

USM Teacher Certification Standards

Standard 1: Diversity of child/adolescent development, learner needs, and equitable and culturally responsive practices. *The teacher demonstrates knowledge of the diverse ways in which students develop and learn by providing learning opportunities that support students' intellectual, physical, emotional and social development.*

Indicators:

- Identifies individual, student and group differences (e.g. intellectual, cultural, social)
- Gathers data from multiple sources on how students learn
- Draws on students' stages of development, learning styles, strengths and needs, to design instruction and inform educational programs
- Draws on students' experiences and family and community influences to design instruction and inform educational programs
- Demonstrates understanding of and sensitivity to issues of diversity and equity during the design and assessment of instruction
- Makes appropriate accommodations and modifications for individual students who have specific learning differences or needs
- Uses appropriate services or resources to meet learners needs

Standard 2: Knowledge of subject matter and inquiry. *The teacher understands the framework and standards of the subject matter she/he teaches. She/he uses the discipline's tools of inquiry, central concepts, and internal structure, and makes interdisciplinary connections to promote learners' inquiry.*

Indicators:

- Assesses learners' prior knowledge and modifies instruction
- Demonstrates a mastery of accurate content knowledge
- Engages learners as investigators in activities that highlight key concepts in content area(s)
- Continues to learn subject matter in an ongoing way
- Models and encourages students' application of the discipline's tools of inquiry
- Assesses learners' prior knowledge and modifies instruction
- Presents content and concepts through multiple representations
- Draws on multiple resources to plan lessons and engage students in learning concepts
- Creates learning experiences that integrate knowledge of different disciplines

Standard 3: Beliefs about teaching and learning. *The teacher clearly communicates beliefs about teaching, learning, and the role of education in ensuring access and equity for all students.*

Indicators:

- Clearly communicates a realistic vision or stance for a learner-centered education
- Seeks opportunities to discuss beliefs with colleagues
- Uses reflection and inquiry to clarify and challenge beliefs
- Is confident and open about beliefs
- Demonstrates practices that support espoused beliefs and communicates them to others
- Articulates the importance of an equitable education for all students

Standard 4: Technology. *The teacher understands the social, ethical and legal issues associated with the use of technology and tools of the discipline, and uses technology and tools to support teaching practice and student learning.*

Indicators:

- Readily uses email and other online means to communicate
- Explains the rationale for the selection of technologies and tools based on student goals, needs and talents
- Uses computer technology to create appropriate learning materials
- Uses and engages students in the use of a repertoire of current and emerging technologies, including assistive technology, based on research and best practices,.
- Ensures equitable access and safe use of technology resources for students
- Evaluates and adjusts strategies for using technology and tools based on student performance
- Uses electronic means to record and report student data

- Articulates school policies regarding the use of technology and tools

Standard 5: Professionalism and collaboration. *The teacher demonstrates ethical and legal professional behavior within school and community and works collaboratively with colleagues, parents, and community members to improve conditions of learning for all students and adults.*

Indicators:

- Recognizes the teacher's role as a moral steward and a model for students
- Demonstrates knowledge of social issues, professional organizations, and advocacy activities that promote appropriate programs for students and families
- Maintains a professional demeanor (e.g., arrives on time and is prepared for responsibilities, dresses appropriately)
- Complies with school policies regarding health, safety, sexual harassment, and abuse issues
- Adheres to a code of ethics that demonstrates an understanding of the laws that govern student rights and teacher responsibilities
- Honors confidentiality
- Readily listens to and communicates with parents
- Consults with other school professionals concerning a student's learning or health when appropriate
- Collaborates and consults with an open mind with colleagues, specialists and support staff to ensure student learning
- Develops partnerships with parents and guardians in support of student' learning and well-being.
- Participates regularly in school and community events
- Seeks resources in the community to enhance student learning
- Participates as an active, contributing member to work teams and committees

Standard 6: Positive classroom environment. *The teacher creates a democratic learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, student responsibility, and self-motivation.*

Indicators:

- Creates a comfortable, well-organized physical environment with clear academic and behavioral expectations
- Works with students individually and as a group to manage their own behaviors and assume responsibility for their own learning
- Implements positive classroom management techniques for establishing structures, routines, and procedures, gaining attention, and facilitating transitions.
- Uses time effectively
- Creates an environment in which students work both cooperatively and independently
- Establishes a classroom climate of openness, caring, mutual respect, and inquiry
- Facilitates student choice and decision-making
- Engages students in service to classroom, school and community

Standard 7: Instructional planning. *The teacher consistently plans and evaluates instruction based on knowledge of the learner, subject matter, community, intended student standards and curriculum.*

Indicators:

- Plans and implements curriculum and instruction according to students' developmental needs, prior knowledge and interests, for both individuals and groups
- Plans curriculum and instruction beginning with identified learning standards and goals (academic, social skills, life skills, and communication skills)
- Designs coherent daily, unit, and year-long plans through curricular mapping
- Reflects systematically and continually on instruction and makes adjustments accordingly
- Coordinates with students' teacher(s) across all settings (SPED, ELL) to enact Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- Implements lessons using effective pacing, well-sequenced procedures, and well-prepared materials

Standard 8: Instructional strategies. *The teacher understands and uses a variety of appropriate instructional strategies and tools to promote learning and inquiry based on knowledge of the learner, subject matter, community, intended student standards and curriculum.*

Indicators:

- Uses a repertoire of instructional strategies that are based on research and best practices
- Explains the rationale for the selection of instructional strategies and tools based on student goals, needs and talents
- Reflects systematically and continually on instructional strategies and makes adjustments accordingly
- Empowers students to think for themselves and construct knowledge

Standard 9: Assessment. *The teacher understands and uses a variety of informal and formal assessment strategies to evaluate and support the development of the learner.*

Indicators:

- Communicates clear expectations and provides descriptive feedback to students
- Encourages student goal-setting and self-reflection during informal and formal assessment
- Accurately documents, interprets, and reports assessment results to students, parents, colleagues and the community
- Uses a variety of informal and formal assessments that provide valid evidence of student's performance of learning goals (objectives, outcomes) and standards
- Interprets assessment results to adjust instruction, and enhance student progress and confidence
- Supports students' performance in district and state assessment programs

Standard 10: Professional development. *The teacher is above all a learner who reflects on and evaluates choices and actions, and continually strives to improve practice*

Indicators:

- Actively seeks out and participates in professional development activities and articulates and applies what is learned
- Actively seeks and acts upon feedback from colleagues and students
- Continually reflects upon, inquires about, and employs new teaching practices
- Honestly assesses her or his own knowledge and abilities and acts upon that assessment by setting goals
- Demonstrates competence through multiple sources of evidence
- Engages productively in collegial discussions about educational issues

NOTE: The first five standards are the TEAMS Candidacy Standards.