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# 4H

## Information/Action

### *Educator Preparation Committee*

#### **Proposed Content Knowledge Requirements and Authorizations for Education Specialist Credentials for Special Education Teacher Candidates and Additional Authorizations for Credentialed Special Education Teachers**

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**Executive Summary:** This agenda item proposes content knowledge requirements for prospective special education teachers and draft authorization statements for proposed Education Specialist credentials. In addition, this item proposes ways for existing credential holders to voluntarily earn the additional authorizations that the new credentials have, as needed.

**Recommended Action:** That the Commission adopt proposed content knowledge requirements and authorization statements for the new special education credential structure; provide pathways for existing credential holders to voluntarily earn new authorizations as needed.

**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.

June 2018

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# Proposed Content Knowledge Requirements and Authorizations for Education Specialist Credentials for Special Education Teacher Candidates and Additional Authorizations for Credentialed Special Education Teachers

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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. In the [April 2018 meeting](#), staff presented an item about appropriate content knowledge for special education teacher candidates. As part of the implementation of the new credential structure, staff is presenting in this agenda item a recommendation for the appropriate content knowledge for education specialist candidates and the accompanying authorization statements for each of the preliminary credentials in the revised credential structure. In addition, staff will provide some recommendations for a bridge or pathway for existing credential holders who may want to earn the additional authorizations that exist in the new credential structure.

## Background

This agenda item builds upon a series of agenda items presented over the past two years as the Commission has conducted the work of transforming educator preparation in California. Part of that work included examining the Education Specialist credential structure and program standards and developing Teaching Performance Expectations for each of the five Education Specialist specialty areas that were determined to be the five initial special education credentials that will be offered in California in the future. Now that a decision has been reached about the credential structure, other important decisions need to be made regarding the necessary content knowledge for special education teachers and the appropriate authorization statements for each initial credential offered.

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. Historical information regarding content knowledge requirements was provided in the [April 2018 agenda item](#).

All credentials issued by the Commission have accompanying authorization statements that specify what the holder of the credential is authorized to do. Authorizations are included in Title 5 regulations and are used by the Commission and employing agencies to determine an appropriate assignment. Authorization statements are prepared for all specialty areas that may be listed on an Education Specialist credential.

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

At the [April 2018 Commission meeting](#), staff presented an item for Commission consideration that included three options, shown below, for candidates to satisfy content knowledge. *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, 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 recommends that the Commission select Option 1 regarding the content knowledge that prospective special education teachers should be required to demonstrate. Table 1 provides information on the benefits and challenges with the options identified in this item.

Table 1	Benefits to the Option	Challenges with the Option
<b>Option 1:</b> Elementary plus 7 content areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This option is the most flexible in that a total of 8 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>

**Discussion of Authorization Statements for Education Specialist Credentials**

The proposed Education Specialist Credential authorizations would be consistent with the scope of preparation to teach students with disabilities specific to the credential issued. Consistent with long-standing Commission policy, if the Commission adopts the proposed revised Education Specialist Credential authorizations, all current holders of a valid California credential and those earning an Education Specialist California credential authorizing them to teach students with disabilities would retain the authorization with the same scope and content that was originally issued for as long as they hold their valid California credential.

The proposed authorization statements for the Exceptional Support Needs, the Extensive Support Needs and the Early Childhood Special Education Credentials are included below. Each authorization statement identifies who the teacher is authorized to teach based upon that teacher’s preparation. It is anticipated that the authorization statements for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Visual Impairments credentials will not need to change. Those teachers will remain authorized to teach the populations of students in the settings that they were authorized to teach prior.

### **Proposed Authorization Statement for the Exceptional Support Needs Credential**

The proposed authorization for the Exceptional Support Needs specialty area includes all federal disability categories except deaf-blind, deafness, developmental delay, hearing impairment, and visual impairment, as follows:

*The Education Specialist Instruction Credential: Exceptional Support Needs* authorizes the holder to conduct Educational Assessments related to students access to the academic curriculum and progress towards meeting instructional academic goals, provide instruction and Special Education Support based on the student's needs, as determined by the IEP, to individuals with a primary disability of autism, emotional disturbance, intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disabilities, and traumatic brain injury, in kindergarten, grades 1-12 through age 22, and classes organized primarily for adults in services across the continuum of program options available.

### **Proposed Authorization Statement for the Extensive Support Needs Credential**

The proposed authorization statements for the Extensive Support Needs specialty area that includes all federal disability categories except deafness, developmental delay, hearing impairment, and visual impairment, as follows:

*The Education Specialist Instruction Credential: Extensive Support Needs* authorizes the holder to conduct Educational Assessments related to students access to the academic curriculum and progress towards meeting instructional academic goals, provide instruction and Special Education Support based on the student's needs, as determined by the IEP, to individuals with a primary disability of autism, deaf-blind, emotional disturbance, intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disabilities, and traumatic brain impairment, in kindergarten, grades 1-12 through age 22, and classes organized primarily for adults in services across the continuum of program options available.

### **Proposed Authorization Statement for the Early Childhood Special Education Authorization**

Authorization statements for the Early Childhood Special Education credential and added authorization are provided in subsections (b)(6) and (b)(7) of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations section 80048.6. Staff proposes the following amendments to the existing authorization statements to expand the authorization through kindergarten and to add the "orthopedic impairment" disability category:

*The Education Specialist Instruction Credential: Early Childhood Special Education* authorizes the holder to conduct Educational Assessments related to student's access to the academic core curriculum and progress towards meeting instructional academic goals, and provide instructional and Special Education Support to students from birth through kindergarten who are eligible for early intervention special education and related services, to individuals with a primary disability in specific learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, autism, emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairment, and

multiple disabilities including developmental delay and a disabling medical condition in services across the continuum of program options available.

The *Early Childhood Special Education Added Authorization* authorizes the holder to conduct Educational Assessments related to student's access to the academic core curriculum and progress towards meeting instructional academic goals and provide instructional and special Education Support to students from birth through kindergarten who are eligible for early intervention special education and support with a primary disability in specific learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, autism, emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairment, and multiple disabilities including developmental delay and a disabling medical condition in services across the continuum of program options available.

### **Differences between Current and Proposed Authorizations**

When the Commission updates standards and credentials for teacher preparation, there is an impact on the authorization that accompanies the new credential. As new authorization statements are developed, it is important to consider how existing credential holders can expand the scope of their authorization to include new areas covered in the new credentials should they choose to do so.

It is important to note that it is never mandatory for a teacher to earn the new authorization unless the teacher elects to do so or the teacher is providing educational services in the special education area not authorized by their current credential authorization.

Staff proposes that a “bridge” be developed to enable those current teachers who elect to expand their current authorization to match the new credential for employment or other reasons.

Such a bridge could be developed between the current Mild/Moderate Disabilities credential and the Exceptional Support Needs Credential in the areas of multiple disabilities and orthopedic impairment, since those are the two authorizations that are not included in the Mild-Moderate credential. A similar authorization bridge could be developed for Moderate-Severe credential holders that would provide them with the additional training to work with students with orthopedic impairments, other health impairments, or a specific learning disability. Essentially, any bridge would address what is new and would be available to those existing credential holders who are interested in working with students the authorizations represent. This approach is consistent with past Commission practice, when, for example, the special education credential was expanded to include an authorization related to autism.

### **Recommendations for Consideration and Potential Action by the Commission**

Staff is bringing forward for Commission consideration and potential action the following recommendations:

1. The Commission maintain the existing requirement for Education Specialists to meet content knowledge requirements for their credential.

2. The Commission adopt the proposed authorization statements for the Exceptional Support Needs; the Extensive Support Needs; and the Early Childhood Special Education Credentials.
3. The Commission accept the definition of Language and Academic Development for the purpose of developing regulations for the authorization statements.
4. The Commission direct staff to build a bridge between the existing Mild/Moderate, Moderate/Severe, and Early Childhood Special Education Credential to the new credentials so that existing credential holders may earn authorizations that will be equivalent to the new credential authorizations.
5. The Commission direct staff to develop Added Authorization programs for Mild/Moderate and Moderate/Severe credential holders to add authorizations to their credentials that would make their credential equivalent to one of the new credentials.

**Next Steps**

If the Commission adopts the recommendations, staff will begin the regulatory process to implement the revised authorizations for teachers prepared in the future. As part of the regulatory process, specific dates will be identified when candidates completing an Education Specialist teacher preparation program will earn the revised Education Specialist authorization.

**Appendix A**  
**Federal Disability Categories**

Federal Disability Category	MMD (Current)	ESN (Proposed)	MSD (Current)	EXT (Proposed)	ECSE (Current)	ECSE (Proposed)	DHH (Current & Proposed)	VI (Current & Proposed)
Autism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Deaf-blindness			✓	✓			✓	✓
Deafness							✓	
Developmental Delay					✓	✓		
Emotional Disturbance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Hearing Impairment							✓	
Intellectual Disability	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Multiple Disabilities		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Orthopedic Impairment		✓		✓		✓		
Other Health Impairment	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Specific Learning Disability	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Speech or Language Impairment*								
Traumatic Brain Injury		✓		✓	✓	✓		
Visual impairment, including blindness								✓

**MMD = Mild/Moderate Disabilities**  
**ESN = Exceptional Support Needs**  
**MSD = Moderate Severe Disabilities**  
**EXT = Extensive Support Needs**  
**ECSE = Early Childhood Special Education**  
**DHH = Deaf and Hard of Hearing**  
**VI = Visual Impairments**

**\*Speech or Language Impairment** – SLI is defined as having a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment, or voice impairment, which adversely affects the student's educational performance. Services related to this disability category must be provided by a specialist with



expert knowledge in working with students with one or more of these disorders, such as the Speech-Language Pathologist.

*Child with a disability* means a child evaluated in accordance with [§§300.304](#) through 300.311 as having an intellectual disability, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this part as “emotional disturbance”), an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, another health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

A full description of the federal disability categories is available here:  
IDEA sec. 300.8