets and resources and acquiring them for subsequent allocation according to organizational goal priorities.
- Demonstrate knowledge of activities that maximize fiscal resources through core financial management processes (e.g., budgeting, procurement, accounting).

**FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK**

SUBAREA III—COLLABORATION AND MANAGEMENT

0013 Understand strategies related to the management of a school organization.

For example:

- Demonstrate understanding of the application of core organizational processes (e.g., planning, communication, decision making, problem solving, and information management) and their application for operational effectiveness and organizational development.
- Demonstrate understanding of a variety of practices and models for the management of an organizational system and operational policies and procedures that enhance student learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the application of management techniques used to define roles, assign functions, and delegate accountability relative to achieving goals.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the application of organizational monitoring systems used to ensure policy implementation.
- Apply knowledge of methods for identifying management functions that can be improved using technology and ensuring that organization management functions are supported by current technologies.
- Apply knowledge of methods for providing ongoing training and review to ensure that the use of technology in organizational management is productive and efficient and promotes professional growth.

**FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK**

0014 Understand strategies related to the management of human resources.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the application of principles of human resource management and strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of all constituents of the organization.
- Demonstrate knowledge of methods for empowering all constituents (e.g., staff, students, parents/guardians) of the organization as leaders to support change efforts through the use of delegation, collaboration, and collegial strategies.
- Demonstrate knowledge of supervisory and performance appraisal techniques used to enhance and develop the knowledge and skill base of instructional and noninstructional staff.
- Demonstrate familiarity with activities that support and facilitate professional development, focusing on the improvement of teaching and learning.
- Demonstrate familiarity with core human resource processes (e.g., recruitment, selection, induction, negotiation) to support an effective learning environment.

0015 Understand strategies related to the management of the physical plant.

For example:

- Demonstrate knowledge of activities that ensure the physical plant is accessible, well maintained, functional, secure, and conducive to the support of the full range of the organization's curricular and extracurricular programs.
- Demonstrate knowledge of activities that provide efficient delivery of core auxiliary services (e.g., health and nutrition, pupil transportation, risk management, school security).
- Demonstrate understanding of practices, policies, and procedures used to effectively operate, manage, and maintain the organization's facilities, equipment, and auxiliary services.
- Demonstrate understanding of activities that maintain secure, safe, clean, and esthetically pleasant environments for students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members.

**FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK**

0016 Understand principles of professional development for educators.

For example:

- Demonstrate understanding of professional development models and adult learning theory.
- Demonstrate knowledge of activities that promote reflective practices among administrators, teachers, and staff.
- Demonstrate knowledge of activities that promote collaboration of staff and outside agencies in providing services to students and families.
- Demonstrate knowledge of strategies that promote high expectations for administrators, staff, and students and that foster lifelong learning.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the application of strategies for systematically supporting staff development to enhance the learning environment and instruction.
- Demonstrate knowledge of organizations, research, and publications relevant to the field of special education and special education administration.

0017 Understand skills and strategies necessary for effective communication and collaboration.

For example:

- Identify listening skills (e.g., active listening) and methods for providing effective written and spoken communication.
- Identify methods for clearly articulating the organization's vision, mission, and goals to multiple constituents and ways to provide effective communication with individuals and organizations in the community.
- Demonstrate understanding of activities that support the organization's decision making by collecting and organizing information from all constituents.
- Demonstrate knowledge of group leadership, consensus building, and conflict-mediation skills that can be employed with all constituents.

**FIELD 180: DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEST FRAMEWORK**

0018 Understand the role of families and community members in providing for the education of students with disabilities.

For example:

- Demonstrate understanding of the groups that compose the school community (e.g., parents/guardians, business and industry, service organizations, local and county government) and the community resources that provide services to support the vision, mission, and goals of the school organization.
- Demonstrate understanding of conditions and dynamics related to the diversity of the community (e.g., racial, linguistic, religious, socio-economic) that affect organizational priorities, policies, and practices.
- Demonstrate understanding of school-community relations, marketing strategies, and issues and trends that affect the school community and the mission of the school.
- Demonstrate knowledge of methods for developing an ongoing dialogue with representatives of diverse community groups.
- Demonstrate understanding of the political nature of schools, strategies for identifying and considering various political interests within the community, and methods for using political structures and skills to build community support for organizational priorities.
- Demonstrate knowledge of research-based models of and activities to foster partnerships among the school organization and families, businesses, community groups, government agencies, and higher education to promote delivery of educational opportunities.
- Demonstrate knowledge of methods for involving the school organization and community in school improvement efforts and methods to educate the community about school funding and referenda.