



# ATPE Input to State Board for Educator Certification

Regarding Chapter 231, Special Educator Certification Requirements

September 20, 2024

The **Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)** appreciates this opportunity to offer written input to the State Board for Educator Certification regarding the revised special educator certification requirements. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the EPSG Special Populations Working Group, as well as the staff's work to incorporate our suggestions into the new rules. In particular, we are happy to see the expansion of the proposed rules from applying only to teachers of record to include paraprofessional experience in the rubrics to determine content competency, as well as allowing professional development to count toward the determination of content competency. We advocated for each of these and appreciate their inclusion in the draft.

**ATPE supports high standards for special educators.** It is important that our special education teachers possess high levels of competency both in the specialized knowledge needed to support students in special education and in specific subject-area content knowledge. We do feel the proposed rubrics as written represent great progress toward achieving this goal. One suggested change ATPE proposes is to allow experience in a closely related field to count toward determining content competency. Currently, the rubric allows for paraprofessional experience to count, as well as experience in the content area, but teaching experience in a closely related field (for example, prior experience teaching Algebra II for an educator who will now be teaching geometry) is also valuable in determining content competency. Many of the skills overlap in these closely related fields and can be valuable for an educator in their new role.

ATPE looks forward to continuing work with the stakeholder group to improve these standards and ensure that our special educators have clear, unambiguous, and attainable standards for determining content competency.

For additional information, contact ATPE Governmental Relations at (800) 777-2873 or [government@atpe.org](mailto:government@atpe.org).