

R277. Education, Administration.

R277-304. Teacher Preparation Programs.

R277-304-1. Authority, Purpose, and Oversight Category.

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution [Article X, Section 3](#), which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board;

(b) Subsection [53E-3-401](#)(4), which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law; and

(c) Subsection [53E-6-201](#)(3)(a), which directs the Board to make rules to establish the criteria for obtaining an educator license.

(2)(a) The purpose of this rule is to specify the standards which the Board expects of a teacher preparation institution before program approval in specified areas.

(b) The standards in this rule apply to the specific educational area and grade level for which the preparation program is designed.

(3) This Rule R277-304 is categorized as Category 4 as described in Rule R277-111.

R277-304-2. Definitions.

(1)(a) "Career and technical education" or "CTE" means organized educational programs or competencies which directly or indirectly prepare students for employment, or for additional preparation leading to employment, in occupations where entry requirements do not generally require a baccalaureate or advanced degree.

(b) CTE programs provide all students a continuous education system, driven by a student's college and career readiness plan, through competency-based instruction, culminating in essential life skills, certified occupational skills, and meaningful employment.

(2) "Clinical experience" means a structured opportunity in which a program candidate is mentored by a licensed educator and evaluated by a teacher leader, school administrator, or university preparation program faculty member, in order to develop and demonstrate competency in the skills and knowledge necessary to be an effective teacher, in a physical classroom, which may include experiences in a virtual classroom.

(3) "Competency" means evidence through demonstration in a higher education or pre-k-12 classroom setting of successful application of knowledge and skills.

(4) "Essential Elements" means the alternate academic achievement standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities, established by the Board in the Special Education Rules Manual, dated June 2023, incorporated by reference in Section R277-750-2.

(5) "Diverse student populations" means unique student groups as identified by:

(a) disability;

(b) academic learning needs; or

(c) linguistic needs.

(6)(a) "Multi-tiered system of supports" or "MTSS" means a framework for integrating assessment and intervention to maximize student achievement, reduce behavior problems, and increase long-term success.

(b) The combination of systematic implementation of increasingly intensive intervention, referred to as tiers, and carefully monitoring students' progress, distinguishes MTSS from typical prevention measures.

(c) Emphasis, in MTSS, is placed on ensuring interventions are implemented effectively.

(7) "Personalize" means to engage all students with high expectations for their learning goals and to empower each learner to take ownership of individual strengths, needs, and interests, while tailoring flexible supports to maximize student growth and competence.

(8) "Utah Core Standards" means the core standards established by the Board in Rule R277-700 for grades K-12 and the Core Standards for Early Learning, adopted June 2023.

R277-304-3. Incorporation by Reference of Educator Preparation Program Competencies.

(1) This rule incorporates by reference:

(a) the General Teacher Preparation Competencies dated June 2024;

- (b) the Educator Preparation Program Competencies for Elementary Literacy dated May 2022;
- (c) the Elementary Content Competencies dated January 2024;
- (d) the Standards for Special Education Educator Preparation Program Approval dated August 2024; and
- (e) the Special Education Preparation Foundational Competencies dated March 2025.

(2) A copy of these documents is located at:

- (a) <https://schools.utah.gov/administrativerules/documentsincorporated>; and
- (b) the offices of the Utah State Board of Education.

R277-304-4. General Teacher Preparation.

Before approval by the Board, a teacher preparation program shall provide evidence that the program:

(1) prepares candidates to meet the Utah Effective Teaching Standards in Rule R277-330;

(2) prepares candidates to teach:

- (a) the Utah Core Standards; and
- (b) the Essential Elements, as appropriate to a candidate's prospective area of licensure as established by the Board;

(3) includes school-based clinical experiences for a candidate to observe, practice skills, and reflect on teaching that:

- (a) are significant in number, depth, breadth, and duration;
- (b) are progressively more complex; and
- (c) include working with all types of students;
- (4) for candidates who enroll in a preparation program before September 1, 2026, requires competency in:
 - (a) content and content specific pedagogy appropriate for the area of licensure;
 - (b) knowledge of the Educator Standards contained in Rule R277-217;
 - (c) designing, administering, and reviewing formative and summative assessments in a meaningful and ethical manner;

- (d) improving student outcomes by:
 - (i) using student assessment data, both formative and summative;
 - (ii) analyzing instructional practices; and
 - (iii) making necessary adjustments to personalize learning;
- (e) using strategies to promote active student engagement;
- (f) systematically designing instruction toward a specific learning goal by:
 - (i) providing tier one and tier two instruction and intervention on the Utah core standards including the use of competency-based learning;
 - (ii) using a variety of evidence-based instructional strategies, including explicit instruction and scaffolded supports;
 - (iii) integrating technology to support and meaningfully supplement the learning of students;
 - (iv) designing developmentally appropriate and authentic learning experiences;
 - (v) developing higher order thinking and metacognitive skills; and
 - (vi) integrating cross-disciplinary skills, such as literacy and numeracy, into instruction;
- (g) providing positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior;
- (h) establishing a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment, including:
 - (i) positive behavior interventions and supports within a multi-tiered system of support;
 - (ii) classroom procedures and routines;
 - (iii) trauma-informed practices; and
 - (iv) accountability practices;
- (i) knowledge and skills to assist in the identification of and instruction for students with disabilities in the general classroom, including:
 - (i) knowledge of the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act;
 - (ii) knowledge of the role of non-special education teachers in the education of students with disabilities;
 - (iii) knowledge and skills in implementing least restrictive behavior interventions;

- (iv) skills in implementing and assessing the results of interventions; and
- (v) skills in the implementation of an educational program with accommodations, modifications, services, and supports established by an IEP or a 504 plan for students with disabilities in the general education classroom;
- (j) knowledge and skills designed to meet the needs of diverse student populations in the general education classroom, including:
 - (i) allowing students alternative ways to demonstrate learning that are sensitive to student diversity;
 - (ii) creating an environment that is sensitive to multiple experiences and diversity;
 - (iii) designing, adapting, and delivering instruction to address each student's diverse learning strengths and needs; and
 - (iv) incorporating language development into planning, instruction, and intervention for students learning English, using their first language as an asset while supporting development of English proficiency; and
- (k) effectively communicating and collaborating with parents, colleagues, and administration;
- (5) for candidates who enroll in a preparation program on or after September 1, 2026, requires competence in the General Teacher Preparation Competencies;
- (6) for a program candidate accepted on or after January 1, 2020, provides multiple opportunities for a program candidate to successfully demonstrate application of knowledge and skills gained through the program in one or more clinical experiences in collaboration with a licensed teacher over an extended period in each of the following competencies:
 - (a) implementing the planning and design, delivery, facilitation, assessment, evaluation, and reflection of a unit of instruction;
 - (b) revising instructional plans for future implementation or reteaching concepts as appropriate;
 - (c) implementing the accommodations, modifications, services, and supports as outlined in a student's IEP or 504 plan;
 - (d) evaluating student artifacts and assessments;

- (e) establishing and maintaining classroom procedures and routines that include positive behavior interventions and supports;
 - (f) establishing and maintaining a positive learning climate;
 - (g) reflecting on the teaching process and justifying instructional decisions;
 - (h) participating in at least one IEP meeting or parental consultation regarding a student that the program candidate has instructed; and
 - (i) consulting and collaborating with qualified personnel, such as a school counselor or school social worker, regarding the emotional well-being of students;
- (7) include consideration of a candidate's dispositions and suitability for teaching; and
- (8) include plans for candidate remediation and exit counseling, if appropriate.

R277-304-5. Early Childhood and Elementary Preparation Programs.

(1) Before approval by the Board, a preparation program for early childhood education or elementary education shall demonstrate how the program requires candidate competency in:

- (a) the areas outlined in Section R277-304-3;
- (b) early childhood development and learning;
- (c) the Educator Preparation Program Competencies for Elementary Literacy;
- (d) for candidates who enroll in a preparation program before September 1, 2026, the appropriate content knowledge needed to teach:
 - (i) the science of literacy instruction including:
 - (A) phonemic awareness;
 - (B) phonics;
 - (C) fluency;
 - (D) vocabulary;
 - (E) comprehension; and
 - (ii) the science of mathematics instruction, including:
 - (A) quantitative reasoning;
 - (B) problem solving;
 - (C) representation;

- (D) numeracy; and
- (E) a balance of procedural and conceptual understanding;
- (iii) physical and life science;
- (iv) health and physical education;
- (v) social studies; and
- (vi) fine arts; or

(2) for candidates who enroll in a preparation program on or after September 1, 2026, the Elementary Content Competencies and the Educator Preparation Program Competencies for Early Literacy.

(3) For a program candidate accepted after January 1, 2020, a preparation program for early childhood or elementary education shall provide multiple opportunities for a program candidate to successfully demonstrate application of knowledge and skills gained through the program in a school-based setting in each of the following:

- (a) all requirements outlined in Subsections R277-304-4(4) through (7);
- (b) demonstrating content-specific pedagogy in each of the areas outlined in Subsection R277-304-5(1);
- (c) diagnosing students struggling with reading and planning and implementing remediation for those students; and
- (d) diagnosing students struggling with mathematics and planning and implementing remediation for those students.

(4) An educator preparation program shall apply the standards in this Section R277-304-4 to the specific age group or grade level for which the preparation program is designed.

(a) An early childhood education program shall focus primarily on early childhood development and learning in preschool through grade 3.

(b) An elementary program shall include both early childhood development and learning and elementary content and pedagogy in kindergarten through grade 6.

R277-304-6. Secondary Preparation Programs.

(1) Before approval by the Board, a secondary preparation program shall demonstrate that it requires competency in:

- (a) all content competencies established by the Superintendent for a professional educator license in at least one endorsement;
- (b) all areas outlined in Subsections R277-304-4(4) through (7);
- (c) including literacy and quantitative learning objectives in content-specific classes in alignment with the Utah Core Standards; and
- (d) planning instruction and assessment in content-specific teams and in cross-curricular teams.

(2) For a program candidate accepted after January 1, 2020, a secondary preparation program shall provide multiple opportunities for a program candidate to successfully demonstrate application of knowledge and skills gained through the program in a school-based setting in each of the following:

- (a) all requirements outlined in Subsections R277-304-4(4) through (7); and
- (b) ensuring student safety and learning in educational labs or shops and extra-curricular settings.

R277-304-7. Special Education and Preschool Special Education Programs.

(1) Before approval by the Board, a special education or preschool special education preparation program shall demonstrate that:

(a) the program is operated by or partnered with a Utah institution of higher education or the Board;

(b) it requires competency in Board approved special education teacher preparation competencies in one or more of the following special education areas:

- (i) Mild/Moderate Support Needs;
- (ii) Complex Support Needs;
- (iii) Deaf and Hard of Hearing;
- (iv) Blind and Visually Impaired;
- (v) Deafblind; or
- (vi) Preschool Special Education (Birth-Age 5);

(c) the program requires the passage of a Braille assessment approved by the Superintendent for a program in the Blind and Visually Impaired area;

(d) For a candidate enrolled in a special education preparation program before September 1, 2027 or enrolled in a preschool special education preparation program, the program requires competency in:

- (i) all areas detailed in Subsections R277-304-4(4) through (7);
- (ii) legal and ethical issues surrounding special education, including:
 - (A) the IDEA;
 - (B) the Special Education Rules Manual incorporated by reference in Section R277-750-2; and
 - (C) all other applicable statutes and Board rules;
- (iii) working with other school personnel to implement and evaluate academic, behavioral, and developmental supports and interventions for students with disabilities within a multi-tiered system of supports as appropriate for the area of licensure;
- (iv) training in and supervising the services and supports provided to students with disabilities by general education teachers, related service providers, and paraprofessionals; and
- (v) providing specially designed instruction, including content-specific pedagogy, as per IEPs, to students with disabilities, including:
 - (A) the Utah Core Standards; and
 - (B) the Essential Elements as appropriate to a candidate's prospective area of licensure as established by the Board;
 - (C) skills in assessing and addressing the educational, developmental, and functional needs and progress of students with disabilities;
 - (D) skills in implementing and assessing the results of research and evidence-based interventions for students with disabilities; and
 - (E) skills in implementing an educational program with accommodations, modifications, services, and supports established by an IEP for students with disabilities.

(2) For a program candidate accepted after January 1, 2020, a special education or preschool special education preparation program shall require multiple opportunities for a program candidate to successfully demonstrate application of knowledge and skills gained through the program in a school-based setting in each of the following:

- (a) all requirements outlined in Subsections R277-304-4(4) through (7);
- (b) creating learning goals and objectives for a student with disabilities that are specific, measurable, time-bound, and aligned to identified student needs and the Utah Core Standards;
- (c) designing or adapting learning environments for diverse student populations that encourage active participation in individual and group activities;
- (d) monitoring school compliance with multiple student IEP and Section 504 plans;
- (e) conducting a student IEP meeting under the supervision of a licensed special education teacher;
- (f) using knowledge of measurement principles and practices to interpret assessment information in making instructional, eligibility, program, and placement decisions for students with disabilities, including those from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- (g) communicating with parents of students with disabilities to ensure they are informed regarding the progress of their student and their right to due process; and
- (h) if the program is designed to prepare an individual for a special education license area, developing and implementing a secondary transition plan as it relates to post-secondary education and training, competitive employment, and independent living.

(3) For a program candidate accepted on or after September 1, 2027, a special education preparation program shall require demonstration of:

- (a) the Special Education Preparation Foundational Competencies; and
- (b) the competencies for at least one special education endorsement.

R277-304-8. Deaf Education Preparation Programs.

- (1) Before approval by the Board, a deaf education preparation program shall:
 - (a) be operated by or partnered with a Utah institution of higher education or the Board;

(b) be aligned with the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc., Optimizing Outcomes for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, Educational Service Guidelines, Third Edition;

(c) be focused on one or more of the following areas:

(i) teaching students who are deaf or hard of hearing from birth to age five using both listening and spoken language strategies and American Sign Language;

(ii) teaching students who are deaf or hard of hearing with listening and spoken language strategies; or

(iii) teaching students who are deaf or hard of hearing with strategies that promote the development of American Sign Language and English literacy across the curriculum;

(d) require competency in:

(i) the areas detailed in Subsections R277-304-4(4) through (7).

(ii) legal and ethical issues surrounding special education, including:

(A) the IDEA;

(B) the Special Education Rules Manual incorporated by reference in Section R277-750-2; and

(C) all other applicable statutes and Board rules;

(iii) addressing specific linguistic and cultural needs of deaf and hard of hearing students throughout the curriculum;

(iv) skills for incorporating language into all aspects of the curriculum;

(v) pedagogical skills unique to teaching reading, writing, mathematics, and other content areas to deaf and hard of hearing students;

(vi) basic fluency in the use of American Sign Language;

(vii) knowledge of the audiological and physiological components of audition;

(viii) skills for teaching speech to deaf and hard of hearing students;

(ix) the socio-cultural and psychological implications of hearing loss; and

(x) assessing and addressing the educational needs and educational progress of deaf and hard of hearing students.

(2) For a program candidate accepted after January 1, 2020, a deaf or hard of hearing education preparation program shall require multiple opportunities for a

program candidate to successfully demonstrate application of knowledge and skills gained through the program in a school-based setting in each of the following:

- (a) all requirements outlined in Subsections R277-304-4(4) through (7);
- (b) for a program focused on Subsection R277-304-8(1)(c)(i):
 - (i) assessing early childhood language development and assessment in American Sign Language and spoken English;
 - (ii) working with families with students who are deaf or hard of hearing while respecting a variety of communication modalities;
 - (iii) integrating language, speech, and listening into everyday activities;
 - (iv) sharing knowledge with families with students who are deaf or hard of hearing about the complexities of deaf culture, including norms and behaviors of the deaf community;
 - (v) developing auditory perception in children and educating parents about developmental milestones for listening skills; and
 - (vi) proficiency in American Sign Language as demonstrate by passing an assessment approved by the Superintendent;
- (c) for a program focused on Subsection R277-304-8(1)(c)(ii):
 - (i) developing auditory perception in children and strategies for developing listening and spoken language in deaf and hard of hearing students;
 - (ii) demonstrating understanding and expertise regarding early childhood spoken language development;
 - (iii) involving family members with students who are deaf or hard of hearing in learning and therapeutic activities;
 - (iv) integrating speech, listening, and spoken language in preschool and early elementary content areas; and
 - (v) integrating current listening technology, including troubleshooting such technology; and
- (d) for a program focused on Subsection R277-304-8(1)(c)(iii):
 - (i) integrating American Sign Language into instruction of core academic content for all school-age students;

- (ii) enhancing bilingual literacy of students who are deaf or hard of hearing in both American Sign Language and English;
- (iii) integrating respect and understanding of deaf culture into instruction;
- (iv) demonstrating understanding and expertise regarding American Sign Language, language development; and
- (v) proficiency in American Sign Language as demonstrated by passing an assessment approved by the Superintendent.

R277-304-9. Career and Technical Education Preparation Programs.

(1) Before approval by the Board, a CTE teacher preparation program designed for individuals that do not hold a bachelor's degree or higher shall:

- (a) focus on one or more of the following areas:
 - (i) family and consumer sciences;
 - (ii) health sciences;
 - (iii) information technology;
 - (iv) skilled and technical sciences; or
 - (v) work-based learning;
- (b) require that candidates have six years of documented, related occupational experiences within the 10 years before the program application in an approved CTE license area;
- (c) require competency in all areas detailed in Section R277-304-4;
- (d) for a program candidate accepted after January 1, 2020, a CTE preparation program shall require multiple opportunities for a program candidate to successfully demonstrate application of knowledge and skills gained through the program in a school-based setting in all requirements outlined in Section R277-304-4; and
- (e) require candidates to hold the applicable license or certificate issued by the Utah State Department of Commerce, Division of Professional Licensing in any area where such licensure or certification exists.

(2) A program may count an associate's degree in a related area for up to two years of occupational experience to satisfy the requirement in Subsection R277-304-9(1)(b).

(3)(a) An approved program may request a waiver from the Superintendent of the occupational experience required for a candidate if the candidate has passed an approved competency examination in the respective field at or above the passing score established by the Superintendent.

(b) The Superintendent may grant a waiver under Subsection (3)(a) for up to five years from the date the candidate passed the examination.

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Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: [Art X Sec 3](#); [53E-3-401](#); [53E-6-201](#)