



Education Support Professionals (ESPs): Professional Growth Continuum (PGC) Professionalism: Professional Dispositions *Proficient Level*

Competency

The ESP demonstrates professional dispositions effectively at their worksite.

Key Method

The ESP demonstrates how professional dispositions shape their experiences and effectiveness at work.

Method Components

This micro-credential is based on the Universal Standard of Professionalism from the [NEA's ESP Professional Growth Continuum \(PGC\)](#), which defines professionalism as the ability to present and conduct oneself in a professional manner in all job settings.

Professionalism for education support professionals can be broken into two skill areas:

1. Professional Preparedness
2. Professional Dispositions

This micro-credential focuses on *professional dispositions*.

Words to Know

Ambassador: a person who represents, speaks for, or advertises a particular organization, group of people, activity, or brand

Appropriate: suitable or right for a particular situation or occasion

Continuum: a set of things on a scale, which have a particular characteristic to different degrees

Dignified: controlled, serious, and calm, and therefore deserving respect

Disposition: the way that someone normally thinks and behaves that shows what type of person they are

Emotional Control: a facet of emotion regulation, but refers primarily to attempts by an individual to manage the generation, experience, or expression of emotion, and/or one's emotional responses

Etiquette: the set of rules or customs that control accepted behavior in particular social groups or social situations

Effective: successful or achieving the result you want or the result you hoped for

Integrity: the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles that you refuse to change

Procedure: a set of actions that is the official or accepted way of doing something

Professional: a person who has a job that needs skill, education, or training

Promptness: the quality of doing something quickly and without delay, or at the arranged time

Proficient: skilled and experienced; good at doing something because of practice

Respectful: full of, characterized by, or showing politeness or deference

NEA's ESP Professional Growth Continuum

Let's look at examples of proficient-level professional dispositions in the NEA's ESP Professional Growth Continuum. There are many ways for ESPs to demonstrate professional dispositions at a proficient level. Demonstrating skills and knowledge in this standard may look different depending on your unique role, worksite, community, and experience. The following language, adapted from the PGC, provides examples (indicators are bold, descriptors are sub-bullets):

- **Conduct yourself as an ambassador for your school or agency.**
(For All Career Families)

- model school procedures and expectations
- greet students, parents/guardians, staff, visitors, and the community in a dignified, positive manner
- promptly respond to requests for information or assistance
- provide appropriate information to students, parents/guardians, staff, visitors, and the community
- demonstrate honesty and integrity in making decisions
- use appropriate language around students

- **(For Food Services)**

- provide friendly, accurate, and fast service

- **(For Health and Student Services)**

- communicate effectively in routine, sensitive, and confidential matters about students with required individuals
- promptly respond to requests for information within privacy guidelines
- provide appropriate information to students, parents/guardians, staff, visitors, and the community within privacy guidelines
- provide friendly, accurate, and fast service in a respectful manner

- **(For Paraeducators)**

- treat students, parents/guardians, staff, visitors, and the community in a dignified, respectful manner
- communicate effectively in routine, sensitive, and confidential matters about students with required individuals

(For Security Services)

- communicate effectively in routine, sensitive, and confidential matters about students with required individuals

(For Transportation Services)

- drive the vehicle in safe and professional manner

● **Work collaboratively with a team.**

(For All Career Families)

- acknowledge the merits of multiple viewpoints or ideas
- share ideas with and accept ideas of team members
- understand team structures and how to contribute in the best interest of the students

● **Maintain emotional control in stressful situations.**

(For all Career Families)

- use a firm, calm voice, and controlled breathing
- ask clarifying questions

● **Establish and maintain effective working relationships with others both inside and outside of the worksite.**

(For All Career Families)

- understand the needs and perspectives of students, parents/guardians, staff, visitors, and the community
- seek solutions to identified needs with appropriate staff

● **Respond appropriately to instruction and feedback.**

(For All Career Families)

- develop strategies for continuous improvement
- seek to understand the specifics of corrective feedback and how to change behavior or processes to improve

● **Shift tasks and priorities when necessary.**

(For All Career Families)

- Interrupt or reschedule planned tasks as needed
- Ask clarifying questions to understand needs and new priorities

(For Transportation Services)

- be willing to change or reschedule routes and runs based on the need

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1, 2, and 3.

If any part of the micro-credential is incomplete or left blank, the submission will be scored “Incomplete,” and you will receive an email with a note of encouragement to complete all Parts of the micro-credential and resubmit your work to NEA.

Please read the “How to earn a proficient score” section at the end of each Part below to make sure your micro-credential submission is complete and meets the requirements.

For each Part, you may choose to submit your response:

- in WRITING (created in Microsoft Word, Google Docs, or another word processing software; acceptable file formats are .doc, .docx, .pdf, .rtf); OR
- through an AUDIO RECORDING (created on a mobile device like a smartphone or tablet, or audio recording equipment; acceptable file formats are .mp3, .wav, .aiff); OR
- through a VIDEO RECORDING (created on a mobile device like a smartphone or tablet, or audio recording equipment; acceptable file formats are .mp4, .mov, .wmv, .avi)

Video or audio recordings for **each Part** should be one single file. You may complete all of the responses in one clip, or you may edit multiple clips together as one file to submit per Part.

IMPORTANT:

ESPs are strongly encouraged to explore the links in the *Supporting Rationale and Research and Resources* section at the end of this document.

Do this before working on Part 1 of your micro-credential submission.

Part 1: Skill Area Learning – Professional Dispositions at Your Worksite

Directions:

1. Locate a copy of your job description or think about your daily tasks/job responsibilities.
2. List two specific examples of tasks you do regularly that depend on your professional disposition skills below.

Task #1: _____

Task #2: _____

3. Based on what you selected above for Task #1, check the box or boxes of all the PGC indicators of professional disposition skills you think are related to the task. (There are no wrong answers.)

- Conduct yourself as an ambassador for your school or agency
- Work collaboratively with a team
- Maintain emotional control in stressful situations
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with others both inside and outside of the worksite
- Respond appropriately to instruction and feedback
- Shift tasks and priorities when necessary

4. Based on what you selected above for Task #2, check the box or boxes of all the PGC indicators of professional disposition skills you think are related to the task. (There are no wrong answers).

- Conduct yourself as an ambassador for your school or agency
- Work collaboratively with a team
- Maintain emotional control in stressful situations
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with others both inside and outside of the worksite

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- Respond appropriately to instruction and feedback
- Shift tasks and priorities when necessary

5. Explain how professional dispositions are essential to how you complete Task #1 and #2 using the skill(s) you identified above. As you explain, be sure to include the following:

a. Tell us:

- your career family title;
- your worksite type (elementary, middle, high school, district, or institution of higher education); and
- the PGC indicator that best connects to each task.

b. How are professional dispositions essential to how you complete these tasks?

c. What could happen if you did not have professional dispositions skills? What impact(s) could it have on students, schools, etc.?

d. How do your professional dispositions help you help people you interact with during the workday (e.g., students, co-workers, colleagues, administrators, supervisors, family and community members, etc.)?

e. Describe a time when demonstrating professional dispositions was challenging, and explain what you did to address the challenge.

You may choose to submit a written response for Part 1. If you do this:

- Create a new Word document.
- Copy and paste your responses to items #2 – 5. This should include answers/responses to the above questions and prompts. Save the document.

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- Upload the document file to the NEA Certification Bank submission page section for Part 1.

OR

You may submit an audio or video response for Part 1. If you do this:

- Use a mobile device (e.g., smartphone or tablet) to make an audio or video recording of yourself answering all of the questions and prompts for items #2 – 5 above. Feel free to refer to any notes you have made while exploring the topic. Save your recording.
- Upload the file of the recording to the NEA Certification Bank submission page section for Part 1.
- The audio or video recording should be no more than 7 minutes in length. If a submitted recording for Part 1 is longer than 7 minutes, only the first 7 minutes will be reviewed.

Submission Checklist:

- Upload your written, audio, or video recording to Part 1.
- Completely answer each question/prompt, and
- If you submit an audio or video recording: make sure the total length of your responses for Part 1 is no longer than 7 minutes.
- If you submit a written response: make sure the total length of your response for Part 1 is 350 words minimum and no longer than 1000 words.
- *If you have a job description, please upload a copy with the rest of your files in Part 1 of the NEA Certification Bank submission page for this micro-credential. This will help NEA learn more about how employers view ESP roles and will not affect your score. Submitting your employer-created job description is not required to earn a proficient score on this micro-credential.

How to earn a passing and proficient score in Part 1:

Part 1 Passing: Responses to directions #2 – 4 Identify the work tasks dependent upon the PGC indicators for the skill area in this

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micro-credential. At least three terms from the “Words to Know” section must be integrated accurately into your responses.

Part 1 Rubric: Responses to direction #5 including sub-bullets

Score:	Developing	Proficient
Direction #5: Explain how professional dispositions are essential to how you complete work tasks #1 and #2 using the PGC skills identified.	Provide answers to some or all questions but little to no detail illustrating the points shared.	Provide answers to all questions describing with examples from work experiences how professional dispositions are essential to the completion of work tasks. Examples describe positive and negative impacts as well as challenges.

Part 2: Interview

Directions: Follow the steps below, make an audio or video recording or written transcription of the interview, and save it to upload as part of your submission.

Identify one person from your ESP career family with whom you feel comfortable discussing professional dispositions. Do not have the interviewee share any personal information that could be used to identify them (e.g., name, school, district, etc.), as they should remain anonymous.

Before the interview, provide the interviewee with a copy of the questions and the PGC indicators and descriptors listed above. The recording should be 5-10 minutes long. If a submitted recording for Part 2 is

longer than 10 minutes, only the first 10 minutes will be reviewed. Written transcriptions should be at most 1000 words.

Interview the person using only questions #1-3 below and include their responses. After conducting the interview, answer all of the questions yourself:

1. What is one aspect of your professional disposition that you feel confident in?
 - a. What specifically did you do or what happened to help you gain that confidence?
2. What is one aspect of your professional disposition where you think you have the most growing or learning to do?
 - a. Why do you think you have the most growing or learning to do in this aspect?
3. Do you think that we, at our worksite, are encouraging adults to develop and use their professional dispositions skills?
 - a. If yes, provide a specific example of what we are doing well to make this happen and how you know it works.
 - b. If no, what specifically do you think we could do differently?
4. What have you learned from talking with a co-worker or colleague about professional dispositions?

Submission Checklist

- Upload your audio or video recording or written transcription of your interview to Part 2 of the NEA Certification Bank submission page.
- Include complete, relevant responses to all questions from the interviewee AND the submitter/you.
- Answer 1, 1a, 2, 2a, 3; then
- Answer either 3a or 3b.
- For questions 1 and 2, provide specific and relevant examples.
- For questions 3a or 3b, provide relevant specifics on how school/worksite/community staff and/or leaders are encouraging the development and usage of professional dispositions or provide achievable ideas for what could be done differently to improve in this area.

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- Make sure the length of your recording is no longer than 10 minutes, and the length of a written transcription is no longer than 1000 words.

How to earn a proficient score in Part 2:

Part 2 Rubric:

Score:	Developing	Proficient
Interviews	Interview of co-worker and self do not provide answers to all questions or provide answers to all questions but only with general examples of how confidence has been gained in professional dispositions, areas of growth or learning related to the skill area; and whether adults are encouraged to develop and use their knowledge in this skill area on the job.	Interview of co-worker and self provide answers to all questions, demonstrating understanding of professional dispositions and describe with work examples how confidence has been gained in professional dispositions; identify areas of growth or learning related to the skill area; whether adults are encouraged to develop and use their knowledge in this skill area on the job and how this could be improved if needed; and apply understanding of co-worker's experiences to inform the submitter's knowledge about the skill area.

Part 3: Reflection

Directions:

Read all of the text in the three numbered prompts/questions below.

Then respond to all three prompts/questions through a written response **OR** an audio or video recording of yourself.

- If you submit a written response: make sure your Part 3 response is 350 words minimum and no longer than 750 words.
- If you submit a recording (audio or video): make sure your recording for Part 3 is no longer than 5 minutes.

Prompts/Questions:

1. Describe one missed opportunity at your worksite when you or others could have done a better job using professional dispositions effectively. (*Your response describing a missed opportunity will not negatively impact your score and will not be shared.)
2. What action step or small change can you make in the next seven months to strengthen your professional disposition skills? How could you put those stronger skills to use at your worksite, school, community, district, or institution of higher education?

Some examples:

- Talk about your exploration of professional dispositions with another member of your worksite community. Share what you've learned or realized, and ask them about their thoughts on the topic.
- Change how you approach one task or part of your day where you have realized you could be more effective with your professional dispositions.

3. Describe who will benefit from your steps to develop and deepen your knowledge and practice of your professional dispositions. Tell us how and why they will benefit.

Submission Checklist

- Upload your written, audio, or video response to the NEA Certification Bank submission page for Part 3.
- Include relevant, complete, and specific responses to all three prompts/questions.
- Make sure your responses reflect an understanding of what proficient professional dispositions means for ESPs.
- Make sure the length of your written response is 350 words minimum and no longer than 750 words, or the length of your recording is no longer than 5 minutes.

How to earn a passing score in Part 3:

Part 3 Passing: Your reflection identifies an action step or change you can make to strengthen your professional dispositions, how you will put those stronger skills to use at your worksite, school, community, or institution of higher education, and who will benefit and how they will benefit.

Supporting Rationale and Research

ESPs are strongly encouraged to explore the links in the Supporting Rationale and Research, and Resources section below before beginning to work on Part 1 of the micro-credential.

National Education Association: [NEA ESP Professional Growth Continuum](#)

Resources:

The PGC: What it is and how to use it

- [English video](#)
- [Spanish video](#)

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- [Spanish resources](#)

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD): [Whole Child Approach to Education](#)