



Alliance *for*
Massage Therapy
Education

Core Competencies for Massage Therapy Teachers

National Teacher Education Standards Project

Alliance for Massage Therapy Education

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Core Competencies for Massage Therapy Teachers

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Introduction

The Alliance for Massage Therapy Education was established to serve as the voice, advocate and resource for the community of massage schools and educators. Within this broader mission, one of the organization's primary goals is *to strengthen and improve the quality of massage education*. To carry out this objective, the Alliance has embarked upon a long-term effort to address the critical need for teacher training, called the **National Teacher Education Standards Project** (TESP).

In December 2010, the Alliance published a white paper that outlined the rationale and scope for the TESP (available from the Teacher Standards page on the Alliance website). The project will take place over a period of 5-10 years, and will progress through five sequential phases. The first foundational step is the development of the *Core Competencies for Massage Therapy Teachers*. Once the document is finalized, the work of implementation can begin. This will include the creation of a model teacher training curriculum and the development of teacher training resources. For this goal to be practically attained there will need to be a wide range of training opportunities for teachers in a variety of settings.

The Alliance's Professional Standards Committee has been responsible for the creation of this document. This group of experienced teachers, CE providers and school directors researched existing teacher standards throughout the realms of public education and specialized professional education. The committee incorporated some of these well-researched templates, adding to them the unique nature and attributes of massage therapy education.

It is essential to recognize that this document is the first of its kind in our field. For the most part, we have been operating without standards and without requirements for teachers to have formal training in the theory and methodology of teaching. As a result, we are collectively at the stage of "not knowing what we don't know". This is the natural starting point for learning and growth. We fully recognize that the breadth of competencies described in this document represent a level of understanding and capability that few teachers in our field have attained. This is not a cause for embarrassment or trepidation, but a call to everyone involved in massage education to be willing to engage in an ongoing process of [professional development](#).

Rather than setting the bar low to reflect the current state of teaching practice in our field, the Alliance is using this opportunity to provide a comprehensive template that will guide the future training of teachers. Overall, this is designed to serve as a vision of where teachers in our field can be (in time), and where we want succeeding generations of massage therapy teachers to be at the entry point of their careers.

Structure of the Document

This document is organized into four general categories and ten standards. Each category and standard begins with a descriptive narrative and then lists the competencies needed to reliably carry out that element of the educational process. These are presented in the matrix of **knowledge, skills** and **attitudes** (KSAs), which form the basis for effective and successful teaching. **Knowledge** is something you have learned or discovered **Skill** is the ability to do something well and **Attitude** combines both the ability of being able to do something and attribute of a quality or characteristic.

The standards are intended to apply to teachers across the entire continuum of massage therapy education, from entry-level training programs to continuing education and post-graduate studies. They also apply to teachers throughout the arc of their professional careers. What distinguishes the beginning from the accomplished teacher is the degree of sophistication in the application of the knowledge and skills.

To assist the process of self-assessment, the competencies in each standard have been divided into two levels: **Level 1** elements comprise a reasonable set of basic expectations for a lead instructor. **Level 2** elements require more experience, study and increased proficiency.

Current instructors in the field will likely find that their state of knowledge, skills and attitudes includes some elements in each of the two levels, with other elements yet to be developed. Such assessment will provide a useful map for ongoing learning.

THE LEARNER and LEARNING

Teaching begins with the learner. To ensure that each learner acquires (or enhances) the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for the safe and effective practice of massage therapy, teachers must understand that learning and developmental patterns vary among individuals, that adults bring significant differences to the learning process, and that they need supportive, challenging and productive learning environments to thrive. Effective teachers have high expectations for their learners and implement educational experiences that support each learner in achieving his/her full potential. Teachers do this by combining a base of professional knowledge, including an understanding of how physical, cognitive, emotional, [spiritual](#) and social development and integration occurs, with the recognition that adult learners are individuals who bring the rich history of their lives to the process. This includes family background, education, occupation, skills, attitudes, perspectives, talents and interests. Teachers collaborate with learners and colleagues to better understand their students and maximize their learning experiences. Teachers promote students' responsibility for their own learning process and work with them to ensure optimal learning outcomes at all stages of their career path.

Standard 1: Learner Development and Well-being

The teacher recognizes that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the physical, cognitive, emotional, [spiritual](#) and social aspects. The teacher designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences; and maintains a focus on the progress of learners throughout the educational process.

1.1 KNOWLEDGE

Level 1

- 1.1.1 The teacher understands how learners construct knowledge, acquire and embody skills, develops disciplined thinking processes and somatic awareness – and knows how to use instructional strategies that promote student learning.
- 1.1.2 The teacher identifies readiness for learning, and understands how development in any one area may affect performance in others.
- 1.1.3 The teacher understands that each learner's physical, cognitive, emotional, [spiritual](#) and social development influences learning.

Level 2

- 1.1.4 The teacher knows how to make instructional decisions that build on learners' strengths and needs, based on each learner's physical, cognitive, emotional, spiritual and social development.

1.2 SKILLS

Level 1

- 1.2.1 The teacher regularly assesses individual and group performance in order to design and modify instruction to meet learners' needs and sets the stage for the next level of learning.
- 1.2.2 The teacher of hands-on courses presents strategies for ergonomics and ensures that learners utilize optimal principles of movement and alignment in the practice of massage therapy.

- 1.2.3 The teacher instructs in a manner that supports learners' [self-responsibility](#).
- 1.2.4 The teacher monitors how learners are responding to the physical and emotional demands that are placed on them by the training program, instructs learners in self-care protocols, and refers them to appropriate administration, professionals or other resources as needed.
- 1.2.5 The teacher works collaboratively with learners and administration to identify and implement new strategies to overcome obstacles to learning.

Level 2

- 1.2.6 The teacher creates developmentally appropriate instruction that takes into account individual learners' strengths, interests and needs, and that enables each learner to advance his/her learning.
- 1.2.7 The teacher considers learners' outside support systems when designing instruction for their growth and development.

1.3 ATTITUDES

Level 1

- 1.3.1 The teacher respects learners' differing strengths, needs and areas of challenge.
- 1.3.2 The teacher supports learners' [self-responsibility](#) in their process of growth and development.
- 1.3.3 The teacher values the input and contributions of colleagues and other professionals in supporting each learner's process of growth and development.
- 1.3.4 The teacher values the input and contributions of learners' personal support systems in their process of growth and development.

Standard 2: Learning Differences and Integrative Approaches

The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and cultural factors to create and maintain learning environments that help learners to meet their potential. The teacher recognizes the interconnected nature of human experience to provide adult learners with rich opportunities for personal growth and integration.

2.1 KNOWLEDGE

Level 1

- 2.1.1 The teacher recognizes that learners have a variety of cultural, familial, educational, and socioeconomic backgrounds, and that these factors influence how they learn.
- 2.1.2 The teacher recognizes the interconnectedness among the physical, emotional, cognitive, spiritual and social aspects of learning and self-development.
- 2.1.3 The teacher identifies differences in student approaches to learning and performance.
- 2.1.4 The teacher provides instruction without bias as to learners' cultural, familial and individual backgrounds.

2.1.5 The teacher is able to make appropriate accommodations for students with identified learning challenges/disabilities.

Level 2

2.1.6 The teacher includes content that supports learners' ongoing process of integrating their physical, emotional, cognitive, and social aspects as they learn.

2.1.7 The teacher knows how to design lesson plans for a [diverse](#) population of adult learners.

2.1.8 The teacher knows how to accommodate the needs of learners with disabilities using specific strategies and resources.

2.2 SKILLS

Level 1

2.2.1 The teacher adapts instruction to accommodate various learning styles and creates opportunities for learners to demonstrate their learning in different ways.

2.2.2 The teacher makes appropriate and timely provisions (e.g., pacing, task demands, and communication, assessment and response modes) for individuals with particular learning differences or needs.

2.2.3 The teacher includes learners' personal experiences and cultural norms when presenting information.

2.2.4 The teacher assists learners in developing their ability to bring attention to cognitive/sensory/kinesthetic experiences.

2.2.5 The teacher collaborates with school administrators to address the needs of students with identified learning challenges/disabilities, in order to provide accommodations and to access resources, specialized assistance and services.

Level 2

2.2.6 The teacher designs lesson plans and curriculum content to build on learners' prior knowledge and experiences.

2.3 ATTITUDES

Levels 1

2.3.1 The teacher respects and values all learners and believes that all learners can realize their full potential.

2.3.2 The teacher motivates each learner to strive toward attainment of their full potential.

2.3.3 The teacher helps students learn to respect and value each other, their teachers, school administration, their clients, and members of their profession.

Standard 3: Learning Environments

The teacher works with learners to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active [engagement](#) in learning, and self-[motivation](#).

3.1 KNOWLEDGE

Level 1

- 3.1.1 The teacher understands the relationship between motivation and engagement.
- 3.1.2 The teacher knows how to manage the classroom by collaborating with learners to establish and monitor elements of a safe and productive learning environment that include policies, procedures and organizational structures.
- 3.1.3 The teacher understands the dynamics of the teacher-learner relationship, and the importance of well-defined professional boundaries.
- 3.1.4 The teacher understands how learner diversity can affect communication and knows how to communicate effectively.
- 3.1.5 The teacher knows how to use therapeutic equipment and how to guide learners to apply them in appropriate, safe and effective ways.
- 3.1.6 The teacher knows how to use electronic media and how to guide learners to apply them in appropriate and effective ways.
- 3.1.7 The teacher knows the principles and requirements of [academic](#) honesty and works with learners to ensure their understanding of and compliance with these requirements.

Level 2

- 3.1.8 The teacher knows how to design learning experiences using strategies that build learner self-direction and ownership of learning.
- 3.1.9 The teacher knows how to design activities for learners to work productively and cooperatively with each other to achieve learning goals.

3.2 SKILLS

Level 1

- 3.2.1 The teacher encourages students to work productively and cooperatively with each other to achieve learning goals.
- 3.2.2 The teacher collaborates with learners and colleagues to build a safe, positive learning climate of openness, mutual respect, support, and inquiry.
- 3.2.3 The teacher 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.
- 3.2.4 The teacher monitors the work of learners to ensure compliance with academic honor codes.

- 3.2.5 The teacher manages the learning environment to actively and equitably engage learners by organizing, allocating, and coordinating the resources of time, space and learners' attention.
- 3.2.6 The teacher communicates verbally and nonverbally in ways that demonstrate awareness of and responsiveness to the cultural backgrounds, differing perspectives and unique life experiences learners bring to the process.
- 3.2.7 The teacher builds and maintains relationships with learners that have clear and intact boundaries between personal and professional roles, paying special attention to situations where dual relationships may be present.
- 3.2.8 The teacher designs and uses activities that build learners' compassion, sensitivity, respect and kindness for others in the development of interpersonal communication skills.
- 3.2.9 The teacher monitors the emotional tone of the learning environment.
- 3.2.10 The teacher attends to both individual and group issues, and proactively addresses conflict when it arises.
- 3.2.11 The teacher is a thoughtful and responsive listener and observer.

Level 2

- 3.2.12 The teacher designs activities that build learners' compassion, sensitivity, respect and kindness for others in the development of interpersonal communication skills.
- 3.2.13 The teacher identifies potential conflicts before they arise and takes preventive measures.

3.3 ATTITUDES

Level 1

- 3.3.1 The teacher is committed to working with learners and colleagues to establish positive and supportive learning environments.
- 3.3.2 The teacher values the role of learners in promoting each other's learning and recognizes the importance of peer relationships in establishing a climate of learning.
- 3.3.3 The teacher supports learners in the processes of decision-making, exploration, working collaboratively and independently, and engaging in purposeful learning.
- 3.3.4 The teacher fosters respectful communication and problem-solving among all members of the learning community.

CONTENT

Teachers must have a deep and flexible understanding of their subject area(s) and be able to draw upon content knowledge as they work with adult learners to take in new material and gain competence in theory, methodology and practical application of that material in client-centered practice settings. Teachers make content accessible to learners by using multiple means of communication, including digital media and information technology. They integrate [cross-disciplinary](#) skills (including [critical thinking](#), problem solving, creativity and experiential awareness) to help learners achieve the educational objectives of the particular training program, workshop or seminar. Finally, teachers make content knowledge relevant to the practice of massage therapy.

Standard 4: Content Knowledge

The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the subject(s) he or she teaches. The teacher creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the subject accessible and meaningful for learners to assure competency of the content.

4.1 KNOWLEDGE

Level 1

- 4.1.1 The teacher understands major concepts, assumptions, debates, processes of inquiry, and ways of knowing that are central to the subject s/he teaches.
- 4.1.2 The teacher understands common misconceptions in learning the discipline and how to guide learners to accurate conceptual understanding.
- 4.1.3 The teacher knows and uses the standard reference terminology of the subject and knows how to make it accessible to learners.
- 4.1.4 The teacher knows the proper use of equipment, products and utilization protocols in their subject area.
- 4.1.5 The teacher has a deep knowledge of educational objectives and learning progressions in the subject s/he teaches.
- 4.1.6 The teacher (in an entry-level massage program) knows how her/his subject relates to other courses in the program, and to the program as a whole.
- 4.1.7 The teacher (of continuing education courses) knows how his/her subject relates to client treatment and applicable massage therapy scope of practice.

4.2 SKILLS

Level 1

- 4.2.1 The teacher effectively uses representations and explanations that capture key ideas in the subject, guide learners through learning progressions, and promote each learner's achievement of content standards.
- 4.2.2 The teacher engages students in learning experiences in the subject that encourage learners to understand, question, and analyze ideas from diverse perspectives.
- 4.2.3 The teacher engages learners in applying methods of inquiry and standards of evidence used in the subject.

- 4.2.4 The teacher stimulates learner [reflection](#) on prior content knowledge, links new concepts to familiar concepts, and makes connections to learners' experiences.
- 4.2.5 The teacher evaluates instructional resources and curriculum materials for their comprehensiveness, accuracy for representing particular concepts in the subject, and appropriateness for his/her learners.
- 4.2.6 The teacher uses supplementary resources and technologies effectively to facilitate accessibility and relevance for all learners.
- 4.2.7 The teacher creates opportunities for students to learn, practice, and gain competence in the subject.

Level 2

- 4.2.8 The teacher evaluates and modifies instructional resources and curriculum materials for their comprehensiveness, accuracy for representing particular concepts in the subject, and appropriateness for his/her learners.

4.3 ATTITUDES

Level 1

- 4.3.1 The teacher realizes that content knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex, culturally situated, and ever evolving. S/he keeps abreast of new ideas and understandings in the field.
- 4.3.2 The teacher recognizes and acknowledges the potential of bias in his/her representation of the subject.
- 4.3.3 The teacher is committed to work toward each learner's competency within the learning objectives.

Level 2

- 4.3.4 The teacher appreciates multiple perspectives within the subject and facilitates learners' critical analysis of these perspectives.

Standard 5: Application of Content

The teacher understands how to connect theory and methodology and use differing perspectives to engage learners in [critical thinking](#) and creativity. The teacher understands how to build the comprehensive skills needed for the practice of massage therapy.

5.1 KNOWLEDGE

Level 1

- 5.1.1 The teacher understands the various options for teaching material in his/her subject, and the relative strengths and limitations of each approach.
- 5.1.2 The teacher understands the importance of accessing and managing information.
- 5.1.3 The teacher knows how to evaluate issues of ethics and quality related to information and its use.

- 5.1.4 The teacher knows how to effectively use digital and interactive technologies information for the classroom.
- 5.1.5 The teacher evaluates technology resources for quality, accuracy, and effectiveness.
- 5.1.6 The teacher understands how to engage learners in critical thinking, and application of theory and methodology to the task of designing client-centered treatment.
- 5.1.7 The teacher knows how to access research studies and trends in the massage therapy field to build a base of evidence that supports professional practice, and understands how to integrate that information into the curriculum.

Level 2

- 5.1.8 The teacher knows how to help learners develop high-level questioning skills to promote their independent learning.

5.2 SKILLS

Level 1

- 5.2.1 The teacher guides learners to analyze the complexities of an issue or question using perspectives from varied approaches and disciplines in order to foster innovation and problem solving.
- 5.2.2 The teacher engages learners in applying content knowledge to the practice of massage therapy, and encourages them to read current research, collect [data](#) and do case studies.
- 5.2.3 The teacher develops learners' communication skills by creating meaningful opportunities to employ a variety of forms of communication that address varied audiences and purposes.
- 5.2.4 The teacher helps learners discern and identify information according to whether it is anecdotal, empirical or evidence-informed.
- 5.2.5 The teacher facilitates learners' ability to bring awareness of varying social and cultural perspectives that expand their understanding and ability to meet the needs of a [diverse](#) client population.

5.3 ATTITUDES

Level 1

- 5.3.1 The teacher values knowledge outside his/her own subject area and how such knowledge enhances student learning.
- 5.3.2 The teacher values flexible learning environments that encourage learner exploration, discovery and expression across subject areas.

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

Effective instructional practice requires that teachers understand and integrate planning, instructional strategies and assessment in coordinated and engaging ways. Beginning with their endpoint or goal, teachers first identify student learning objectives and content standards and align assessments to those objectives. Planning focuses on using a variety of instructional strategies to address [diverse](#) ways of learning and to incorporate new technologies to maximize and individualize learning.

Standard 6: Planning for Instruction

The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting well-defined learning objectives by drawing upon knowledge of subject, curriculum, andragogy and [pedagogy](#). The teacher also draws upon knowledge of learners and the body-centered nature of massage therapy education.

6.1 KNOWLEDGE

Level 1

- 6.1.1 The teacher knows how to design lesson plans that fit within his/her course mandate.
- 6.1.2 The teacher understands content and professional standards (such as the Massage Therapy Body of Knowledge) and how these are organized and reflected in the curriculum.
- 6.1.3 The teacher understands how integrating educational theory and engages learners purposefully in applying content knowledge.
- 6.1.4 The teacher understands the body-centered nature of massage therapy education and how these somatic factors impact planning and classroom management.

Level 2

- 6.1.5 The teacher knows how to progress from establishing broad-scale program or educational objectives, to curriculum design, course design, and finally, the design of individual lesson plans within a course.
- 6.1.6 The teacher knows the intended learning progression within his/her program, from beginning, to middle, to end.
- 6.1.6 The teacher knows about different theories of learning (e.g., behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, multiple intelligences).
- 6.1.7 The teacher understands the distinctions between subject-centered, student-centered and teacher-centered models.
- 6.1.8 The teacher understands and incorporates multiple levels of [Bloom's](#) Taxonomy or a similar system about critical thinking in curriculum development and instruction.
- 6.1.9 The teacher understands the strengths and needs of individual learners, how to plan instruction that is responsive to these strengths and needs, and how to adjust plans based on assessment information and learner responses.
- 6.1.10 The teacher 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.

6.2 SKILLS

Level 1

- 6.2.1 The teacher plans how to deliver the subject matter in a way that supports the learner's progression – choosing appropriate strategies, resources and materials.
- 6.2.2 The teacher develops appropriate sequencing of learning experiences and provides multiple ways to demonstrate knowledge and skill.
- 6.2.3 The teacher seeks guidance with administration (as appropriate) who have expertise to design and deliver effective learning experiences to meet special learning needs.
- 6.2.4 The teacher evaluates instructional plans in relation to short- and long-range goals, and adjusts plans to enhance learning and improve outcomes.

Level 2

- 6.2.5 The teacher works individually and collaboratively to design courses and to select and create learning experiences that are relevant to learners and that are congruent with curriculum goals, content standards and professional standards.
- 6.2.6 The teacher plans for instruction based on formative and summative assessment data, prior learner knowledge and educational objectives.

6.3 ATTITUDES

Level 1

- 6.3.1 The teacher respects learners' diverse strengths and needs and is committed to using this information to plan effective instruction.
- 6.3.2 The teacher values planning as a collegial activity that takes into consideration the input of learners, fellow teachers and administrative staff.
- 6.3.3 The teacher is committed to adjustment and revision of instructional plans based on learner needs, new knowledge and changing circumstances.

Standard 7: Instructional Strategies and Delivery

The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to motivate learners to develop a comprehensive understanding of theory and methodology and to build skills to apply the knowledge in meaningful and effective ways.

7.1 KNOWLEDGE

Level 1

- 7.1.1 The teacher knows how to apply a range of instructional strategies to achieve learning goals at the appropriate stages of learner development.
- 7.1.2 The teacher understands that somatic processes (e.g., sensory/kinesthetic awareness, body image, embodied history, structural and functional limitations, attitudes about touch) can influence student learning experiences and their ability to work with others.
- 7.1.3 The teacher knows when and how to use strategies to engage learners in critical thinking that relates theoretical material to practical application.

- 7.1.4 The teacher understands how different forms of communication (e.g., oral, written, nonverbal, somatic, visual, digital) convey ideas, foster self-expression, and build relationships.
- 7.1.5 The teacher knows how to use a wide variety of resources, including human and technological, to engage students in learning.
- 7.1.6 The teacher understands how content and skill development can be supported by media and technology.

Level 2

- 7.1.7 The teacher understands how to develop the cognitive processes associated with various kinds of learning (e.g., critical and creative thinking, problem framing and problem solving, invention, memorization and recall).

7.2 SKILLS

Level 1

- 7.2.1 The teacher is able to employ different perspectives/approaches to communicate concepts and skills.
- 7.2.2 The teacher monitors student learning, engages learners in assessing their progress, and adjusts instruction in response to student and group learning needs.
- 7.2.3 The teacher recognizes and addresses learners' issues and concerns that arise from the body-oriented aspects of the curriculum, whether it relates to their own experience or the work they are doing with clients or fellow learners.
- 7.2.4 The teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies to support and expand learners' communication, and ability to demonstrate their knowledge, through speaking, listening, reading, writing and other modes.
- 7.2.5 The teacher presents instruction in an effective manner, including use of voice, gesture, choice of words and awareness of spatial relationships in the classroom.

Level 2

- 7.2.7 The teacher engages learners in developing higher-order questioning skills and metacognitive processes.
- 7.2.8 The teachers engage learners in using a range of learning skills and technology tools to access, interpret, evaluate and apply information.
- 7.2.9 The teacher uses experiential exercises as a means of engaging learners at the physical, cognitive, emotional, [spiritual](#) or social levels.

7.3 ATTITUDES

Level 1

- 7.3.1 The teacher is committed to understanding the strengths and needs of diverse learners when planning and adjusting instruction.
- 7.3.2 The teacher values differences in communication styles and encourages learners to develop and use various forms of communication.

- 7.3.3 The teacher is committed to exploring how the use of new and emerging technologies can support and promote student learning.
- 7.3.4 The teacher values flexibility and reciprocity in the teaching process, encourages student input and ideas, and adapts instruction accordingly.

Standard 8: Observation and Assessment

The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of [assessment](#) to engage and receive feedback from learners in their own growth, to observe and evaluate learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

8.1 KNOWLEDGE

Level 1

- 8.1.1 The teacher understands that ongoing observation of learners across the full range of their experiences provides crucial information for assessment and for the guidance of each learner's process.
- 8.1.2 The teacher knows when and how to engage learners in analyzing their own assessment results and in helping to set goals for their own learning.
- 8.1.3 The teacher understands the positive impact of effective descriptive feedback for learners and knows a variety of strategies for communicating this feedback (e.g., oral, visual, tactile, written).
- 8.1.4 The teacher knows when and how to evaluate and report learner progress as it relates to standards for completion of a course or program.
- 8.1.5 The teacher understands how to prepare learners for assessments and how to make accommodations in assessments and testing conditions for learners with special needs.

Level 2

- 8.1.6 The teacher understands the differences between formative and summative applications of assessment and knows how and when to use each.
- 8.1.7 The teacher understands the types and 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.
- 8.1.8 The teacher 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.

8.2 SKILLS

Level 1

- 8.2.1 The teacher engages learners in understanding and identifying quality work.
- 8.2.2 The teacher aligns instruction and assessment with learning goals.
- 8.2.3 The teacher is discerning and non-judgmental when observing learners, and offers direct feedback within the framework of each learner's capacity.
- 8.2.4 The teacher models and structures processes that guide learners in examining their own thinking and learning.
- 8.2.5 The teacher works with administration to make modifications in assessments or testing conditions for learners with special needs.
- 8.2.6 The teacher utilizes appropriate technology to assist learners in their development and assessment.

Level 2

- 8.2.7 The teacher balances the use of formative and summative assessment as appropriate to support, verify, and document learning, and engages learners in multiple ways of demonstrating knowledge and skill as part of the assessment process.
- 8.2.8 The teacher designs assessments that match learning objectives with assessment methods and minimizes sources of bias that can distort assessment results.
- 8.2.9 The teacher works independently and collaboratively to examine summative assessments and other performance data to understand each learner's progress and to guide planning.

8.3 ATTITUDES

Level 1

- 8.3.1 The teacher is committed to providing timely and effective descriptive feedback to learners on their progress.
- 8.3.2 The teacher is committed to using multiple types of assessment processes to support, verify, and document learning.
- 8.3.3 The teacher is committed to making accommodations in assessments and testing conditions, including for learners with special needs.

Level 2

- 8.3.4 The teacher 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.
- 8.3.5 The teacher is committed to using various assessments and assessment data to identify learner strengths and challenges in order to promote learner development.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The teacher's primary responsibility is to establish safe and productive learning environments. To do this well, teachers must engage in meaningful professional development and self-renewal by regularly examining their role through study, introspection and [collaboration](#). This cycle of ongoing self-improvement is enhanced by collegial support, collaboration and administrative support. Such active engagement results in the discovery and implementation of improved teaching and learning, as well as greater career satisfaction and longevity. Teachers also contribute to improving instructional practices that meet learners' needs and accomplish institutional mission and goals. Teachers benefit from and participate in collaboration with the community of educators and health care professionals. They demonstrate [leadership](#) by modeling ethical behavior and contributing to positive changes in instructional practice.

Standard 9: Professional Development and Ethical Conduct

The teacher participates in ongoing learning activities, engages in self-reflection, and receives input from others on the performance of their duties to increase their knowledge and skills. The teacher brings a high level of ethical awareness to his/her work with learners and colleagues, and maintains a healthy balance in his/her professional life.

9.1 KNOWLEDGE

Level 1

- 9.1.1 The teacher understands and knows how to use a variety of self-assessment and problem-solving strategies to analyze and reflect on his/her professional role and to plan for adaptations or adjustments.
- 9.1.2 The teacher understands how personal identity, worldview, and prior experience affect perceptions and expectations, and recognizes how they may bias behaviors and interactions with others.
- 9.1.3 The teacher understands laws and administrative policies related to learners' rights and teacher responsibilities (e.g., for educational equity, appropriate education for learners with disabilities, confidentiality, privacy, appropriate treatment of learners).
- 9.1.4 The teacher knows and follows the prevailing regulations that govern the practice and teaching of massage therapy in their jurisdiction.
- 9.1.5 The teacher understands the distinction between a therapist-client relationship found in clinical settings, and the teacher-student relationship in educational settings.

Level 2

- 9.1.6 The teacher knows how to build and implement a plan for [professional development](#) directly aligned with his/her needs using feedback from teacher evaluations and observations, data on learner performance, and evolving standards in the field.

9.2 SKILLS

Level 1

- 9.2.1 The teacher engages in ongoing learning activities pertinent to their subject area to develop knowledge and skills in order to provide learners with engaging curriculum and learning experiences that are congruent with institutional, state and national standards.
- 9.2.2 Independently and in collaboration with colleagues, the teacher uses a variety of data (e.g., systematic observation, information about learners, research) to evaluate teaching procedures in the classroom.
- 9.2.3 The teacher actively seeks resources both within and outside the institution, as supports for analysis, reflection and problem-solving.
- 9.2.4 The teacher reflects on his/her personal biases and accesses resources to deepen his/her own understanding of cultural, ethnic, gender, and learning differences to create a framework of professional neutrality
- 9.2.5 The teacher advocates, models, and teaches safe, legal, and ethical use of intellectual property and technology including appropriate documentation of sources and respect for others in the use of social media.
- 9.2.6 The teacher maintains the confidentiality of all information regarding the experience of and academic records of the learner.
- 9.2.7 The teacher maintains appropriate professional boundaries in the teacher-learner relationship, and protects the integrity of the learner's experience.
- 9.2.8 The teacher maintains state credentials for the professional practice of massage therapy or other health care discipline (if required by jurisdiction).

9.3 ATTITUDES

Level 1

- 9.3.1 The teacher 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.
- 9.3.2 The teacher sees him/herself as a learner, seeking ongoing opportunities to draw upon developments in the field and research as sources of analysis and reflection to improve the effectiveness of teaching.
- 9.3.3 The teacher understands that teaching is an art form – one that requires craft, sensitivity, creativity and intelligence, regardless of the subject matter or the number of learners in a classroom.
- 9.3.4 The teacher understands the expectations of the massage therapy field including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant law and policy.
- 9.3.5 The teacher is committed to maintaining his/her own well-being and improving the well-being of others.

Standard 10: [Professional Collaboration](#)

The teacher participates in activities that advance the art and science of massage therapy through collaboration with colleagues and other education and health care professionals.

10.1 KNOWLEDGE

Level 1

- 10.1.1 The teacher understands the historical, cultural, political, and social context of the massage therapy field.
- 10.1.2 The teacher knows how to collaborate with others to support learners.
- 10.1.3 The teacher knows how to contribute to a common culture that supports student learning.
- 10.1.4 The teacher knows how to work with others and has developed skills in collaborative interaction appropriate for both face-to-face and online communication.

10.2 SKILLS

Level 1

- 10.2.1 The teacher takes an active role as part of the instructional team, giving and receiving feedback, examining learner work, analyzing data from multiple sources, and sharing responsibility for decision-making and accountability for educational outcomes.
- 10.2.2 The teacher works collaboratively with learners to establish mutual expectations and ongoing communication to support learner development and achievement.
- 10.2.3 The teacher advocates for quality education that meets the needs of learners, strengthens the learning environment, and supports the provision of effective care to massage therapy clients.
- 10.2.4 The teacher engages collaboratively to build a shared vision and supportive culture, identify common goals, and monitor and evaluate progress toward those goals.

Level 2

- 10.2.5 Working with colleagues, the teacher builds ongoing connections within a community of educators and health care professionals to enhance student learning and development.
- 10.2.6 The teacher engages in [professional development](#) activities to enhance his or her teaching skills

10.3 ATTITUDES

Level 1

- 10.3.1 The teacher actively shares responsibility for shaping and supporting the mission of his/her institution or organization.
- 10.3.2 The teacher respects learners' beliefs and expectations and seeks to work collaboratively with learners in setting and meeting goals.
- 10.3.3 The teacher embraces the challenge of change and continuous improvement and change.
- 10.3.4 The teacher takes initiative to grow and develop with colleagues through interactions that enhance professional knowledge and skills and support student learning.

Primary Source Material for these Standards

This document is adapted from the *Model Core Teaching Standards: A Resource for State Dialogue*, developed by the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC), a program of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

It was first published in 1997, with a comprehensive update released in April 2011. The Alliance for Massage Therapy Education is grateful to CCSSO for their permission to utilize this well-crafted resource.

Based in Washington, D.C., CCSSO is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public.

Copies of the original InTASC document may be downloaded from the Council's website at <http://www.ccsso.org>.

Additional Sources

The following references were also used in the development of these standards:

- *Core Competencies of Nurse Educators*; National League for Nursing.
- *Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession*; Ohio State Board of Education.
- *Pennsylvania Adult Teacher Competencies*; Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- *Professional Standards for Teachers in Adult Education*; Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.
- *Teaching Massage: Fundamental Principles in Adult Education for Massage Program Instructors*; 2008, Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins.

Glossary

This glossary includes terms that will assist the teacher in understanding the competencies described in this document.

Academic Language. Language that is tied to specific subject area disciplines, captures—through vocabulary, grammar, and organizational strategies—the complex ideas, higher order thinking processes, and abstract concepts of the discipline. It is the language used in classrooms, textbooks, and formal presentations in a subject area and differs in structure and vocabulary from everyday spoken English.

Andragogy. A theory of learning focused on the specific needs of adults. It stands in contrast to pedagogy, which refers to learning in childhood. Originally used by Alexander Kapp (a German educator) in 1833, Andragogy was developed into a theory of adult education by the American educator Malcolm S. Knowles. It describes a specific theoretical and practical approach, based on a humanistic conception of self-directed and autonomous learners and teachers as facilitators of learning. This approach can be stated with six assumptions related to the unique nature of adult learning:

- Adults need to know the reason for learning something (Need to Know)
- Experience (including error) provides the basis for learning activities (Foundation).
- Adults need to be responsible for their decisions on education; involvement in the planning and evaluation of their instruction (Self-concept).
- Adults are most interested in learning subjects having immediate relevance to their work and/or personal lives (Readiness).
- Adult learning is problem-centered rather than content-oriented (Orientation).
- Adults respond better to internal versus external motivators ([Motivation](#)).

Assessment. The productive process of monitoring, measuring, evaluating, documenting, reflecting on, and adjusting teaching and learning to ensure students reach high levels of achievement. Assessment systems need to include both formative and summative assessment processes, aligned with instructional and curricular goals and objectives. Formative assessment findings should be used as a continuous feedback loop to improve teaching and learning. Summative assessment results should be used to make final decisions about gains in knowledge and skills.

Formative Assessment. A process used by teachers and learners that provides a continuous stream of evidence of learner growth, empowering teachers to adjust instruction and learners to adjust learning to improve student achievement. Formative assessment requires clear articulation and communication of intended instructional outcomes and criteria for success, ongoing descriptive feedback, and the use of assessment evidence to make adjustments to teaching and learning, self- and peer-assessment that promote learner awareness of growth and needed improvement, and a partnership between teachers and learners that holds both parties accountable for learner achievement and success.

Summative Assessment. The process of determining learning at the culmination of a given period of time to evaluate the extent to which instructional objectives have been met. Examples of summative assessment include end-of-unit tests, final exams, semester exams, portfolios, capstone projects, performance demonstrations, national certification or licensure examinations.

Attitude. Behavior in the Affective Domain in learning. Attitude is about learning, self-efficacy, perception about ability to perform and goal setting. (Kraiger, et al. 1993)

Bloom's Taxonomy. A classification of learning objectives within education first proposed in 1956 by a committee of educators chaired by Benjamin Bloom who also edited the first volume of the standard text, *Taxonomy of educational objectives: the classification of educational goals*. A revised version was published in 2000. Bloom's Taxonomy refers to a classification of the different objectives that educators set for students (learning objectives). It divides educational objectives into three domains: *Cognitive*, *Affective*, and *Psychomotor* (sometimes described as knowing/head, feeling/heart and doing/hands respectively). Within the domains, learning at the higher levels is dependent on having attained prerequisite knowledge and skills at lower levels. A goal of Bloom's Taxonomy is to motivate educators to focus on all three domains, creating a more holistic form of education.

Collaboration. A style of interaction between individuals engaged in shared decision making as they work toward a common goal. Individuals who collaborate have equally valued personal or professional resources to contribute and they share decision-making authority and accountability for outcomes.

Content Knowledge. Includes not only a particular set of information, but also the framework for organizing information and processes for working with it. The traditional definition of content knowledge has been extended in these standards in three ways. First, it incorporates the notion of "pedagogical content knowledge," which blends content and effective instructional strategies for teaching particular subject matter, including appropriate representations and explanations. Second, it includes connections to other disciplines and the development of new, interdisciplinary areas of focus such as civic literacy, environmental literacy, and global awareness. Third, the notion of content knowledge is further extended to include cross-disciplinary skills as tools of inquiry and means to probe content deeply and apply it in real world contexts.

Critical Thinking. Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. <http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/defining-critical-thinking/766>

Cross-disciplinary Skills. Skills that: 1) allow learners to probe content deeply (e.g., reading comprehension, critical thinking), 2) connect academic disciplines to one another (e.g., problem solving), 3) can be applied to and may be used differently within various fields (e.g., critical thinking in biology vs. critical thinking in literary analysis), and 4) should be taught explicitly in the context of a given content area (e.g., accessing and interpreting information). These skills include critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, effective oral and written communication, accessing and analyzing information, as well as adaptability, creativity, initiative, and entrepreneurialism.

Data and Use of Data. Factual, evidentiary forms of information about individuals or groups of learners that are collected, documented, organized, and analyzed for the purpose of making decisions about teaching and learning. Examples of learner data include, but are not limited to 1) learner demographics and background information, 2) documented information about learning needs and prior performance, 3) learner class work, homework, and other formal and informal works produced by the learner, 4) progress charts, records, and anecdotal teacher notes from formative assessments and/or classroom observations,

5) end-of-course teacher-developed tests or summative performances and course grades, and 6) external test scores.

Using data in instructional decision making is a continuous, cyclical process of making instructional decisions based on the analysis of learner data. Using data to inform instructional decisions involves key processes—assessing, analyzing, planning, implementing, and reflecting. Data-informed instructional decision making uses data from multiple sources to understand learning strengths and needs in order to suggest classroom and institution-wide instructional solutions.

Diverse Learners and Learning Differences. Diverse learners and students with learning differences are those who, because of gender, language, cultural background, differing ability levels, disabilities, learning approaches, and/or socioeconomic status may have academic needs that require varied instructional strategies to ensure their learning. Learning differences are manifested in such areas as differing rates of learning, motivation, attention, preferred learning modalities, complexity of reasoning, persistence, foundational knowledge and skills, and preferred learning and response modes.

Diversity. Inclusivity of individual differences (e.g., personality, interests, learning styles, work history and life experiences), and group differences (e.g., race, ethnicity, ability, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, nationality, language, religion, political affiliation, and socio-economic background).

Engagement. The process of leading students to actively participate in learning activities and to do what is necessary to ensure their performance and success.

Knowledge. See Content Knowledge.

Leadership. In this document, leadership refers to attributes of the teacher that include but are not limited to: 1) a view of the teacher's role in education as multifaceted; 2) a keen sense of ethical responsibility to advance the profession of teaching while simultaneously advancing knowledge, skills, and opportunities for each learner; 3) a deep commitment to teaching that includes a willingness to actively engage in professional development to expand knowledge about teaching and learning; 4) a willingness to take on the mantle of leadership in the classroom and among colleagues without a formal title; 5) a recognition of when to lead and when it is appropriate to allow others to lead; 6) knowledge of when and how to marshal a variety of stakeholders to work toward a common cause; 7) an ability to regularly garner resources, both human and other, for the betterment of the students and the school; and 8) the ability to make sound decisions based on the appropriate use and interpretation of quality data and evidence. Teacher leaders function well in professional communities, contribute to institutional improvement, and inspire their students and colleagues to excellence.

Learning Environment. A complex setting designed to attend to the learner(s), the context, and the content simultaneously. Regardless of the setting—whether traditional classroom, virtual, or other alternative format—a learning environment must motivate student learning through establishing interest, providing choices, making relevant connections, building understanding, assessing learning outcomes, developing effective teacher-learner relationships, and creating a sense of belonging between and among learners.

Learning Progressions. Descriptions of increasingly sophisticated ways of thinking about a topic and have been proposed as solutions to such educational problems as a lack of curricular coherence, developmental inappropriateness of curricula, misalignment between instruction and assessment, and weaknesses in support for valued teaching practices. They can support teachers' formative assessment practices and help teachers use learners' prior knowledge in productive ways. By laying out the territory that learners are likely to traverse in coming to understand a given concept, these tools can help teachers recognize their learners' misconceptions as productive steps on the way to full understanding.

Mastery. Display of excellent skill or knowledge according to predetermined parameters

Motivation. The stimulus, incentive, or inducement to act or react in a certain way. Purposeful behavior is motivated behavior, which means that either physiologic or social stimuli activate or motivate a person to do something.

Pedagogy. The study of being a teacher or the process of teaching. The term generally refers to the teaching of children, but is used generically to refer to the art and science of teaching at all levels of education. Pedagogy derives from the ancient Greek word *paidagogeio* meaning "to lead the child". In the realm of adult learning, the analogous term is [Androgogy](#).

Professional Development. Includes comprehensive, sustained, and intensive learning opportunities to expand the professional knowledge base available to teachers and to engage them in an ongoing process of critically examining their teaching practices to find new and more effective ways to improve student learning. Professional development needs to address both an individual teacher's goals for professional growth and the larger organizational learning priorities for institutional improvement. Professional learning engages teachers in working with others to deepen their content knowledge, sharpen their instructional skills, and develop their ability to use data for meaningful decision making. Thus, professional learning is an ongoing, job-embedded process that supports transfer of newly-learned knowledge and skills to practice. Such learning also needs to be evaluated and refined on an ongoing basis.

Self-reflection. Self-reflection is the capacity of humans to exercise introspection and the willingness to learn more about their fundamental nature, purpose and essence.

Self-responsibility. In the context of self-development, responsibility, also known as self-responsibility, is the acknowledgment that individuals, through their thinking, feeling and behaving, are in control of how they experience life.

<http://www.positive-thinking-principles.com/what-is-responsibility.html>

Skill. See Cross Disciplinary Skills.

Spirit. Comes from the Latin word *breath*. air, life essence, soul; the incorporeal principle of life, the vital principle of man, conscious being as opposed to matter; vigor, courage, aliveness. (Webster Living Dictionary)

Spirit entails courage, tenacity, and commitment, alignment with principle, demonstration of excellence, honor, respect and humility. (Hawkins, D. Power vs. Force, 2003)

Spiritual. Relating to, consisting of, or affecting the spirit.

Spirituality. The quality or state of being. In this document, this term does not include a context of specific religious practice or affiliation.