

Alabama Core Teaching Standards

Ala. Admin. Code r. 290-3-3-.04

Pursuant to the mission of improving the academic achievement of all students in the public schools of Alabama, candidates will align their practice with the following standards modified from the Model Core Teaching Standards developed by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC).

(1) **Learner Development.** The candidate understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

(a) The candidate regularly assesses individual and group performance in order to design and modify instruction to meet learners' needs in each area of development (cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical) and scaffolds the next level of development.

(b) The candidate creates developmentally appropriate instruction that takes into account individual learners' strengths, interests, and needs and that enables each learner to advance and accelerate his/her learning.

(c) The candidate collaborates with families, communities, colleagues, and other professionals to promote learner growth and development.

(d) The candidate understands how learning occurs-how learners construct knowledge, acquire skills, and develop discipline thinking processes-and knows how to use instructional strategies that promote student learning.

(e) The candidate understands that each learner's cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical development influences learning and knows how to make instructional decisions that build on learners' strengths and needs.

(f) The candidate identifies readiness for learning and understands how development in any one area may affect performance in other areas.

(g) The candidate understands the role of language and culture in learning and knows how to modify instruction to make language comprehensible and instruction relevant, accessible, and challenging.

(h) The candidate respects learners' differing strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to further each learner's development.

(i) The candidate is committed to using learners' strengths as a basis for growth and their misconceptions as opportunities for learning.

(j) The candidate takes responsibility for promoting learners' growth and development.

(k) The candidate values the input and contributions of families, colleagues, and other professionals in understanding and supporting each learner's development.

(2) **Learning Differences.** The candidate uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

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- (a) The candidate designs, adapts, and delivers instruction to address each student's diverse learning strengths and needs and creates opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in different ways.
 - (b) The candidate makes appropriate and timely provisions (e.g., pacing for individual rates of growth, task demands, communication, assessment, and response modes) for individual students with particular learning differences or needs.
 - (c) The candidate designs instruction to build on learners' prior knowledge and experiences, allowing learners to accelerate as they demonstrate their understandings.
 - (d) The candidate brings multiple perspectives to the discussion of content, including attention to learners' personal, family, and community experiences and cultural norms.
 - (e) The candidate incorporates tools of language development into planning and instruction, including strategies for making content accessible to English language learners and for evaluating and supporting their development of English proficiency.
 - (f) The candidate accesses resources, supports, and specialized assistance and services to meet particular learning differences or needs.
 - (g) The candidate understands and identifies differences in approaches to learning and performance and knows how to design instruction that uses each learner's strengths to promote growth.
 - (h) The candidate understands students with exceptional needs, including those associated with disabilities and giftedness, and knows how to use strategies and resources to address these needs.
 - (i) The candidate knows about second language acquisition processes and knows how to incorporate instructional strategies and resources to support language acquisition.
 - (j) The candidate understands that learners bring assets for learning based on their individual experiences, abilities, talents, prior learning, and peer and social group interactions, as well as language, culture, family, and community values.
 - (k) The candidate knows how to access information about the values of diverse cultures and communities and how to incorporate learners' experiences, cultures, and community resources into instruction.
 - (l) The candidate believes that all learners can achieve at high levels and persists in helping each learner reach his/her full potential.
 - (m) The candidate respects learners as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, abilities, perspectives, talents, and interests.
 - (n) The candidate makes learners feel valued and helps them learn to value each other.
 - (o) The candidate values diverse languages and dialects and seeks to integrate them into his/her instructional practice to engage students in learning.
- (3) Learning Environments. The candidate works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

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- (a) The candidate collaborates with learners, families, and colleagues to build a safe, positive learning climate of openness, mutual respect, support, and inquiry.
- (b) The candidate develops learning experiences that engage learners in collaborative and self-directed learning and that extend learner interaction with ideas and people locally and globally.
- (c) The candidate collaborates with learners and colleagues to develop shared values and expectations for respectful interactions, rigorous academic discussions, and individual and group responsibility for quality work.
- (d) The candidate manages the learning environment to actively and equitably engage learners by organizing, allocating, and coordinating the resources of time, space, and learners' attention.
- (e) The candidate uses a variety of methods to engage learners in evaluating the learning environment and collaborates with learners to make appropriate adjustments.
- (f) The candidate communicates verbally and nonverbally in ways that demonstrate respect for and responsiveness to the cultural backgrounds and differing perspectives learners bring to the learning environment.
- (g) The candidate promotes responsible learner use of interactive technologies to extend the possibilities for learning locally and globally.
- (h) The candidate intentionally builds learner capacity to collaborate in face-to-face and virtual environments through applying effective interpersonal communication skills.
- (i) The candidate understands the relationship between motivation and engagement and knows how to design learning experiences using strategies that build learner self-direction and ownership of learning.
- (j) The candidate knows how to help learners work productively and cooperatively with each other to achieve learning goals.
- (k) The candidate knows how to collaborate with learners to establish and monitor elements of a safe and productive learning environment including norms, expectations, routines, and organizational structures.
- (l) The candidate understands how learner diversity can affect communication and knows how to communicate effectively in differing environments.
- (m) The candidate knows how to use technologies and how to guide learners to apply them in appropriate, safe, and effective ways.
- (n) The candidate is committed to working with learners, colleagues, families, and communities to establish positive and supportive learning environments.
- (o) The candidate values the role of learners in promoting each other's learning and recognizes the importance of peer relationships in establishing a climate of learning.
- (p) The candidate is committed to supporting learners as they participate in decision making, engage in exploration and invention, work collaboratively and independently, and engage in purposeful learning.

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(q) The candidate seeks to foster respectful communication among all members of the learning community.

(r) The candidate is a thoughtful and responsive listener and observer.

(4) Content Knowledge. The candidate understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

(a) The candidate effectively uses multiple representations and explanations that capture key ideas in the discipline, guide learners through learning progressions, and promote each learner's achievement of content standards.

(b) The candidate engages students in learning experiences in the discipline(s) that encourage learners to understand, question, and analyze ideas from diverse perspectives so that they master the content.

(c) The candidate engages learners in applying methods of inquiry and standards of evidence used in the discipline.

(d) The candidate stimulates learner reflection on prior content knowledge, links new concepts to familiar concepts, and makes connections to learners' experiences.

(e) The candidate recognizes learner misconceptions in a discipline that interfere with learning and creates experiences to build accurate conceptual understanding.

(f) The candidate evaluates and modifies instructional resources and curriculum materials for their comprehensiveness, accuracy for representing particular concepts in the discipline, and appropriateness for his/her learners.

(g) The candidate uses supplementary resources and technologies effectively to ensure accessibility and relevance for all learners.

(h) The candidate creates opportunities for students to learn, practice, and master academic language in their content.

(i) The candidate accesses school and/or district-based resources to evaluate the learner's content knowledge in the learner's primary language.

(j) The candidate understands major concepts, assumptions, debates, processes of inquiry, and ways of knowing that are central to the discipline(s) she/he teaches.

(k) The candidate understands common misconceptions in learning the discipline and how to guide learners to accurate conceptual understanding.

(l) The candidate knows and uses the academic language of the discipline and knows how to make it accessible to learners.

(m) The candidate knows how to integrate culturally relevant content to build on learners' background knowledge.

(n) The candidate has a deep knowledge of student content standards and learning progressions in the discipline(s) she or he teaches.

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- (o) The candidate is knowledgeable about current state legislation, current state initiatives, and programs including, but not limited to, the Alabama Reading Initiative (ARI); the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI); Alabama Learning Exchange (ALEX); Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educators and Students Statewide (ACCESS); and MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support)/RTI (Response to Instruction) and their relationship to student achievement.
 - (p) The candidate realizes that content knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex, culturally situated, and ever evolving. She or he keeps abreast of new ideas and understanding in the field.
 - (q) The candidate appreciates multiple perspectives within the discipline and facilitates learners' critical analysis of these perspectives.
 - (r) The candidate recognizes the potential of bias in his/her representation of the discipline and seeks to appropriately address problems of bias.
 - (s) The candidate is committed to work toward each learner's mastery of disciplinary content and skills.
- (5) Application of Content. The candidate understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.
- (a) The candidate develops and implements projects that guide learners in analyzing the complexities of an issue or question using perspectives from varied disciplines and cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., a water quality study that draws upon biology and chemistry to look at factual information and social studies to examine policy implications).
 - (b) The candidate engages learners in applying content knowledge to real world problems through the lens of interdisciplinary themes (e.g., financial literacy, environmental literacy).
 - (c) The candidate facilitates learners' use of current tools and resources to maximize content learning in varied contexts.
 - (d) The candidate engages learners in questioning and challenging assumptions and approaches in order to foster innovation and problem solving in local and global contexts.
 - (e) The candidate develops learners' communication skills in disciplinary and interdisciplinary contexts by creating meaningful opportunities to employ a variety of forms of communication that address varied audiences and purposes.
 - (f) The candidate engages learners in generating and evaluating new ideas and novel approaches, seeking inventive solutions to problems, and developing original work.
 - (g) The candidate facilitates learners' ability to develop diverse social and cultural perspectives that expand their understanding of local and global issues and create novel approaches to solving problems.
 - (h) The candidate develops and implements supports for learner literacy development across content areas.

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- (i) The candidate understands the ways of knowing in his/her discipline, how it relates to other disciplinary approaches to inquiry, and the strengths and limitations of each approach in addressing problems, issues, and concerns.
- (j) The candidate understands how current interdisciplinary themes (e.g., civic literacy, health literacy, global awareness) connect to the core subjects and knows how to weave those themes into meaningful learning experiences.
- (k) The candidate understands the demands of accessing and managing information as well as how to evaluate issues of ethics and quality related to information and its use.
- (l) The candidate understands how to use digital and interactive technologies for efficiently and effectively achieving specific learning goals.
- (m) The candidate understands critical thinking processes and knows how to help learners develop high level questioning skills to promote their independent learning.
- (n) The candidate understands communication modes and skills as vehicles for learning (e.g., information gathering and processing) across disciplines as well as vehicles for expressing learning.
- (o) The candidate understands creative thinking processes and how to engage learners in producing original work.
- (p) The candidate knows when and how to access resources to build global awareness and understanding, and how to integrate them into the curriculum.
- (q) The candidate is constantly exploring how to use disciplinary knowledge as a lens to address local and global issues.
- (r) The candidate values knowledge outside his/her own content area and how such knowledge enhances student learning.
- (s) The candidate values flexible learning environments that encourage learner exploration, discovery, and expression across content areas.

(6) Assessment. The candidate understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the candidate's and learner's decision making.

- (a) The candidate balances the use of formative and summative assessment as appropriate to support, verify, and document learning.
- (b) The candidate designs assessments that match learning objectives with assessment methods and minimizes sources of bias that can distort assessment results.
- (c) The candidate works independently and collaboratively to examine test and other performance data to understand each learner's progress and to guide planning.
- (d) The candidate engages learners in understanding and identifying quality work and provides them with effective descriptive feedback to guide their progress toward that work.

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- (e) The candidate engages learners in multiple ways of demonstrating knowledge and skill as part of the assessment process.
- (f) The candidate models and structures processes that guide learners in examining their own thinking and learning as well as the performance of others.
- (g) The candidate effectively uses multiple and appropriate types of assessment data to identify each student's learning needs and to develop differentiated learning experiences.
- (h) The candidate prepares all learners for the demands of particular assessment formats and makes appropriate accommodations in assessments or testing conditions, especially for learners with disabilities and language learning needs.
- (i) The candidate continually seeks appropriate ways to employ technology to support assessment practice both to engage learners more fully and to assess and address learner needs.
- (j) The candidate understands the differences between formative and summative applications of assessment and knows how and when to use each.
- (k) The candidate understands the range of types and multiple purposes of assessment and how to design, adapt, or select appropriate assessments to address specific learning goals and individual differences, and to minimize sources of bias.
- (l) The candidate knows how to analyze assessment data to understand patterns and gaps in learning, to guide planning and instruction, and to provide meaningful feedback to all learners.
- (m) The candidate:
 - 1. Knows when and how to engage learners in analyzing their own assessment results and in helping to set goals for their own learning.
 - 2. Recognizes when assessment data show foundational gaps in content knowledge and addresses the lowest deficiency while simultaneously addressing the grade level content.
- (n) The candidate understands the positive impact of effective descriptive feedback for learners and knows a variety of strategies for communicating this feedback.
- (o) The candidate knows when and how to evaluate and report learner progress against standards.
- (p) The candidate understands how to prepare learners for assessments and how to make accommodations in assessments and testing conditions, especially for learners with disabilities and language learning needs.
- (q) The candidate possesses knowledge of Alabama's assessment requirements and processes.
- (r) The candidate:
 - 1. Possesses knowledge of Alabama's assessment requirements and processes to include portfolios, screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, and outcome based.
 - 2. Is committed to engaging learners actively in assessment processes and to developing each learner's capacity to review and communicate about their own progress and learning.
- (s) The candidate takes responsibility for aligning instruction and assessment with learning goals.

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- (t) The candidate is committed to providing timely and effective descriptive feedback to learners on their progress.
- (u) The candidate is committed to using multiple types of assessment processes to support, verify, and document learning.
- (v) The candidate is committed to making accommodations in assessments and testing conditions, especially for learners with disabilities and language learning needs.
- (w) The candidate is committed to the ethical use of various assessments and assessment data to identify learner strengths and needs to promote learner growth.

(7) Planning for Instruction. Based on the appropriate Alabama Course(s) of Study, the candidate plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

- (a) The candidate individually and collaboratively selects and creates learning experiences that are appropriate for curriculum goals and content standards and are relevant to learners.
- (b) The candidate plans how to achieve each student's learning goals, choosing appropriate strategies and accommodations, resources, and materials to differentiate instruction for individuals and groups of learners.
- (c) The candidate develops appropriate sequencing of learning experiences and provides multiple ways to demonstrate knowledge and skill.
- (d) The candidate plans for instruction based on formative and summative assessment data, prior learner knowledge, and learner interest.
- (e) The candidate plans collaboratively with professionals who have specialized expertise (e.g., special educators, related service providers, language learning specialists, librarians, media specialists) to design and jointly deliver, as appropriate, learning experiences to meet unique learning needs.
- (f) The candidate evaluates plans in relation to short- and long-range goals and systematically adjusts plans to meet each student's learning needs and enhance learning.
- (g) The candidate integrates Alabama's current programs and initiatives into the curricula and instructional processes.
- (h) The candidate communicates with students, families, and the public about Alabama's assessment system and major Alabama educational improvement initiatives.
- (i) The candidate understands content and content standards and how these are organized in the curriculum.
- (j) The candidate understands how integrating cross-disciplinary skills in instruction engages learners purposefully in applying content knowledge.
- (k) The candidate understands learning theory, human development, cultural diversity, and individual differences and how these impact ongoing planning.

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- (l) The candidate understands the strengths and needs of individual learners and how to plan instruction that is responsive to these strengths and needs.
 - (m) The candidate knows a range of evidence-based instructional strategies, resources, and technological tools and how to use them effectively to plan instruction that meets diverse learning needs.
 - (n) The candidate knows when and how to adjust plans based on assessment information and learner responses.
 - (o) The candidate knows when and how to access resources and collaborates with others to support student learning (e.g., special educators, related service providers, language learner specialists, librarians, media specialists, community organizations).
 - (p) The candidate respects learners' diverse strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to plan effective instruction.
 - (q) The candidate values planning as a collegial activity that takes into consideration the input of learners, colleagues, families, and the larger community.
 - (r) The candidate takes professional responsibility to use short- and long-term planning as a means of assuring student learning.
 - (s) The candidate believes that plans must always be open to adjustment and revision based on learner needs and changing circumstances.
- (8) Instructional Strategies. The candidate understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.
- (a) The candidate uses appropriate strategies and resources to adapt instruction to the needs of individuals and groups of learners.
 - (b) The candidate continuously monitors student learning, engages learners in assessing their progress, and adjusts instruction in response to student learning needs.
 - (c) The candidate collaborates with learners to design and implement relevant learning experiences, identify their strengths, and access family and community resources to develop their areas of interest.
 - (d) The candidate varies his/her role in the instructional process (e.g., instructor, facilitator, coach, audience) in relation to the content and purposes of instruction and the needs of learners.
 - (e) The candidate provides multiple models and representations of concepts and skills with opportunities for learners to demonstrate their knowledge through a variety of products and performances.
 - (f) The candidate engages all learners in developing higher order questioning skills and metacognitive processes.
 - (g) The candidate engages all learners in using a range of learning skills and technology tools to access, interpret, evaluate, and apply information.

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- (h) The candidate uses a variety of instructional strategies to support and expand learners' communication through speaking, listening, reading, writing, and other modes.
- (i) The candidate asks questions to stimulate discussion that serves different purposes (e.g., probing for learner understanding, helping learners articulate their ideas and thinking processes, stimulating curiosity, and helping learners to question).
- (j) The candidate understands the cognitive processes associated with various kinds of learning (e.g., critical and creative thinking, problem framing and problem solving, invention, memorization, and recall) and how these processes can be stimulated.
- (k) The candidate knows how to apply a range of developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate instructional strategies to achieve learning goals.
- (l) The candidate knows when and how to use appropriate strategies to differentiate instruction and engage all learners in complex thinking and meaningful tasks.
- (m) The candidate understands how multiple forms of communication (oral, written, nonverbal, digital, visual) convey ideas, foster self-expression, and build relationships.
- (n) The candidate knows how to use a wide variety of resources, including human and technological, to engage students in learning.
- (o) The candidate understands how content and skill development can be supported by media and technology and knows how to evaluate these resources for quality, accuracy, and effectiveness.
- (p) The candidate is committed to deepening awareness and understanding the strengths and needs of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction.
- (q) The candidate values the variety of ways people communicate and encourages learners to develop and use multiple forms of communication.
- (r) The candidate is committed to exploring how the use of new and emerging technologies can support and promote student learning.
- (s) The candidate values flexibility and reciprocity in the teaching process as necessary for adapting instruction to learner responses, ideas, and needs.

(9) Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. The candidate engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community) and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

- (a) The candidate engages in ongoing learning opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in order to provide all learners with engaging curriculum and learning experiences based on local and state standards.
- (b) The candidate engages in meaningful and appropriate professional learning experiences aligned with his/her own needs and the needs of the learners, school, and system.
- (c) The candidate, independently and in collaboration with colleagues, uses a variety of data (e.g., systematic observation, information about learners, research) to evaluate the outcomes of teaching and learning and to adapt planning and practice.

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- (d) The candidate actively seeks professional, community, and technological resources, within and outside the school, as supports for analysis, reflection, and problem-solving.
 - (e) The candidate reflects on his/her personal biases and accesses resources to deepen his/her own understanding of cultural, ethnic, gender, and learning differences to build stronger relationships and create more relevant learning experiences.
 - (f) The candidate advocates, models, and teaches safe, legal, and ethical use of information and technology including appropriate documentation of sources and respect for others in the use of social media.
 - (g) The candidate understands and knows how to use a variety of self-assessment and problem-solving strategies to analyze and reflect on his/her practice and to plan for adaptations/adjustments.
 - (h) The candidate knows how to use learner data to analyze practice and differentiate instruction accordingly.
 - (i) The candidate understands how personal identity, worldview, and prior experience affect perceptions and expectations, and recognizes how they may bias behaviors and interactions with others.
 - (j) The candidate understands laws related to learners' rights and teacher responsibilities (e.g., for educational equity, appropriate education for learners with disabilities, confidentiality, privacy, appropriate treatment of learners, reporting in situations related to possible child abuse).
 - (k) The candidate knows how to build and implement a plan for professional growth directly aligned with his/her needs as a growing professional using feedback from candidate evaluations and observations, data on learner performance, and school- and system-wide priorities.
 - (l) The candidate takes responsibility for student learning and uses ongoing analysis and reflection to improve planning and practice.
 - (m) The candidate is committed to deepening understanding of his/her own frames of reference (e.g., culture, gender, language, abilities, ways of knowing), the potential biases in these frames, and their impact on expectations for and relationships with learners and their families.
 - (n) The candidate sees him/herself as a learner, continuously seeking opportunities to draw upon current education policy and research as sources of analysis and reflection to improve practice.
 - (o) The candidate understands the expectations of the profession including the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics, the NASDTEC Model Code of Ethics for Educators, (MCEE), professional standards of practice, and relevant law and policy.
- (10) Leadership and Collaboration. The candidate seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.
- (a) The candidate takes an active role on the instructional team, giving and receiving feedback on practice, examining learner work, analyzing data from multiple sources, and sharing responsibility for decision making and accountability for each student's learning.

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- (b) The candidate works with other school professionals to plan and jointly facilitate learning on how to meet diverse needs of learners.
- (c) The candidate engages collaboratively in the school-wide effort to build a shared vision and supportive culture, identify common goals, and monitor and evaluate progress toward those goals.
- (d) The candidate works collaboratively with learners and their families to establish mutual expectations and ongoing communication to support learner development and achievement.
- (e) The candidate, working with school colleagues, builds ongoing connections with community resources to enhance student learning and wellbeing.
- (f) The candidate engages in professional learning, contributes to the knowledge and skill of others, and works collaboratively to advance professional practice.
- (g) The candidate uses technological tools and a variety of communication strategies to build local and global learning communities that engage learners, families, and colleagues.
- (h) The candidate uses and generates meaningful research on education issues and policies.
- (i) The candidate seeks appropriate opportunities to model effective practice for colleagues, to lead professional learning activities, and to serve in other leadership roles.
- (j) The candidate advocates to meet the needs of learners, to strengthen the learning environment, and to enact system change.
- (k) The candidate takes on leadership roles at the school, district, state, and/or national level and advocates for learners, the school, the community, and the profession.
- (l) The candidate understands schools as organizations within a historical, cultural, political, and social context and knows how to work with others across the system to support learners.
- (m) The candidate understands that alignment of family, school, and community spheres of influence enhances student learning and that discontinuity in these spheres of influence interferes with learning.
- (n) The candidate knows how to work with other adults and has developed skills in collaborative interaction appropriate for both face-to-face and virtual contexts.
- (o) The candidate knows how to contribute to a common culture that supports high expectations for student learning.
- (p) The candidate actively shares responsibility for shaping and supporting the mission of his/her school as one of advocacy for learners and accountability for their success.
- (q) The candidate respects families' beliefs, norms, and expectations and seeks to work collaboratively with learners and families in setting and meeting challenging goals.
- (r) The candidate takes initiative to grow and develop with colleagues through interactions that enhance practice and support student learning.
- (s) The candidate takes responsibility for contributing to and advancing the profession.
- (t) The candidate embraces the challenge of continuous improvement and change.

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