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Amy T. Parker

Portland State University, atp5@pdx.edu

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Introduction to CEC's Process for Re-Validating Knowledge and Skills Competency Sets

**Amy Parker, Ed.D. & COMS, Assistant Professor,
Portland State University, atp5@pdx.edu**

Within the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), DVIDB provides professional development to educators; advocates for the needs of students with visual impairment and those who are deafblind; and develops recognized knowledge and skills competencies for teachers and paraprofessionals that align with recognized standards for personnel in special education. Using a consensual validation process, the CEC includes external partners as “associations with a direct connection to the specialty being studied” (CEC Validation Manual, 2017, p. 2).

The current knowledge and skills specialty sets in deafblindness for teachers and interveners were published in 2009 (Zambone & Alsop, 2009). According to the CEC Validation manual (2017): “Ideally, every seven years, each Specialty Set should go through a re-validation process to ensure that it is current and reflective of best practice in the field” (p. 3). The systematic review and validation of the deeply connected knowledge

and skills competency sets for teachers of the deafblind and interveners are overdue.

The process begins with the DVIDB Validation Team (VT) that composes a concept paper that outlines the need for re-validation and submits it to the CEC Professional Practice and Standards Committee (PSPC) for review and approval. In this case, the concept paper addresses and proposes a review of both the intervener and teacher of the deafblind specialty sets. Upon approval, our approach will be to nominate contributors with expertise to serve on 1 of 7 strands within the specialty sets who will work in sub-teams to review, edit and align the competencies using literature on research, policy and practice to support the proposed competencies. Since this is a re-validation, the current competencies will be heavily referenced as a starting point. The work of this group is reviewed by the VT and submitted to the PSPC for editing and review.

Upon PSPC approval of the final proposed set, the CEC creates a validation survey to distribute to the DVIDB members and to external organizational partners. According the validation manual, “the CEC selects intentional samples as opposed to random samples, to respond to validation study surveys. The use of an intentional sample allows the direct selection of individuals with appropriate backgrounds, experience, and

knowledge of the specialty area. The CEC liaison is responsible for collaborating with the Validation Team (VT) to obtain an appropriate sample of individuals to respond to the validation survey” (p. 2). The data from this survey is analyzed and returned to the VT for review, reporting, and to finalize the set. All reports on the process and the final published set are shared at our conventions, journals, publications, and on our website.

The revalidation of the knowledge and skills competencies dovetails with the important community work that supports national legislation called the [Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act](#), which formally acknowledges both the roles of teachers of the deafblind and interveners in the education of students who are deafblind. The concept paper published in our Winter, 2020 quarterly, will be used to have conversations with external agency partners and is being shared to frame the need for such personnel standards to meet the educational needs of students who are deafblind. Join us at our international convention in Portland, Oregon on February 7th where we will be hosting our Community Forum: ["Revisiting the Teacher of the DB and Intervener Standards: A Participatory Process"](#). For more information about the CEC’s process for creating standards within its Division structure and through a consensual validation process, visit the

[Council for Exceptional Children's Initial and Advanced Specialty Sets](#)

webpage.

References

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