# M1: What Would You Do?

## Course

Special Education

## Location

Module 1

## Alignments

### Course Outcomes

CLO I: Describe the professional practices of special education teachers.

### Module Outcomes

MLO 1.1: Identify the legal and ethical rights and responsibilities of various partners in special education services.

MLO 1.2: Apply ethical and legal principles to special education service scenarios.

MLO 1.3: Evaluate personal understanding and professional development needs related to the field of special education.

### Specific InTASC Standards

| **InTASC** | **Type** | **Specific Standard** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 9i | Knowledge | 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. |
| 9j | Knowledge | The teacher 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). |
| 9o | Disposition | The teacher understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant law and policy. |

## Assignment Instructions

### Purpose

Special education teachers are bound by laws and ethical codes that dictate how they operate within their roles. However, sometimes those legal and ethical boundaries are muddied, and it becomes challenging for teachers to know how they should operate. Sometimes, educators and systems rely on precedent (the way things have typically been done) rather than current laws or ethics; unfortunately, this opens the door to implicit bias in our practices with students in special education. This assignment invites you to consider how you, as a special education teacher, would respond to situations that present gray areas.

### Task

For this assignment, you will choose one of the scenarios listed below. Create an explanation of how you, as an education professional, would respond to the scenario. You have the option of writing a 1–2-page paper, recording a 3-5 minute response, or putting a graphical representation together (PowerPoint, etc.). For your response, you will:

* List the laws, ethical standards, or policies that are potentially being violated.
* Speculate on how implicit bias or reliance on precedent might play a role in why a problem practice is occurring.
* Describe how you would reimagine the situation to be more ethically and legally compliant.

You may choose to point to an ethical standard or framework (e.g., social model of disability). Additionally, you will want to identify why you think the issue occurred and the role that bias played in the situation.

#### Technical Details

Should you choose to do a video response, submit a link to the video (not the video file!). You can choose any video platform available to you; some examples include

* YouTube
* Flip (formerly known as Flipgrid)
* Vimeo
* TikTok
* Your institution’s video platform (common examples include Kaltura Mediaspace and Panopto)

Captioning is available through all the platforms mentioned above. Be sure to review the captions for accuracy; you will also want to make sure the person you are sharing the video with can access your video and enable the captions. Keep each video’s length to three minutes or less.

### Criteria

You will be evaluated based on the accuracy of your response, including your ability to identify the gray areas presented in your chosen scenario, point to laws and ethical codes that may be in conflict, and remedy the scenario so that it is legally and ethically compliant. Rely on the instructions above as you develop your assignment submission.

* List the laws, ethical standards, or policies that are potentially being violated.
* Speculate on how implicit bias or reliance on precedent might play a role in why a problem practice is occurring.
* Describe how you would reimagine the situation to be more ethically and legally compliant.

## Rubric

Table 1: Assignment Rubric

| **Criterion** | **InTASC** | **A(4)** | **B(3)** | **C(2)** | **D(1)** | **F(0)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| List the laws, ethical standards, or policies that are potentially being violated. | 9j | Lists the laws, ethical standards, or policies that are potentially being violated; identifies areas of uncertainty or interpretation. | Lists the laws, ethical standards, or policies that are potentially being violated. | Lists some laws, ethical standards, or policies that are potentially being violated; misses key concerns in the scenario. | Inaccurately lists the laws, ethical standards, or policies that are potentially being violated. | Does not list the laws, ethical standards, or policies that are potentially being violated. |
| Critique a scenario to identify the role that bias or biased practices played. | 9i | Critiques a scenario to identify the role that bias played; offers alternate interpretations or factors. | Critiques a scenario to identify the role that bias played. | Critiques a scenario to identify the role that bias played; does not use examples from the scenario to support answer. | Inadequately critiques a scenario to identify the role that bias played. | Does not critique a scenario to identify the role that bias played. |
| Apply laws and/or ethical/professional standards related to learners’ rights and teacher responsibilities to a scenario that lacks compliance. | 9o | Applies laws and/or ethical/professional standards related to learners’ rights and teacher responsibilities to a scenario that lacks compliance; provides examples of specific actions that could be taken to support answer. | Applies laws and/or ethical/professional standards related to learners’ rights and teacher responsibilities to a scenario that lacks compliance. | Applies laws and/or ethical/professional standards related to learners’ rights and teacher responsibilities; does not connect rights and responsibilities to a scenario that lacks compliance. | Inaccurately applies laws related to learners’ rights and teacher responsibilities to a scenario that lacks compliance. | Does not apply laws related to learners’ rights and teacher responsibilities to a scenario that lacks compliance. |

## Scenarios

The following scenarios were generated from Microsoft Copilot (2024).

### Scenario 1: The Inclusion versus Segregation Challenge

Background: Ms. Nguyen teaches at Riverdale High School, where inclusion practices are emphasized. She has a student, Carlos, who uses a wheelchair due to cerebral palsy. Carlos expresses interest in participating in the school’s track and field team. However, the track is not wheelchair accessible. Ms. Nguyen faces a dilemma:

Track and Field Participation:

* Carlos wants to compete alongside his peers, but the track’s design excludes him.
* Ms. Nguyen wonders: Should she advocate for modifying the track to accommodate Carlos, potentially disrupting existing plans? Or should she encourage an alternative activity, preserving the track team’s routine?

### Scenario 2: The Individualized Accommodations Quandary

Background: Mr. Lee teaches a self-contained classroom for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) at Willowbrook Elementary. One of his students, Maya, has sensory sensitivities and struggles with transitions. Maya’s IEP specifies individualized accommodations, including a sensory break area. However, during a surprise fire drill, Mr. Lee faces a dilemma:

Fire Drill Chaos:

* The loud alarm startles Maya, causing distress. She covers her ears and curls up on the floor.
* Mr. Lee wonders: Should he prioritize the safety protocol and evacuate the class, potentially exacerbating Maya’s anxiety? Or should he bend the rules and allow her to stay in the sensory break area until the drill ends?

### Scenario 3: The Confidentiality Conundrum

Background: Mrs. Patel is a special education teacher at Oakwood Middle School. She works closely with students who have emotional and behavioral disorders. One of her students, Jake, has severe anxiety and often confides in her about personal struggles. Jake shares a deeply personal experience related to his family during a counseling session. Mrs. Patel is torn between maintaining Jake’s trust and her legal obligation to report any signs of abuse or neglect. Here’s the situation:

Jake’s Revelation:

* Jake tearfully reveals that his older brother physically abuses him at home. He pleads with Mrs. Patel not to tell anyone because he fears retaliation.
* Mrs. Patel faces a dilemma: Should she honor Jake’s trust and keep the information confidential, or should she report it to the school counselor or child protective services, potentially jeopardizing Jake’s safety?

### Scenario 4: The Inclusion Dilemma

Background: Ms. Rodriguez is a dedicated special education teacher at Maplewood Elementary School. She teaches a diverse group of students, including those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and varying levels of support needs. One of her students, Alex, has Down syndrome and is part of the general education classroom for most of the day due to the school’s inclusion policy. Alex’s inclusion in the general education classroom has been beneficial in many ways. He interacts with peers, participates in class discussions, and learns from the same curriculum as his classmates. Here’s the situation:

During a science experiment, the teacher assigns groups for a hands-on activity. Alex’s group includes three other students. While Alex is enthusiastic, he struggles with fine motor skills and verbal communication. The group members are supportive, but they find it challenging to adapt the experiment to accommodate Alex’s needs. Ms. Rodriguez faces a dilemma: Should she intervene and modify the experiment to ensure Alex’s full participation, potentially disrupting the flow of the lesson for other students? Or should she let the group handle it independently, risking Alex feeling left out?

Parent Expectations:

* Alex’s parents are actively involved in his education. They appreciate the inclusive environment but express concerns about his progress. They want Alex to thrive academically and socially.
* Ms. Rodriguez faces conflicting expectations: Should she prioritize Alex’s academic growth while balancing parental expectations, or should she focus solely on fostering a positive social experience for him?

## Reference

Microsoft. (2024). *Copilot.* [www.bing.com/chat.](http://www.bing.com/chat)