



Education Support Professionals (ESPs): Professional Growth Continuum (PGC) Health and Safety: Problem Solving and Decision Making *Proficient Level*

Competency

The ESP efficiently and effectively demonstrates health and safety problem solving and decision making at their worksite.

Key Method

The ESP demonstrates how health and safety problem solving and decision making shape their experiences and effectiveness at work.

Method Components

This micro-credential is based on the Universal Standard of Health and Safety from the [NEA's ESP Professional Growth Continuum \(PGC\)](#), which defines health and safety as the ability to protect the health and safety of oneself and others by knowing and executing health, safety, and emergency protocols/procedures with fidelity. Health and Safety for education support professionals can be broken into two skill areas:

1. Knowledge of Health and Safety Regulations

2. Health and Safety Problem Solving and Decision Making

This micro-credential focuses on *health and safety problem solving and decision making*.

Words to Know

Code-of-Conduct: a set of rules that members of an organization or people with a particular job or position must follow

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

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

Efficient: working or operating quickly and effectively in an organized way; or working in a way that does not waste a resource (something valuable such as fuel, water, or money)

Law: a rule made by a government or a system of rules that state how people may and may not behave in society and in business, and that often orders particular punishments if they do not obey

Policy: a set of ideas or a plan of what to do in particular situations that have been officially agreed upon by a group of people, a business organization, a government, or a political party

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

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

Regulation: an official rule or law

Report: a spoken or written description of an event or situation

Requirement: something needed or necessary; something that you must do

Rule: an accepted principle or instruction that states the way things are or should be done, and tells you what you are allowed or are not allowed to do

NEA's ESP Professional Growth Continuum

Let's look at examples of proficient-level health and safety problem solving and decision making in the NEA's ESP Professional Growth Continuum. There are many ways for ESPs to demonstrate health and safety problem solving and decision making 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):

- **Know and fulfill assigned and designated functions during practice and active emergency/evacuation procedures.**
 - (For All Career Families)**
 - Keep an emergency plan in an easily accessible location
 - station yourself at a designated location to direct emergency responders
 - (For Clerical Services)**
 - keep daily attendance records available for cross-checking student and staff count
 - station yourself at the front entrance or a designated location to direct emergency responders
 - (For Food Services)**
 - escort and direct students in the cafeteria or kitchen at the time of an emergency
 - conduct an emergency shutdown of all kitchen and cafeteria equipment
 - know the procedures for kitchen/electrical fires
 - (For Health and Student Services)**
 - escort and direct students in the health office at the time of an emergency
 - (For Paraeducators)**
 - escort and direct students with high needs at the time of an emergency
 - (For Security Services)**
 - follow emergency procedures based on protocols and guidance

from your supervisor

(For Skilled Trades)

- know the physical design and location of emergency/electrical panels and safe areas in the school
- Know and conduct emergency shutdown procedures for all equipment

(For Transportation Services)

- conduct safe bus evacuations for students with and without special needs
- know how to operate all bus safety equipment (e.g., emergency fire exits, window exits, fire extinguishers)

● **Make quick and accurate decisions in difficult situations.**

(For All Career Families)

- know the procedures for a person with a knife or firearm
- call for ambulance/emergency support
- make the appropriate staff aware of the situation

(For Clerical Services)

- alert emergency response team based on guidance from the administration

(For Food Services)

- know the procedures for assisting a choking or unresponsive student or staff
- know and follow all Health Department regulations

(For Security Services)

- alert emergency response team based on guidance from administration

(For Skilled Trades)

- ensure safe containment of hazardous construction materials

● **Maintain security and safety with regard to visitors in the building.**

(For all Career Families)

- know sign-in procedures and parameters for visitors in the building (e.g., name badge visible, in permitted areas, observing

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- school expectations, etc.)
- know procedures for strangers in the building or on campus

(For Clerical Services)

- know how to operate surveillance or other equipment in the school office

(For Custodial and Maintenance)

- open and secure the building
- know evacuation paths
- coordinate utility shutoffs
- respond promptly and according to plan when an emergency code is announced

(For Security Services)

- secure the building
- know evacuation paths
- respond promptly and according to plan when an emergency code is announced
- monitor surveillance equipment
- know plans for school events to schedule and coordinate security.

(For Skilled Trades)

- know evacuation paths
- coordinate utility shutoffs
- respond promptly and according to plan when an emergency code is announced

(For Technical Services)

- know evacuation paths
- coordinate utility shutoffs
- respond promptly and according to plan when an emergency code is announced
- monitor and update surveillance equipment

(For Transportation Services)

- set and monitor parameters for students and adults at bus stops and pickup points (e.g., in permitted areas and active supervision)
- respond promptly and according to plan when an emergency code is announced

- **Recognize behaviors that students may exhibit during emergency situations.**

(For All Career Families)

- plan for students who may have a strong response to stressful situations (e.g., seizure, run away, hide, etc.)
- implement a protocol for students with a history of unpredictable or violent behavior

- **Display confidence and poise when making judgment calls during emergency drills or events.**

(For All Career Families)

- use a firm, calm voice and controlled breathing
- use practiced, predetermined phrases for clarity under stress

- **Honor privacy and exercise confidentiality of all personal information regarding students, parents/guardians, staff, visitors, and the community.**

(For All Career Families)

- share only necessary information with emergency or other assisting staff

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 on 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 on 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 take time 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 – Health and Safety Problem Solving and Decision Making at Your Worksite

Directions:

1. Locate a copy of your job description or think about the tasks/job responsibilities you do on a daily basis in your job.
2. Select two specific examples of tasks you do on a regular basis that are dependent on your health and safety problem solving and decision making skills and list them 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 health and safety problem solving and

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decision making skills you think are related to the task. (There are no wrong answers).

- Know and fulfill assigned and designated functions during practice and active emergency/evacuation procedures
- Make quick and accurate decisions in difficult situations
- Maintain security and safety with regard to visitors in the building
- Recognize the behaviors that students may exhibit during emergency situations
- Display confidence and poise when making judgment calls during emergency drills or events
- Honor privacy and ensure confidentiality of all personal information regarding students, parents/guardians, staff, visitors, and the community

4. Based on what you selected above for Task #2, check the box or boxes of all the indicators of health and safety problem solving and decision making skills you think are related to the task (there are no wrong answers).

- Know and fulfill assigned and designated functions during practice and active emergency/evacuation procedures.
- Make quick and accurate decisions in difficult situations.
- Maintain security and safety with regard to visitors in the building.
- Recognize the behaviors that students may exhibit during emergency situations.
- Display confidence and poise when making judgment calls during emergency drills or events.
- Honor privacy and ensure confidentiality of all personal information regarding students, parents/guardians, staff, visitors, and the community.

5. Explain how health and safety problem solving and decision making skills are essential to how you complete Task #1 & #2 using the skill(s) you identified above. As you explain, be sure to include the following:

- a. Tell us:
 - your career family title;

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- 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making skills essential to how you complete these tasks?
- c. What could happen if you did not have health and safety problem solving and decision making skills? What impact(s) could it have on students, schools, etc.?
- d. How do your health and safety problem solving and decision making skills 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making was a challenge for you and 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 all of the above questions and prompts. Save the document.
- Upload the document file to the NEA Certification Bank submission page section for Part 1.

OR

You may choose to 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 during your exploration of the topic. Save your recording.
- Upload the file of the recording to the NEA Certification Bank submission page section for Part 1.

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The 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 of it along 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 that are dependent upon the PGC indicators for the skill area in this 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making is 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making is essential to the completion of work tasks. Examples describe positive and

		negative impacts as well as challenges.
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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 having a conversation about health and safety problem solving and decision making. 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 in length. If a submitted recording for Part 2 is longer than 10 minutes, only the first 10 minutes will be reviewed. Written transcriptions should be no longer than 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making that you feel confident in?
 - a. What specifically did you do or what happened to help you to gain that confidence?
2. What is one aspect of health and safety problem solving and decision making 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making skills?

- a. If yes, provide a specific example of what we are doing well to make this happen, and how you know it is working.
 - 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making?

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 from 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 question 3a or 3b, provide relevant specifics on how school/worksite/community staff and/or leaders are encouraging the development and usage of health and safety problem solving and decision making skills, or provide achievable ideas for what could be done differently to do better in this area.
- Make sure the length of a 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	Interview of co-worker and self provide answers to all questions, demonstrating understanding of health and safety problem solving and decision

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	on how confidence has been gained in health and safety problem solving and decision making, 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.	making and describe with work examples how confidence has been gained in health and safety problem solving and decision making; 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 the co-worker's experiences to inform the submitter's knowledge about the skill area.
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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** through 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making skills 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making skills 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 could be more effective through health and safety problem solving and decision making skills.
3. Describe who will benefit from your steps to develop and deepen your own health and safety problem solving and decision making skills. 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making 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 health and safety problem solving and decision making skills, how you will put those stronger skills to use at your worksite, school, community, or institution of higher education, along with 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](#)
- [Spanish resources](#)

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