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Future Special Education Teachers Prepared to Meet New Challenges

SACRAMENTO –The Commission on Teacher Credentialing adopted a set of revitalized teacher education program standards to guide the preparation of special education teachers at their December 12, 2009 meeting. The result will be teachers who are better prepared to meet the needs of a changing population of students with special needs, including students with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Key revisions in the preparation for special education credentials include:

- New Communication Development authorization to serve students with special needs in language development, autism-related communication needs, social communication, school readiness skills, and special needs literacy development
- Preparation for teaching students with Autism Spectrum Disorder included in all specialization areas: Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Moderate/Severe Disabilities, Visual Impairment, Physical and Health Impairment, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Early Childhood Special Education, and Communication Development
- Emphasis on planning, assessment and specialized intervention services
- Teacher collaboration and consultation as more students are placed in inclusive settings

Revised special education teacher preparation programs will be able to provide distance learning and undergraduate options, improve advisement, and grant equivalency for prior coursework and experience.

In January, the Commission will consider revised program standards for Special Education Added Authorizations that can be added to an existing credential. For example, teachers who are not currently authorized to provide services and instruction to students with autism can add an authorization that allows them to do so.

Commission staff will provide assistance to special education teacher preparation program faculty as they revise their programs.

For a look at the new program standards see: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2008-12/2008-12-3B.pdf>

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