



# CODED CORRESPONDENCE

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**DATE:**

June 30, 2022

**NUMBER:**

22-03

**TO:**

All Individuals and Groups Interested in the Activities  
of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing

**FROM:**

Mary Vixie Sandy  
Executive Director  
Commission on Teacher Credentialing

**SUBJECT: Implementation of the New Preliminary Education Specialist Credentials**

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**Summary**

The amendments and additions to Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations pertaining to the Education Specialist Teaching and Services Credentials have been approved by the Office of Administrative Law. This correspondence specifically addresses the changes to the Education Specialist Teaching Credential Requirements. The regulations have an effective date of July 1, 2022.

Separate correspondences (Credential Information Alerts) regarding the regulations concerning the Education Specialist Teaching Credential authorization and assignment options, out-of-state and out-of-country prepared applicants, and the bridge added authorizations, as well as information related to recommending candidates for these credentials were also released to provide additional details. Links to these correspondences may be found in the References section on the last page of this Coded Correspondence.

**Key Provisions**

The special education regulations reduced the number of preliminary education specialist credentials offered from seven to the following five:

- Mild to Moderate Support Needs (MMSN)
- Extensive Support Needs (ESN)
- Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (DHH)

- Visual Impairments (VI)
- Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)

The most significant changes are reflected in the preparation for the new Mild to Moderate Support Needs credential, which replaces the Mild/Moderate Disabilities credential, and the new Extensive Support Needs credential, which replaces the Moderate/Severe Disabilities credential. These changes, summarized below, reflect a broader scope of preparation for candidates.

1. The MMSN and the ESN credential share a common base of preparation in the universal teaching performance expectations (TPEs) and in disability categories with the exception of deafblind which is only covered in the ESN credential.
2. Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and Kindergarten (K) for students with disabilities and orthopedic impairment is now included in the new authorization of the Education Specialist: Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) credential.
3. Authorization statements for the DHH and VI credentials remain the same. The Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE) and Program Standards for these candidates and programs were updated to reflect current theory and practice.
4. The preparation for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and English learner (EL) authorization remain embedded within the preparation programs.
5. MMSN and ESN credentials include enhanced language acquisition and development, and knowledge, skills, and abilities in the areas of orthopedic impairment and traumatic brain injury, that prepare candidates to support students' individual learning needs across the authorized disability categories.
6. All (MMSN and ESN) candidates must take and pass a Commission-approved performance assessment prior to being recommended for a preliminary credential.
7. All (DHH, VI and ECSE) candidates newly enrolled after July 1, 2023, will be required to complete a Commission approved performance assessment prior to being recommended for a preliminary credential.

Along with the changes to the credential structure, the adoption of the regulations signals the implementation of the 2018 Education Specialist Program Standards and Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE) which outline the requirements for preparation for approved educator preparation programs and candidates within those programs. These standards and TPE include requirements around clinical practice hours and the requirement of passing a Commission-approved teaching performance assessment.

#### *Bridge Added Authorizations*

The regulations also include specifications for bridge added authorizations which will be available to existing Education Specialist Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Moderate/Severe Disabilities, or Early Childhood Special Education (or their equivalent authorizations) credential holders who may want to earn the equivalent authorization to the new credential. Details related to the requirements for earning the bridge added authorizations can be found in [Credential Information Alert 22-07](#). Interested individuals will have multiple options to complete the additional content identified in the new teaching performance expectations (TPE)

that represent the content not covered during their initial preparation. *No existing Education Specialist credential holder is required to earn the bridge added authorization unless they wish to expand the scope of their existing special education credential.* In addition, the pathways to the bridge added authorizations, including coursework and professional development, will not be part of an approved program sponsor's accreditation activities.

#### *Educators Prepared Outside of California*

The regulations also updated the requirements for educators who were prepared in another state or country to teach in a special education setting. The changes, outlined in [Credential Information Alert 22-09](#), will align these educators with California prepared educators by resulting in the issuance of a Preliminary Education Specialist Credential instead of a Level I credential. Additionally, the requirement that educators who hold a generic or non-disability specific special education credential that was earned outside of California must complete additional content was removed from the requirements. As such, these credentials may now be considered comparable to the California MMSN, ESN, or ECSE credentials.

*Language Academic Development and Physical Health Impairment Programs and Candidates*  
With the addition of enhanced language acquisition and development and the knowledge, skills and abilities in the areas of orthopedic impairment and traumatic brain injury in the new MMSN and ESN credentials, the Language and Academic Development (LAD) and Physical Health Impairment (PHI) authorizations are being phased out. Any individual who holds an Education Specialist credential with a LAD or PHI authorization will continue to hold a valid credential for as long as the credential is renewed. After July 1, 2022, all Commission-approved educator preparation programs offering the LAD or PHI credential must teach out their candidates and no new candidates may enroll in these programs. The Commission will no longer issue the LAD or PHI credentials after July 1, 2026. All Commission approved programs offering the LAD and/or PHI Preliminary credentials are required to notify any candidate currently enrolled or previously enrolled but who has not yet completed the program of the established sunset date.

#### *Sunset Date to issue Preliminary Education Specialist Credentials under the 2008 Program Standards*

Effective July 1, 2026, Commission approved educator preparation programs will no longer be able to recommend candidates for a Preliminary Mild to Moderate Disabilities, Preliminary Moderate to Severe Disabilities, or an Early Childhood Special Education credential as aligned to the 2008 Education Specialist Program Standards. This sunset date was established to allow candidates newly enrolled in integrated teacher preparation programs, intern preparation programs, and candidates who may have an interruption in their preparation program to complete the program they started. All approved educator preparation programs should notify candidates currently enrolled and those who have yet to complete the Preliminary Mild to Moderate Disabilities or the Moderate/Severe Disabilities program of the impending sunset date.

**Important Dates**

New Education Specialist program standards and TPEs take effect July 1, 2022, as per regulations.

Approved educator preparation programs will no longer be able to recommend candidates for the Preliminary Education Specialist Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Moderate/Severe Disabilities, Physical Health Impairments, and Language and Academic Development credentials after September 1, 2026.

**Background**

In 2018, the Commission approved a new [Education Specialist credential structure](#) reducing the number of preliminary credentials from seven to five. Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE) for each of the five preliminary Education Specialist credential areas (Mild to Moderate Support Needs, Extensive Support Needs, Early Childhood Special Education, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Visual Impairments) have also been adopted. The new Education Specialist program standards focus on what programs must offer to candidates including clearly defined expectations for clinical practice, while the TPE define the knowledge and skills each candidate must have prior to recommendation for the preliminary teaching credential. In an effort to provide existing credential holders with the opportunity to obtain the new authorization, a bridge authorization was developed.

**Sources**

Education Code sections: 44225, 44225(b), 44225(d), 44225(e), 44225(g), 44225(l), 44227(a), 44227(b), 44227.7, 44251, 44252, 44252(b), 44252.1, 44253.2(a), 44253.2(b), 44253.2(c), 44253.2(d), 44253.3, 44256(c), 44259, 44259.5, 44259.7, 44265, 44265.3, 44265.5, 44268, 44274.2, 44275.4, 44280, 44281, 44283, 44310, 44325, 44326, 44335, 44339, 44340, 44341, 44343, 44373, 44373(c), 44452, 44453, 44454, 44455, 44461, 44465, 56031, 56360, 56361, 56365, and 56366

**References**

[Agenda Item 2B](#) – Pathways for Current Education Specialist Credential Holders Interested in Earning the New Education Specialist Credential

[Education Specialist Program Standards and TPE](#) (2018)

[Summary of New Preliminary Education Specialist Credentials](#)

[Credential Information Alert 22-06](#): Expanded Education Specialist Authorization Instruction Credential Assignments

[Credential Information Alert 22-07](#): Special Education Bridge Authorization

[Credential Information Alert 22-08](#): Education Specialist Recommendation Via CTC Online

[Credential Information Alert 22-09](#): Special Education Requirement Update for Out of State and Out of Country Applicants

**Contact Information**

[credentials@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:credentials@ctc.ca.gov) for questions related to education specialist credentials

[specialeducation@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:specialeducation@ctc.ca.gov) for questions related to educator preparation programs