



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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CONTACT:  
MARILYN ERRETT (916) 445-7912

## **California Leads Nation in Approving New Special Education Communication Development Teaching Authorization**

SACRAMENTO – At an August 6, 2009 public hearing, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing approved regulations for a new Communication Development authorization for teachers serving special needs students who struggle with communication and literacy. Special educators who earn this authorization can provide focused instruction that helps students with communication problems that interfere with academic achievement and social interaction.

The Commission's decision comes at a time of severe teacher shortages in the area of special education, and an increase in students who need specialized instruction. Over a period of two and a half years, the Commission held public forums throughout California, brought together an expert panel of special educators, and queried other states regarding underserved student populations, best practices and up-to-date services for special education students.

Based on the recommendation of its Special Education Workgroup and input from hundreds of California teachers, administrators, parents and others, the Commission made California the first in the nation to address the call for teachers prepared to help students develop essential communication, language, and literacy skills in a classroom setting.

The new Communication Development authorization will not meet the shortage of speech-language pathologists. There is a clear need for more speech-language pathologists who are responsible for serving students whose disabilities are of a clinical or medical nature. These services differ from those to be provided by the Communication Development teacher whose responsibility it is to assist students to achieve academic success in the core curriculum. The new Communication Development authorization will also comply with federal No Child Left Behind requirements for classroom teachers.

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The Commission-approved regulations will now go to the Office of Administrative Law for review. Upon approval of the regulations, the Commission will develop standards to guide teacher preparation programs in developing course work and field work experiences for this new group of teacher candidates.

The Commission's advisory panel made several other recommendations related to special education credentials. The full report can be viewed at:

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/reports/Special-Education-Certification-Report-2007.pdf>

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