

EDUCATION SPECIALIST INSTRUCTION CREDENTIAL

Requirements for Teachers Prepared in California for the Preliminary and Clear Credentials

The Commission issues a two-level special education teaching credential. Regulations approved in 2010 established two new levels for candidates completing the program standards approved in 2008 and 2009. The new levels will be 'preliminary' and 'clear'. A Preliminary Education Specialist Instruction Credential is the first document issued after an individual has met basic credential requirements. The Clear credential is issued once all credential requirements have been completed.

Since 1997, the Commission has issued a two-level special education teaching credential, known as 'Level I' and 'Level II'. The Commission will continue to issue Level I/II documents to individuals who complete these programs within the transition timeframes established in regulations. Information on the Level I and II requirements may be found in [Credential Information Leaflet CL-808C](#) 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

Autism Spectrum Disorders

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) content is included in the new preliminary Education Specialist Instruction Teaching Credential programs for all specialty areas. The preliminary and clear credential authorizes the holder to provide autism instructional services to students within the specialty area(s) of their credential. The ASD authorization appears as a separate authorization on the Education Specialist Instruction Credential.

Teaching English Learners

The Education Specialist Preliminary Teacher Preparation Program includes content for teaching English learners, as described in Education Code section 44259.5, that authorizes the credential holder 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 impairments; 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; authorizes service to children ages birth to pre-kindergarten only.
- *Language and Academic Development (LAD)*
Authorizes the holder to provide instructional services to students with academic communication and language needs to children in preschool, kindergarten, in grades 1 - 12 through age 22, and classes organized primarily for adults, but does not take the place of speech and language services as defined in Education Code section 56333

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 Preliminary Credential

The Preliminary 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 \[pdf\]](#), as aligned with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) core academic subjects (See Terms and Definitions).
 - b. Complete a Commission-approved single subject 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. The subject-matter program must align with the subject-matter competence requirements for the teaching credential under NCLB.
 - 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). 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 for more information.
5. Complete a [Commission-approved Education Specialist Credential program](#) in an education specialist specialty area resulting in formal recommendation by the Commission-approved program sponsor through which requirements are completed. Contact the institution for specific program requirements.

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 preliminary, clear, life, or professional clear general education teaching credential based upon possession of a bachelor's degree and completion of a professional teacher preparation program, including student teaching.

Requirements for the Clear Credential

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

1. Completion of a clear credential program through a Commission-approved Induction Program. The Induction program must be approved specifically for special education.

An individual with both general education (multiple or single subject) and special education preliminary teaching credentials may complete one set of clear credential requirements through induction. The list of professional development options in the IIP must address the candidate's needs for both the general education and special education credentials. To clear both a general education and special education credential with one induction program, the induction program must be completed concurrently through a program that is approved to offer both the general education and special education programs.

An individual who earned the clear multiple or single subject credential by completing a general education Induction Program who subsequently earns a preliminary Education Specialist Instruction Credential (in any of the specialty areas) must complete the portions of the approved induction program specific to special education. The individual is not required to repeat parts of the clear program that are in common with the general education Induction Program. The IIP for a multiple or single subject credential holder who did not complete induction to earn their clear credential or the holder of a General or Standard general education teaching credential will need to clarify with the approved induction program if any additional content in the induction program will need to be met.

Transition to the Clear Credential for holders of Level I Credentials

Holders of the Level I Education Specialist Instruction 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)

Note: Teaching experience is not required to earn a clear Education Specialist Instruction Credential.

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 Preliminary Education Specialist Instruction Credential will be issued a Clear Credential. Individuals meeting this criteria must submit an application ([form 41-4 \[pdf\]](#)), full application [processing fee \[pdf\]](#) and a photocopy of their National Board Certification directly to the Commission office.

Terms and Definitions

Subject-Matter Competence

The preliminary teaching credential requirements include alignment of the subject-matter competence requirement to the Federal NCLB core academic subject areas (English, reading/language arts, mathematics, science, foreign language, civics/government, economics, arts, history, geography, and elementary level). This allows candidates to meet the subject-matter competence requirement by passage of the appropriate examination(s) for the multiple subject teaching credential, or passage of the appropriate examination(s) or subject-matter program for the single subject teaching credential in the areas of art, English, foreign language, mathematics including foundational-level mathematics, music, social science, or science including foundational-level general science and specialized science.

This requirement is only for candidates earning the preliminary Education Specialist Teaching Credential and does not apply to candidates for the Level I Education Specialist Teaching Credential.

Individualized Induction Plan (IIP)

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 (see definition below). 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.

For the individual who holds both a preliminary general education and a preliminary or Level I education specialist credential, the IIP must be written to clear all preliminary credentials held. There is a twelve semester unit cap on the number of units that may be included in the IIP.

Transition Plan

The preliminary education specialist preparation program must develop a Transition Plan for each candidate prior to the completion of the preliminary program that will assist the developers of the 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.

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

Reference: California Education Code, Sections 44225, 44251, 44265, and 44373; Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Section 80046.5 through 80048.8.1