Most elementary school teachers are generalists who teach a variety of subjects. In recent years, education experts have grown concerned that these teachers are not adequately prepared to meet the ever-growing demand for increasing student achievement in mathematics. Elementary mathematics specialists — or in the state of Texas, elementary master mathematics teachers — meet this demand for higher-level mathematics instruction in elementary schools.

Texas State University offers a Texas master mathematics teaching credential EC-6 as part of the master of education in elementary education. Graduates of the program become teachers, teacher-leaders or coaches who support effective mathematics instruction and student learning at the classroom, school, district or state levels. The specific roles and responsibilities of an elementary mathematics specialist/elementary master mathematics teacher vary according to the needs of each setting.

“Given the many demands and expertise required to teach all subjects of elementary school, AMTE supports the use of elementary mathematics specialists to teach and to support others who teach mathematics at the elementary level. We believe that special expertise is required to do this job well. This expertise includes both a deep and practical knowledge of the content and pedagogy of elementary and middle school mathematics and the ability to work with other professionals to develop their mathematical knowledge for teaching.”

— Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators
Course Work
To enter the elementary mathematics specialist program, candidates must meet the following requirements:

• have a teaching certificate
• have three years of teaching experience

The following courses are required for the elementary mathematics specialist certification. Where indicated, classes are available online or through CONNECT, a tool that allows classes to meet, communicate and view presentations in a realtime online environment.

The first 18 hours prepare students to take the TexMaT Master Mathematics Teacher EC-6 exam. Passing the exam is necessary to becoming a credentialed elementary math specialist in Texas.

• Teaching Math in Elementary School (number and operations emphasis)
• Evaluative Techniques for the Classroom (online)
• Methods in Geometry for Elementary Math Teachers
• Coaching and Mentoring Skills for Elementary Math Teachers (CONNECT, online)
• Problem-solving, Reasoning and Modeling for Elementary Math Teachers (CONNECT, online)
• Probability and Statistics Methods for Elementary Math Teachers (CONNECT, online)
• Human Growth and Development II (CONNECT, online)
• Curriculum and Management in the Elementary and Middle School (CONNECT, online)
• Multicultural Teaching and Learning
• Philosophical Foundations of Education (CONNECT, online)
• Research in Education
• Principal and Practice in Elementary School (CONNECT, online)

The master’s degree program requires an additional 12 hours of instruction that strengthens the role of the elementary mathematics specialist.

Career Opportunities
At the classroom level, an elementary math specialist may teach mathematics to elementary students in one or more grade levels or work with particular groups of students to provide remedial or enrichment support services. At the school or district level, the specialist may work primarily with teachers as coaches or in a professional development capacity targeting school-wide improvement in mathematics. In this role, elementary math specialists build and strengthen teachers’ understanding of mathematics content and help them develop more effective instruction and assessment. The development of curriculum, assessment or policy may also be the responsibility of the elementary math specialist.

Admission Policy
Applicants must submit a Graduate College application. Visit www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/apply for access to an online application, information about where to submit application documents and additional details. Students considering working toward the elementary mathematics specialist certificate should have the following skills and expertise:

• deep and broad understanding of mathematical content, including the specialized knowledge needed for teaching
• solid knowledge of the elementary context
• expertise in using and helping others use effective instructional and assessment practices that are informed by knowledge of mathematical learning trajectories
• knowledge and skills for working with adult learners
• leadership skills and the ability to influence and support educational efforts to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics

Visit www.gradcollege.txstate.edu for access to an online application and additional details. Generally, applications are due June 15 for the fall semester and October 15 for the spring semester.

Financial Assistance
For more information about scholarships, financial aid and application deadlines, visit The Graduate College website at www.gradcollege.txstate.edu and click on Financing Your Graduate Education. Please note that program admission priority deadlines must be met in order to be considered for scholarships, fellowships and assistantships.

Contact
Beth Bos, Ph.D., Graduate Advisor
Elementary Mathematics Specialist Certification
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Texas State University
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666–4684
Phone: 512.245.8306
Fax: 512.245.7911
E-mail: bb33@txstate.edu

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