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## Information/Action

### *Educator Preparation Committee*

#### **Appropriate Content Knowledge Requirement for Special Education Teacher Candidates**

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**Executive Summary:** This agenda item presents additional information related to satisfying content knowledge requirements for prospective special education teachers. Several options are presented for the Commission's discussion. The discussion at this meeting will inform the next agenda item where the Commission will be asked to adopt performance expectations, program standards, and authorization statements.

**Recommended Action:** That the Commission discuss the options provided in this agenda item regarding the appropriate content knowledge requirement for special education teacher candidates and provide direction to staff.

**Presenters:** William Hatrick and Sarah Solari Colombini, Consultants, Professional Services Division

#### **Strategic Plan Goal**

##### ***II. Program Quality and Accountability***

- a) Develop and maintain rigorous, meaningful, and relevant standards that drive program quality and effectiveness for the preparation of the education workforce and are responsive to the needs of California's diverse student population.

April 2018

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## Appropriate Content Knowledge Requirement for Special Education Teacher Candidates

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### Introduction

At its [February 2018 meeting](#) the Commission adopted a revised credential structure for Education Specialist teaching credentials, as described below. As part of the implementation of the new credential structure, staff is presenting in this agenda item a deeper discussion of the appropriate content knowledge for education specialist candidates consistent with this credential structure. The new credential structure provides for specialty content areas for the Preliminary Education Specialist teaching credential:

- Mild to Moderate Support Needs (MMSN)
- Significant Support Needs (SSN)
- Visual Impairments (VI)
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)
- Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)

### Background

The content knowledge required of special education candidates has varied over time in accordance with the credential structure, authorization statements, and student ages/grades served by holders of the credential. For example, during the Ryan credentials era, special education teachers were required to hold a general education teaching credential prior to earning a special education credential, and thus the content knowledge requirement was satisfied by the preparation for the initial general education teaching credential.

Table 1 below provides an historical overview of the special education credential structure in California, including age range/grades authorized. Table 2 provides an overview of the supporting content knowledge requirements for special education candidates within each of these credential structures.

<b>Table 1: Historical Overview of Special Education Credential Structures</b>				
<i>B= Birth</i>	<i>Pre=Preschool</i>	<i>K= Kindergarten</i>	<i>12 = 12<sup>th</sup> grade</i>	<i>22= 22 years of age</i>
<b>Ryan Credentials (1970-1997)</b>		<b>Education Specialist Credentials (1997-2010)</b>		
Learning Handicapped (LH)	K-12	Mild/Moderate Disabilities (MM)	K-12	
Severely Handicapped (SH)	K-12	Moderate/Severe Disabilities (MS)	K-12	
Visually Handicapped (VH)	K-12	Visual Impairments (VI)	B-22	
Physically Handicapped (PH)	K-12	Physical and Health Impairment (PHI)	B-22	
Communication Handicapped (CH)	K-12	Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)	B-22	
		Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)	B-Pre	

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			<i>22= 22 years of age</i>
<b>Education Specialist Credentials (2010-2018)</b>		<b>Education Specialist Credentials (2018- )</b>	
Mild/Moderate Disabilities (MM)	K-12	Mild to Moderate Support Needs (MMSN)	K-22
Moderate/Severe Disabilities (MS)	K-12	Significant Support Needs (SSN)	K-22
Visual Impairments (VI)	B-22	Visual Impairments (VI)	B-22
Physical and Health Impairment (PHI)	B-22		
Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)	B-22	Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)	B-22
Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)	B-Pre	Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)	B-K
Language and Academic Development (LAD)	K-22		

Table 1 shows that initially all five specialty content areas within the special education teaching credential authorized the individual to teach students in kindergarten through grade 12. With the redesign in the mid-1990s, a new specialty content area of Early Childhood Special Education was developed to ensure that teachers of the youngest students with disabilities are well prepared and authorized to work with children prior to entering kindergarten.

The credentials issued from 1970-1997 did not authorize the special education teacher to provide services in a Resource setting. But with the move to the Education Specialist teaching credentials structure in 1997, all special education credentials included the preparation and an authorization to teach in a Resource setting. Beginning in 2005, all special education credentials also include the preparation and an authorization to teach English learners.

<b>Table 2: Historical Overview of the Content Knowledge Required for Special Education Credentials</b>		
<b>Ryan Credentials (1970-1997)</b>	<b>Education Specialist Credentials (1997-2010)</b>	<b>Education Specialist Credentials (2010-2018)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates may satisfy the content knowledge requirement by completing a Commission-approved subject matter program or by passing the appropriate CSET examination.</li> <li>• All special education teachers are authorized to teach <b>all content areas</b>.</li> <li>• It is important to note the content area that a special education teacher candidate verifies is not recorded on the credential itself due to the fact that the credential holder is not limited to teaching only that content area.</li> </ul>		

<b>Ryan Credentials (1970-1997)</b>	<b>Education Specialist Credentials (1997-2010)</b>	<b>Education Specialist Credentials (2010-2018)</b>
All special education teachers were required to also hold a general education teaching credential prior to 1997. The content area in which the special education candidate verified knowledge was the content area of the initial Multiple or Single Subject teaching credential. No additional verification of content knowledge was required for special education teachers. The following content areas were included:	Beginning in 1997 individuals could earn a special education credential without previously earning a general education teaching credential. The allowable content areas for a prospective special education were initially identified as any of the Single Subject content areas or the content knowledge required for the Multiple Subject teaching credential. The new Early Childhood Special Education credential did not have a content area knowledge requirement. The following content areas were included:	Beginning in 2010, due to the federal No Child Left Behind legislation, prospective special education teachers were no longer allowed to demonstrate content knowledge in the following content areas: Health, Business, Agriculture, Home Economics, or Industrial and Technology Education. The following content areas were included:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Elementary Education/ Multiple Subject</li> <li>2. English</li> <li>3. Mathematics</li> <li>4. Science</li> <li>5. Social Studies</li> <li>6. Art</li> <li>7. Music</li> <li>8. Physical Education</li> <li>9. Foreign Language</li> <li>10. Agriculture</li> <li>11. Health</li> <li>12. Home Economics</li> <li>13. Business</li> <li>14. Industrial and Technology Education</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Elementary Education/ Multiple Subject</li> <li>2. English</li> <li>3. Mathematics</li> <li>4. Science</li> <li>5. Social Studies</li> <li>6. Art</li> <li>7. Music</li> <li>8. Physical Education</li> <li>9. World Languages</li> <li>10. Agriculture</li> <li>11. Health</li> <li>12. Home Economics</li> <li>13. Business</li> <li>14. Industrial and Technology Education</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Elementary Education/ Multiple Subject</li> <li>2. English</li> <li>3. Mathematics</li> <li>4. Science</li> <li>5. Social Studies</li> <li>6. Art</li> <li>7. Music</li> <li>8. Physical Education</li> <li>9. World Languages</li> </ol>

**Historical Data on How Special Education Candidates Met the Content Knowledge Requirement**  
 Data is provided in Table 3 below to identify the content knowledge areas most used by candidates to meet the content knowledge requirement. The vast majority of new

<b>Table 3: Content Knowledge Areas Satisfied by New Special Education Credential Holders <sup>1</sup></b>											
<b>Content Area</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>										<b>Total by Content</b>
	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	
Multiple Subject	2224	2520	2620	2867	2691	2441	1981	1737	1629	1837	22,547
English	88	101	104	123	130	114	105	80	69	85	999
Social Science	69	78	103	99	135	110	93	58	81	89	915
Health Science	23	38	43	48	49	26	12	12	12	10	273
Math-Foundational Level	21	14	15	22	28	21	21	17	10	24	193
Physical Education	15	17	20	27	28	24	17	11	19	15	193
Science	10	25	20	31	26	20	12	15	11	10	180
Foundational General Science <sup>2</sup>	-	-	12	17	23	23	17	20	15	14	164
World Language: Spanish	10	11	10	8	5	5	4	11	5	8	77
Art	4	10	4	7	7	3	5	2	5	1	48
Math	2	2	5	7	8	1	3	5	7	5	45
Home Economics	1	1	2	4	2	3		2	1		16
WL: American Sign Language	3		1	2	2		3	2		2	15
Business	1	1	1	3	1	2	1		1		11
Music	3	1	3		1	1	2	2	1	2	9
WL: Korean	1	2	1	2						3	9
WL: Mandarin	2	2		1		2	1		1		9
WL: Chinese	1	2		2			1	1	1		8
WL: Japanese	3	1	1			1			1		7
Industrial & Technology Education	1		2	1						1	5
WL: French			2			1					3
Agriculture						1			1		2
WL: Italian		1					1				2
WL: Russian										1	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2493</b>	<b>2856</b>	<b>3001</b>	<b>3309</b>	<b>3179</b>	<b>2839</b>	<b>2307</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1885</b>	<b>2129</b>	<b>25,996</b>

<sup>1</sup> Beginning in 2011-12, shaded cells indicate the content area is no longer acceptable to meet the subject matter requirement for a new special education teaching credential.

<sup>2</sup> Foundational Level General Science credential was added by regulation in February 2009.

Candidates took one or more subtests in the following languages but did not complete all subtests necessary to meet the credential requirement in the following World Languages: Armenian, Cantonese, Filipino, German, Punjabi, Vietnamese

special education teachers, averaging 87 percent over the past 10 years, have satisfied the Multiple Subject content knowledge requirements, while about four percent each have satisfied the English or the Social Science Single Subject content knowledge requirements. All special education teachers are authorized to teach any content area. The data provided in Table 3 was collected by reviewing both credential data and examination data to find information that could assist the Commission in understanding how new special education teachers satisfy the content knowledge requirement.

### **Discussion of Content Knowledge Requirements for the New Special Education Credential Structure**

At the [February 2018 Commission meeting](#), the item provided for Commission consideration included two options (below) for candidates to satisfy content knowledge. In this item, staff presents an additional option for the Commission's consideration. *Note:* With the reactivation of Elementary Subject Matter programs following federal adoption of the revised Elementary and Secondary Education Act, prospective special education teacher candidates will have the choice, regardless of the option selected by the Commission, of completing a Commission-approved subject matter program or passing the appropriate CSET examination in order to meet the applicable content area knowledge requirement.

**Option 1: Maintain the current content knowledge requirements.** A prospective special education teacher could satisfy the same content knowledge requirement as a multiple subject candidate or a single subject candidate in any one of the following content areas: English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, Physical Education, and World Languages.

**Option 2: Require special education candidates to meet the multiple subject or the single subject content knowledge requirements in a more limited number of content areas.** The most recent [Special Education agenda item](#) proposed that prospective special education teachers should be required to demonstrate the same content knowledge as a multiple subject candidate or a single subject candidate in one of the following four core academic content areas: English, Mathematics, Science or History/Social Sciences. If this requirement were to be implemented, the list of allowable content area knowledge for all special education credentials would be limited to the following: Elementary Education/Multiple Subject, English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

**Option 3: Require all special education candidates to meet the same content knowledge requirements as elementary teachers.** The subject matter requirements for a prospective multiple subject teacher address a broad set of content knowledge across all of the following content areas:

- Reading, Language and Literature
- History and Social Studies
- Science
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Human Development
- Visual and Performing Arts

### Commission Discussion

Staff requests that the Commission provide input and/or direction regarding the content knowledge that prospective special education teachers should be required to demonstrate. Table 4 provides information on the benefits and challenges with the options identified in this item. This discussion will help inform the next agenda item planned for the June 2018 Commission meeting.

Table 4	Benefits to the Option	Challenges with the Option
<b>Option 1:</b> Elementary plus 8 content areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This option is the most flexible in that a total of 9 content areas would be allowed.</li> <li>• This is the current requirement so no regulations would need to be promulgated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a candidate satisfies content in one single subject area, will the teacher be adequately prepared to teach and support student learning needs across the range of adopted content standards?</li> </ul>
<b>Option 2:</b> Elementary plus 4 core academic areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This option would ensure that all special education teachers have verified content knowledge in elementary education or one of the 4 core academic areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a candidate satisfied content in one single subject area, will the teacher be adequately prepared to teach and support student learning across the range of adopted content standards?</li> <li>• Would need to amend regulations.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 3:</b> Elementary ONLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This option would ensure that all prospective special education teachers have verified content knowledge in <b>all</b> 4 core academic areas, human development, VAPA, and physical education. This is currently the most often used pathway for candidates seeking an Education Specialist Credential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the most limited option in that only the Multiple Subject/Elementary content would be allowed.</li> <li>• Would need to amend regulations.</li> </ul>

### Next Steps

Staff will incorporate Commission priorities and direction in an agenda item that will be presented for possible Commission action at the June 2018 meeting.

Staff is also working to finalize proposed credential authorization statements, program standards and Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) for the Education Specialist credential, and will present these at the June 2018 Commission meeting for review and possible adoption. Once the Commission takes action in June 2018 on the authorization statements, staff will begin the regulatory process.