

State Of California  
Commission On Teacher Credentialing

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## EDUCATION SPECIALIST INSTRUCTION CREDENTIAL

### Requirements for Teachers Prepared in California for the Level I and II Credentials

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The Commission issues a two-level special education teaching credential. A five-year Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential is the first document issued after an individual has met basic credential requirements. The Level II credential is issued once all credential requirements have been completed.

The Commission is transitioning to the new preliminary and clear Education Specialist Instruction Credentials. Dates have been established in regulations to move to the preliminary and clear teaching credential programs and to allow candidates to finish their current programs. The last date to enroll candidates in a Level I program was December 31, 2011, and candidates must finish the Level I program by January 31, 2013.

For credential candidates seeking to enter a preliminary education specialist credential program or complete the clear credential program through a Commission-approved induction program, please see [Credential Information Leaflet CL-808CA](#) on the Commission's web site.

#### Authorization (see Terms and Definitions)

The Education Specialist Instruction Credential authorizes the holder to conduct Educational Assessments related to student's access to the academic core curriculum and progress towards meeting instructional academic goals, provide instruction, and Special Education Support to individuals in the area of specialization listed on the credential in the following settings:

- Resource rooms or services
- Special education settings
- General education settings
- Special schools
- Home/hospital settings
- State hospitals
- Development centers
- Correctional facilities
- Non-public, non-sectarian schools and agencies
- Alternative and non-traditional instructional public school settings other than classroom

#### Teaching English Learners

Individuals completing an Education Specialist Level I Teacher Preparation Program that includes content for teaching English learners, as described in Education Code section 44259.5, are authorized to provide instruction for English language development in grades twelve and below, including preschool, and in classes organized for adults; and specially designed academic instruction in English within the subject area and grade level authorization of the Education Specialist Instruction Teaching Credential.

#### Specialty Areas

- *Mild/Moderate Disabilities (M/M)*  
Includes specific learning disabilities; mild to moderate mental retardation; other health impairment; serious emotional disturbance; and authorizes service in grades K–12 and in classes organized primarily for adults through age 22.

- *Moderate/Severe Disabilities (M/S)*  
Includes autism; deaf-blindness; moderate to severe mental retardation; multiple disabilities; serious emotional disturbance; and authorizes service in grades K–12 and in classes organized primarily for adults through age 22.
- *Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)*  
Includes deafness; hearing impairment; deaf-blindness; and authorizes service to individuals ages birth through 22.
- *Visual Impairments (VI)*  
Includes blindness; visual impairment; deaf-blindness; and authorizes service to individuals ages birth through 22.
- *Physical and Health Impairments (PHI)*  
Includes orthopedic impairment; other health impairment; multiple disabilities; traumatic brain injury; and authorizes service to individuals ages birth through 22.
- *Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)*  
Includes the mild/moderate and moderate/severe disabilities listed above and traumatic brain injury, and authorizes service to children ages birth to pre-kindergarten only.

An added authorization in Early Childhood Special Education is also available to individuals who hold a preliminary, Level I, professional clear, clear, Level II, or life special education teaching credential, and who complete a program through a Commission-approved program sponsor.

The ECSE Added Authorization authorizes the holder to provide special education services in the area of mild/moderate or moderate/severe disabilities for students ages birth to pre-K as determined by the local level special education assessment.

### Requirements for the Level I Credential

The Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential is valid for five years from the date of issuance.

Applicants must satisfy **all** of the following requirements:

1. Obtain a baccalaureate or higher degree, except in professional education, from a regionally-accredited college or university.
2. Satisfy the [basic skills requirement](#). See Commission leaflet [CL-667](#), entitled [Basic Skills Requirement](#) for additional information.
3. **One** of the following requirements must be satisfied:
  - a. Provide verification of subject-matter competence by either passing the appropriate subject matter examination(s) as specified in Verifying Subject-Matter Competence by Examination (Multiple Subject) leaflet [CL-674M \[pdf\]](#) or Verifying Subject-Matter Competence by Examination (Single Subject) leaflet [CL-674S \[pdf\]](#).
  - b. Complete a Commission-approved subject-matter program of course work or its equivalent and obtain certification of completion from the authorized person in the education department of a California college or university with an approved program. However, the availability of subject matter programs at California colleges and universities may be limited as they continue to phase out programs. Applicants may be required to pass the appropriate subject matter examinations based upon specification of this requirement in their university's professional preparation program.\*\*

- c. For Specialized Science subjects only, individuals may take and pass the appropriate subject matter examinations or obtain verification of completion of subject-matter course work from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Information, including requirements and procedures, can be found in [Coded Correspondence 03-0010](#).
4. Pass the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA). Applicants who complete their teacher preparation on or after January 1, 2000 are required to pass RICA. RICA is not required for the area of Early Childhood Special Education, nor is it required of individuals who hold a valid California teaching credential which was issued based upon possession of a bachelor's degree and completion of a teacher preparation program including student teaching. Visit the Evaluation Systems Pearson website at [www.rica.nesinc.com](http://www.rica.nesinc.com) for more information.
5. Complete a [Commission-approved Education Specialist Credential program](#) in an education specialist specialty area resulting in formal recommendation by the approved program through which program requirements are completed. Contact the program sponsor for specific requirements.

Certificates of Eligibility may be issued to California trained individuals who meet all the requirements for the Level I credential but are not yet employed in a specialist position. The Certificate allows the individual to actively seek employment in the specialist position(s) listed on the certificate.

There is no requirement that the Certificate of Eligibility be automatically issued if the individual is not employed. The program sponsor may request either a Level I or a Certificate of Eligibility using the online recommendation process.

**Note:** The Certificate of Eligibility is *not* available for candidates completing the Preliminary Education Specialist Instruction Credential program.

\*\* Verification of subject-matter competence is **not required** for the area of Early Childhood Special Education, nor is it required of individuals who hold a valid California clear, life, or professional clear teaching credential based upon possession of a bachelor's degree and completion of a professional teacher preparation program, including student teaching.

## Requirements for the Level II Credential

Applicants must satisfy **all** of the following requirements:

1. Complete an individualized induction plan designed in collaboration with your employer and a California college or university with a Commission-approved education specialist program in the disability area listed on your Level I credential and obtain the formal recommendation for the credential by the program sponsor where the individualized induction plan was completed
2. Complete a course in Health Education, including but not limited to, nutrition; the physiological and sociological effects of alcohol, narcotic and drug abuse; and the use of tobacco. This requirement must include training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) that covers infant, child, and adult CPR skills
3. Complete a course in Computer Education, including instruction in general and specialized skills in the use of computers in educational settings
4. Provide verification of a minimum of two years of successful full-time special education teaching experience in a public school, nonpublic school, or private school with equivalent status while holding the Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential, verified by your employer. (See Definitions)

**Note:** Dates were established in regulations to move to the new preliminary and clear teaching credential programs and to allow candidates to finish their current programs. The last date to enroll a candidate in a Level II program is December 31, 2014, and candidates must finish the Level II program by January 31, 2019.

### **Transition to the Clear Credential**

Holders of the Level I Education Specialist credential have the option of completing a Commission-approved program to obtain the Level II credential or may transition to a Commission-approved Induction program in special education to obtain the Clear Education Specialist Instruction credential. The preliminary education specialist preparation program will develop a Transition Plan for each candidate prior to the completion of the preliminary program. The Transition Plan will assist the developers in the creation of the Individualized Induction Plan (IIP). An IIP for a candidate with a Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential completing an induction program must also address the content currently in the Level II program. A credential holder should contact the approved induction program concerning this option. Please see [Coded Correspondence 10-12](#) on the Commission's web site for more information. (See Terms and Definitions)

### **National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification**

Individuals who earn [National Board for Professional Teaching Standards](#) Certification in the area of *Exceptional Needs/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood* after the issuance of their California Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential will be issued a Level II Credential. Individuals meeting this criteria may submit an application directly to the Commission, using the [Online Direct process](#), or by mail including [form 41-4 \[pdf\]](#), full application [processing fee \[pdf\]](#) and a photocopy of their National Board Certification.

### **Terms and Definitions**

#### ***Full-Time Teaching Experience***

This is defined as teaching a minimum of 4 hours a day, unless the minimum statutory attendance requirement for the students served is less. Experience must be on a daily basis and for at least 75% of the school year. Experience may be accrued in increments of a minimum of one semester. No part-time or combination of teaching with other school employment will be accepted. All experience must be gained in public schools in California. The candidate shall be responsible for obtaining verification of this experience on the official letterhead of the district or districts by the superintendent, assistant superintendent, director of personnel, or director of human resources in which the teacher was employed.

#### ***Transition Plan***

The preliminary education specialist preparation program will develop a Transition Plan for each candidate prior to the completion of the preliminary program that will assist the developers of the Individualized Induction Plan (IIP). The Plan includes the individual's strengths and areas of need that can be addressed in the clear credential preparation program. The Plan facilitates the individual's transition from initial teacher preparation to a clear education specialist credential preparation program by building upon and providing opportunities for demonstration and application of the pedagogical knowledge and skills acquired in the preliminary credential preparation program.

#### ***Individualized Induction Plan (IIP)***

Based on the Transition Plan, the IIP includes appropriate professional development and/or course work designed to expand and apply the candidate's skills and knowledge. The scope of the IIP is determined by the teacher's educational setting and/or areas identified in the Transition Plan as areas of need. The IIP identifies the coursework, experiences, and/or tasks that must be completed while guiding the activities to support growth and improvement of professional practice.

The IIP includes professional development and/or course work to guide the activities that support growth and improvement of professional practice. The scope of the IIP is determined by the teacher's educational setting and/or areas identified in the Transition Plan. A support provider, who holds a valid California special education teaching credential in the specialty area of the teacher or has sufficient professional background and experience in the specialty area, must be assigned to the teacher within 30 days of employment. The IIP must be completed by the special education teacher, the employing agency, and the program sponsor within 60 days of employment or, in the case of an individual who is not employed prior to beginning the supported induction program, to allow the teacher the maximum time to complete the clear credential requirements. If a preliminary program sponsor is no longer available or if the special education teacher transitions to a new program sponsor, the new partnering program sponsor must review and make appropriate changes to the IIP.

### ***Developmental Delay***

Student who needs special education and related services by experiencing a delay in one or more of the following: physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development or adaptive development.

### ***Hard-of-Hearing or Hearing Loss Includes Unilateral or Bilateral, Whether Fluctuating, Conductive, Sensorineural, and/or Auditory Neuropathy***

Hearing impairment or hearing loss, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness but may include problems involving the cochlea, the sensory organ of hearing.

### ***Educational Assessment***

Assessment of students in a comprehensive manner within the authorization of the teaching credential or added authorization using multiple sources of information and a variety of strategies that directly measure a student's performance to meet goals in areas of grade-level academic curriculum and/or functional goals designed to meet the Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individualized Family Service Program (IFSP), and/or Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) goals and objectives regarding eligibility and services that directly result from the student's disability according to state and federal accountability systems. The assessment process may include both formal and informal assessments to evaluate students' educational instruction needs and strengths for the purpose of making accommodations, modifications, and instructional decisions.

### ***Special Education Support***

Support includes participation in the Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individualized Family Service Program (IFSP), and/or Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) process including planning and implementation of the student's IEP, IFSP, and/or ITP; providing consultative, collaborative, and coordinating instruction with students, parents, teachers, and other community and school personnel; planning, developing, and implementing instructional program plans relative and within the authorization of the credential or added authorization. Special education support does not include providing speech, language and hearing, orientation and mobility, or audiology services.

*Reference: California Education Code, Sections 44225 and 44265, and Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Section 80046.5 through 80048.8.1*