Council for Exceptional Children Accreditation Policies and Procedures

Version 1.2 January 2024

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Section 1: Introduction

As the recognized leader for special education professional standards, CEC develops standards, ethics and practices, and guidelines to ensure that individuals with exceptionalities have access to well-prepared, career-oriented special educators.

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) has a history of conducting programmatic reviews using standards developed and maintained by CEC. In 2020, the CEC Board of Directors (BoD) voted to create an Accreditation Commission, charged with developing and launching an accreditation process. The goal of creating an accreditation process was to expand opportunities for special educator preparation programs to seek accreditation and elevate the prominence of CECs standards in the field.

CEC Accreditation provides an opportunity for special educator programs to seek national accreditation from the recognized leader in special education. This is an exciting time of expanded program pathways for accreditation as the only current option for a program to be formally reviewed against CEC Standards is by seeking CAEP Accreditation and utilizing the SPA program review process for National Recognition. CEC believes that by becoming an Accreditor, we will be able to expand options for accreditation and strengthen the positive effect of our standards within the field. CEC plans to offer a straightforward, virtual process, which would help keep costs reasonable for programs, while increasing flexibility.

Mission

CEC Accreditation distinguishes programs meeting rigorous performance standards for professional preparation of special education professionals with expertise for delivering effective practice that optimizes the learning and development of children and youth with exceptionalities. The CEC Accreditation Commission exists to create, administer, and continuously evaluate a process through which programs seek and achieve accreditation by providing evidence that they meet CEC professional preparation standards.

Scope of Accreditation

The Council for Exceptional Children accredits programs leading to licensure and/or in support of special educators at the graduate and undergraduate levels within the United States and its territories and within U.S. based institutions operating abroad.

Governance Overview

Independence from Parent Organization

The Accreditation Commission conducts autonomous decision-making in relation to Accreditation Decisions and Policy and Process as detailed in memorandum of understanding with the BoD (located in Appendix E) that delineates the Commission's roles and responsibilities. Neither the CEC BoD nor its members, shall be involved in program accreditation reviews, deliberations, or decisions.

Commission

CEC Accreditation is overseen by a governing body called the Accreditation Commission. The CEC Accreditation Commission's purpose is to develop, oversee and guide CEC's Accreditation policies, processes, and decision-making. The Commission is subject to operational oversight by the CEC BoD.

Composition

The Accreditation Commission is comprised of individuals who possess professional expertise in the fields of assessment, accreditation, educator preparation, and special education. The number of Commissioners may be adjusted based on relevant workload/number of programs pursuing accreditation.

Committees

The Accreditation Commission may appoint committees and/or workgroups in conjunction with CEC Staff in order to work on projects or ongoing tasks. The Commission will develop guidelines for each the operational oversight of each committee prior to appointing its members. CEC Staff retain the authority to ensure that workload and resources required of CEC remain reasonable.

Policy Changes

Changes to policies contained within this manual must be approved by a majority vote of the Accreditation Commission through electronic voting or participating in a meeting in which a quorum has been reached. CEC staff are responsible for maintaining processes and operational oversight of the Accreditation process.

Voting

Unless otherwise noted, in order for a motion to pass a majority vote of a quorum of the Accreditation Commission participating in the meeting in which the vote is held. A quorum is reached if a majority of incumbent Commissioners are participating through distance technologies or in person.

Section 2: Volunteers

CEC Accreditation is made possible by the generous support of peers who are committed to the improvement and advancement of preparation of special education professionals. CEC membership is not required to serve as a volunteer in the accreditation process.

Volunteer Qualifications

Currently serving Accreditation Commissioners are responsible for both electing and determining qualifications for newly incoming volunteers based on current composition, expertise, diversity, and knowledge gaps.

In addition to time commitments desired knowledge/skills include but are not limited to:

- Experience with creating, implementing, or evaluating educator preparation standards, program review, and/or accreditation
- Design and implementation of assessments
- Implementing and/or evaluating CEC standards
- Experience as a birth through 12 practitioner, clinical faculty, or cooperating teacher

Commissioners

The Accreditation Commission is comprised of individuals (Commissioners) who are responsible for making final accreditation decisions and operational policies.

Selection

A Commissioner-elect is elected through a majority vote of currently serving Commissioners. A Commissioner-Elect must successfully participate in orientations and trainings prior to participation in the operations of the Accreditation Commission, including but not limited to deliberations, issuing program decisions, and voting. CEC Accreditation staff will develop and maintain an application process with input from the BoD and the Commission.

Terms

Commissioners serve three-year terms; and are eligible for re-election to a second, consecutive, three-year term. Commissioners are again eligible to serve up to two consecutive terms after a one-year break from service.

The Chair of the Commission serves a two-year term, elected by a majority vote from current Commissioners.

Duties

Commissioners are responsible for the governance of the Accreditation Commission and related duties. Primary responsibilities include creating and approving policies, issuing accreditation decisions, ensuring accredited programs continue to meet accreditation requirements, and ensuring adherence to oversight bodies such as the CEC Board of Directors and CHEA.

Removal

A Commissioner may be removed from service with a majority vote of the Commission at any time for the following reasons.

1. Attendance: Commissioners are expected to regularly attend meetings of the Commission. Commissioners who fail to attend meetings regularly jeopardize the Commission's ability to complete its work and conduct votes and will be subject to removal from the Commission.
2. Participation: Commissioners are expected to be able to participate and contribute toward the completion of the Commission's duties as directed by the Chair of the Commission and CEC Staff.
3. Conflict of Interest: A Commissioner may be removed from service in the event that a Conflict-of-Interest Policy has been violated.
4. Without Cause: A Commissioner may be removed from service with a two-thirds vote without cause.

Conflicts of Interest

Commissioners are required to uphold a high level of ethical behavior. Commissioners with close relationships to programs such as current or former employer, candidate or alumni must recuse themselves from program decisions related to those programs/institutions.

Accreditation Reviewer

Composition

CEC's Accreditation Reviewers are a diverse pool of volunteers representing various specialty areas, professional roles, disabilities/exceptionalities, and geographic location.

Selection

Individuals interested in becoming an accreditation reviewer must submit a formal application which will first be reviewed by CEC staff to ensure that general qualifications are met. Once staff has determined that an applicant meets general qualifications the application will be forwarded to the Accreditation Commission for review and decision based on the current needs of the volunteer pool.

Term of Service

The term for an accreditation reviewer is four years and individuals are eligible to be approved for additional terms by submitting a renewal application for consideration by the Accreditation Commission. Renewals will be granted based upon a review of volunteer performance, level of engagement, and continuing needs of the organization.

Duties

- Adherence to CEC Accreditation Policies and procedures
- Impartial and adherence to strict conflict of interest guidelines, including a potential appearance of a conflict

Removal

An accreditation reviewer may be removed from service for violating confidentiality, conflict of interest, non-participation, or low performance. CEC will collect feedback related to site visitors and make recommendations to the Accreditation Commission for removal. Accreditation reviewers will be removed from service by a majority vote of the Accreditation Commission.

Council for Exceptional Children Staff

CEC Staff are responsible for the overall operations of CEC Accreditation such as scheduling meetings and accreditation reviews, updating materials such as the website, and ensuring that policies and procedures are followed by CEC volunteers and programs engaged in CEC's accreditation process.

CEC Staff are not able to vote on policies or accreditation decisions.

Section 3: Process Overview

1. Application → 2. Program-Report → 3. Review → 4. Decision → 5. Maintaining Accreditation → Renewal

Professional Standards used in CEC Accreditation Processes

CEC Accreditation varies from most other accreditors in that its main focus is on performance-based standards rather than programmatic standards. CEC Accreditation uses the following sets of CEC Professional Practice-based Standards for programs seeking accreditation:

- 2020 Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Special Educators (Initial K-12 Standards)
- Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionist/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE) (Initial birth through age 8)
- Standards for the Preparation of Advanced Special Education Professionals

Recognizing the importance of creating more accredited programs to stimulate the pipeline of highly qualified educators, where possible, programs are strongly encouraged to submit a singular report which captures the breadth of the age spans served.

- If the program prepares B through age 8, they should use the EI/ECSE standards (one report)
- If the program prepares B- age 5 or KG, they should use the EI/ECSE Standards (one report)
- If the program prepares K-12 or K-12+, they should use the Initial K12 Special Educator Standards (one report)

In the event a program prepares special educators across a broad age span such as Birth or P through Grade 12, for the entirety of the program to earn accreditation it is not sufficient to submit just one report, since the EI/ ECSE and K-12 Standards are based upon different sets of essential practices tailored to the specific developmental needs and service delivery models of early childhood (birth to age 8) or K-12 special education. Therefore, programs seeking accreditation from CEC that prepare students for multiple age spans have two options:

1. Seek accreditation for only a portion of the program (i.e., K-12, B-8, etc.). If accreditation is achieved, sample language could be used such as: *This program prepares students to serve students with exceptionalities from ages XXX to XXX and has earned accreditation from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). In doing so, CEC reviewed the K-12 Standards Aligned report that was submitted. While the program's early childhood components meet the standards of the State of XXX, these were not reviewed as part of the CEC Accreditation Process.*
2. Write and submit two separate reports: using the EI/ECSE standards for the ages 3-8 portion of the program; and the K12 standards for the K through 12 (or some grade).

This language is meant to encourage as many programs as possible to seek accreditation from CEC to assist in stimulating the pipeline of special education professionals, while limiting the impact on college and university staff resources.

If the program is unable to submit two reports or elects to only submit one report for a program that covers the age span of two sets of standards, and achieves accreditation, it must accurately display its accreditation status so that it is clear what the accredited status entails (e.g., licensures, age ranges, standards evaluated against). CEC staff can assist programs with drafting language that to accurately represent and market its accreditation status.

Application for Eligibility

A program may apply for eligibility if it falls under the scope of CEC's Accreditation outlined in the introduction. Program representatives complete an application that includes background information about the program. CEC staff review the application for completeness and adherence to eligibility policies. CEC Accreditation defines a program as a cohesive set of courses, requirements, and common key assessments leading to a degree, endorsement, or other credential and/or recommendation for state licensure or certificate. If different assessments are used, despite leading to the same licensure, these must be submitted as separate programs. CEC's Accreditation Website provides comprehensive, current instructions, and resources for completing and submitting an application.

Program-Report

The program-report is the self-study written by program representatives. The program-report contains narratives, evidence, and supporting documentation needed to demonstrate that a program has met the CEC Performance-Based Standards as well as any additional requirements for CEC Accreditation.

Accreditation Review

CEC accreditation reviews are conducted by teams of accreditation reviewers who are trained peer volunteers who will evaluate the program report and evidence submitted. The purpose of the review is for the accreditation review team to compile a report summarizing their findings related to verifying evidence submitted that program has met relevant standards and accreditation requirements. The virtual accreditation review also provides the opportunity for the review team to interview and have discussions with program faculty to provide contextual information related to the program. The report will be provided to the Accreditation Commission for final decision. All reviews are conducted virtually and will not include a physical visit.

Decision

The Accreditation Commission reviews all reports and related evidence submitted by both the program representatives and the review team. The Commission will ensure adherence to all policies in the review process and that appropriate evaluation of evidence by the review team. The Accreditation Commission then makes the final accreditation decision.

Maintaining Accreditation

Programs are required to continue to meet CEC Standards and Accreditation requirements in between review cycles. Programs will submit annual reports to CEC with relevant evidence that they are continuing to meet accreditation requirements. Currently accredited programs must submit full program reports prior to the expiration of their current term to avoid a lapse in accreditation.

Providers with multiple programs will need to submit an application for eligibility and subsequent program report for each distinct program. Each submission will be treated as a separate entity (i.e., initial k12, advanced k12, EI/ECSE).

Costs

Programs are responsible for all costs associated with the accreditation process such as the application fee, and annual administrative fees. Failure to remain current on fees and/or dues may result in the pause of an accreditation review and/or a revocation of accreditation.

Available resources and support

CEC offers a variety of resources and support for programs seeking accreditation in both virtual and face to face formats. The most up to date resources will be posted on the CEC website.

CEC staff are available to assist programs with process and policy related questions. Due to conflict-of-interest, CEC staff are unable to answer questions related to sufficiency of evidence and/or accreditation decisions as this is the responsibility and discretion of the Accreditation Commission.

CEC does not engage in recommending or endorsing consultants in regard to positive accreditation decision.

Application for Eligibility Requirements

Programs must submit an application and remit corresponding payment for consideration into the accreditation process. Applications for Eligibility are reviewed by CEC Staff, who makes a determination on eligibility based on completeness and adherence to all accreditation policies and eligibility requirements. Upon acceptance of an eligibility application, a program will have three years to complete and submit a program report for accreditation.

Eligibility Requirements

- Proof of state approval/authorization
- Proof of Regional Accreditation of the parent organization/institution
- Programs lead to licensure or other credential aligning to CEC Standard(s)
- Three cycles of data and three academic years of program completers by the time the program report is submitted
- Commitment to effectively preparing candidates supported by qualified faculty
- CEC membership is not required for a program to pursue accreditation.

Report Preparation

Standards

Programs may submit a report that addresses one of the following sets of standards:

- Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Special Educators
- Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionist/Early Childhood Special Educators
- Advanced Special Education Preparation Standards

A program may only submit a report to one set of standards. If the program spans two sets of standards it should be submitted as two separate programs.

Commitment to Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Report submissions must reflect the program's commitment to continuous improvement of candidate outcomes. Continuous improvement must include but is not limited to completers' preparation for effective practice that optimizes the learning and development of children and youth with exceptionalities.

Submission of reports

All reports must be submitted via the template(s) in the accreditation system, including all supporting documents and other evidence by the pre-established timelines. Only evidence and/or supporting documents submitted via the official accreditation system will be considered as part of the review. Links to external websites will not be reviewed or considered as part of the review.

Programs should protect sensitive identifying information such as candidate social security numbers by using alternate identification systems.

Programs with Low Enrollment

CEC will review and consider programs for accreditation even if they are considered to have low enrollment. FERPA allows submission of low enrollment numbers/identifying student information for accreditation purposes

Decisions

All final accreditation decisions are determined by the Accreditation Commission. All reports, including the program's submission and the accreditation reviewers' report are considered throughout the decision-making process.

Decision Types

Accreditation –Seven (7) years

Accreditation is granted with a full term of seven years when all standards are met and no significant deficiencies are found within one or more standard(s).

Provisional Accreditation – 2 years

Provisional Accreditation is granted for programs determined to partially meet CEC standards and/or fall below evidence and data requirements. A program will be granted a two-year term under a Provisional Accreditation status in order for the program to address the deficiencies cited in the original review. If the program successfully shows evidence that they have corrected, the program is granted the remainder of a full accreditation term of seven years (from the time of the original review semester). A program will have one opportunity to submit a provisional report and a provisional accreditation status is not available to program's whose previous status was provisional accreditation

Denial of Accreditation

Accreditation is denied if a program does not sufficiently meet more than three (3) CEC standards, serious deficiencies are found within multiple standards, or other accreditation policies are not followed by a program.

After a Decision is Made

Decisions will be posted publicly by CEC within 30 days of Commission decision. Information available to the public will include what the decision signifies, type of decision, length of accreditation term (if

applicable), rationale for awarding the accreditation decision, and information about deficiencies in relation to accreditation standards and policies and for conditioning or denying accreditation.

Maintaining Accreditation Status

Accreditation Eligibility

Programs that have completed the application, and have been approved for, Accreditation Eligibility must submit their program report and obtain accreditation within three years. If a program does not successfully earn accreditation during this three-year period, they must reapply for Accreditation Eligibility.

Interim Reporting

To maintain accreditation status, programs must complete and submit an annual and/or interim report between accreditation cycles that provides evidence that the program is continuing to meet the standards in between Accreditation Reviews and ensure that all requirements to enter CEC's Accreditation process are maintained such as maintaining regional accreditation. Failure to submit an interim report may result in the loss of a program's accreditation status.

Annual fees

Programs are assessed an annual fee. Non-payment of annual fees may result in a loss of accreditation status.

Displaying Accreditation Status

If a program is currently accredited by the CEC Accreditation Commission, a program may choose to publicly display their accreditation status with an accurate and current accreditation statement. Sample marketing language is available to accredited programs by contacting CEC and will be included in materials sent to accredited programs with their decision notifications.

Programs are not required to publicly display an adverse accreditation decision.

*CEC only accredits individual programs. It does not accredit units, departments, organizations, or institutions in their entirety.

Appeal of Accreditation Decision

Appeals are reserved for adverse accreditation decisions that do not result in accreditation and are handled via an independent decision-making process. Appeals should be submitted to the Chair of the Accreditation Commission. The Chair will then appoint a three-person panel of reviewers and/or Commissioners that were not involved in the original decision. If requested, CEC Staff will draft a concise summary of relevant facts and information to the Appeal Panel. CEC Staff will share the summary with the program representative.

Complaints

Complaints against a candidate or accredited program

CEC accepts written complaints from individuals and/or organizations related to programs seeking or holding CEC accreditation. For a complaint to be addressed it must contain contact information for the

individual or organization submitting a complaint, program name and provider for which the complaint is being submitted, specific cited policies and/or standards believed to be in violation, and any related evidence demonstrating a program has violated CEC Accreditation Policy or Standards.

Complaints against CEC Staff, Volunteers, Policies, or Procedures

CEC strives to conduct and maintain a collaborative, ethical, and fair accreditation process for the improvement of special educator programs and students with exceptionalities. CEC accepts complaints related to its policies, procedures, and conduct of its staff and volunteers.

Appendix A: Glossary of Common Terms

Accreditation Review	The all-encompassing process for which programs seek accreditation from submission to decision.
Accreditation Reviewer	Accreditation Reviewers are a diverse pool of CEC-vetted volunteers representing various specialty areas, professional roles, disabilities/exceptionalities who evaluate program submissions for alignment to the requirements for accreditation.
Advanced Program	Advanced programs are designed to support current special educators who seek to deepen their skills and broaden their knowledge base by seeking an additional license and/credential.
Adverse Decision	An accreditation decision that does not result in an accreditation term.
Candidates	Candidates are defined as individuals enrolled in a program for the purpose of preparation for professional licensure or other credentials that qualify them to teach early childhood and/or K-12 students with exceptionalities.
Candidate characteristics	Defined by programs. Examples include modality of program participation (online, hybrid, face-to-face), age, exceptionality(ies), full-time/part time, race/ethnicity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, first generation college student, English as first language
CEC	Abbreviation for the Council for Exceptional Children [exceptionalchildren.org]
CEC Professional Preparation Standards	Generally, refers to the umbrella of CEC's Standards rather than an individual set of Standards.
CHEA	The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) is a nonprofit, nongovernmental institutional membership organization that "recognizes" accrediting organizations or periodically reviews their effectiveness in assuring and improving quality in higher education. CHEA, as a national coordinating body for U.S. accreditation, also serves as an advocacy organization, an accreditation research and policy body and a convener and partner to address international quality assurance issues.
Conflict of Interest	In general, when an individual's personal interests – family, friendships, employer, financial, or social factors – could compromise their judgment, or influence decision making.

Commission	The CEC Accreditation Commission's purpose is to develop, oversee and guide CEC's Accreditation policies, processes, and decision-making. The Commission is subject to operational oversight by the CEC Board of Directors.
Completers	Completers are candidates who have successfully completed all program requirements earning program recommendation to the relevant state or other authorizing body for licensure or other credential to teach early childhood or K-12 learners with exceptionalities.
Component	Subcategories of a standard that expand upon and further define the standard.
Data collection cycle	A full academic year comprises a single data collection cycle. The academic year is defined by the calendar of the program and its parent organization/institution.
Diversity	Defined by institution for the purposes of the program report.
EI/ECSE	Early Interventionist/ Early Childhood Special Education
Initial Program	Initial programs prepare candidates for their first special educator license and/or credential.
Key Assessment	An assessment that all program candidates complete and that are aligned to and fully address the relevant CEC standards.
Lead Administrator	The individual with the authority and responsibility for the development and administration of the program.
Program	A program is defined as an integrated sequence of coursework and/or requirements leading to a degree and/or credential (e.g., state licensure) that entitles the holder to perform professional special educator services.
Program Objectives	Includes student learning outcomes or program outcomes.
Program Report	The culmination of supporting documentation and evidence submitted by a program to meet accreditation requirements.
Semester	For accreditation purposes a spring semester is considered January 1-June 30 and Fall refers to July 1-December 31.
SPA	Refers to a Specialized Professional Association
Student(s)	Refers to a classroom student (Birth through grade 12)

Appendix B: Accreditation Expectations

Expectation 1: Developing Candidate Proficiencies stated in relevant set of *CEC Standards*

The program has a clear plan of study that includes coursework, field and clinical experiences, and other practice-based learning opportunities that are sequenced and scaffolded to facilitate and develop candidates' proficiencies stated in the relevant set of CEC standards*.

   A. Required coursework and other practice-based learning opportunities in the program of study comprehensively includes preparation for all aspects of the relevant set of CEC Standards*
   B. Program field and clinical experiences are aligned to/with expectations stated in the relevant set of CEC standards.

Expectation 2: Measuring Candidate Performance on *CEC Standards* and Using Data for Continuous Improvement

The program demonstrates that program completers are proficient in the relevant set of *CEC standards*.

   A. The program utilizes six to eight key assessments for all candidates that, collectively, are aligned to and fully address the relevant *CEC standards*.
      1. Each key assessment's instructions and rubrics are aligned to components within the relevant set of *CEC standards*.
      2. The rubrics for each key assessment include objective descriptions of candidate performance expectations for meeting the relevant *CEC standards*.
      3. Each key assessment displays consistency between the tasks in the instructions, what is evaluated in the rubric, and the tasks evaluated at each level of performance across the rubric.
   A. The program routinely and reliably collects, analyzes, and stores candidate performance data from the key assessments.
   B. The program provides data from multiple cycles for each key assessment, disaggregated by key component, that measures candidate performance on the relevant *CEC standards*.
   C. Candidate performance on key assessments demonstrates that at least 80% of candidates have met each standard on each candidate's best attempt at the assessments.
   D. The program conducts a process at least once each year for reviewing and analyzing candidate performance data, with faculty to improve teaching and learning in relation to the relevant set of *CEC standards*.
   E. The program's analysis of candidate performance data includes disaggregation by candidate characteristics that informs the program's plan for differentiated academic and nonacademic support for the success of *all* candidates.

Expectation 3: Assuring Public Accountability

The program is transparent with the public about its effectiveness in preparing special educators, publishing on its website in a place easily accessible to current and prospective candidates and the public:

- A. Program objectives and evidence of meeting these objectives; and
- B. Effectiveness data including the number of program completers by academic year, rate of completion within program's published timeframe, and other institutionally designed measures that speak to program effectiveness.

Contextual Indicators of Quality Required for the Self-Study Report

The following indicators of program quality illuminate the evidence the program submits in Expectations 1, 2, and 3. The information provided in this section is not factored into the accreditation decision; it is gathered to support the program's self-study and continuous improvement.

Mission and Conceptual Framework

- A. The program demonstrates that its mission statement and conceptual framework reflect and support the institution's and the community's context as well as the program's role in preparing special education professionals.
- B. The program provides evidence that its mission statement and conceptual framework includes stakeholder perspectives, are regularly evaluated, and reflect a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and to preparing special education professionals who can meet the needs of every child.

Leadership and Faculty

- C. The program chair or lead administrator has authority and responsibility for the development and administration of the program and has **sufficient** time and resources to fulfill the role responsibilities.
- D. Faculty qualifications and composition supports the ability of the program to effectively prepare candidates in the relevant CEC standards*.

Resources and Student Support

- E. Candidates have equitable access to academic and non-academic supports and resources designed around the needs and characteristics of the candidate population.
- F. The program routinely reviews the performance of candidates and advises candidates regarding their progress and potential in the program.

* 2012 Advanced Special Education Preparation Standards; 2020 Initial K-12 Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Special Educators; 2020 Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE)

Appendix C: Standards

Field and Clinical Experience Standard

Special education candidates progress through a series of developmentally sequenced field and clinical experiences for the full range of ages, types and levels of abilities, and collaborative opportunities that are appropriate to the license or roles for which they are preparing. These field and clinical experiences are supervised by qualified professionals.

Standard 1: Engaging in Professional Learning and Practice within Ethical Guidelines

Candidates practice within ethical and legal guidelines; advocate for improved outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families while considering their social, cultural, and linguistic diversity; and engage in ongoing self-reflection to design and implement professional learning activities.

1.1, Candidates practice within ethical guidelines and legal policies and procedures.

1.2, Candidates advocate for improved outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families while addressing the unique needs of those with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds.

1.3, Candidates design and implement professional learning activities based on ongoing analysis of student learning; self-reflection; and professional standards, research, and contemporary practices.

Standard 2: Understanding and Addressing Each Individual's Developmental and Learning Needs

Candidates use their understanding of human growth and development, the multiple influences on development, individual differences, diversity, including exceptionalities, and families and communities to plan and implement inclusive learning environments and experiences that provide individuals with exceptionalities high quality learning experiences reflective of each individual's strengths and needs.

2.1, Candidates apply understanding of human growth and development to create developmentally appropriate and meaningful learning experiences that address individualized strengths and needs of students with exceptionalities.

2.2, Candidates use their knowledge and understanding of diverse factors that influence development and learning, including differences related to families, languages, cultures, and communities, and individual differences, including exceptionalities, to plan and implement learning experiences and environments.

Standard 3: Demonstrating Subject Matter Content and Specialized Curricular Knowledge

Candidates apply their understanding of the academic subject matter content of the general curriculum and specialized curricula to inform their programmatic and instructional decisions for learners with exceptionalities.

3.1, Candidates apply their understanding of academic subject matter content of the general curriculum to inform their programmatic and instructional decisions for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.2, Candidates augment the general education curriculum to address skills and strategies that students with disabilities need to access the core curriculum and function successfully within a variety of contexts as well as the continuum of placement options to assure specially designed instruction is developed and implemented to achieve mastery of curricular standards and individualized goals and objectives.

Standard 4: Using Assessment to Understand the Learner and the Learning Environment for Data-Based Decision Making

Candidates assess students' learning, behavior, and the classroom environment in order to evaluate and support classroom and school-based problem-solving systems of intervention and instruction. Candidates evaluate students to determine their strengths and needs, contribute to students' eligibility determination, communicate students' progress, inform short and long-term instructional planning, and make ongoing adjustments to instruction using technology as appropriate.

4.1, Candidates collaboratively develop, select, administer, analyze, and interpret multiple measures of student learning, behavior, and the classroom environment to evaluate and support classroom and school-based systems of intervention for students with and without exceptionalities.

4.2, Candidates develop, select, administer, and interpret multiple, formal and informal, culturally and linguistically appropriate measures and procedures that are valid and reliable to contribute to eligibility determination for special education services.

4.3, Candidates assess, collaboratively analyze, interpret, and communicate students' progress toward measurable outcomes using technology as appropriate, to inform both short- and long-term planning, and make ongoing adjustments to instruction.

Standard 5: Supporting Learning Using Effective Instruction

Candidates use knowledge of individuals' development, learning needs, and assessment data to inform decisions about effective instruction. Candidates use explicit instructional strategies and

employ strategies to promote active engagement and increased motivation to individualize instruction to support each individual. Candidates use whole group instruction, flexible grouping, small group instruction, and individual instruction. Candidates teach individuals to use meta-/cognitive strategies to support and self-regulate learning.

5.1, Candidates use findings from multiple assessments, including student self-assessment, that are responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity and specialized as needed, to identify what students know and are able to do. They then interpret the assessment data to appropriately plan and guide instruction to meet rigorous academic and non-academic content and goals for each individual.

5.2, Candidates use effective strategies to promote active student engagement, increase student motivation, increase opportunities to respond, and enhance self-regulation of student learning.

5.3, Candidates use explicit, systematic instruction to teach content, strategies, and skills to make clear what a learner needs to do or think about while learning.

5.4, Candidates use flexible grouping to support the use of instruction that is adapted to meet the needs of each individual and group.

5.5, Candidates organize and manage focused, intensive small group instruction to meet the learning needs of each individual.

5.6, Candidates plan and deliver specialized, individualized instruction that is used to meet the learning needs of each individual.

Standard 6: Supporting Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Growth

Candidates create and contribute to safe, respectful, and productive learning environments for individuals with exceptionalities through the use of effective routines and procedures and use a range of preventive and responsive practices to support social, emotional and educational well-being. They follow ethical and legal guidelines and work collaboratively with families and other professionals to conduct behavioral assessments for intervention and program development.

6.1, Candidates use effective routines and procedures to create safe, caring, respectful, and productive learning environments for individuals with exceptionalities.

6.2, Candidates use a range of preventive and responsive practices documented as effective to support individuals' social, emotional, and educational well-being.

6.3, Candidates systematically use data from a variety of sources to identify the purpose or function served by problem behavior to plan, implement, and evaluate behavioral interventions and social skills programs, including generalization to other environments.

Standard 7: Collaborating with Team Members

Candidates apply team processes and communication strategies to collaborate in a culturally responsive manner with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals within the school, other educational settings, and the community to plan programs and access services for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

7.1, Candidates utilize communication, group facilitation, and problem–solving strategies in a culturally responsive manner to lead effective meetings and share expertise and knowledge to build team capacity and jointly address students' instructional and behavioral needs.

7.2, Candidates collaborate, communicate, and coordinate with families, paraprofessionals, and other professionals within the educational setting to assess, plan, and implement effective programs and services that promote progress toward measurable outcomes for individuals with and without exceptionalities and their families.

7.3, Candidates collaborate, communicate, and coordinate with professionals and agencies within the community to identify and access services, resources, and supports to meet the identified needs of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

7.4, Candidates work with and mentor paraprofessionals in the paraprofessionals' role of supporting the education of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

C.2 Advanced Special Educator Preparation Standards

Standard 1: Assessment

Special education specialists use valid and reliable assessment practices to minimize bias.

1.1, Special education specialists minimize bias in assessment.

1.2, Special education specialists design and implement assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of practices and programs.

Standard 2: Curricular Content Knowledge

Special education specialists use their knowledge of general and specialized curricula to improve programs, supports, and services at classroom, school, community, and system levels.

2.1, Special education specialists align educational standards to provide access to challenging curriculum to meet the needs of individuals with exceptionalities.

2.2, Special educators continuously broaden and deepen their professional knowledge and expand their expertise with instructional technologies, curriculum standards, effective teaching strategies, and assistive technologies to support access to and learning of challenging content.

2.3, Special education specialists use understanding of diversity and individual learning differences to inform the selection, development, and implementation of comprehensive curricula for individuals with exceptionalities.

Standard 3: Programs, Services, and Outcomes

3.1, Special education specialists design and implement evaluation activities to improve programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.2, Special education specialists use understanding of cultural, social, and economic diversity and individual learner differences to inform the development and improvement of programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.3, Special education specialists apply knowledge of theories, evidence-based practices, and relevant laws to advocate for programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.4, Special education specialists use instructional and assistive technologies to improve programs, supports, and services for individuals with exceptionalities.

3.5, Special education specialists evaluate progress toward achieving the vision, mission, and goals of programs, services, and supports for individuals with exceptionalities.

Standard 4: Research and Inquiry

Special education specialists conduct, evaluate, and use inquiry to guide professional practice.

4.1, Special education specialists evaluate research and inquiry to identify effective practices.

4.2, Special education specialists use their knowledge of the professional literature to improve practices with individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

4.3, Special education specialists foster an environment that is supportive of continuous instructional improvement and engage in the design and implementation of research and inquiry.

Standard 5: Leadership and Policy

Special education specialists provide leadership to formulate goals, set and meet high professional expectations, advocate for effective policies and evidence-based practices, and create positive and productive work environments.

5.1, Special education specialists model respect and ethical practice for all individuals and encourage challenging expectations for individuals with exceptionalities.

5.2, Special education specialists support and use linguistically and culturally responsive practices.

5.3, Special education specialists create and maintain collegial and productive work environments that respect and safeguard the rights of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

5.4, Special education specialists advocate for policies and practices that improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities.

5.5, Special education specialists advocate for the allocation of appropriate resources for the preparation and professional development of all personnel who serve individuals with exceptionalities.

Standard 6: Professional and Ethical Practice

Special education specialists use foundational knowledge of the field and professional ethical principles and practice standards to inform special education practice, engage in lifelong learning, advance the profession, and perform leadership responsibilities to promote the success of professional colleagues and individuals with exceptionalities.

6.1, A comprehensive understanding of the history of special education, legal policies, ethical standards, and emerging issues informs special education specialist leadership.

6.2, Special education specialists model high professional expectations and ethical practice, and create supportive environments that safeguard the legal rights and improve outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

6.3, Special education specialists model and promote respect for all individuals and facilitate ethical professional practice.

6.4, Special education specialists actively participate in professional development and professional learning communities to increase professional knowledge and expertise.

6.5, Special education specialists plan, present, and evaluate professional development focusing on effective and ethical practice at all organizational levels.

6.6, Special education specialists actively facilitate and participate in the preparation and induction of prospective special educators.

6.7, Special education specialists actively promote the advancement of the profession.

Standard 7: Collaboration

Special education specialists collaborate with stakeholders to improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

7.1, Special education specialists use culturally responsive practices to enhance collaboration.

7.2, Special education specialists use collaborative skills to improve programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities.

7.3, Special education specialists collaborate to promote understanding, resolve conflicts, and build consensus for improving programs, services, and outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities.

Field and Clinical Experience Standard

Early Interventionist/Early Childhood Special Education candidates progress through a series of planned and developmentally sequenced field experiences for the early childhood age ranges (birth to age 3, 3 through 5 years, 5 through 8 years), range of abilities, and in the variety of collaborative and inclusive early childhood settings that are appropriate to their license and roles. Clinical experiences should take place in the same age ranges covered by the license. If the license covers all three age ranges, the program must provide clinical experiences in at least two of the three age ranges and a field experience in the third age range. These field and clinical experiences are supervised by qualified professionals.

Standard 1: Child Development and Early Learning

Candidates understand the impact of different theories and philosophies of early learning and development on assessment, curriculum, instruction, and intervention decisions. Candidates apply knowledge of normative developmental sequences and variations, individual differences within and across the range of abilities, including developmental delays and disabilities, and other direct and indirect contextual features that support or constrain children's development and learning. These contextual factors as well as social, cultural, and linguistic diversity are considered when facilitating meaningful learning experiences and individualizing intervention and instruction across contexts.

1.1 Candidates demonstrate an understanding of the impact that different theories and philosophies of early learning and development have on assessment, curriculum, intervention, and instruction decisions.

1.2 Candidates apply knowledge of normative sequences of early development, individual differences, and families' social, cultural, and linguistic diversity to support each child's development and learning across contexts.

1.3 Candidates apply knowledge of biological and environmental factors that may support or constrain children's early development and learning as they plan and implement early intervention and instruction.

1.4 Candidates demonstrate an understanding of characteristics, etiologies, and individual differences within and across the range of abilities, including developmental delays and disabilities, their potential impact on children's early development and learning, and implications for assessment, curriculum, instruction, and intervention.

Standard 2: Partnering with Families

Candidates use their knowledge of family-centered practices and family systems theory to develop and maintain reciprocal partnerships with families. They apply family capacity-building practices as they support families to make informed decisions and advocate for their young children. They engage families in opportunities that build on their existing strengths, reflect

current goals, and foster family competence and confidence to support their children's development and learning.

2.1, Candidates apply their knowledge of family-centered practices, family systems theory, and the changing needs and priorities in families' lives to develop trusting, respectful, affirming, and culturally responsive partnerships with all families that allow for the mutual exchange of knowledge and information.

2.2, Candidates communicate clear, comprehensive, and objective information about resources and supports that help families to make informed decisions and advocate for access, participation, and equity in natural and inclusive environments.

2.3, Candidates engage families in identifying their strengths, priorities, and concerns; support families to achieve the goals they have for their family and their young child's development and learning; and promote families' competence and confidence during assessment, individualized planning, intervention, instruction, and transition processes.

Standard 3: Collaboration and Teaming

Candidates apply models, skills, and processes of teaming when collaborating and communicating with families and professionals, using culturally and linguistically responsive and affirming practices. In partnership with families and other professionals, candidates develop and implement individualized plans and successful transitions that occur across the age span. Candidates use a variety of collaborative strategies while working with and supporting other adults.

3.1, Candidates apply teaming models, skills, and processes, including appropriate uses of technology, when collaborating and communicating with families; professionals representing multiple disciplines, skills, expertise, and roles; and community partners and agencies.

3.2, Candidates use a variety of collaborative strategies when working with other adults that are evidence-based, appropriate to the task, culturally and linguistically responsive, and take into consideration the environment and service delivery approach.

3.3, Candidates partner with families and other professionals to develop individualized plans and support the various transitions that occur for the young child and their family throughout the birth through 8 age span.

Standard 4: Assessment Processes

Candidates know and understand the purposes of assessment in relation to ethical and legal considerations. Candidates choose developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate tools and methods that are responsive to the characteristics of the young child, family, and program. Using evidence-based practices, candidates develop or select as well as administer informal measures, and select and administer formal measures in partnership with families and

other professionals. They analyze, interpret, document, and share assessment information using a strengths-based approach with families and other professionals for eligibility determination, outcome/goal development, planning instruction and intervention, monitoring progress, and reporting.

4.1, Candidates understand the purposes of formal and informal assessment, including ethical and legal considerations, and use this information to choose developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate, valid, reliable tools and methods that are responsive to the characteristics of the young child, family, and program

4.2, Candidates develop and administer informal assessments and/or select and use valid, reliable formal assessments using evidence-based practices, including technology, in partnership with families and other professionals.

4.3, Candidates analyze, interpret, document, and share assessment information using a strengths-based approach with families and other professionals.

4.4, Candidates, in collaboration with families and other team members, use assessment data to determine eligibility, develop child and family-based outcomes/goals, plan for interventions and instruction, and monitor progress to determine efficacy of programming.

Standard 5: Application of Curriculum Frameworks in the Planning of Meaningful Learning Experience

Candidates collaborate with families and professionals to use an evidence-based, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive early childhood curriculum addressing developmental and content domains. Candidates use curriculum frameworks to create and support universally designed, high quality learning experiences in natural and inclusive environments that provide each child and family with equitable access and opportunities for learning and growth.

5.1, Candidates collaborate with families and other professionals in identifying an evidence-based curriculum addressing developmental and content domains to design and facilitate meaningful and culturally responsive learning experiences that support the unique abilities and needs of all children and families.

5.2, Candidates use their knowledge of early childhood curriculum frameworks, developmental and academic content knowledge, and related pedagogy to plan and ensure equitable access to universally designed, developmentally appropriate, and challenging learning experiences in natural and inclusive environments.

Standard 6: Using Responsive and Reciprocal Interactions, Interventions, and Instruction

Candidates plan and implement intentional, systematic, evidence-based, responsive interactions, interventions, and instruction to support all children's learning and development across all

developmental and content domains in partnership with families and other professionals. Candidates facilitate equitable access and participation for all children and families within natural and inclusive environments through culturally responsive and affirming practices and relationships. Candidates use data-based decision-making to plan for, adapt, and improve interactions, interventions, and instruction to ensure fidelity of implementation.

6.1, Candidates, in partnership with families, identify systematic, responsive, and intentional evidence-based practices and use such practices with fidelity to support young children's learning and development across all developmental and academic content domains.

6.2, Candidates engage in reciprocal partnerships with families and other professionals to facilitate responsive adult-child interactions, interventions, and instruction in support of child learning and development.

6.3, Candidates engage in ongoing planning and use flexible and embedded instructional and environmental arrangements and appropriate materials to support the use of interactions, interventions, and instruction addressing developmental and academic content domains, which are adapted to meet the needs of each and every child and their family.

6.4, Candidates promote young children's social and emotional competence and communication, and proactively plan and implement function-based interventions to prevent and address challenging behaviors.

6.5, Candidates identify and create multiple opportunities for young children to develop and learn play skills and engage in meaningful play experiences independently and with others across contexts.

6.6, Candidates use responsive interactions, interventions, and instruction with sufficient intensity and types of support across activities, routines, and environments to promote child learning and development and facilitate access, participation, and engagement in natural environments and inclusive settings.

6.7, Candidates plan for, adapt, and improve approaches to interactions, interventions, and instruction based on multiple sources of data across a range of natural environments and inclusive settings.

Standard 7: Professionalism and Ethical Practice

Candidates identify and engage with the profession of early intervention and early childhood special education (EI/ECSE) by exhibiting skills in reflective practice, advocacy, and leadership while adhering to ethical and legal guidelines. Evidence-based and recommended practices are promoted and used by candidates.

7.1, Candidates engage with the profession of EI/ECSE by participating in local, regional, national, and/or international activities and professional organizations.

7.2, Candidates engage in ongoing reflective practice and access evidence-based information to improve their own practices.

7.3, Candidates exhibit leadership skills in advocating for improved outcomes for young children, families, and the profession, including the promotion of and use of evidence-based practices and decision-making.

7.4, Candidates practice within ethical and legal policies and procedures.

Appendix D: Expectations and sample evidence matrix

	Sample Evidence
Expectation 1: Developing Candidate Proficiencies stated in relevant set of CEC Standards*	
The program has a clear plan of study that includes coursework, field and clinical experiences, and other practice-based learning opportunities that are sequenced and scaffolded to facilitate and develop candidates' proficiencies stated in the relevant set of CEC standards*.	
A. Required coursework and other practice-based learning opportunities in the program of study comprehensively includes preparation for all aspects of the relevant set of CEC Standards*	• Plan of Study • Course Catalogs • Teacher Preparation Inspectorate • Rubrics for Key Assessments
B. Program field and clinical experiences are aligned to/with expectations stated in the relevant set of CEC standards.	• Syllabi, catalog • Experiential Learning Activities • Lesson plans • ePortfolio • Summary of quality clinical placement • Special Education Quality Assurance Review
Expectation 2: Measuring Candidate Performance on CEC Standards* and Using Data for Continuous Improvement	
The program demonstrates that program completers are proficient in the relevant set of CEC standards.	
A. The program utilizes six to eight key assessments for all candidates that, collectively, are aligned to and fully address the relevant CEC standards*.	• Table articulating the alignment of each assessment with the standards address.
1. Each key assessment's instructions and rubrics are aligned to components within the relevant set of CEC standards*.	• Key assessments with instructions and rubrics labeled by appropriate standard and component • Table presenting the data generated by assessment rubrics as they align with each standard disaggregating to reflect specific components
2. The rubrics for each key assessment include objective descriptions of candidate performance	• Rubrics for each assessment

expectations for meeting the relevant CEC standards*.	
3. Each key assessment displays consistency between the tasks in the instructions, what is evaluated in the rubric, and the tasks evaluated at each level of performance across the rubric.	• Rubrics for each assessment
B. The program routinely and reliably collects, analyzes, and stores candidate performance data from the key assessments.	• Multiple cycles of data tables for each standard with brief narrative regarding conclusions drawn
C. The program provides data from multiple cycles for each key assessment, disaggregated by key component, that measures candidate performance on the relevant CEC standards*.	• Multiple cycles of data tables for each standard
D. Candidate performance on key assessments demonstrates that at least 80% of candidates have met each standard on each candidate's best attempt at the assessments.	• Candidate performance data tables for each standard. • If the data tables show that less than 80% of candidates are proficient on one or more standards, a narrative describing strategies the program is putting in place to address the deficiencies.
E. The program conducts a process at least once each year for reviewing and analyzing candidate performance data, with faculty to improve teaching and learning in relation to the relevant set of CEC standards*.	• Minutes or summary notes from faculty meetings • Narrative describing the process for reviewing and analyzing the data and description of changes faculty are making to teaching and learning based on their analysis of data. • Evidence indicating linkage or relationship between data and program improvement efforts • Interviews with faculty to discuss the process for reviewing and analyzing data
F. The program's analysis of candidate performance data includes disaggregation by candidate characteristics that informs the program's plan for differentiated academic and nonacademic support for the success of all candidates.	• Candidate performance data tables for each standard that includes aggregate candidate demographic information for those who meet and do not meet each standard. • Remediation process policies • Data analysis outlining characteristics and trends and how those are addressed

	through academic and non-academic supports

Expectation 3: Assuring Public Accountability	
The program is transparent with the public about its effectiveness in preparing special educators, publishing on its website in a place easily accessible to current and prospective candidates and the public:	
A. Program objectives and evidence of meeting these objectives; and	• Link and PDF of website – university, school, program – readily available for public view; institutional database (e.g., office of educational effectiveness).
B. Effectiveness data including the number of program completers by academic year, rate of completion within program's published timeframe, and other institutionally designed measures that speak to program effectiveness.	• Link and PDF to website of institution's office of educational effectiveness database that highlights program learning outcome assessments, academic program survey (current/alumni).

Expectation 4: Contextual Indicators of Quality Required for the Self-Study Report	
The following indicators of program quality illuminate the evidence the program submits in Expectations 1, 2, and 3. The information provided in this section is not factored into the accreditation decision; it is gathered to support the program's self-study and continuous improvement.	
Mission and Conceptual Framework	
The program demonstrates that its mission statement and conceptual framework reflect and support the institution's and the community's context as well as the program's role in preparing special education professionals.	• Submission of mission statement, conceptual framework and description of program's role in preparing special education professionals. • Response to specific questions posed in the program report template
B. The program provides evidence that its mission statement and conceptual framework includes stakeholder perspectives, are regularly evaluated, and reflect a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and to preparing special education professionals who can meet the needs of every child.	• Narrative explaining how the program mission statement and conceptual framework includes stakeholder perspective and are regularly evaluated. • Minutes or summary notes from advisory committee meetings, meetings with students, faculty, etc. In which the mission

	statement and conceptual framework are reviewed and/or discussed • Evidence of a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
Leadership and Faculty	
C. The program chair or lead administrator has authority and responsibility for the development and administration of the program and has sufficient time and resources to fulfill the role responsibilities.	• Narrative Summary • Program Organizational Chart • Background and academic credentials of the chair or lead administrator
D. Faculty qualifications and composition supports the ability of the program to effectively prepare candidates in the relevant CEC standards*.	• Faculty information chart within program report
Resources and Student Support	
E. Candidates have equitable access to academic and non-academic supports and resources designed around the needs and characteristics of the candidate population.	• Narrative summary detailing available student supports and resources for all candidates at all program sites • Links to online resources • Include photos of physical space resources for all sites
F. The program routinely reviews the performance of candidates and advises candidates regarding their progress and potential in the program.	• Narrative, instructions, policies for how the program reviews candidate progress • Policies of progression related requirements • Program milestones with associated actions/consequences (e.g., candidate moves to field experience, candidate moves to student teaching, candidate is counseled out of program)

*All candidate data should be deidentified and include the three most recent assessment cycles

Appendix E: Memorandum of Understanding

Memorandum of Understanding

Between the CEC Program Accreditation Commission and the

CEC Board of Directors

This document constitutes a formal agreement between the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Board of Directors (Board) and the CEC Accreditation Commission (Commission) regarding the review and accreditation of special educator preparation programs.

Statement of Purpose

This Memorandum of Understanding acknowledges the critical role of CEC Special Educator Preparation Accreditation in advancing the effective preparation of special educators. This agreement also serves to delineate the commitments, roles, and responsibilities of the CEC Accreditation Commission ("Commission"), the body that oversees the CEC Special Educator Preparation Accreditation system, and the CEC Board of Directors with regard to accreditation policies, processes, and decision-making.

The Commission's purpose is to oversee and guide CEC's Special Educator Preparation Accreditation functions under the authority of the CEC Board of Directors. The Commission maintains independence from the CEC Board for decision making related to accreditation through this memorandum of understanding. Neither the CEC Board nor the Board's members shall be involved in program accreditation reviews or accreditation decision-making.

Principles

The Commission and the Board agree to the following principles:

1. CEC is the organization for special education professionals. The infrastructure to support the professional activities and needs of its members resides within CEC.

2. The Board recognizes that the Commission serves the needs of the profession by ensuring that special educator preparation programs are qualified to prepare professionals for education careers working with individuals with exceptionalities.

3. The Board and the Commission acknowledge that the Commission maintains clearly described and published operational separation from any parent or sponsoring organizations, including independence with respect to accreditation requirements, policies and procedures, in the conduct of all accreditation reviews, functions, operations, and all accreditation actions.

4. The CEC Board and Commission will respect the confidentiality of all accreditation activities and program decisions of the Commission.

5. The Commission will ensure all policies, procedures, and processes are in alignment with the Council for Higher Education Administration (CHEA) Guidelines.

Policy, Procedural Authority, and Responsibilities

The Board and the Commission agree to the following:

1. The primary functions of the Commission are to (a) establish and implement policies and procedures for accreditation; (b) set accreditation requirements that align with but are not limited to CEC's Professional Practice-Based Special Educator Preparation Standards; (c) develop and maintain a system for accreditation reviews; and (d) make accreditation decisions.

2. The Board is responsible for maintaining CEC's Professional Practice-Based Special Education Preparation Standards, informed by data and feedback from the Commission.

3. The Board and Executive Director, in concert with the Commission, will ensure that accreditation policies and practices do not violate other policies of the association, and do not expose CEC to undue liabilities. CEC will ensure that the Commission and Commissioners will be insured in the event of legal disputes.

4. The Commission will select and submit a slate of individuals to serve on the Commission to CEC's Board of Directors and will appoint its own Chair from among its current composition.

5. The Board will make available resources, including but not limited to, legal, financial, staffing, physical office space, and technology necessary to support the effective operations of the Commission and its functions.

6. The Commission will report on its actions at regular intervals to the Board.