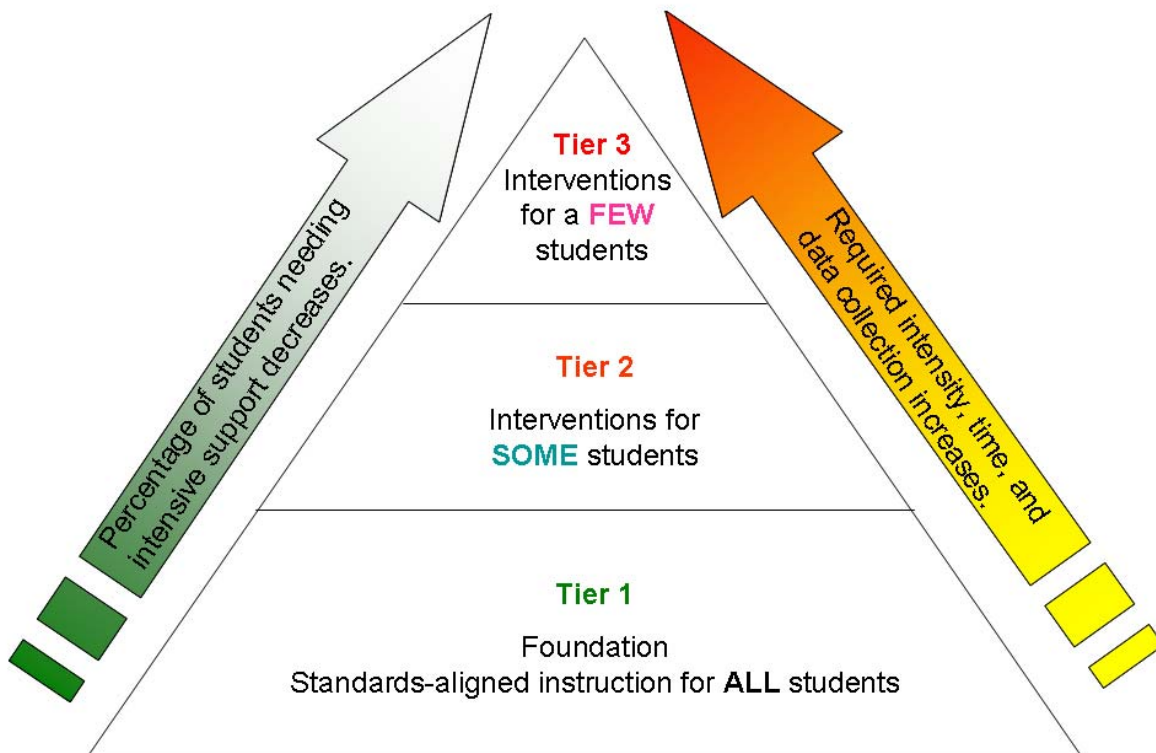




Philosophy behind Our New Curriculum

Our new curriculum is based on Universal Design for Learning and the *Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII)* model which views education as a unified system along increasing tiers of intervention (see diagram below). In RtII, the universal tier consists of evidence-based instructional practices for all students. The second tier consists of targeted interventions for students at risk for special education services. The third tier consists of intensive, more individualized interventions for at-risk students or those already identified as having special needs.

Response to Instruction and Intervention Model (RtII)



Our philosophy views general education and special education as a continuum of more intensive services to meet the needs of diverse learners and **not** as separate or distinct programs. It is difficult to distinguish in our new curriculum where regular education ends and special education begins. Further, to be maximally effective, one tier cannot exist without the other. For example, good instruction based

on evidence-based practices should be in place before more intensive interventions are required for any individual student.

Aligning instruction with standards —both state and national— is also a crucial element in our new curriculum. Our PreK-4 teacher-preparation program will train our students to use a standards-aligned system where they (1) employ well-communicated and clear standards that evince high expectations, (2) design materials and select instructional resources that align with the standards, (3) design instruction that enables a wide range of students to meet or exceed those standards, (4) confirm student progress using fair assessments that are matched to the standards, and (5) recognize and take advantage of instructional interventions to support students having difficulty meeting standards.

Collaboration is a key component of our new curriculum. It was designed in a collaborative process involving a curriculum committee drawn from our special education and teacher education programs, with input, feedback and approval from the faculty of the two programs. We also solicited and received additional input and suggestions from the faculty in the College of Education. To assure that we addressed realistic needs in school settings, we spoke with teachers and administrators in the schools about the most desirable traits, attitudes, skills, and types of knowledge teachers should have.

Fully one-third of the courses in our new program are cross-listed between the special education and teacher education programs. Regardless of whether a course is cross-listed or not, however, faculty in our special education and teacher education programs collaborate on the design and delivery of our new courses, constantly looking for ways to train our graduates to be more effective inclusive teachers in an RtII approach.

What Follows in This Document

On next page, you will find a table of the courses in our new PreK-4 teacher-preparation curriculum. This table notes how much of each course will be dedicated to addressing special education issues and how much to addressing issues related to English language learners (ELL)

On pages four through six you will find titles and course descriptions for the courses in the PreK-4 program of study. Beside each course's title it tells whether it is a new course or a revision of an existing course. At the end of the courses section, we note that we are using a distributed arts integration approach.

On page seven you will find a description of the four stages of required field experience and a description of how we plan to incorporate field experiences throughout our PreK-4 program. On the final page you will find a table that shows how these field experiences are distributed across our courses.

Draft PreK-4 Curriculum

Course Title	Credits	Proportion of course (credits) addressing SpEd competencies & learner needs *	Proportion of course (credits) addressing ELL competencies & learner needs *
SpEd 332. Education and Inclusion of Individuals with Special Needs in K-12 † ‡	3	3.00	0
TLT/SpEd 404. Diversity, Families, and School Collaborations in K-12 † ‡	3	1.50	1.50
TLT/SpEd 405. Principles and Applications of K-12 Assessment † ‡	3	2.50	.50
TLT 407. Instructional Design for K-12 Classrooms † ‡	3	1.00	0
TLT 408. Child Development and Cognition	3	.25	.25
TLT/SpEd 409. K-12 Classroom Environment and Management † ‡	3	2.00	.50
TLT/SpEd 411. Early Childhood Education	3	1.50	.50
TLT 412. Social Studies in PreK through 4 th Grade	3	.50	.10
TLT 420 Reading and Literacy in PreK through 4th Grade	3	1.00	.50
TLT 422. Language Arts in PreK through 4th Grade	3	.50	.50
TLT 426. Science in PreK through 4 th Grade	3	.50	.10
TLT 428. Mathematics and Numeracy in PreK through 4th Grade	3	1.00	.10
SpEd 465. Advanced Inclusionary Practices in K-12 † ‡	3	2.50	.50
TLT 444. Student Teaching and Seminar †	3	.50	.50
Total	42	18.25	5.55

* Course proportions demonstrated through percentage of course content, class periods, out-of-class activities, and field experiences.

† Core course that is also included in the revised secondary curriculum.

‡ Course also included in dual certification for special education.

Draft Course Descriptions

SpEd 332. Education and Inclusion of Individuals with Special Needs in K-12 [Revised course]

Overview of social, developmental, legal, and educational issues and practices related to the special education of individuals with disabilities. Covers social, environmental, and physiological etiology; development; identification; learning characteristics; and needs of individuals identified for special education. Emphasizes meeting diverse needs of students in general education classrooms through evidence-based practices and adaptations matched to learner needs. Addresses legal rights of students and their families, as well as legal responsibilities of teachers as required by IDEIA and other related special legislation.

TLT/SpEd 404. Diversity, Families, and School Collaborations in K-12 [New course]

Cultural and linguistic diversity as critical variables in educational equity for all learners, including ELL. Explores home-school partnerships, family and professional collaboration, and teacher self-awareness. Implementing culturally sensitive and responsive classroom practices as well as forming collaborative relationships with families that respect diversity of family contexts. Collaborative, multidisciplinary teaming to support, optimize, and advocate for student's educational needs and connect to community services and resources available to individuals and families. Addresses family mental health issues and wraparound services.

TLT/SpEd 405. Principles and Applications of K-12 Assessment [Revised course]

Assessment applied to learning in classroom learning environments, including universal screening and progress monitoring. Discusses assessment approaches, ways to implement assessment, and use of assessment tools to monitor all students, including ELL and students with disabilities. Use of data-management and grading systems. Addresses diagnostic assessments for student placement and analysis of assessment data to tailor instruction to diverse student needs. Emphasis on research-based practices of assessment to inform instructional decision-making consistent with the RtII framework.

TLT 407. Instructional Design for K-12 Classrooms [Revised course]

Introduces the systematic design of instruction following the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII) and Universal Design for Learning models. Explores theories of learning and instructional applications as a part of technology-based and standards-aligned classroom education grounded in the use of a quality, research-based core curriculum and effective instructional practices to meet the needs of all learners. Addresses appropriate use of instructional technologies for universal learning. Students will plan, design, and develop student-centered, standards-aligned, technology-supported instruction and appropriate learner assessments.

TLT 408. Child Development and Cognition [Revised course]

Introduction to biological, motor, perceptual, cognitive, language, emotional, social/emotional, and gender development of young children and adolescents. Developmental history, theories, and research, as well as the effect of culture, family, peers, media, and schooling on the individual and groups. Students investigate typical and atypical development and explore the implications of individual differences for teaching and learning, with an emphasis on evidence-based instructional practices designed to optimize the growth and development of all learners. Explores mental health issues and at-risk students.

TLT/SpEd 409. K-12 Classroom Environment and Management [Revised course]

Designing inclusive classroom environments that maximize learning. Emphasis on fostering a community of learners using connections among classroom arrangement, classroom management, and cognitive development to create positive learning outcomes for all students, including ELL learners and students with disabilities. Addresses the tiered model of prevention and positive behavior support, including the role of functional assessment and individual positive behavior support plans in classroom management. Highlights the ways a positive climate for learning involves establishing and maintaining partnerships with families

TLT/SpEd 411. Early Childhood Education [New course]

Introduction to development of early childhood education in the U.S. Emphasizes evidence-based methods and materials to assist young children in the learning process, including arrangement of indoor/outdoor space, developmentally appropriate practices, and the design of instruction to foster young children's emotional, social, language, cognitive, physical, and creative development. Includes embedded instruction and adaptations for students with identified disabilities, children at risk for developing disabilities, and children with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and family collaboration within the instructional planning process.

TLT 412. Social Studies in PreK through 4th Grade [Revised course]

Overview of Pennsylvania's PreK-4 Standards for social studies, including: Pennsylvania history, United States history, economics, civics and government, citizenship, political science/government, and geography. Development, implementation and evidence-based assessment of preK-grade 4 social studies curricula. Effective teaching techniques such as lesson planning, inclusive practices, integrating instructional technologies into instruction, reflecting on teaching, and the latest research-based teaching and assessment methods. Emphasis on alignment of instruction with standards.

TLT 420. Reading and Literacy in PreK through 4th Grade. [Revised course]

Methods of teaching reading and literacy in preK-4, including critical components of early literacy. Selection of appropriate materials, instructional strategies, techniques, and formative and summative assessments. Best practices in reading instruction in a standards-aligned curriculum, explicit strategies for teaching vocabulary and comprehension, and using evidence-based practices to teach reading to learners at all levels of proficiency. Helping learners make the transition from learning to read to reading to learn. Working with families and non-school support services to enhance reading development.

TLT 422. Language Arts in PreK through 4th Grade [Revised course]

Principles of language learning and the development of communication skills from PreK-4. Implications of developmental differences and experiences in non-school settings on student readiness and skills. Helping parents support their children's language skills development. Methods of teaching listening, speaking, and writing, including spelling, punctuation, grammar, and handwriting. Selection of appropriate standards-aligned materials, textbooks, assessments, and evidence-based approaches to teach the language arts to learners from a variety of backgrounds and across a range of abilities.

TLT 426. Science in PreK through 4th Grade [Revised course]

Overview of inquiry-based activities and investigations to promote science learning in PreK-grade 4 classrooms. Emphasis on Pennsylvania's PreK-4 Standards for Science and Technology and Environment and Ecology standards and aligning instruction with standards. Course activities include planning effective lessons, trying out new methods of teaching, reflective practice, inclusionary methods, and integrating instructional technologies into science learning. Evidence-based assessment types are highlighted within instructional contexts.

TLT 428. Mathematics and Numeracy in PreK through 4th Grade [Revised course]

Trends, theories, activities and manipulative materials for teaching early numeracy and elementary mathematics. Pre-school development and in-school skills and concepts, including sets, systems of numeration, experience with numbers, number operations and concepts, numerals, measurement, early algebra, and elements of geometry. Implications of developmental differences and early non-school experiences on learner readiness and skills. Helping parents support their children's mathematics conceptual development. Research-based practices and inclusionary approaches to teach mathematics to learners from a variety of backgrounds and across ability levels.

SpEd 465. Advanced Inclusionary Practices in K-12 [Revised course]

Advanced techniques grounded in current research-based methods and best practice for educating and assessing students with disabilities, students from diverse backgrounds, and English language learners using a standards-aligned system. Accommodations, modifications, planning for physical and instructional inclusion through embedded strategic instruction, adaptations, and curriculum overlapping. Addresses decision hierarchies for level of instructional adaptation and social inclusion methods through social facilitation techniques. Explores critical factors in developing, implementing, and modifying curriculum using evidence-based practices. Explores collaborative co-planning and co-teaching models.

TLT 444. Student Teaching and Seminar [Revised course]

Intensive practice in the application of principles of teaching in a supervised internship in the schools. Regular meetings among student teachers for critical analysis and discussion of classroom instructional practices, as illustrated by the student teachers' experiences in the schools. Practical mentoring on professionalism, applying differentiated instructional models in real-world setting, and aligning instruction with standards. Prerequisite: consent of the program coordinator.

Integrated Arts Instruction (non-course requirements)

In addition to the courses listed above, our new curriculum also covers PDE competencies related to the arts. It uses a required series of 16 out-of-class arts integration experiences, ranging from audience experiences to designing arts integration learning activities. These experiences are distributed evenly across the four arts (visual art, dance, music, and theatre) and complement the content-area-specific instruction in how to integrate the arts in teaching that is provided by the instructors of the five content-area teaching methods courses (language arts, mathematics, reading, science, and social studies). Our arts integration program is described in the *Arts Integration Experiences Guide*.

Field Experiences

PDE guidelines also require that each teacher-in-preparation have 190 hours of pre-student teaching field experiences distributed across four “stages” of experience:

Stage 1 – Observation: Students observe in a variety of education and education-related settings including community-based child care, Head Start, early intervention, and school districts. Observations should occur in a range of school and early learning settings (e.g., urban, suburban, rural; high and low-performing schools) so students have a broad experience and learn as much as possible about pre-K through grade 4 learners and pre-K through grade 4 education philosophy.

Stage 2 – Initial Experience [exploration]: The candidate works under the teacher’s supervision during individual tutorials or with a small group of students. Activities can include reading, math, and other subject-matter experiences, tutoring children, small-group conversations, outdoor play, and monitoring classroom routines and procedures.

[40 hours are required for Observation and Exploration (Stage 1 & 2).]

Stage 3 – Pre-student teaching: This is the beginning of student teaching in which candidates teach small groups of students, in schools and early learning settings. This combines individual tutorials, small-group, and whole-class instruction at the selected grade level over the course of the semester. Students work with materials they have prepared and created for classroom instruction. [150 hours are required for Stage 3.]

Stage 4 – Student Teaching: A minimum of 12 weeks full-time student teaching as prescribed in §354.25(f).

Each instructor designs a series of field experiences that are appropriate to the content of the course and enable students in the course to have exposure to experiences in schools and other settings that enhance students’ understanding of family and cultural issues, RtII, standards-aligned instruction, inclusive practices, and differentiated instruction. Field experiences embedded in courses throughout the curriculum are designed to assure that students are never far from the classroom or other preK-4 setting. This allows teachers-in-training to reinforce what they are learning in their coursework through observation, data collection, one-on-one tutoring or teaching, small group work, and whole-class teaching.

Under our new curriculum, field experiences are distributed across all but one course. The table on the next page details the number of hours in each stage required by the courses in our new curriculum. These are minimums. That is, course instructors may require additional field experiences.

Field Experiences Distribution across Curriculum

Course Title	Hours of Field Experience	Stage
SpEd 332. Education and Inclusion of Individuals with Special Needs in K-12 † ‡	10	1 & 2
TLT/SpEd 404. Diversity, Families, and School Collaborations in K-12 † ‡	10	1 & 2
TLT/SpEd 405. Principles and Applications of K-12 Assessment † ‡	5+5	2+3
TLT 407. Instructional Design for K-12 Classrooms † ‡	0	
TLT 408. Child Development and Cognition	5	1
TLT/SpEd 409. K-12 Classroom Environment and Management † ‡	10	1 & 2
TLT/SpEd 411. Early Childhood Education	5	1 & 2
TLT 412. Social Studies in PreK through 4 th Grade	12	3
TLT 420. Reading and Literacy in PreK through 4th Grade	12	3
TLT 422. Language Arts in PreK through 4th Grade	12	3
TLT 426. Science in PreK through 4 th Grade	12	3
TLT 428. Mathematics and Numeracy in PreK through 4th Grade	12	3
SpEd 465. Advanced Inclusionary Practices in K-12 † ‡	5+5	2+3
TLT 444. Student Teaching Seminar (first two weeks of 14-week placement, 7:30 am-3:30pm)	80	3
Student Teaching	12 weeks	
Total (50 hours at stages 1 & 2; 150 hours at stage 3)	200	

NOTE: Hours listed above are minimums.