

PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential FAQs

****Credential not currently available as of this posting****

January 2024

[PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential Handbook](#)

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A) Credentialing Requirements, Including Emergency Credentials to Teach in Transitional Kindergarten

- 1. Is a Multiple Subject credential holder without PK experience required to get a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential to teach in PK and TK?**
 - Multiple Subject credential holders are already authorized by their credential to teach PK and TK.
- 2. Is there a Subject Matter Competency Requirement?***
 - Yes, there is a Subject Matter Competency Requirement (SMR), [Program Precondition 5](#). Candidates may meet this requirement in one of two ways:
 - 1.** Possession of a baccalaureate degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution of higher education with a degree major in
 - Child Development,
 - Child and Adolescent Development,
 - Human Development,
 - Early Childhood Education,
 - Child and Family Studies,
 - Early Childhood Studies,
 - Human Development and Family Science,
 - Family Science, or
 - Child, Adolescent, and Family Studies.

OR

- 2.** Completion of 24 semester units or the equivalent quarter units of non-remedial, degree-applicable coursework completed at a regionally accredited institution of higher education, with a grade of C or higher, in early childhood education and/or child development.

****There is no CSET for this credential.***

- 3. If a teacher has their Multiple Subject (MS) credential, what do they need to earn their PK-3 credential?**
 - Once the credential is approved, a teacher who holds a Multiple Subject credential with English Learner authorization may obtain the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential by meeting this credential's [subject matter competency requirement](#) as noted above. They will then apply directly to the Commission to obtain the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential. More information about this process will be available once the regulations have been finalized by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL).
- 4. Is there a Basic Skills Requirement for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential?**
 - No. There is not a Basic Skills Requirement for this credential. (*Candidates do not need to take the CBEST.*)
- 5. Are the CBEST and CSET required for the PK-3 credential?**
 - The CBEST and CSET are not required for this credential.
- 6. What exams/assessments are required for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential?**
 - Candidates will need to successfully complete a reading instruction examination (RICA/LPA) and Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA).

- 7. The requirement for the English Language Learner authorization is unclear. What does this look like?**
- Content for teaching English Language Learners is embedded in the PK-3 program standards and is provided to candidates as part of their Commission-approved programs.
- 8. What will the requirements be for supervising teachers in PK classrooms?**
- Qualifications for supervising teachers –those teachers who will work with and supervise PK-3 credential candidates in the student teaching placements – are addressed in [Program Standard 3](#).
- 9. What will the faculty qualifications be?**
- Faculty qualifications are addressed in [Common Standard 1](#). Faculty qualifications for clinical practice faculty are addressed in [Program Standard 3](#). It is up to the institution to ensure faculty meet the qualifications for the content and pedagogy they are responsible for teaching.
- 10. What requirements will need to be met for a preschool teacher who has worked for 3 years and holds a Child Development Site Supervisor Permit?**
- The individual in this scenario must complete a baccalaureate (BA) degree and a Commission-approved PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential program, including coursework and clinical practice. They must also complete the appropriate performance assessments (TPA and LPA/RICA) and be recommended for the credential. Please refer to the list of requirements for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential provided in the [PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential Handbook](#) on the PK-3 [ECE Specialist Instruction credential website](#).
- 11. Will California State Preschool Program Teacher with a Master’s in Curriculum and Instruction (ECE), a site supervisor permit, and 10 years of Preschool Teacher experience be granted the PK-3 Credential?**
- A candidate with the background described in this question would be granted 200 hours, and possibly up to 400 hours, of clinical practice equivalency if they meet **all** the criteria in [Clinical Practice Equivalency Option 1](#), including that they taught full-time in a center-based setting with 3- and 4-year-olds and are able to provide documentation of this. They will be required to complete a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential preparation program and complete a minimum of 200 hours clinical practice in a K-3 setting. For full list of criteria for Clinical Practice Equivalency Option 1 see [Precondition 7](#) in the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential Handbook. They will be required to complete a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential preparation program and complete a minimum of 200 hours clinical practice in a K-3 setting. For a full list of criteria for Option 1 see [Precondition 7](#) in the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential Handbook.
- 12. Is the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential replacing the Multiple Subject Credential?**
- No
- 13. The credential requires a bachelor's (BA) degree. Can the credential program be incorporated into a bachelor's degree program at a university?**
- Programs may offer an integrated undergraduate program pathway that results in both a BA degree and a PK-3 ECE Specialist teaching credential as an option if they so choose. They must ensure that candidates are prepared to meet the teaching performance expectations (TPEs) that are assessed in the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA).

- 14. Do I need to have a BA in order to obtain the credential or can I apply for the credential based solely on my ECE coursework?**
- All California teaching credentials for PK-12 instruction, including the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential, require the holder to have earned a baccalaureate (BA) degree. For the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential, ECE and Child Development coursework support meeting the subject matter competency requirement (SMR) only.
- 15. Where does a person apply for the credential?**
- The credential will not be available until the regulations have been approved by the Office of Administrative Law. Once the regulations are approved, candidates will need to complete a Commission approved PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential program, successfully complete the teaching performance assessment (TPA) and RICA/Literacy Performance Assessment (LPA) and be recommended by their program for the credential.
 - Multiple Subject credential holders with English Learner authorization who qualify for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential by meeting the subject matter competency requirement will apply directly to the Commission. More information about this process will be available once the regulations have been finalized by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL).
- 16. Can the CA teaching credential be in any content area? Would an administrative credential also count?**
- Candidates for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential who already hold a Multiple Subject credential with English Learner authorization and have met the subject matter competency requirement (SMR) may self-apply directly to the Commission for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential when it becomes available. Candidates who hold an Administrative Services credential would also need to hold a Multiple Subject credential with English Learner authorization and have met the SMR for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential. They will then apply directly to the Commission for the credential when it becomes available. More information about this process will be available once the regulations have been finalized by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL).
- 17. When is the soonest that candidates will be able to start the new PK-3 credential program?**
- Programs will not be approved to start offering preparation programs to candidates until the credential has been established in state regulations through approval by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL). Once this occurs, programs must successfully complete the Initial Program Review (IPR) process and be approved by the Committee on Accreditation (COA) to offer the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential to candidates.
- 18. Does an individual need to have a PK-3 Credential to teach preschool?**
- Those who teach TK in a California public elementary school need to have either a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction or Multiple Subject Credential. For those interested in teaching in a state subsidized or a state licensed preschool program additional requirements apply outside of credentialing and are not within the Commission's purview such as those related to Title 5 subsidized childcare programs administered by the California Department of Education and the California Department of Social Services, Title 22 subsidized and non-subsidized child care programs, and those related to Head Start programs. For information on these requirements please consult the appropriate state agencies.

B) The Subject Matter Competency Requirement for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential

- 1. What are the required elements for an ECE course to “count” toward subject matter?**
 - The course must be in early childhood education and/or child development (ECE/CD), and must be non-remedial, degree-applicable units from a regionally accredited institution of higher education. Candidates who wish to apply these courses toward the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential must earn a grade of C or better in each course. Please see the [PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential Handbook](#) for more details.
- 2. Is there a CSET option for meeting subject matter competency for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential?**
 - There are no CSET options to meet the subject matter competency for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential. Subject matter competency is met via coursework or degree major. Please see [Program Precondition 5](#) for a complete list of options for meeting this credential requirement.
- 3. If a teacher holds a Multiple Subject credential with English Learner authorization and has 24 verified units in ECE/CD, have they met the requirements for the PK-3 credential?**
 - Yes, they have met the requirements for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential and may apply directly to the Commission for the new credential. More information about this process will be available once the regulations have been finalized by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL).
- 4. Will a bachelor’s degree in child development be recognized as meeting the subject matter competency requirement for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential?**
 - Yes. Please see [Precondition 5](#) or Section A above for full list of degree majors that meet the subject matter competency requirement for this credential.
- 5. Can candidates earn ECE subject matter competency units through prep program coursework and/or clinical practice?**

This is a complicated question, and it is important to understand different considerations depending upon program model.

- For candidates enrolled in post baccalaureate teacher preparation programs, subject matter is completed typically during undergraduate coursework either through the academic degree major or through acceptable undergraduate coursework prior to entering a teacher preparation program. This content knowledge of subject matter provides the foundation for the teacher preparation program to build upon with sound pedagogical knowledge and skills. The pedagogically focused coursework would not count toward a candidate’s subject matter competency requirement. For these candidates, if they lack either the 24 units or an appropriate academic degree major, they could theoretically be taking the necessary coursework in addition to their teacher preparation program coursework simultaneously. It is important to note that all candidates must meet the subject matter competency requirement prior to daily whole class instruction; and, because daily whole class instruction happens at different places in different programs during student teaching, it is strongly advised to have candidates complete subject matter well before student teaching.

(This response continues onto the next page)

- **Integrated undergraduate teacher preparation programs** are programs that integrate subject matter content (the degree coursework) and teacher preparation coursework (pedagogy). Therefore, these programs will have 24 units of clear subject matter content and meet all the preparation program standards and requirements. The statute on integrated programs makes clear that when integrating subject matter and teacher preparation, neither can be given short shrift. Therefore, it must be very clear where subject matter is taught in the program and where the teacher preparation program standards are addressed. Using the exact course for both purposes is likely to raise a significant number of questions in the review process. And as with the post baccalaureate model, candidates must meet the subject matter competency requirement prior to daily whole class instruction; therefore, it is strongly advised to have candidates complete subject matter competency requirement well before student teaching.
- Regardless of program design, programs must ensure that the preparation coursework and clinical practice provide candidates with the content and pedagogy they will need in order to be successful in classrooms with young children and on the TPA and RICA/LPA. It may or may not be possible for programs to incorporate the subject matter competency requirement into their preparation coursework and still meet all standards and TPEs. Once a new program is submitted to the Initial Program Review (IPR) process, it will be reviewed by a peer review team to determine if the program is aligned to the standards and TPEs.

6. If a person has 24 units in one of the 9 approved majors, but did not complete the major, can that meet subject matter competency?

- 24 semester or equivalent quarter units of non-remedial, degree-applicable coursework completed at a regionally accredited institution of higher education with a minimum grade of C or the equivalent count towards the subject matter competency requirement (SMR) as long as the units are in Early Childhood Education or Child Development.

7. For current credentialed teachers who hold a CA Child Development Permit, will this be considered meeting the subject matter competency?

- The subject matter competency requirement is 24 units of non-remedial, degree applicable ECE/CD completed at a regionally accredited institution of higher education with a minimum grade of C or the equivalent, or completion of one of the majors listed in [Precondition 5](#). Those who hold a Child Development permit but do not have 24 units in ECE do not meet the subject matter competency requirement.

8. Within the first 60 days of the candidate's admission, we must complete an assessment of a demonstration of subject matter competence. What assessment is this?

- See [Program Precondition 4](#). The term "assessment" here means that the program has reviewed each candidate individually to determine whether they already meet the subject matter competency based on the coursework they have taken, or degree earned and communicate to the candidate whether or not they meet the subject matter competency requirement based on that review. Candidates must understand whether they have satisfied the subject matter competency requirement or need to enroll in additional coursework so they can complete clinical practice and be recommended for a credential. Candidates must be aware of this early in the program in order to have sufficient time to complete this requirement since subject matter competence is required prior to candidates completing daily whole class instruction as part of their student teaching.

9. **Do you plan to include additional degree majors in the list of undergraduate degrees that align with PK-3 subject matter competency requirement? Our Child Development degree program's exact title is not currently listed in the handbook. Our program's degree title is "Child Development and Family Studies."**
- There are no plans at this time to add majors that qualify for the subject matter competency requirement (SMR); however, the SMR for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential may be met by completing 24 semester units (or the quarter equivalent) of ECE or Child Development non-remedial, degree-applicable coursework completed at a regionally accredited institution of higher education with a grade of C or the equivalent. If the Child Development and Family Studies major includes 24 units that meet the criteria, programs will be able to verify this by completing a transcript review for these candidates.

C) Relationship Between the Multiple Subject and the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential

1. **Can candidates who are earning a Multiple Subject credential in a program take the 24 units and earn both credentials?**
 - A candidate who has completed all requirements for a Multiple Subject (MS) credential with English Learner authorization in an educator preparation program may choose to complete the subject matter competency requirement (SMR) of 24 units in Early Childhood Education and/or Child Development. The MS program will recommend the candidate for their MS credential.
 - The candidate will then apply directly to the Commission to obtain the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential once it is available. More information about this process will be available once the regulations have been finalized by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL).
2. **Is there a pathway for future PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential holders to earn a Multiple Subject credential as well?**
 - Not at this time. This topic will be under consideration in the future.
3. **If someone holds the Multiple Subject Credential and a Child Development Permit what is the benefit to applying for the PK-3 Credential?**
 - It demonstrates that the teacher has particular expertise in early learning, care, and development. The PK-3 credential also meets the apportionment requirements in [Education Code sec. 48000\(g\)\(4\)](#) for Local Education Agency funding for TK classes.
4. **What is the timeline for those who will already have a Multiple Subject credential and want to add the PK-3 Credential?**
 - Once the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential successfully completes the regulatory process through the Office of Administrative Law (OAL), Multiple Subject credential holders with English Learner authorization who have met the subject matter competency requirement (SMR) may apply directly to the Commission for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential. More information about this process will be available once the regulations have been finalized by the Office of Administrative Law.

D) Program Standards: Including Program Standards, Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs), and the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA)

- 1. How are the current ECE Competencies being integrated into program standards?**
 - The competencies have been incorporated with the adopted PK-3 ECE Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs). [Program Standard 2](#) requires programs to prepare all candidates towards meeting the [TPEs](#).
- 2. Are the TPEs finalized?**
 - Yes. The TPEs were adopted by the Commission in [October 2022](#).
- 3. For community college programs with an Early Childhood Education Associate of Science Degree for Transfer (AS-T), are students expected to meet the TPEs and TPAs within just the 24 units of ECE or are they connected to completing the second two years for the BA and credential?**
 - Candidates for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential will not take the TPA until they are in a teacher preparation program. The TPA is embedded in the teacher preparation program, not in the community college AS-T program. These are separate but interrelated experiences.
- 4. What is in place to ensure that current TPA evaluators have an ECE background to ensure they are able to evaluate a TK-3 TPA with an understanding of developmentally appropriate practice?**
 - See [Program Standards 5 and 6](#).
- 5. What TPA will be required for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential?**
 - Candidates for this credential must complete a Commission approved Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA). At this time, candidates will need to complete the Multiple Subject TPA, which must be completed in grades TK, K, 1, 2, or 3. Beginning July 1, 2025, candidates for this credential will also need to complete a Literacy Performance Assessment. Until then, candidates are required to complete the RICA in addition to the TPA.
- 6. Will both a CalTPA and edTPA be developed for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential? If it is just a CalTPA, will we be able to keep using the edTPA for our current credentials and then the CalTPA for the PK-3 credential?**
 - CalTPA is currently in the process of developing a PK-3 ECE TPA model to be presented to the Commission for potential adoption. The sponsor of the edTPA has indicated that they plan to develop a handbook specifically designed for this credential, however, its status is unknown at the time of this posting.

E) Applying to Offer a Preparation Program

- 1. What is the process for an institution wishing to offer a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential preparation program?**
 - Commission approved Institutions seeking to offer a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential will participate in the Initial Program Review (IPR) process.
 - All submission materials, along with step-by-step instructions are located on our [Submitting a New Educator Preparation Program in California](#) webpage and the process is very specific.
 - Be sure to include **all** required evidence. Institutions must address **all** elements of the proposal and provide specific evidence for each element.
 - There are multiple steps involved, and we recommend that you communicate with the other educator preparation programs at your institution to gain an understanding of how they have

organized proposal submissions.

- *Incomplete and/or inaccessible submissions will be returned without review and must be completed/made accessible prior to beginning the IPR process.* This will likely result in a significant delay for the proposed program.
- You will find a webinar, along with other applicable information on the [PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Webpage](#).
- The IPR Team offers regular office hours where your team may ask questions and discuss the IPR process. For more information, please see the [Accreditation Technical Assistance](#) page.

2. Does the Commission need reviewers to review PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential IPR Proposals? Is it appropriate for representatives from institutions proposing a new program to participate as a reviewer?

- The Commission needs volunteers to serve on the Board of Institutional Review (BIR) to review program proposals. The Commission asks that institutions submitting program proposals make one or more individuals available to read other submissions.
- The Commission needs individuals who have expertise in PK, TK, literacy, Multiple Subjects, and other educator preparation faculty members with expertise to volunteer to review. Reviewers need to be from a Commission approved institution and have experience working in teacher preparation.

3. What impact will this credential have on induction programs? Will induction programs need to have a separate program for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential?

- The PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential, like the Multiple Subject/Single Subject and Education Specialist credentials, is a two-tier credential and will require someone with a preliminary PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential to participate in induction in order to clear their credential. As with other credentials, candidates will determine their Individual Development Plan with the input of their program and site-based supervisors. The induction program is individualized to meet the specific needs of each candidate. Please see [Program Standard 9](#) for more details. The Commission anticipates working with the induction community to discuss how induction programs will be impacted and any issues that may need to be addressed.

4. What is the timeline for accreditation once a proposal is submitted?

- The Initial Program Review (IPR) process for Commission approved institutions generally takes a minimum of 8-12 months from the time the Commission receives a proposal. Proposals that are complete and accessible move more smoothly through the process.
- Once the regulations are finalized by the Office of Administrative Law OAL, program proposals that have completed the IPR process will be brought before the Committee on Accreditation (COA) for review and possible approval.

5. We have a BA in Early Childhood Education program and will revise it for the PK-3 ECE credential. We will develop an Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP) ECE credential program. Do we prepare one or two applications?

- Institutions may submit program proposals for more than one pathway (integrated, intern, traditional student teaching, residency, etc.) leading to the credential. We recommend making an appointment with the IPR Team (IPR@ctc.ca.gov) to discuss your specific program if you are considering both an ITEP and traditional graduate level program. Also, please keep in mind that

intern program proposals require additional evidence addressing the intern program preconditions.

- Once the IPR Team receives your completed submission, the peer review and approval process will take a *minimum* of 6-12 months and may take longer depending on the number of review cycles it requires. **Incomplete and/or inaccessible submissions will face significant delay.** Ensuring your proposal includes all required evidence and is easily accessible to reviewers will facilitate the process.

6. Do the community colleges need to submit their course syllabi, and other documentation as they would be partnering with a California State University (CSU), University of California (UC), or private/independent institution of higher education?

- Only Commission approved program sponsors may sponsor an educator preparation program. Community colleges may partner with CSU, UC, or private/independent program sponsors in a variety of ways including, in some instances providing specific coursework, but are not eligible to be an approved program sponsor. The program sponsor is responsible for submitting all necessary course syllabi and documentation indicating where in the program the requirements, standards, and TPEs are addressed.

F) Preparation Program Models, Pathways, and Collaboration with Community Colleges

1. We understand that community colleges can't apply to develop a program, but would we still be eligible for any of the grants if we're partnering with 4-year institutions? If yes, how would we apply?

- Community colleges have not been included by the legislature in the statutory language for any statewide grants related to sponsoring educator preparation programs, and thus are not eligible for funding in this manner.

2. What role is there for the California community colleges (CCCs) in relation to the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential? What is the benefit for 4-year institutions to partner with CCCs?

- Community colleges are an outstanding resource to candidates in meeting the subject matter competency requirement (SMR). Candidates completing an associate degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development that includes 24 units in the applicable areas will be meeting the subject matter competency requirement for the credential. Candidates completing other associate degrees at community colleges might also choose to complete coursework that meets the subject matter competency requirement as part of their course of study. Additionally, several community colleges have put together programs with 24 ECE/CD units of degree applicable coursework for multiple subject credential holders to help them meet the subject matter competency requirements for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential.

3. When “selecting a Commission-approved model” Teaching Performance Assessment, is there a choice of models or do we design our own? To begin before the PK-3 TPAs are available in 2025, do we use our current MS model already in place? Who is the model sponsor?

- CalTPA is currently in the process of developing a PK-3 ECE TPA model to be presented to the Commission for potential adoption. Until that performance assessment is available, preparation programs can use their current Multiple Subject TPA model (CalTPA, edTPA, or FAST) with PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential candidates, with the provision that the TPA must be completed in any of grades TK-3 (not in PK).
- You can learn more about [Teaching Performance Assessments in California](#) on the Commission’s

website. The “[model sponsor](#)” refers to the entity that represents the assessment and is responsible to programs using that model and to the Commission. Model sponsors may be a state agency, individual institutions, a consortium of institutions and/or partners, a private entity, and/or combinations of these.

4. While the Commission’s Child Development Permit Advisory work has continued for a number of years and yielded recommendations to possible revisions for the permit, will the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential replace the recommendations for the permit? Or will the recommendations of changes to the permit continue to be developed and bring edits to the permit matrix?

- No, the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential is not intended to replace the Child Development Permit or the recommendations that have been made for updating those permits. The PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential and the Child Development Permit are two different and separate licensing processes. The 2017 Child Development Permit recommendations do not apply to the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential. The Child Development Permit Workgroup (CDP) is currently meeting through spring of 2024. The recommendations of the CDP workgroup will go to the Commission in fall of 2024. Please be sure you are [subscribed to the ECE News Update](#) for updates on the Child Development Permit and other ECE news.

5. Will teaching time in the classroom under a Child Development Permit count towards teaching requirements to clear the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential?

- Educators who hold a Child Development Teacher Permit with 6+ years of full-time satisfactory experience in a center based preschool program may qualify for some equivalency toward the clinical practice requirement for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential. There are additional criteria for this equivalency option detailed in [Precondition 7](#) in the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential Handbook. In order to be granted equivalency towards clinical practice, candidates must meet **all** of the criteria for Equivalency Option 1. There is no ‘partial credit’ for this element of the credential.

6. How will you provide technical assistance (i.e., will there be office hours?)

- The Initial Program Review (IPR) Team holds office hours on the first and third Wednesdays of the month.
- There are existing ECE office hours on the first and third Tuesdays of the month.
- There are links to these office hours available on the Commission’s [Accreditation Technical Assistance Page](#).
- Additionally, the ECE Team has offered monthly Community Circle sessions where details on the new credential have been discussed.
- Please be sure you are subscribed to the [ECE News Update](#), the [PSD e-News](#), and check the [PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential page](#) for updates.

- 7. Does the credential program need to be offered through the education department, or can an ECE/CD department located in an authorized institution be able to offer the credential? Faculty capacity in credential programs is a real issue in CSU.**
- The credential does not need to be offered through the education department. Commission-approved institutions of higher education offering educator preparation programs are required to have the education department, school of education, or other credential preparation body of the institution sign off to acknowledge they are aware of and working with the preparation program being proposed, and that the new program will be included as a part of the institution's overall education unit. Common Standards require that the program have sufficient resources to support its credential programs.
- 8. How do teacher education programs determine if a current Multiple Subject credential course would be appropriate to be included in a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential preparation program? For example, how would we determine whether a course in "Early Literacy" would be appropriate to include in coursework for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential?**
- Coursework and fieldwork must address the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential program preconditions, standards, and TPEs in order for programs to be approved and for continuing accreditation. It is possible for programs to use some Multiple Subject coursework provided the program can demonstrate that the coursework addresses the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential standards and TPEs. Please use the evidence requirement guides found on our [Preconditions and Standards](#) page for specific details on what information is required. Program faculty would need to review their current course syllabi against the PK3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential standards and TPEs to determine where it may or may not be aligned before including these same courses within the program proposal. Many initial program proposals have been returned due to the fact that they are clearly focused on the MS credential and have not been appropriately designed for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential. Attention to the specific standards and TPEs for PK-3 Specialist Instruction credential must be evident.
- 9. Is there any stipend or grant for those who want to complete these credentials?**
- Intern programs, where the candidate is the teacher of record, provide the opportunity for candidates to earn a salary as teacher of record while completing their teacher preparation coursework and clinical practice. Some residency programs also offer stipends.
- 10. What are the best practices or recommendations for making sure that students transferring from a community college to a university are receiving the same academic and clinical experiences at both academic institutions?**
- This is beyond the purview of the Commission. Articulation agreements between institutions of higher education set the criteria for coursework between systems.
- 11. Are there apprenticeship funding opportunities applicable to PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential in either an ITEP or Post-BA pathway format?**
- Not at this time. Check with individual programs to see what pathways and funding opportunities they offer.

G) Clinical Practice Requirements

- 1. For an overview of the details on the Clinical Practice Element (Program Standard 3) of the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential, please**
 - View the [Webinar held 12/13/2023](#) (You may also access the recording, slides, and links to other resources on the [PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential page](#) of our website)
 - See the [Clinical Practice Guide for PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential](#)
 - See the [PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential Handbook](#)

- 2. For teachers who already have a bachelor's (BA) degree and 24 ECE/CD units, what are the parameters now for their "student teaching?"**
 - Individuals in this scenario have met the subject matter competency requirement (SMR) and will need to complete a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential preparation program, including 600 hours of clinical practice experience, RICA/Literacy Performance Assessment (LPA), and Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) as well as all other requirements for the credential.

- 3. What is considered an ECE setting in regard to where clinical practice must be completed?**
 - Any **center based** or school setting that includes children in grades PK-3, inclusive, can be considered an ECE setting where clinical practice can be completed. PK is considered 3- and 4-year-olds. For additional information on clinical practice placements, please see the [Clinical Practice Guidance](#) document and [Program Standard 3](#).

- 4. Can the PK clinical experience setting include CSPP (California State Preschool Program), Local Education Agency (LEA), and private programs?**
 - See [Program Standard 3](#) for information regarding Clinical Practice requirements.

- 5. The clinical hours - is it possible for individuals to meet this requirement with infant/toddler settings?**
 - The PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential authorizes service in grades PK-3. Clinical practice hours must be completed in settings that include children in any of these grades, with 3 – and 4-year-olds considered preschool aged. Thus, infant/toddler settings are not eligible settings for clinical practice hours for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential.

- 6. How are districts being informed of the clinical practice requirements?**
 - Educator preparation programs are responsible for facilitating clinical practice opportunities for candidates. When programs execute an MOU with a district, the requirements for clinical practice are included.

- 7. Can a teacher internship count towards clinical hours for the PK-3 credential? Will you be able to provide a list of examples of approved clinical hours options?**
 - Please see the [for Intern Programs](#). Interns are teachers of record while also working to earn their preliminary credential which means their supervised clinical practice is designed to take place while they are teacher of record. However, not every hour that an intern teacher is teaching will count toward the 600 hours of required clinical practice. The [Clinical Practice Guide for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential](#) is available to help programs determine what hours to count toward the required 600 hours of clinical practice.

- 8. Can you share more information on how an intern teacher might be able to meet the multiple grade level requirements for clinical practice?**
- The standards require a minimum of 200 hours of clinical practice in PK or TK, 200 hours in K-3, and 200 hours in any of the PK-3 settings.
 - Intern teachers and student teachers such as those in residency programs are not exempt from this requirement even though they are assigned to a single classroom.
 - The program must identify opportunities that will give these candidates the full range of required experiences.
 - Assurance that an intern will be able to complete clinical practice consisting of a minimum of 200 hours in a PK/TK placement and a minimum of 200 hours in in a K-3 placement must be reflected in the program's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the employing school/district/agency.
 - Program proposals must be clear about how the intern program will ensure that the intern will be afforded opportunities to complete the entire 600 hours in the various required settings.
- 9. If there are two teachers in the ECE classroom, but only one is a teacher and the other is an aide, this would be an ok setting, correct?**
- As long as the teacher meets the qualifications for the LEA/ECE-employed supervisor, the classroom can serve as a clinical practice placement. This person would need to provide supervision while the candidate is completing clinical practice in their learning space.
- 10. Do you need to have the six formal observations per semester for both the early student teaching and the final student teaching?**
- The formal observations are a crucial element of clinical practice and should occur throughout the candidate's time in the program. It is up to the program to ensure they occur, generally approximately once every two to three weeks. However, the spacing of them may be established to best meet the program goals and structure. If a program elects to supervise candidates using a different model of frequency of observations and can justify that it better meets the needs of the candidate, it may be acceptable. However, it is the responsibility of the program to demonstrate that, over the course of the program, at least the equivalent amount of supervision is achieved.
- 11. Does clinical practice have to be at the same school?**
- The clinical practice placements do not have to be at the same school. However, as programs consider various program designs for maximizing candidate outcomes, programs should keep in mind that clinical practice experiences should not be a patchwork of unrelated experiences but rather a coherent, cohesive process that leads candidates to develop their skills as an educator and their understanding of early learners.
 - One purpose of the clinical practice component of the preparation program is to provide candidates with a realistic and meaningful experience as to what being an educator entails. This includes how teachers build relationships and community in the classroom, learn to differentiate instruction for children with different strengths and abilities, and to navigate the logistics of classroom organization and routines. For this reason, the clinical practice component of the preparation program generally involves placing candidates for significant portions of the year in a single setting (generally at least one full term at a time).

12. For candidates who come into the program with both subject matter competency and experience that is eligible for clinical practice equivalency, what does the field work/early student/final teacher look like? Is it the same, just less hours?

- Candidates for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential who hold a Multiple Subject Credential with an English Learner authorization and have met the subject matter competency requirement (SMR) may apply directly to the Commission for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential. More information about this process will be available once the regulations have been finalized by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL).
- Candidates who enter a PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential preparation program having met the SMR and who have met criteria for one or both of the clinical practice equivalency options will need to complete the educator preparation program, along with additional required clinical practice hours. It will be up to the program to design a process to keep track of clinical practice hours and placements. Programs must ensure that all candidates complete a minimum of 200 hours in K-3 during the preparation program, even if they qualify for equivalency in the PK/TK. There is no equivalency option for the K-3 placement.
- It is important to note that even if a candidate meets both equivalency options and is required to complete only 200 additional hours, the candidate must demonstrate competency in all the TPEs and pass the TPA. This may require a candidate to exceed the minimum clinical practice hours in order to fulfill these other requirements.

13. Please elaborate on the 6 Formal Observations. This is very confusing about what counts as a Formal Observation.

- A formal observation generally includes the following:
- Candidate submits a formal lesson plan to the supervisor prior to the planned observation date; and the supervisor provides feedback on the plan.
- The university/program supervisor observes and scripts the lesson/learning activity (this may be done in person or remotely, if necessary)
- A post-lesson conference between the candidate and supervisor takes place (possibly including the LEA/ECE-employed supervisor if available); the supervisor(s) guides the candidate in reflecting on the learning activity to identify elements that went well and areas for improvement in future teaching.
- The university/program supervisor submits a formal report to the program, including notes and confirmation of the post-lesson conference, which the program is responsible for storing.

14. Can clinical practice be done through coursework? In other words, could observation-based assignments be part of a standard lecture-type course to meet this requirement?

- Clinical practice is a developmental and sequential set of activities integrated with theoretical and pedagogical coursework. It is up to programs to ensure the clinical practice component of the program provides candidates with consistent and meaningful opportunities to observe, practice, and reflect on classroom interactions in their role as educator.
- Clinical practice as indicated in the standards are comprised generally of early fieldwork, initial student teaching, and final student teaching including a culminating four weeks of solo or co-teaching where the candidate has essentially taken over the classroom under the guidance of the mentor teacher. While some of the early fieldwork maybe be done through coursework and include observations, the vast majority of the 600 hours of clinical practice must a setting in which the candidate is actively engaged in a PK-3 classroom with opportunities to practice. Such practice includes everything from one-on-one work with children, to small group and full class

instruction, guiding children through transitions throughout the day, and supervising play time.

- Assignments completed as part of a course where candidates practice teaching on other candidates do not qualify as clinical practice.
- Coursework assigned to be completed in a candidate's clinical practice placement needs to meet the criteria as listed in the [PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Handbook](#).

15. Is it possible to complete clinical practice in Expanded Learning Opportunities Programs (ELOP), such as afterschool and summer enrichment programs? Can time spent teaching in ELOP count towards clinical practice equivalence?

- While an ELOP situation is not specifically prohibited, it is highly unlikely to meet all the conditions for clinical practice as required by the standards.
- ELOP work would not be eligible for clinical practice equivalency unless it meets all of the criteria for one of the options in [Program Standard 3](#).

16. How do community colleges hire a TPA coordinator?

- Institutions offering educator preparation programs are responsible for designating a TPA coordinator. Community colleges cannot offer educator preparation programs but may partner with a Commission-approved institution program sponsor. It will be up to the program sponsor to identify a TPA coordinator.

17. Who is the point person to contact for community colleges to ask clarifying questions?

- Representatives from community colleges are welcome to contact the IPR Team: IPR@ctc.ca.gov to address program questions regarding the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential and the ECE Team: ECE@ctc.ca.gov for questions regarding Child Development Permits.

18. Can clinical practice be paid? For example, someone who completed 2 years at a community college and has a Child Development permit. Can that candidate be employed at an ECE setting while pursuing their BA? In other words, the candidate is not an intern (since the candidate does not have a BA).

- How individuals earn a living while earning their baccalaureate (BA) degree is outside of the Commission's purview. Whether or not a person may use their existing ECE employment to do their clinical practice is a question for their program but often not possible. Candidates in student teaching programs must be working in a mentor teacher's classroom and must meet all the requirements set forth in the standards, so the answer to this question would depend on the person's unique situation, which should be evaluated by the Commission-approved program sponsor.
- There are some preparation programs that offer stipends for residency pathways. These would be acceptable placements for PK-3 candidates.
- Candidates in an educator preparation program who are working in a setting serving 3- and 4-year-old children may be able to complete some of their clinical practice hours in their workplace, as long as the program determines that the site meets the criteria for clinical practice placement.

19. Can the LEA supervisor and university supervisor be the same person if they work at the field site?

- No. It is important that a triad structure is in place: candidate, university/program supervisor, LEA/ECE-employed supervisor (mentor teacher).

20. Can the observations be hybrid, some in person and some online?

- Yes, as long as they include planning, observation, conference, and reflection. The university/program supervisor must provide documentation, as they would in an in-person formal observation.

21. Will there be financial support for the clinical experience requirements? Especially for those working full time and can't afford to lose income during clinical practice.

- There are no specific dedicated state funds for the PK-3 credentials. There are some opportunities for candidate support through a variety of sources. See the [Resource Compendium](#) for examples. Programs may also apply for residency and other grants available through the Commission on the [Grant Funded Programs](#) page of our website.

22. Will student teaching be able to occur in Head Start Programs?

- It is possible for candidates to do from 200-400 hours of their clinical practice in Head Start Programs. It is up to programs to determine appropriate settings for clinical practice that align with the program standards. Please see the [Clinical Practice Guide For PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential](#) and [Standard 3](#).

H) Clinical Practice Equivalency

1. Will the 200 hours waived have any restrictions? (Such as practicum hours completed in a work setting.)

- It is important to clarify that there are no waivers for clinical practice. There is a 600-hour clinical practice requirement for all candidates. Some candidates may qualify for equivalency for these clinical practice hours if their prior experience meets specific criteria.
- Candidates have the opportunity to be granted equivalency for clinical practice by meeting required criteria.
- These criteria are specific and no 'partial credit' or substitutions are permitted. Please see [Program Precondition 7](#). Criteria for both options for clinical practice equivalency are listed and explained.

2. Does the 6+ years of ECE teaching experience mean PK-3 grade experience?

- For Clinical Practice Equivalency Option 1, candidates must complete 6+ years of full-time ECE teaching experience with 3- and 4-year-olds along with additional requirements found in [Precondition 7](#).
- All candidates for this credential also need to complete a minimum of 200 hours of clinical practice in a K-3 setting.
- There is no equivalency option for the K-3 portion of clinical practice.
- For full details on this equivalency option, please see [Precondition 7](#).

3. What about assistant teachers in PK-3; does this count?

- No. In order to meet Equivalency Option 1 for clinical practice, the candidate must either hold a valid Child Development Permit at the Teacher level or higher or verify employment as a lead teacher in a Head Start program, California State Preschool Program, or a childcare and development center serving preschool-aged children ages 3- and 4-years old. There are additional criteria for meeting this option listed in [Precondition 7](#).

4. **What about individuals who have been working with infants/toddlers for many years? Does this experience count as well?**
 - No, the candidate must either hold a valid Child Development Permit at the Teacher level or higher or verify employment as a lead teacher in a Head Start program, California State Preschool Program, or a childcare and development center serving preschool-aged children (ages 3-4) in order to meet the Equivalency Option 1.
5. **What if practicum is also in TK-3rd?**
 - Practicum equivalency for clinical practice must meet criteria outlined in [Precondition 7](#). Practicum must be in a preschool learning space where the candidate worked with children ages three to four years old. There is no equivalency option available for practicum or teaching experience in K-3 classrooms.
6. **Is the expectation that the candidate needs to document any details that are not on the transcript (child age, number of hours). My question refers to Option 2. Transcripts do not include all of these details.**
 - Programs must establish a process for confirming that candidates meet all requirements for this credential. This includes a process for determining candidate eligibility for clinical practice equivalency. It is up to the programs to design a process by which they will verify how candidates meet criteria for clinical practice equivalency (See [Precondition 6](#)).
7. **Is the "school year" considered 9 months?**
 - The Commission has not quantified the duration of a "school year" but it is intended to be an academic year or the equivalent.
8. **If a candidate has met one or both of the clinical practice equivalency requirements in a K-3 classroom, will it not count since this is only for PK/TK?**
 - Equivalency is only available for the PK/TK portion of clinical practice. *There is no equivalency option for the K-3 portion of the clinical practice component for this credential.* Therefore, they may not meet equivalency requirements for work in a K-3 classroom.

I) The 24 Units for Transitional Kindergarten Apportionment

1. **If a TK teacher wants to do a job share, does the other teacher they partner with have to have the 24 ECE units or other qualifications the TK has to have in order to work with them? Can they just have a general Multiple Subject credential?**
 - All teachers teaching TK classes must meet the apportionment requirement if their employer wants to collect apportionment for the TK class.
2. **In the slides, it was noted that Multiple Subject holders can teach preschool-12th grade in "self-contained classrooms." Does that negate the requirement for 24 ECE/CD units to teach TK?**
 - Multiple Subject credential holders are already authorized to teach in the TK classes. However, state statute requires that, beginning August 1, 2025, all teachers in these classrooms meet the 24-unit requirement in order for their employer to be eligible to collect [apportionment](#) for the TK class.

3. Regarding the Child Development Permit units, can candidates take the 24 units ECE courses in Extension programs?

- The 24 ECE/CD unit requirement for TK apportionment are not for purposes of a Child Development Permit. The units are a funding requirement for credentialed teachers teaching TK whose employers want to collect state funding (apportionment) for those TK classes. These units must be from a regionally accredited institution of higher education and be degree applicable and non-remedial.

Please see the following page for links to resources mentioned throughout this document.

Resources Linked in this Document

- [PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential Webpage](#)
- [PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential Handbook](#)
- [Clinical Practice Guide for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential](#)
- [Submitting a Proposal for a New Educator Preparation Program in California Webpage \(IPR\)](#)
- [Preconditions and Standards](#)
 - [Preconditions for Intern Programs](#)
 - [Common Standards](#)
- [Teaching Performance Assessments in California](#)
- [Assessment Design Standards](#)
- [ECE News Mailing List](#)
- [PSD eNews Mailing List](#)
- [Accreditation Technical Assistance](#)
 - ECE@ctc.ca.gov
 - IPR@ctc.ca.gov
- [Clinical Practice for the PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction Credential Webinar December 2023](#)
- [Resource Compendium](#)
- [Grant Funded Programs](#)
- [Commission Meetings](#) (include recordings and detailed agenda documents)
 - [Commission on Teacher Credentialing – October 2022 Meeting](#)
- [CDE Transitional Kindergarten FAQs](#)