

# The Status of Licensure of Special Education Teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Prepared for the Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education

by

**William L. Geiger**

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

**Margaret D. Crutchfield**

The Council for Exceptional Children

**Richard Mainzer**

The Council for Exceptional Children

**April 2003**



Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

<http://www.copsse.org>

---

# Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education

---

**University of Florida**

**Johns Hopkins University**

**Vanderbilt University**

**University of Colorado - Boulder**

**Instructional Research Group, Long Beach, CA**

COPSSE research is focused on the preparation of special education professionals and its impact on beginning teacher quality and student outcomes. Our research is intended to inform scholars and policymakers about advantages and disadvantages of preparation alternatives and the effective use of public funds in addressing personnel shortages.

In addition to our authors and reviewers, many individuals and organizations have contributed substantially to our efforts, including Drs. Erling Boe of the University of Pennsylvania and Elaine Carlson of WESTAT. We also have benefited greatly from collaboration with the National Clearinghouse for the Professions in Special Education, the Policymakers Partnership, and their parent organizations, the Council for Exceptional Children and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education.

---

The Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education, H325Q000002, is a cooperative agreement between the University of Florida and the Office of Special Education Programs of the U. S. Department of Education. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of Education, nor does mention of other organizations imply endorsement by them.

Recommended citation:

Geiger, W. L., Crutchfield, M. D., & Mainzer, R. (2003). *The status of licensure of special education teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century* (COPSSE Document No. RS-7). Gainesville, FL: University of Florida, Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education.



U. S. Office of Special  
Education Programs

Additional Copies may be obtained from:  
COPSSE Project  
P.O. Box 117050  
University of Florida  
Gainesville, FL 32611  
352-392-0701  
352-392-2655 (Fax)

There are no copyright restrictions on this document; however please credit the source and support of the federal funds when copying all or part of this document.

---

---

# CONTENTS

## CHAPTERS

Introduction to Licensure of Special Education Teachers.....	4
Review of Research on Licensure Requirements.....	6
Current Requirements for Conventional Licensure.....	14
Alternative Routes to Licensure.....	27
Limitations of Studies and Recommendations for Future Research.....	32

REFERENCES.....	35
-----------------	----

## APPENDICES

Appendix A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels for Special Education Licenses.....	39
Appendix B. Required Assessments for Initial Licensure of Special Education Teachers.....	54
Appendix C. Letter Request for Information on Alternative Route Certification Program.....	62

## TABLES

Table 1. Areas of Special Education Licensure.....	18
Table 2. Assessments Required for Licensure of Special Education Teachers.....	21

## FIGURES

Figure 1. Number of Areas of Special Education Licensure Awarded by Jurisdictions.....	19
---	----

---

## INTRODUCTION TO LICENSURE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Licensure<sup>1</sup> of teachers in the United States dates back to approximately 1825 when local school districts and counties established agencies to examine and license teachers (Mackey & McHenry, 1994). At the turn of the 20th century, state agencies entered the arena in order to standardize examination of teacher candidates. Several decades later, statewide systems for examining were replaced by state standards for the preparation of teachers. The standards established by individual states represent minimum levels of competence for practice that will ensure protection of the general public (Shive, 1988).

Recently the U. S. Department of Education [USDOE] issued a report, *Meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher Challenge*, which criticized current state systems of licensure as “outdated” with low standards, posing barriers to the admission of qualified candidates. It found promise for a new model of teacher licensure in alternative routes that require passage of state-required examinations but often do not require many of the pedagogical or clinical practice components found in most traditional teacher preparation programs. The new model proffered in the report is based on the best characteristics of current alternative route programs: “high standards for verbal ability and content knowledge” and “streamlined certification requirements” (U. S. Department of Education, 2002, p. 19).

The USDOE’s report displayed high enthusiasm for alternative licensure programs. However, there is little information on alternative licensure programs for special education teachers available in the professional literature. Rosenberg and Sindelar (2001) found only eight data-based studies on this topic. They were able to distill some potential indicators of effective alternative licensure programs for special education teachers. However, based on the limited number and uneven quality of data-based studies, they could conclude little about the effectiveness of alternative licensure programs in special education.

*Meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher Challenge* has directed attention to the adequacy of our traditional systems for licensing teachers and the potential of alternative routes. This report is intended to help inform discussions about conventional and alternative licensure models in the area of special education. By providing current information on requirements and options for licensing special education teachers, this report will enable policy makers and practitioners interested in special education to participate knowledgeably in the national dialogue about the licensure and quality of teachers.

This document shares the results of two national studies. The first study focuses on models and requirements for the conventional licensure of special education teachers. All 50 states and the District of Columbia participated in this study. The second study focuses on alternative licensure practices for special educators in a sample of ten states.

---

<sup>1</sup> The term *license* (or derivatives) will be used in this report to refer to the credentials states or comparable jurisdictions issue to qualified school personnel. The term *certificate* (or derivatives) will still appear in some quotations.

---

The report is organized into five major sections:

- A review of literature related to the conventional licensure of special education teachers and special education requirements for general education teachers
- The results of a national study of requirements for conventional licensure of special education teachers and special education requirements for general education teachers
- Results of a pilot study of alternative routes to licensure in special education
- Limitations of studies in the report and recommendations for future research
- Appendices related to the two studies.

---

## REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS

Since the 1960s there have been dozens of studies on a variety of aspects of jurisdiction models and requirements for licensure of special education teachers and requirements related to special education for the licensure of general education teachers. These studies can be clustered by scope of inquiry. Although some studies do not fit neatly into a cluster, clustering studies is a useful organizational tool for an historical review of research on licensure requirements. Six clusters of inquiry were identified:

1. Special education licensure in specific areas of disability
2. Categorical and non-categorical approaches to licensure
3. Licensure of special educators that emphasizes ages of students with disabilities (early childhood special education and transition from secondary education)
4. Assessment requirements for special education licensure
5. Broad, comprehensive studies of special education licensure
6. Requirements that general education teachers be prepared to educate students with disabilities.

### Cluster 1: Special Education Licensure in Specific Areas of Disability

For more than three decades, there has been an interest in licensure for teachers of students with learning disabilities. Prior to the passage of P. L. 94-142, Schwartz (1969) studied licensure standards for teachers of students with learning disabilities. At that time, only 12 jurisdictions<sup>2</sup> reported licensing teachers in this area, and 21 jurisdictions reported they had no standards for teachers of students with learning disabilities. Some jurisdictions licensed teachers for students with learning disabilities under other disability categories, e.g., orthopedically disabled, mentally retarded. More than 15 years later, Leigh and Patton (1986) published the results of another study on state licensure patterns for teachers of students with learning disabilities. They observed that titles of state licenses varied considerably across jurisdictions. While a majority of the jurisdictions offered a specific credential in learning disabilities, about 40 percent used a more generic credential. In 1997 Jenkins, Leigh, and Patton updated the information reported in the 1986 study. They found that 29 jurisdictions offered licenses in the “category of learning disability, or a close variation” (p. 274).

In the latter half of the 1970s, licensure in the areas of severe/profound disabilities and severe emotional disturbances was investigated. Russo and Stark (1976) found that 4 jurisdictions

---

<sup>2</sup> Because the literature on special education licensure models includes many studies of states and similar governmental units of the United States and, in at least one instance, other countries, the term *jurisdictions* will be used instead of states, except in quotations and when a statement applies only to a state or states.

---

licensed teachers in severe/profound disabilities and 7 jurisdictions anticipated licensing in this area in the near future. Morgan (1978) published the results of a study on certification requirements for teachers of students with severe emotional disturbances. Fourteen (14) jurisdictions (of the 40 that responded) indicated they had “separate standards for certification in the area of severe disturbances, in contrast to the category of behavioral disorders or social/emotionally maladjusted” (p. 270).

In 1985, Chapey, Pyszkowski, and Trimarco published results of a study on the number of jurisdictions issuing licenses in specific categorical areas. The areas of visual disabilities and hearing disabilities were reported most frequently. Forty-three (43) jurisdictions issued licenses in each of these areas. Other areas in which categorical licenses were frequently awarded included speech/language impairments (38), mental retardation (34), emotional disturbance (34), learning disabilities (34), and physical/multiple disabilities (31). Two years later, Huebner and Strumwasser (1987) reported that 45 jurisdictions offered specific licenses for teachers of blind and visually impaired.

## **Cluster 2: Categorical and Non-Categorical Approaches to Licensure**

Interest in categorical and non-categorical licensure models for special education teachers (especially teachers of students with mild forms of educational disability) has existed since the implementation of P. L. 94-142. In 1979 Belch reported 11 jurisdictions offered forms of non-categorical licenses. Another 12 jurisdictions indicated that they were moving in the direction of offering non-categorical licenses.

In the 1980s, at least four studies targeted categorical and non-categorical models of licensure directly, and many polemical papers were published on the topic. Chapey et al. (1985) reported that 25 jurisdictions were moving toward “a generalist concept of certifying teachers non-categorically or generically” (p. 204). The remaining 26 study respondents were continuing to use categorical models of licensure for special education teachers. A year later, McLaughlin, Smith-Davis, and Burke (1986) reported that 30 jurisdictions had categorical models of licensure, and 26 had non-categorical models. The authors noted that “states with primarily non-categorical certification can and usually do have specialty endorsement areas for certain types of handicaps or certain types of personnel, and states with categorical certification may include one or more categories for generic specialists or perhaps cross-categorical specialists” (p. 23). In other words, many jurisdictions had “mixed” models of licensure—a combination of categorical and non-categorical.

Mausser and Cranston-Gingras (1988) published a report that supported the observations of McLaughlin et al. (1986). While some jurisdictions were identified as using a traditional categorical model and others non-categorical systems, the authors noted that many jurisdictions used both options. They perceived a preference for categorical certification and noted the presence of a “slow trend toward non-categorical certification options” (p. 5), especially for students with mild disabilities. That same year McLaughlin and Stettner-Eaton (1988) affirmed that jurisdictions were shifting toward non-categorical options. A comparison of studies conducted in 1977 and in 1986 revealed that at least 10 states had moved from categorical to non-categorical licensure.

In 1990 the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) reported that 15 jurisdictions used traditional categorical accreditations. Twelve (12) jurisdictions used a

---

non-categorical approach, and 4 jurisdictions used non-categorical with some categorical accreditations. That year Berkeley (1990) also published a study in which 17 jurisdictions were identified as offering categorical licenses for special educators. Twenty-four (24) jurisdictions considered their licensure to be non-categorical, yet 20 of these jurisdictions also reported one or more areas of categorical licensure. He commented that only “four of the states that reported truly had non-categorical certification for special education teachers” (p. 4).

In the last two years, a few publications have provided updated information on categorical and non-categorical models of licensure in special education. The Fifth Edition of *The NASDTEC Manual on the Preparation and Certification of Educational Personnel* (2000) identified at least 42 states and the District of Columbia as issuing categorical special education credentials; 7 jurisdictions did not. Similarly, 42 jurisdictions issued some form of non-categorical credential, and 7 did not.

In 2001 Mainzer and Horvath examined jurisdiction special education licensure models using data from *The NASDTEC Manual* along with data compiled by the Council for Exceptional Children [CEC]. They found that, when early childhood special education, deaf, hard-of-hearing, and blind and visually impaired are excluded from the analysis, “only four states use a purely categorical framework for licensing in special education” (p. 4). Twenty-four (24) jurisdictions were found to use only multi-categorical frameworks; 14 of these jurisdictions offered generic licenses in special education. Twenty-three (23) jurisdictions used a combination of categorical and multi-categorical approaches. They concluded that there was an identifiable trend toward multi-categorical licensure, especially for teachers of students with mental retardation, orthopedic impairments, other health impairments, serious emotional disturbances, and specific learning disabilities.

### **Cluster 3: Areas of Special Education Licensure that Emphasize Ages of Students with Disabilities**

During the 1980s, the topic of licensure requirements for early childhood special educators was examined by at least three teams of investigators. In 1980 Trohanis, Barker, Button, Hazen, Jackson, Karp, May, Meyer, Moore, Norman, Osteen, and Rostetter noted that, between 1976 and 1979, 4 jurisdictions developed licensure standards in early childhood special education and another 8 were in the process of developing standards. A few years later, Stile, Abernathy, Pettibone, and Watchtel (1984) reported that 20 jurisdictions had separate early childhood special education licenses. In 1987 Smith and Powers analyzed 15 states’ policies for licensing early childhood special education teachers and found that 10 of the states had competency-based licensure requirements. By 1990, 21 jurisdictions were identified as awarding separate licenses in early childhood special education (Berkeley, 1990).

Bruder, Klosowski, and Daguio (1990) added to the information base on licensure in early childhood special education by examining age ranges for early childhood special education licenses. Four (4) jurisdictions reported having licenses for special educators specific to birth to three years, and 15 jurisdictions required “some type of certification for special educators providing services to children in a broader age category beginning at birth” (p. 12). A plurality of the jurisdictions reported three years as the earliest age for which licensed special educators were required. Striffler (1995) provided an update on the age ranges of licenses for early intervention teachers. Fourteen (14) jurisdictions offered credentials for birth through five years. This was the most commonly reported age range for licensing early childhood special educators.



---

The next most common age range was birth through eight years or a comparable designation. Five (5) jurisdictions offered credentials for teachers of infants and toddlers, birth through three years.

Surprisingly, very little attention has been given to licensure requirements for secondary transition specialists. In 2002 the first study was conducted of state licensure structures and content requirements for secondary transition personnel (Klienhammer-Trammill, Morningstar, & Morningstar, in press). Twelve (12) states awarded credentials for secondary transition personnel. An additional 19 states awarded special education credentials that focused on the secondary level. Thirty-five (35) states were found to have some form of transition-relevant content requirement for licensure.

#### **Cluster 4: Assessment Requirements for Special Education Licensure**

Very few studies have explored assessment requirements for licensure of special education teachers. Ramsey (1988) found that 26 states administered specialty area tests in special education or were in the process of developing or adopting such tests. At least 4 additional states reported that required assessment of special education candidates was under study. In 1993 Piercy and Bowen explored assessment requirements for licensure of special education teachers. They found that the following five requirements had been adopted in at least 25 jurisdictions: (1) a college degree, (2) completion of an approved teacher preparation program, (3) experience in working with students in classrooms, (4) passage of a basic skills examination, and (5) passage of either a specialty area examination or an examination of content related to teaching. Eleven (11) jurisdictions reported having a required minimum grade point average, 36 required basic skills tests, and 25 required specialty area tests.

#### **Cluster 5: Broad, Comprehensive Studies of Special Education Licensure**

Studies from the early 1970s have examined all areas of special education licensure in jurisdictions and/or multiple aspects of special education licensure, including aspects identified in other clusters in this report. Their breadth places these studies in a single cluster.

In 1972 Abeson and Fleury prepared a report designed to be a reference for individuals interested in state requirements for the licensure of special education teachers and administrators. A preliminary analysis of the report reveals that most state licensure regulations were based on categories of disabilities. The number of special education licensure areas ranged from one to eight; the mode was six areas of licensure. The most commonly reported categories of licensure were mental retardation (43), hearing-impaired (38), speech/language impaired (38), visual impairment (36), and physical impairment (33). Twenty-nine (29) jurisdictions were identified as licensing teachers in the area of emotional disturbance; some jurisdictions indicated licensure requirements in this area were the same as those for other areas of disability. Fewer than half of the jurisdictions (23) reported licensure in the area of learning disabilities. Only 7 jurisdictions had some form of non-categorical licensure for special educators.

Five years later, Gilmore and Aroyros (1997) compiled a similar report. They used “number of categories” as a basis for identifying general models of licensure. The first model they identified consisted of six or more categories of disabilities. Most jurisdictions (at least 35) were identified as using this model. The number of licensure areas most frequently reported by jurisdictions was

---

seven. Nine (9) states were identified as using a second model that consisted of a generic certificate and fewer than six disability-specific categories. Two states, California and Massachusetts, were identified as having unique models. The most common categories of licensure cited by Gilmore and Aroyros were hearing impairment (43), vision impairment (39), speech/language impairment (37), mental retardation (35), emotional disturbance (33), physical disabilities (33), and learning disabilities (31).

When information was available, Gilmore and Aroyros (1997) reported on age/grade ranges for special education licenses. A preponderance of the jurisdictions had a K-12 or PreK-12 model for licensing special education teachers. Ten (10) jurisdictions were identified as offering special education licenses at the elementary and secondary levels.

In 1979, Barresi and Bunte used the structure developed by Gilmore and Aroyros (1997) to examine jurisdiction models of licensure. Jurisdictions with six or more areas of licensure in special education were classified as having a “categorical model.” Those with fewer than six categories were considered to have a “generic model.” Thirty-five (35) jurisdictions had “categorical models,” 14 used “generic models,” 1 used both, and 3 had other models. They noted that some jurisdictions that were classified as having a categorical model had a “generic certificate” as one of their “categorical certificates.”

Barresi and Bunte (1979) also explored other areas of licensure. They reported that 34 jurisdictions treated special education licensure as freestanding, and 34 treated it as an endorsement to another license. (In 17 jurisdictions, the special education licensure was both freestanding and an endorsement to another license.) Nineteen (19) jurisdictions required courses in special education for licensure of general education teachers. Six (6) additional jurisdictions were considering such a requirement. All but one jurisdiction reported that state approval of higher education programs was the basis for licensing teachers. Required courses were additional bases for licensure in 22 jurisdictions; and proof of the acquisition of competencies was required in 14 jurisdictions. Satisfactory performance on state-wide tests was required in 9 jurisdictions.

Fearn (1987), on behalf of the CEC, conducted an extensive study of licensure of special educators. She identified 181 different titles of licenses in special education and created a classification system of 17 designations as a means of organizing the titles. Areas in which states licensed special education teachers were identified, and information was provided on the status of licensure of special education administrators. Fearn also gathered information on whether special education licensure was based on courses or competencies. In 1993 Piercy and Bowen explored some of the same questions examined by Fearn. Nineteen (19) jurisdictions required completion of specific courses for licensure. Eight (8) jurisdictions required mastery of specific competencies.

Fearn summarized information on age and grade ranges of special education licensure. Twelve (12) states licensed teachers in elementary special education, 5 in middle level, and 21 in secondary special education. Ten configurations/designations for licensure in early childhood special education were identified. She also reported that 18 states required special educators to satisfy licensure requirements in elementary or secondary education in addition to meeting certification standards in special education. This was a slight increase over results reported by Barresi and Bunte (1979). By 1993, only 11 jurisdictions were identified as requiring a license in elementary or secondary education in order for a candidate to be licensed in special education (Piercy & Bowen, 1993).

---

In 1993 Putnam and Habanek reported on jurisdiction licensure requirements, with a particular focus on requirements for teachers of students with mild disabilities. Twenty-six (26) jurisdictions awarded licenses in learning disabilities and the same number offered licenses in mental retardation. Twenty-eight (28) jurisdictions reported awarding licenses in emotional disturbance. Thirty-two (32) jurisdictions issued generic licenses to teach students with mild/moderate disabilities. Several jurisdictions offered both categorical and non-categorical licenses for teachers of students with mild disabilities. The authors reported a variety of grade-level configurations for special education licensees. The most common configuration (31) was a K-12 license. Information was also obtained on whether jurisdictions required licensure in general education in order to obtain licensure in special education. Fifteen (15) jurisdictions required a license in general education in order to obtain a license in special education. Their findings differed from those reported in the same year by Piercy and Bowen (1993).

A few years later, Steffens (1996) reported the results of a study that also examined licensure requirements for teachers of students with mild disabilities. She noted that 37 jurisdictions awarded a form of generic licensure. Twenty-five (25) of these jurisdictions offered only non-categorical licenses for teachers of students with mental retardation, learning disabilities, or emotional/behavioral disorders; the other 12 also awarded categorical licenses in these areas. Fourteen (14) other jurisdictions awarded only categorical licenses in the three areas. A K-12 pattern of licensure for special education teachers was used widely. Twenty-four (24) jurisdictions issued K-12 licenses in special education, and another 7 issued PreK-12 licenses. Ten (10) jurisdictions offered different configurations of elementary, middle, or secondary special education licenses.

## **Cluster 6: Required Special Education Preparation for General Education Teachers**

Attention has been given to the topic of preparing general education teachers to educate students with disabilities for nearly a quarter of a century (Thurman & Hare, 1979). Studies by Sargent (1978) and Patton and Braithwaite (1979) reflected this interest. Sargent reported 18 states and the District of Columbia required preparation of general educators in order to better educate students with disabilities in their classrooms. At that time another 10 states had requirements pending. Patton and Braithwaite found that fewer jurisdictions (10) had requirements for special education courses or experience for the initial licensure or re-licensure of regular classroom teachers. Four (4) jurisdictions were identified as having pending requirements.

As part of a study that examined categorical and non-categorical models of licensure, Chapey et al. (1985) requested information on special education requirements for general education teachers. Fifteen (15) jurisdictions required that general education teachers have a course in special education, and five (5) jurisdictions reported that two courses were required. Thirty-five (35) jurisdictions recommended that general education teachers be required to complete some preparation in special education, and more than 70% expressed a preference for at least two courses. Two years later, Tait (1987) found that 33 jurisdictions had requirements for “some exposure to information about exceptional children” (p. 29). She concluded that the number of jurisdictions with such requirements had increased substantially since the late 1970s.

Interest in special education licensure requirements for general education teachers continued in the 1990s. In 1990 Patton and Braithwaite conducted a follow-up to their 1979 investigation of

---

the topic. They found that 37 jurisdictions required special education course work for the initial licensure of general education teachers. Nine (9) jurisdictions reported requirements for course work in special education for the recertification of general education teachers. According to findings during the 1980s, there had been substantial growth in the number of states requiring special education for general educators. A year later, Reiff, Evans, and Cass (1991) provided more information on required preparation in special education for general educators. They found that 31 jurisdictions required an introduction to special education course for elementary education teachers. Six (6) more jurisdictions had special education competency requirements but did not require specific course work. A few years later, Jones and Black (1994) reported that 21 states required a class in exceptionalities for licensure in vocational education. Twenty-three (23) jurisdictions had such a requirement for licensure in general education. The following year Katsiyannis, Conderman, and Franks (1995) reported on state practices regarding a specific dimension of the preparation of general education teachers—inclusion of students with disabilities in general education environments. Six (6) jurisdictions reported having such requirements for licensure, and 16 jurisdictions were in the process of revising licensure requirements to address inclusion.

## Summary Observations

Researchers encountered difficulty in understanding special education teacher licensure guidelines/policies. The topic is complicated by the variety of models and terms adopted by jurisdictions. Organizational variables—including number of licenses and categorical vs. non-categorical/generic options—were developed as frameworks. This helped to clarify jurisdictional approaches to licensing special education teachers.

Thirty-five years of research on licensure requirements for special education teachers and special education requirements for general education teachers reveals:

- The most common areas of categorical licensure have been visual impairment and hearing impairment.
- Over the period reviewed, the number of jurisdictions awarding licenses in the area of learning disabilities increased; however, the number of jurisdictions issuing such licenses has remained relatively constant in the last decade.
- More recent studies indicate that the number of jurisdictions awarding licenses in physical disabilities and in mental retardation declined from earlier reports. The data may also be unclear in the area of emotional disturbance.
- The number of jurisdictions awarding some form of non-categorical license in special education has increased.
- *Mixed* models of special education licensure have become more common. Many jurisdictions have moved from a model that was based solely on categories of disability to a model that also includes one or more forms of non-categorical licenses.

- 
- The number of jurisdictions awarding licenses in early childhood special education increased noticeably in the 1980s. The models of licensure in this area show considerable variability, especially in the age/grade ranges covered.
  - A strong preference for PreK-12 or K-12 configurations of special education licensure was noted.
  - Little attention has been given to the licensure of secondary transition personnel.
  - Few studies have examined jurisdiction assessment standards for licensure in special education.
  - The number of jurisdictions requiring that general education teachers receive preparation to educate students with disabilities has increased.

---

## CURRENT REQUIREMENTS FOR CONVENTIONAL LICENSURE

It has been several years since a comprehensive study of licensure of special education teachers has been undertaken. Current data on the requirements and models for conventional licensure of special education are needed in order to evaluate the adequacy of licensure requirements for special education teachers and to engage knowledgeable in the broader debate on the value of licensure systems, recently stimulated by the USDOE report, *Meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher Challenge* (2002).

In 2000 a study was designed for the purpose of updating information on jurisdiction requirements for the conventional licensure of special educators and extended inquiry into areas of special education licensure that had been explored infrequently. The study investigated recent changes in jurisdiction licensure requirements; changes in licensure requirements for special education teachers; use of recommendations from national organizations for the licensure of special education teachers; bases for granting conventional licenses in special education; models, areas, and levels of licensure in special education; assessment requirements for special education licenses; licensure in early childhood special education; required preparation for general education teachers to provide instruction to students with disabilities; and preparation of special educators in the areas of general curriculum and pedagogy.

### Method

Questions that would extend and update earlier lines of inquiry were identified through an extensive review of research literature pertaining to special education licensure. The research methods adopted for the study were based on the perceived strengths of earlier investigations; use of current technology was also incorporated into the methodology. Research procedures included letters sent to jurisdiction licensure representatives, communication by using fax and e-mail, review of jurisdiction web sites, and telephone interviews. The general methodological design consisted of four stages: (1) identification of knowledgeable informants from the 50 states and the District of Columbia, (2) initial contact with the identified informants, (3) interviews of informants, and (4) validation of the information provided. The format for the interviews included restatement of the responses that were transcribed by the interviewer. This procedure was used to confirm/validate the answers provided by informants.

The questions and procedures developed for the study were piloted with a representative of a state that was undergoing significant changes to its model for licensing special education teachers. The circumstances in this state were complex and provided a rigorous test of the research process and instrument. As a result of the pilot test, modifications were made to the letter requesting participation, and the questionnaire was revised. Procedures for identifying a knowledgeable informant, scheduling and conducting interviews, and recording responses were determined to be effective.

In the spring of 2000, letters requesting participation in the study were mailed to directors of licensure in state departments of education and the District of Columbia. Addresses for the individuals were obtained from *The NASDTEC Manual on the Preparation and Certification of Educational Personnel, Fourth Edition* (1998). In states that had professional standards boards



---

responsible for licensure standards, letters were sent to the directors of these agencies; addresses were obtained from *Characteristics of Independent Professional Teacher Standards Boards* (NEA, 1998). Follow-up letters were sent to directors who did not respond to the initial letters requesting participation. In order to obtain participation from all jurisdictions, telephone calls were made to those who did not respond to letters of invitation. In some instances, persons in state special education units were asked to facilitate participation by licensure personnel. Ultimately, all states and the District of Columbia participated in the study.

Nearly all informants identified by agency directors were representatives of licensure agencies. However, a few representatives of the special education units in jurisdictions were primary or secondary informants. Informants were contacted by telephone, fax, or e-mail and were provided information about the purpose and procedures of the study. They were asked to identify dates and times for interviews during which they would answer a set of questions on their jurisdiction's policies/regulations for conventional licensure of special education teachers. Copies of the questions and a matrix, customized to the areas of special education licensure offered in their jurisdictions, were faxed to informants a few days prior to the scheduled interview. This procedure allowed informants to prepare for the interviews by gathering information that might be needed in order to respond to the questions. The areas of licensure on the state-specific matrices were taken from *The NASDTEC Manual* (1998).

Telephone interviews, the third stage in the research process, usually lasted 30 to 45 minutes. Questions began with the informant sharing information on significant changes that were underway in the jurisdiction system of teacher licensure. The impact of these changes on licensure of special education teachers was discussed early in the interview. Informants were also asked to share information on anticipated changes in teacher licensure in their jurisdictions. The time frame for the anticipated changes was from the time of the interview until 2005. The contextual information on changes in licensure was particularly helpful in jurisdictions that were reforming models and requirements for licensure of special education teachers. If major changes were underway, informants answered the remaining questions in the interview twice—once from the perspective of present licensure requirements and again with regard to new/proposed licensure requirements. Informants were then guided through a series of questions on the following aspects of licensure requirements for special education teachers: (1) use of national standards for special educators in the jurisdiction's standards, (2) preparation of general education teachers to educate exceptional children, (3) preparation of special educators in general education curriculum and pedagogy, (4) bases on which the jurisdiction awarded licenses in special education, (5) the jurisdiction's model for licensing early childhood special educators, (6) areas and levels of licensure for special education teachers, (7) degrees and grade point averages required for special education teachers, and (8) specific assessments required for licensure. Prior to concluding each interview, the interviewer read answers that had been transcribed to the informant. When errors were detected, corrections were made.

The interview process was completed in the fall of 2000. Responses were summarized in a series of tables that allowed them to be linked directly to each jurisdiction. In the fourth stage of the research process, these tables were used to validate summarized information reported by informants. In the fall of 2001 and in the spring of 2001, summary tables were shared in presentations at two national conferences for teacher educators in special education. One conference was in the western part of the U. S., and the other was on the east coast. Participants were asked to examine the information for their respective jurisdictions and to report inaccuracies. Professionals from 13 states and the District of Columbia reviewed the summary tables. No errors were identified.

---

The final stage of the validation process was completed in summer 2001. State-specific validation packets were mailed to each of the original informants from the jurisdictions. The packets contained guidelines for reviewing/validating information in the tables, a section from each table with highlighted information from the jurisdiction, and a page for reporting any significant changes in special education licensure that had occurred since the time of the interview. Responses from the final validation activity were received from 30 jurisdictions. When inaccuracies were identified, the tables were updated.

## Results

**Context of licensure.** Interviews were conducted and responses were received from all 51 jurisdictions. Thirty-seven (37), approximately 73%, reported that significant changes in teacher licensure were underway. More than half (27) of the jurisdictions reported significant changes were underway in the licensure of special education teachers. All but one jurisdiction that reported major changes in special education licensure also reported substantial changes in teacher licensure in general.

**Use of national standards.** Informants reported on jurisdiction use of national standards for the preparation of special education teachers. The standards promulgated by the CEC (1998) were to some degree incorporated into the special education licensure standards of 29 jurisdictions. The standards for Exceptional Needs Specialists disseminated by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS, 1996) were similarly incorporated in the licensure standards for special educators in 8 jurisdictions. The 1998 NASDTEC standards for teachers of students with disabilities were used in the standards for licensure of special education teachers in 18 jurisdictions. Some jurisdictions incorporated more than one set of national standards in their standards for licensure, and others did not incorporate any of the national standards. Approximately 10% of the informants did not know whether the standards of the three national organizations were incorporated in their jurisdiction's standards.

**Bases for issuing licenses.** All jurisdictions reported that "completion of the curricula of state-approved institutions of higher education" (IHEs) was a basis for issuing a credential in special education. This approval was the sole standard used in 8 jurisdictions.

The completion of courses/credit hours within the curriculum of a state-approved IHE was an additional basis for issuing special education credentials in 31 jurisdictions. Twenty-four (24) of these jurisdictions required a minimum number of credit hours in specific content/topical areas. The number of credits ranged from 9-45 semester hours. Seven (7) jurisdictions required only a minimum number of credit hours in special education, i.e., the content was not defined. In these 7 jurisdictions, the number of required credits in special education ranged from 18-30 semester hours.

Sixteen (16) jurisdictions authorized credentials based on "demonstration of required competencies in special education" rather than on the completion of courses. Three (3) jurisdictions required that candidates successfully complete performance assessments for initial licensure in special education. Some jurisdictions reported combinations of course-based, competency-based, and performance assessment options.

Eight (8) jurisdictions planned to change from requiring credit hours in special education to the demonstration of competencies and/or successful completion of performance assessments.



---

Seven (7) of these jurisdictions will require demonstration of competencies in their new models of licensure; performance assessments will be used by five (5) jurisdictions. Three (3) jurisdictions will use both demonstration of competencies and performance assessments as bases for issuing licenses in special education.

Licensure in special education is “freestanding” in a large majority (42) of the jurisdictions. Candidates for licenses in special education in these jurisdictions are not required to have teaching licenses in general education. Kansas, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, and West Virginia reported that licensure in general education is required for licensure in special education. (Nevada did not provide information on this question.) Arkansas and New York will move from a freestanding model to one that requires licensure in general education.

**Areas and levels of special education licensure.** Areas of special education and age or grade ranges of licenses offered by jurisdictions are summarized in **Appendix A**. Jurisdictions used a broad array of titles for the licenses they awarded in special education. In general, the titles aligned well with the categories of disabilities identified in the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997* (USDOE, 1997). Those categories were used as a preliminary structure for organizing the responses. (Because traumatic brain injury was reported only once by jurisdictions, it was listed under “Other.”) Most jurisdictions offered some form of generic/non-categorical license in special education. Therefore, generic licensure (e.g., comprehensive special education) and generic licensure by level of disability (e.g., mild disabilities, severe disabilities) were added to the structure; early childhood special education was also added.

Information on areas of licensure from **Appendix A** is condensed in **Table 1**. (Alaska recognizes licensure titles used by approved preparation programs and is not included in the summary.) Nearly all jurisdictions reported that they awarded special education credentials in the areas of hearing impairment and visual impairment. Montana, New Mexico, and Washington did not report the areas of hearing or visual impairment; Vermont did not report the area of visual impairment. The next most common categorical area of licensure was emotional disturbance, with 27 jurisdictions offering credentials in this area, and 2 combining emotional disturbance with another category of disability.

Specific learning disabilities and mental retardation were the next most common categories. Twenty-three (23) jurisdictions offered licenses in specific learning disabilities. (In Kentucky licensure in this category is combined with emotional disturbance.) Of the 22 jurisdictions awarding licenses in mental retardation, 17 did not make distinctions based on the level of mental retardation. Two (2) jurisdictions awarded licenses in a single, specific level of mental retardation; 3 awarded licenses at two different levels of mental retardation.

**Table 1: Areas of Special Education Licensure**

Area	Number of States	Specific State(s)
Some form of general special education license	27	
Some form of general special education license based on degree of disability	27	
Mental retardation	22	
Hearing impairment	47	
Vision impairment	46	
Emotional disturbance	27	
Orthopedically impaired	21	
Autism	5	
Other health impaired	3	
Specific learning disabilities	23	
Early childhood special education	40	
Other: (10)	9	
Aphasia	1	CA
Orientation mobility	2	FL,HI
Deaf/blind	1	HI
Multiple disabilities	1	ID
Homebound	1	MI
Adapted brain injury	2	NV,NE
Traumatic brain injury	1	NV
Specialist in assessment of intellectual functioning	1	NH
Secondary, diversified occupations	1	VT
Vocational special needs	1	VT

About 40% of the jurisdictions reported issuing special education licenses in the area of orthopedic disabilities. Two (2) jurisdictions awarded licenses that combined orthopedic disabilities with another category of disability.

Other categorical areas were not reported frequently by the jurisdictions. Five (5) jurisdictions offered credentials in autism; in Texas the credential is combined with another categorical area. Three (3) jurisdictions awarded licenses in the area of “Other Health Impaired;” 2 of the jurisdictions combined them with another category of disability. Eight (8) categories of disability or specialization areas were reported by a single jurisdiction.

Approximately 80% of the jurisdictions offered licenses in early childhood special education. However, there were noticeable differences in the age levels/grade ranges for these licenses. Hawaii, Illinois, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina did not report the area of early childhood special education.

All but 5 jurisdictions reported some form of generic special education license. Twenty-seven (27) issued expansive generic licenses in special education, and 27 reported having generic licenses that were based on one or more levels of disability. Fifteen (15) jurisdictions reported generic licenses at both the mild and more severe levels of disability. Nevada offered a generalist license for teachers of students with mild/moderate disabilities, and 11 other jurisdictions reported generic licenses for teachers of students with more severe disabilities.

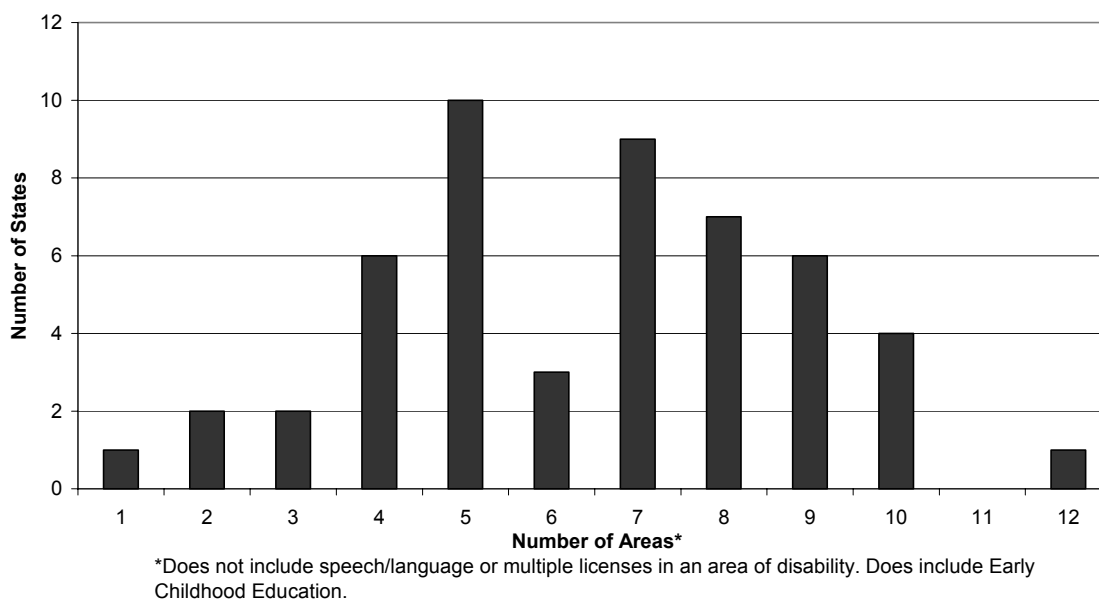
When licensure in speech language impairment was not included, jurisdictions reported 1 (Montana) to 12 (Nevada) areas of licensure in special education. (Although most jurisdictions issued licenses to professionals in the area of speech/language impairments, these individuals

were usually considered to be clinical professionals rather than teachers.) As illustrated in **Figure 1**, 5 areas of special education licensure was the most common number (mode) offered by jurisdictions. Seven (7) areas was the next most common. The mean and median number of areas fell between 6 and 7.

The predominant model for generic licenses reported by the jurisdictions was K-12/PreK-12/1-12 or equivalents. Twenty (20) of the 27 jurisdictions that awarded expansive generic special education licenses used this model, and all of the jurisdictions that awarded generic licenses by level of disability provided this option. Nine (9) of the jurisdictions that awarded expansive generic licenses did so by grade level, but 2 jurisdictions also offered broader age/grade range licenses, e.g., K-12/PreK-12/1-12. Of the 27 jurisdictions that offered generic licenses by level of disability, 4 offered both restricted age/grade level licenses and K-12/PreK-12/1-12 or equivalent options. All of the others offered only expansive K-12/PreK-12/1-12 or equivalent licenses.

Of 9 jurisdictions undergoing or strongly considering major changes in their models of special education licensure, 3 (Iowa, Kansas, and Wisconsin) will retain an existing emphasis on grade levels. Three others (Arkansas, Indiana, and New York) will move from a K-12/PreK-12 model to one that addresses multiple grade/age levels.

**Figure 1 Number of Areas of Special Education Licensure Awarded by Jurisdictions**



**Preparation in general education for special educators.** Given the requirement that instruction for students with disabilities should be linked to the general curriculum according to the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments* (USDOE, 1997), preparation of special education teacher candidates to meet this requirement was examined. Informants from the 42 jurisdictions that reported freestanding licenses in special education were asked to provide information on requirements for the preparation of special education teachers in general

---

education curriculum and pedagogy. Fourteen (14) jurisdictions (including Alaska) reported they did not have requirements for preparation in these areas. Nineteen (19) reported that such preparation was required by their standards and that assessments associated with program approval would probably be included in new system of licensure. Seventeen (17) jurisdictions reported that course work was required; the number of hours varied from “not prescribed” to 30 semester hours. Eight (8) jurisdictions reported requirements of 12 or fewer semester hours for at least some areas of special education licensure.

**Preparation in special education for general educators.** Jurisdictions reported on licensure requirements that general education teachers be prepared to teach exceptional children. Seven (7) jurisdictions reported they had no such requirements for all general education teachers; 2 of these (Arkansas and New York) will require preparation in their new systems of licensure. Twenty-two (22) jurisdictions reported that preparation was required by their state standards for teacher preparation and that the method of preparation was the option of IHE programs. Five (5) jurisdictions reported that preparation was expected to be embedded in programs. Seventeen (17) jurisdictions reported that course work in teaching exceptional children was required for general education teachers. Fourteen (14) of the 17 jurisdictions required two or three semester hours, or the equivalent in clock hours; the other 3 did not stipulate the number of hours of required preparation, and four (4) jurisdictions that required credit hours in special education plan to change to standards-based requirements.

**Assessment for licensure.** Jurisdictions exhibited considerable variation in the procedures and standards they used to assess the proficiency of beginning special education teachers. Informants provided detailed information on a variety of measures of proficiency, including degrees, grade point averages, standardized tests, and required performance assessments. Information on the types of assessments required by each jurisdiction is provided in **Appendix B**. A general summary of required assessments is provided in **Table 2**.

All jurisdictions required at least a bachelors degree in order to be eligible for a license in special education. Four (4) jurisdictions did not require any of the specific measures investigated (minimum grade point average, assessment of basic skills, pedagogical assessment, assessment of knowledge of special education, or performance assessment). Three (3) jurisdictions required or will require all the forms of assessment.

Twenty-two (22) jurisdictions reported having minimum grade point average requirements. North Dakota required a 2.5 overall undergraduate grade point average in order to be eligible for a license in special education but did not require other measures of proficiency.

Forty-two (42) jurisdictions required some type of assessment of candidates’ basic skills, usually reading, mathematics, and writing. State or national standardized tests were the most commonly reported measures of basic skills. Most jurisdictions adopted the PreProfessional Skills Test/PRAXIS I developed by the Educational Testing Service [ETS]. Although many jurisdictions required the PRAXIS I test, minimum passing scores varied. The greatest difference in minimum scores was for the Reading test. The minimum scores for the computer-based version of this test varied from 316–335. Minimum scores for the computer-based Mathematics test ranged from 314-323; and the minimum scores for the computer-based Writing test ranged from 316-324.

A majority of the jurisdictions reported requirements for the assessment of knowledge of special education, at least in some areas of special education. Approximately one-third of the

jurisdictions used PRAXIS II (ETS). Specific tests required by jurisdictions and in minimum passing scores differ notably.

Fewer states (22) reported requirements for the assessment of pedagogical knowledge. The majority of the jurisdictions that assess the pedagogical knowledge of aspiring special education teachers have adopted the PRAXIS II Principles of Learning and Teaching test [ETS]. There are three versions of this test based on specific grade levels. Jurisdictions reported passing scores from 152–168 on these tests.

Performance assessments of candidates for initial licenses in special education were required least often. Thirteen (13) jurisdictions presently require or will require some form of performance assessment for all or most candidates; 3 other jurisdictions require a performance assessment for applicants in a few areas of special education licensure.

**Table 2: Assessments Required for Licensure of Special Education Teachers**

Assessment	Number of States	Comments
Grade point averages	22	Undergraduate GPAs ranged from C to 2.75. The most common requirement was 2.75. Alabama and North Dakota reported GPAs as the only measure of a candidate's proficiency.
Basic skills	42	Usually reading, math, and writing
Pedagogy	22	
Knowledge of special education	22	An additional 7 states require knowledge of special education tests for some special education licenses.
Performance	13	Three (3) more require performance assessments for some areas of special education.
All of the above	3 Florida, Kentucky, Oklahoma	In Kentucky performance assessment occurs in the first year of teaching.
None	4 Idaho, Iowa, South Dakota, Utah	In Utah, approval of programs will require the assessment of a candidate's performance during student teaching.

## Discussion and Conclusions

There have been major changes in licensure structures and requirements in recent years. Many of the changes reflect a shift to standards-based licensure systems, increased emphasis on the assessment of teacher candidates, multilevel structures of licensure, and models for the induction of new/beginning teachers. In most jurisdictions, the field of special education has been included in the transformation of broader licensure structures.

**Use of national standards for the preparation of special educators.** National standards for the preparation of special education teachers have influenced the licensure

---

standards adopted by many states. The degree of impact of national standards was often difficult for informants to report in a precise manner. Although many respondents did not know whether their jurisdiction's standards for licensure of special education teachers were influenced by those of national organizations, a substantial number affirmed that jurisdictions referred to the standards of one or more national organizations when they reviewed and modified their licensure standards. The standards of CEC (1998) were considered most frequently.

Informants were confused regarding the status of NASDTEC's standards (1998) for special educators. Although many informants were familiar with these standards, there were different understandings of the status of the standards. Some informants believed the standards were no longer operative; others thought they were.

Since the standards developed by NBPTS were designed for experienced special education teachers, it was not surprising to discover that these had less influence on jurisdiction standards for beginning special education teachers than CEC or NASDTEC standards.

**Licensure systems for special education teachers.** All jurisdictions that license special education teachers require the approval of programs that prepare these teachers. Utilization of program approval as a foundation for the licensure of special educators has changed little in the last two decades.

Reliance on course-based models of licensure in special education has a long tradition (Barresi & Bunte, 1979; Fearn, 1987; Piercy & Bowen, 1993). Investigators have consistently reported that this model has been preferred by a plurality of jurisdictions. In 2000-2001, most jurisdictions continued to prescribe courses/credit hours for approved programs of preparation. More jurisdictions used this approach than in earlier studies. Jurisdictions differed greatly in the number of credit hours and content required for the preparation of special education teachers.

A substantial minority (38%) of the jurisdictions did not base licensure of special education teachers on the completion of a prescribed number of credit hours. These jurisdictions required demonstration of identified competencies or the successful completion of performance assessments.

Eight (8) jurisdictions with course-based systems reported they will use, or were considering the use of, competency-based or performance-based requirements in new licensure systems. If and when these changes occur, more than 50% of the jurisdictions will use competency-based or performance-based systems.

**Categorical and non-categorical models of licensure.** At the beginning of the 21st century, nearly all jurisdictions had mixed models of licensure for special educators. Five (5) jurisdictions issued only categorical special education licenses; and 3 jurisdictions offered only one or two non-categorical licenses, including early childhood special education. More than 80% of the jurisdictions have mixed systems of licensure in special education, i.e., award both categorical and non-categorical licenses to special education teachers. More than half of the jurisdictions offered generic/non-categorical licenses. Similarly, more than half offered non-categorical licenses based on a level of disability. Nearly all jurisdictions awarded categorical licenses in visual and hearing impairments.

In the last 30 years there has been a clearly identifiable shift from special education licensure models that were based solely on categories of disabilities to models that retain categorical



---

options and also offer non-categorical options. By way of illustration, Abeson and Fleury (1972) reported 7 jurisdictions with some form of non-categorical licensure; others were categorical. The situation now is almost the reverse; all but 5 jurisdictions award some form of non-categorical license.

Statistics on the number of areas of special education licensure awarded by jurisdictions have remained surprisingly constant across the last three decades. Abeson and Fleury (1972) found jurisdictions offered from 1-8 areas of licensure; the mode was 6. Gilmore and Aroyros (1997) found a mode of 7 areas of licensure; the mode was 5, and the median and mean were 6-7. On average, the number of areas of special education licensure available in jurisdictions may have decreased slightly. However, 11 jurisdictions reported more areas of special education licensure than were reported by any jurisdiction 30 years ago (Abeson & Fleury, 1972).

Among categorical areas of licensure, visual impairment and hearing impairment have been the most common for the last 25 years. Apart from the areas of sensory impairment, there were only 4 categorical areas of licensure—emotional disturbance, learning disabilities, mental retardation, and orthopedic impairments—that were reported by more than 10% of the jurisdictions. The categories of mental retardation and physical disabilities are reported much less frequently than in the 1970s and 1980s. The number of jurisdictions awarding licenses in the categorical areas of learning disabilities and emotional disturbance has remained relatively unchanged in the last decade.

Of the jurisdictions undergoing major transitions in their licensure systems, Arkansas, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, and South Carolina will reduce the number of categorical areas of licensure in special education; none will increase the number of categorical areas.

**Levels of licensure in special education.** When licensure in early childhood special education is discounted, 33 jurisdictions used only expansive levels of licensure in special education, e.g., K-12. This finding is compatible with those of Steffens (1996) and Putnam and Habanek (1993) who reported that a majority of jurisdictions used expansive licenses for teachers of students with mild forms of disabilities. All other jurisdictions had mixed systems that included expansive licenses and licenses restricted to specific ages or grade levels. No jurisdiction awarded licenses only for specific age/grade/developmental levels. When the results of this study are compared with those of Gilmore and Aroyros (1997), the number of jurisdictions offering the option of age/grade/development level-specific licenses in special education has increased.

**Licensure in early childhood special education.** Four (4) out of 5 jurisdictions have licenses for early childhood special educators. New York will add this area of licensure in 2004, and South Carolina has a proposal to add a credential in the area. In 1980 Trohanis et al. reported that 4 jurisdictions issued licenses in this area; presently more than 40 do. These findings underscore the fact that licensure in early childhood special education has experienced dramatic growth over the last two decades. Not only has licensure in early childhood special education grown rapidly, it has grown in many directions. There is no consensus on age or grade ranges for these licenses. Striffler (1995) reported age ranges of birth through three, birth through five, and birth through eight. These and other age/grade options were identified in the present study.

**Preparation of special educators in general education.** Permitting candidates to be directly licensed in special education without being prepared first as a general education teacher is a common practice of jurisdictions. Only 8 jurisdictions reported that licensure in general

---

education was a requirement for licensure in special education. This study identified fewer jurisdictions requiring licensure in general education than have been identified previously (Barresi & Bunte, 1979; Piercy & Bowen, 1993; Putnam & Habanek, 1993).

It is not uncommon for jurisdictions to shift away from freestanding models of special education licensure. Since 1996, the proportion of states issuing freestanding licenses in special education has remained relatively constant. Seven (7) states have changed or are about to change this dimension of their licensure structure. Three (3) of the changes were toward a freestanding model, and 4 were away from freestanding.

Individualized education programs (IEPs) of students receiving special education should be related to the “general curriculum,” according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (USDOE, 1997). In view of this requirement, special education teachers will need to be knowledgeable of the general curriculum and should be acquainted with pedagogical strategies used by general educators. Teachers prepared in jurisdictions with freestanding models of special education licensure will need to acquire such knowledge as part of their preparation. Nearly one-third of the jurisdictions with freestanding models of licensure have no such requirements for special education teachers. Among the jurisdictions with requirements for preparation in these areas, the number of credit hours of preparation varies widely.

**Special education preparation for general education teachers.** Required preparation in special education for general education teachers is commonplace. All but 5 jurisdictions require or soon will require such preparation for most general education teachers. This licensure requirement has more than doubled in the last two decades (Barresi & Bunte, 1979).

The most common means of requiring preparation of general education teachers to educate exceptional children is through state standards for the preparation of teachers. Standards-based rather than course-based requirements appear to be preferred increasingly. Soon approximately two-thirds of the jurisdictions will have adopted a standards-based or embedded approach to special education preparation for general educators.

**Assessment of beginning special education teachers.** Program approval standards—whether course-based, competency-based, or performance-based—are one means of “assuring the quality” of beginning special education teachers. Assessment of candidates’ knowledge and skills is another means.

Jurisdictions have very different requirements for measuring the proficiency of special education teacher candidates. The only common denominator is a required bachelors degree. Many jurisdictions require assessment of basic skills, pedagogical knowledge, and/or knowledge of special education. However, even when jurisdictions commonly assess one or more of these areas, they often use different instruments and have different standards for acceptable performance.

In the last 20 years, jurisdiction requirements for assessment of candidates have increased greatly. In 1979 Barresi and Bunte reported 9 jurisdictions required assessments. Currently 45 require some form of standardized assessment. Six (6) more jurisdictions required assessments of basic skills than were reported by Piercy and Bowen in 1993. Similar growth was not found in jurisdiction assessment of knowledge of special education. The number of jurisdictions requiring such assessment has remained relatively unchanged during the last dozen years



---

(Ramsey, 1988; Piercy & Bowen, 1993). Assessment of pedagogical knowledge and skills is required least frequently. When assessment of pedagogy is required, it is usually at the level of knowledge.

Approximately 30% of the jurisdictions required or are in the process of requiring performance assessment of candidates for special education licenses. Interest in this form of assessment appeared to be growing; a majority of the jurisdictions that reported significant changes in their licensure systems will implement performance assessments in their new systems. The nature of the required performance assessments varied between the jurisdictions.

**Summary Observations.** A substantial majority of jurisdictions have adopted licensure structures that include a mixture of categorical and non-categorical licensure options. This situation has evolved largely through the addition of non-categorical options during the last three decades. The growth of non-categorical licensure options may provide jurisdictions and local education agencies with the flexibility needed to address chronic shortages of special education teachers. The growth of non-categorical licensure models is reinforced by the fact that more than 80% of the degrees awarded in special education are in *general* special education as opposed to categorical areas of special education (Mainzer & Horvath, 2001).

Jurisdictions have continued to show a strong preference for expansive age/grade range levels of licensure in special education. All jurisdictions award grades 1-12 or more expansive licenses in at least one area of special education. Some jurisdictions undergoing major reforms in their licensure structures are converting to more restricted age/grade levels or are adding these options. The impact of these changes on the supply and quality of special educators is a worthwhile area for future study.

Licensure in the area of early childhood special education is now common among jurisdictions. This area of licensure has grown dramatically in the last two decades. At the beginning of the 21st century, at least 80% of the jurisdictions issued licenses in this area. The diversity of models and age/grade levels makes it difficult to easily summarize requirements for licensure in early childhood special education.

Ninety percent of the jurisdictions now require or soon will require some preparation of general educators to teach students with disabilities. However, a sizable minority of the jurisdictions lack similar requirements that special education teachers receive preparation in general education curriculum or pedagogy. This omission may raise concern about the preparedness of special education teachers to implement IEPs that are related to the general curriculum. It would not be surprising if jurisdictions begin to enhance requirements for the preparation of special education teachers in general education curriculum and instruction.

Jurisdictions have significantly increased requirements for the assessment of teacher candidates in the last two decades. The most frequently required assessment is in the area of basic skills. Although such assessments may assure the fundamental competence of teachers in reading, writing, and mathematics, they do not assure that candidates have acquired the knowledge and instructional expertise needed to facilitate learning by students with disabilities. More than 40% of the jurisdictions do not have requirements for the assessment of candidates' knowledge of special education. Several jurisdictions have adopted or are exploring performance assessments that will assure competence in these areas. These initiatives are supported by standards adopted by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC).

---

Required assessments of the knowledge and abilities of special education teacher candidates, an area that has been given little attention in the past, merits increased emphasis in future investigations. There are substantial variations among jurisdiction assessment requirements for special education teachers. Some jurisdictions require only a bachelors degree from approved programs; others require successful performance on multiple standardized tests. However, jurisdictions do not agree on which standardized tests candidates must take and display little or no accord with regard to scores required for licensure. There appear to be many instances where challenging assessments and high standards for performance are lacking in jurisdiction requirements for licensing special education teachers. In these situations, the criticism of licensure systems presented in *Meeting the Highly Qualified Teachers Challenge* appears to be justified.

---

## ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO LICENSURE

**Introduction.** Although the USDOE displays high enthusiasm for alternative licensure programs in *Meeting the Highly Qualified Teacher Challenge*, there is little information on alternative licensure programs for special education teachers available in the professional literature. Rosenberg and Sindelar (2001) found only eight data-based studies, although they were able to distill some potential indicators of effective alternative licensure programs for special education teachers. They concluded that the limited number of data-based studies and their uneven quality prevented conclusions about regarding the effectiveness of alternative licensure programs in special education. Because there is relatively little research available on models of alternative licensure of special education teachers, a focused study of the intersection of policy and practice around the issue of alternative routes to licensure [ARL] for special education teachers was undertaken in 2001.

**Methodology.** Ten states were selected for in-depth investigation. These states were selected to provide a representative sample based on the following parameters: large vs. small population; categorical vs. non-categorical special education licensure framework; endorsement vs. freestanding licensure framework; rural vs. urban; heavy vs. little involvement in alternative path programs; and high vs. low need for special educators. The selected states were California, Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, Texas, and Utah. Interviews took place during the spring of 2001.

Appropriate personnel to be interviewed in each state were identified. In most cases, this individual was the Director of Teacher Licensing or the Director of the Professional Standards Board. An e-mail with attached letter was sent to each state representative (**Appendix C**). The letter outlined the purpose of the request for information and included 12 interview questions. Follow-up calls were made over the next two weeks to those who did not respond to the initial e-mail. Four interviews were completed with the person who was originally contacted. In three cases, the person who received the e-mail referred the request for information to another person in that office. This was either the person who had primary responsibility for the special education alternative programs or the person who had oversight of the general alternative licensure program for the state. These people were either interviewed by telephone or responded to our questions (including follow-up questions) by e-mail. In three cases, we received no response to the e-mail and appropriate persons were found by telephoning the appropriate office.

The following 12 questions formed the basis for the telephone and e-mail interviews:

1. Is the information copied from *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001* (Feistritz and Chester, 2001) an accurate description of the current ARLs in your state?
2. Are there other routes to licensure not included in this list? Please describe briefly.
3. Which ARLs apply to special education teachers?
4. Does your state have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure by taking courses only (sometimes called a course credit or course count path)?
5. Describe the current ARL programs in your state that prepare special educators (e.g., institution or entity providing training, length of training, etc.)
6. When were these programs begun?
7. What standards were used to develop the program(s)?
8. How many individuals have completed each program in the last three years?

- 
9. Are there any licensing criteria graduates of these program(s) must meet that graduates of traditional programs are not required to meet?
  10. Does your state ensure that graduates of ARLs are of at least the same quality as graduates of traditional programs? If so, please describe.
  11. Describe how your state evaluates the individuals who complete these programs. Can you share any evaluation data with CEC?
  12. Does your state track completers of these programs to evaluate retention and/or attrition by program?

## Results

Interview Summary Forms for each state interview are included in **Appendix C**. That information is summarized as follows.

**Accuracy of state information.** *Alternative Teacher Licensure: A State-by State Analysis 2001* (Feistritzer & Chester, 2001) provides a complete listing of all ARL policies and/or options in this state. If the interviewee needed a copy of this document, we faxed the pertinent pages. Several of the interviewees did not feel they had the expertise to comment on all of the ARLs listed in the publication. In these situations, if possible, information from state web sites was used to confirm the information from the Feistritzer and Chester report. Information from state representatives or from state web sites confirmed the accuracy of the information for 9 states. One state representative (Louisiana) stated that the state was in the middle of a major reform effort and that all of the ARL programs had changed or were likely to change over the next year.

**Other routes to licensure.** Two states (Georgia, Louisiana) reported ARLs for special educators that were not included in the publication by Feistritzer and Chester.

**ARLs that apply to special education teachers.** The responses to questions 3 and 5 are combined in the following state-by-state summaries. The authors designed an organizational framework in order to foster understanding of the different ways states have addressed ARLs. The framework consists of two different strategies states used to develop ARL programs. These strategies are designated *state-initiated* and *local-initiated*. In the *state-initiated* paradigm, a state conceptualizes and develops standards, criteria, and procedures for ARLs. Local districts and/or IHEs then make proposals to implement the state-initiated ARL program at their sites following the criteria established by the state. The state has more control over the variables in these programs (e.g., requiring a certain number of hours of training prior to beginning teaching). In the *local-initiated* model, states have established much more general standards and policies for ARL programs. Appropriate entities (e.g., local districts, teacher preparation programs) design and implement their own or collaborative ARL programs to meet state policy. These programs become operational when approved by the state.

Due to the constraints of the study, only state-initiated ARLs or state criteria for *local-initiated* programs are described. It is beyond the scope of this report to describe the myriad of individual programs that could meet the ARL criteria in *local-initiated* programs in a particular state. Whenever possible, we have included web addresses for *state-initiated* and *local-initiated* programs.

---

**California:** California does not have any *state-initiated* ARLs but has three ways local entities can develop ARLs: the District Intern program, the University Intern, and the Pre-Internship Teaching Certificate. Los Angeles Unified School District is the only District Intern program in the state that includes special education. Information about this program can be found at the LAUSD web site ([www.lausd.k12.ca.us](http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us)). Several institutions have University Intern programs to prepare teachers for mild/moderate and moderate/severe licensure. There are many Pre-Internship Teaching Certificate programs that include special educators at the local level. California also has a number of paraprofessional career ladder programs that include special educators; some of them are exclusively oriented to special educators.

**Connecticut:** Connecticut has a very active ARL program that has been in operation for over 14 years, but it is not open to special educators. There are no ARL programs for special educators in Connecticut.

**Georgia:** Georgia recently instituted a *state-initiated* ARL, the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (TAPP), at 15 sites including IHEs and Regional Education Service Agencies. All TAPP programs are open to special educators. Information about the TAPP program can be found at [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com). Candidates for TAPP must have a bachelors degree from an accredited IHE with at least a 2.5 GPA, a major or equivalent in subject matter content, and a passing score on the Praxis I prior to program entry. Praxis II must be passed during the second year of the program. Participants in the program receive three to six weeks of intensive course work during the initial summer. They are placed in classrooms and are required to serve an induction period of two years. During the induction period, the candidate is observed and supervised by a support team consisting of a trained mentor teacher, a school administrator, and a college faculty representative. Seminars are held throughout the year for the cohort group. The provider program and the support team make recommendations for full licensure.

**Illinois:** None of the current ARL programs in Illinois applies to special educators.

**Louisiana:** Three new ARLs are being developed: Practitioner Teacher program, Master's Degree program, and Certification Only program. All programs are based in IHEs. Currently, eight of the nine providers of the Practitioner Teacher program include programs preparing candidates for mild/moderate licenses; however, it is unclear how special education training will be incorporated into the other new programs.

Candidates for the Practitioner Teacher program must possess a Baccalaureate degree from an accredited IHE with at least a 2.5 GPA. Candidates must also pass the PRAXIS I as an entry requirement. During the program, candidates must pass the PRAXIS II in special education. Participants in the program receive intensive training in the summer (nine credit hours) prior to being placed in a classroom. During the school year, candidates participate in a seminar each semester and receive one-on-one supervision during an internship. The practitioner teachers also receive support from school-based mentor teachers. Teams composed of principals, mentors, and practitioner teachers will review the first-year teaching performance of practitioner teachers and determine the extent to which the practitioner teachers have demonstrated teaching proficiency. If successful, they enter the assessment portion of the Louisiana Teacher and Assessment Program during the following fall. If unsuccessful, a prescriptive plan will be developed and implemented.

**Michigan:** Michigan has recently instituted an experimental Limited License to Instruct program specifically for special education with Detroit Public Schools. Information on this

---

program is available at [www.state.mi.us/mde/](http://www.state.mi.us/mde/). There are no other ARL programs in special education.

**New Jersey:** No ARLs are available for special education.

**Oregon:** Oregon does not have a typical ARL program. Its alternative options are more accurately viewed as an alternative path to entry into a program. This option, which is available to special educators, allows participants to teach while they are completing a regularly approved program of study at an Oregon IHE.

**Texas:** Texas has well-established ARL programs, all open to special educators. All programs are individually developed through the collaboration of local school districts, IHEs, and the regional education service centers. Information about these can be obtained from the Texas Department of Education at [www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us).

**Utah:** Utah has no *state-initiated* ARL programs. The only *local-initiated* programs for special educators are two at Utah State University. Information about these programs is available at [sped.usu.edu/ppictures/programs/sped\\_prog\\_off.html](http://sped.usu.edu/ppictures/programs/sped_prog_off.html).

**Course count option.** States were asked whether or not they have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure in special education by taking courses only (sometimes called a *course credit* or *course count* path). Eight (8) states reported that they did not have a course-count option. Illinois is transitioning from a course count to a standards-based evaluation; Louisiana will do an individual course count evaluation.

**Dates programs were begun.** The earliest programs were begun in 1986, two programs began in the summer of 2001, and several are just beginning. For a complete breakdown, see the Interview Summary Forms in **Appendix C**.

**Standards used to develop the program.** In all cases, states report that ARL programs are based on the same standards as traditional preparation programs, i.e., to be approved, ARL programs must meet the same standards as traditional preparation programs. However, when and where standards are met will most likely differ between ARL programs and traditional programs. For example, all states require that programs have field-based components. In a traditional program, these are most likely to be part a series of courses with a culminating full-time practicum. In an ARL program this requirement is most likely to be met while the candidate is employed as a teacher. Course work in an ARL program is more likely to be delivered in the summer and in after-school seminars. A traditional program most likely delivers courses to full-time students during the day. None of the programs reported having additional requirements for ARLs.

**Number of ARL graduates.** Only Texas had data on the number of ARL program graduates. In several states, programs were too new to have collected data. In the other states, these data were not collected.

**Assurance of quality.** In every case, the strategy for ensuring the quality of ARL graduates was by requiring program completers to pass the same tests that graduates of traditional programs must pass. For state-specific information, see the Interview Summary Forms (**Appendix C**).



---

**Evaluation of ARL graduates.** States use either state-specific tests or PRAXIS I and II. There are also evaluations done by mentor teachers, principals, etc. No data on candidate performance were available.

**Retention and attrition of ARL graduates.** No states had collected retention or attrition data for graduates of special education ARL programs. Several states are planning to collect retention/attrition information for graduates of new programs. Texas and New Jersey have data for all ARL program completers but have not analyzed the results by discipline.

**Summary observations.** Many states are using ARL programs to deal with critical shortages of teachers. Telephone and e-mail interviews were completed with representatives of 10 states to determine how ARL programs were being implemented for special educators.

Some states are proactively addressing this problem by developing standards, criteria, and procedures for ARLs; the state then works with selected local districts and/or IHEs to implement the programs. In other states, general standards and policies for ARLs have been established at the state level; and local school districts and/or IHEs design and implement their own programs that meet the state standards. Four (4) states (New Jersey, Connecticut, Illinois, Oregon) did not provide ARL programs for special educators. Two (2) states (Georgia, Louisiana) had developed *state-initiated* ARL programs that were available for individuals interested in special education licensure. The final four (4) states (Texas, California, Michigan, Utah) have varying involvement in *local-initiated* ARL programs, e.g., Texas is heavily involved, Utah, very little. Each of these states has established policies for ARL programs, but these are not always extensively used for the preparation of special educators.

All graduates of the special education ARL programs in the states that we investigated must meet the same standards as graduates of traditional preparation programs in their state. However, program requirements for field work and course delivery can be very different. In most cases, courses are provided during the summers and as seminars during the school year. Field work is completed while the participant is teaching as opposed to the more traditional internship or student teaching experience utilized in conventional training programs. Usually mentor teachers rather than university faculty provide supervision in ARL programs. Some states require university faculty participation; others do not.

Graduates of ARL programs, in general, must take the same tests and reach the same performance levels as graduates of traditional training programs. These tests are the primary source of accountability for graduates of the special education ARL programs.

Only Texas had data on the number of graduates. None of the states had data that compared the retention rates or test scores of graduates of ARL programs and graduates of traditional preparation programs.

---

# LIMITATIONS OF STUDIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

## Limitations of the Studies in this Report

Research on the topic of special education licensure does not lack challenges. Specialized jargon is a major obstacle to developing an understandable national picture of licensure practices. Jurisdictions use terms related to licensure that often do not have common definitions across borders. Examples of such terms include *license*, *certificate*, *endorsement*, *approval*, and *authorization*. The variety of licensure-related terms and the absence of common definitions can result in miscommunication and errors in research on the subject. Impediments to communication on licensure are exacerbated by the lack of common terms and definitions in special education. More than a quarter of a century ago, Gilmore and Aroyros (1997) observed “a prolix profusion of particular terms pervades the field of special education” (p. 9). That description applies equally well to the present situation. Both of the studies in this report may have been affected by misunderstandings associated with jargon.

A second challenge that must be addressed when studying special education licensure is identification of informed respondents. Throughout the years, investigators have targeted state-level licensure personnel, state-level special education personnel, or occasionally both for information on the topic. One might expect that jurisdiction coordinators of Comprehensive Systems of Personnel Development would have current and accurate information on licensure requirements for special educators, but often that is not the case. The same can be said for some personnel in jurisdiction licensure units. Because responsibilities for licensure of special education teachers are distributed in diverse ways within jurisdictions, it is difficult for researchers to predetermine the most knowledgeable respondents in each jurisdiction. If an inquiry on licensure is sent to an inappropriate respondent, it may go unanswered or be answered incorrectly. Consequently, response rates and the accuracy of information obtained may vary. Both studies in this report relied heavily on the knowledge of informants. The accuracy of the results is affected by the extent of the informants’ knowledge regarding requirements for conventional licensure of special education teachers and alternative routes to licensure for special education teachers.

Because the difficulties associated with communication and with locating knowledgeable respondents are formidable, research methodologies that enhance the likelihood of accurate communication with well-informed respondents must be used. Mailed surveys may be less effective than strategies that utilize more direct personal communication, which affords opportunities for follow-up and clarification of questions and responses. Verification of the investigator’s accurate interpretation of written or verbal information provided by respondents is crucial in view of the communication challenges mentioned previously.

As a final cautionary note when considering the results of the studies in this report, remember that many jurisdictions reported that licensure changes were underway. Some of the anticipated changes may have occurred by the time this report is published; others may not have taken effect, and still additional or unanticipated changes may have occurred since the studies were conducted. In some jurisdictions, the landscape for licensure in special education may not be today what it was a year ago or even a few months ago.



---

## Recommendations for Future Research

The history of research on models and requirements for conventional licensure of special education teachers and related matters contains many examples of narrow, targeted studies (e.g., licensure for teachers of students with learning disabilities) and multidimensional, more comprehensive studies. Targeted studies may be less intimidating to potential respondents and provide information on important details of special education licensure. Comprehensive studies may help us to understand interconnections within jurisdiction systems of licensure. Both types of investigation are valuable in helping professionals better understand the panorama of special education licensure.

Research on alternative routes to licensure is in an early stage. Based on information obtained through our pilot study, jurisdictions vary in their policies and practices. The complexity that results from these variations requires that, in the future, both comprehensive and targeted studies be undertaken to further explore the options adopted by jurisdictions.

Whether investigators undertake targeted or comprehensive studies of conventional licensure requirements or alternative routes to licensure, it is important that findings be reported for individual jurisdictions in order for results to be understood clearly and for historical comparisons to be made. This form of reporting will enable jurisdictions to verify the results and will enable changes in a jurisdiction's licensure requirements to be tracked over time. It also allows for aggregation of licensure information and for reliable determination of national/regional trends.

It is time for an historical overview of special education licensure to be constructed based on jurisdiction-identifiable information. In the last three decades, several studies have reported results by jurisdiction. The comparison of results across these studies will enable us to better understand changes that have occurred. By constructing a baseline of data from the past and present, we will be able to judge the likely impact of proposed changes in licensure such as that espoused by the USDOE (2002) in *Meeting the Highly Qualified Teachers Challenge*. Most importantly, by understanding where we have been and where we are, we should be able to plan future models/frameworks of licensure that will enhance learning by students with disabilities.

## Questions for Future Investigation

Presently, with regard to special education, there is insufficient information available to confirm or refute definitively the USDOE's assertions with regard to the failure of licensure systems and the benefits of a new model based on elements of alternative routes to licensure. Many questions need to be answered in order to rejoin the positions advocated in *Meeting the Highly Qualified Teachers Challenge*.

Probably the most important set of questions that will need to be answered pertains to relationships between the preparation and licensure of special education teachers and the performance of students with disabilities. Jurisdictions have adopted various configurations of categorical, multi-categorical, and/or generic models of licensure for special education teachers. Also, some jurisdictions have requirements that candidates be prepared in both general education and special education. In addition, many jurisdictions recognize both traditional and alternative routes to licensure. Are certain licensure models/frameworks or programs of preparation more efficacious than others, i.e., do they contribute to improved learning by students with

---

disabilities? If so, what are the critical components in these models/frameworks? These questions, which apply to both traditional and ARL programs, will not be answered easily, but they are fundamental, and sound data are needed to answer them.

A second area for investigation focuses on the relationship between licensure standards and the abilities of general educators to meet the instructional needs of students with disabilities effectively. What skills are needed by general educators to effectively teach students with disabilities? Are there licensure requirements for general education teachers that can be shown to contribute to teachers' instructional effectiveness with students with disabilities? Are these requirements included in ARL programs for general educators?

A third major area for future investigation is the relationship between licensure models and the supply of special education teachers (both short-term and long-term). Are some models/frameworks of special education licensure more successful in assuring an adequate supply of special education teachers than others? For example, does a non-categorical system contribute to or alleviate imbalance in the supply and demand of special educators? Answers to questions related to the supply of special education teachers are of great interest to school administrators, policy makers, and parents. Many special education licensure systems have been modified with the expectation that the changes in licensure models and options, e.g., ARL programs, will increase the availability of special education teachers. It is time to gather data on the relationship between licensure systems and the supply of special education teachers.

A fourth area for additional research focuses specifically on ARL programs, which are relatively new mechanisms for the preparation of special education teachers. A majority of the jurisdictions interviewed in our study of these programs perceived them to be effective strategies for addressing shortages of qualified special education teachers. However, empirical data regarding the near-term and longer-term impacts of these strategies on the supply of qualified special education teachers have not been gathered systematically. As a start, data should be gathered to determine how many jurisdictions have adopted ARL procedures and which models they are using. Many of the ARL programs contacted in our study are too new to have collected retention, attrition, and impact data; yet it is imperative that jurisdictions demand sound data from programs on variables such as retention and performance of candidates in order to evaluate their effectiveness. Also, jurisdictions should explore the impact of special education teachers prepared through ARL programs on the students they teach. Although accurate data on this matter may be difficult to obtain, such research should become a goal in order to assure the quality of these programs.

The four areas for future study we have suggested are not an exhaustive list. The recommended areas focus on the fundamentals of special education personnel preparation: an adequate supply of well-qualified personnel as demonstrated by the performance of students in our schools. Our recommendations are offered as a place to begin a comprehensive investigation of the relationships between teacher preparation, licensure standards, and the performance of students with disabilities in our schools. By better understanding these relationships, we will enhance our collective ability to judge the effectiveness of all models for preparing and licensing special education teachers, including those models criticized and those advocated in USDOE's report, *Meeting the Highly Qualified Teachers Challenge* (2002).

---

## REFERENCES

- Abeson, A., & Fleury, J. B. (1972). *State certification requirements for education of the handicapped*. Arlington, VA: State-Federal Information Clearinghouse for Exceptional Children. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED069063)
- Barresi, J., & Bunte, J. (1979). *Special education certification practices: A summary of a national survey*. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED189800)
- Belch, P. J. (1979). Toward noncategorical teacher certification in special education—myth or reality? *Exceptional Children*, 46(2),129-131.
- Berkeley, T. R. (1990). *Special education certification survey of the states*. Reston, VA: National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED354640)
- Bruder, M., Klosowski, S., & Daguio, C. (1990). *A national survey of personnel standards under P. L. 99-457*. Information Bulletin #36. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED405655)
- Chapey, G. D., Pyszkowski, I. S., & Trimarco, T. A. (1985). National trends for certification and training of special education teachers. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 8(4), 203-208.
- The Council for Exceptional Children [CEC]. (1998). *What every special educator must know: The international standards for the preparation and licensure of special educators*. (3rd ed.). Reston, VA: Author.
- Fearn, K. M. (1987). *Report on the status of certification of special educators in the United States and Territories*. Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.
- Feistritzer, E., & Chester, D. (2001). *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001*. Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Information.
- Gilmore, J. T., & Aroyros, N. S. (1997). *Special education certification: A state of the art survey*. Albany, NY: New York State Education Department. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED158447)
- Huebner, K. M., & Strumwasser, P. (1987). State certification of teachers of blind and visually impaired students: Report of a national study. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness*, 81(6), 244-250.
- Jenkins, A. A., Leigh, J., & Patton, J. (1997). State certification standards for teachers of students with learning disabilities: An update. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 20, 266-279.

- 
- Jones, K. H., & Black, R. S. (1994). *Teaching students with special needs in vocational and regular education: Are certification requirements adequate?* Paper presented at the American Vocational Association Convention, Dallas, TX. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED378391)
- Katsiyannis, A., Conderman, G., & Franks, D. J. (1995). State practices on inclusion. *Remedial and Special Education, 16*(5), 279-287.
- Klienhammer-Trammill, P. J., Geiger, W., & Morningstar, P. (in press). State policy contexts for transition personnel preparation: An analysis of transition-related credentials, standards, and course requirements in state certification and licensure policies. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*.
- Leigh, J., & Patton, J. (1986). State certification standards for teachers of learning disabled students. *Learning Disability Quarterly, 9*, 259-267.
- Mackey, C., & McHenry, V. (1994). *The history of NASDTEC*. Seattle, WA: The National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification.
- Mainzer, R. & Horvath, M. (2001). *Issues in preparing and licensing special educators*. Arlington, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.
- Mausser, A. J., & Cranston-Gingras, A. M. (1988). *Special education teacher certification trends: A national survey*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED348786)
- McLaughlin, M., Smith-Davis, J., & Burke, P. (1986). *Personnel to educate the handicapped in America: A status report*. College Park, MD: University of Maryland. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED30581)
- McLaughlin, M. J., & Stettner-Eaton, B. (1988). *Categorical certification in special education: Does it really make a difference? Policy issues*. Charleston, WV: Appalachia Educational Laboratory. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED311643)
- Morgan, S. R. (1978). Personnel preparation and implementation of services for severely disturbed children in the United States. *Behavior Disorders: Journal of the Council for Children with Behavior Disorders, 3*(4), 268-275.
- National Association of State Directors of Special Education (1990). *National, regional, and state accreditation and certification standards for special education and related services personnel: A summary*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED354644)
- National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification [NASDTEC]. (1998). *The NASDTEC manual on the preparation and certification of educational personnel*. (4th ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.
- NASDTEC. (2000). *The NASDTEC manual on the preparation and certification of educational personnel*. (5th ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

- 
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards [NBPTS]. (1996). *Exceptional Needs Specialist: Standards for National Board Certification* (Draft). Washington, DC: Author.
- National Education Association. (1998). *Characteristics of independent professional teacher standards boards*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Patton, J. M., & Braithwaite, R. L. (1979). *Public Law 94-142 and the changing status of teacher certification/recertification: A survey of state education agencies*. Unpublished manuscript. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED178487)
- Patton, J. M., & Braithwaite, R. (1990). Special education certification/recertification for regular educators. *The Journal of Special Education*, 24(1), 117-124.
- Piercy, S. W., & Bowen, M. L. (1993). *Current and projected practices for certification and monitoring of personnel needs in special education*. Normal, IL: Illinois State University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED366150)
- Putnam, M. L., & Habanek, D. V. (1993). A national survey of certification requirements for teachers of students with mild handicaps: State of confusion. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 16 (2), 155-160.
- Ramsey, R. (1988). *National trends in special education teacher competency testing*. Paper presented at the 66th Annual Meeting of the Council for Exceptional Children, Washington, DC. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED296495)
- Reiff, H. B., Evans, E. D., & Cass, M. (1991). Special education requirements for general education certification: A national survey of current practices. *Remedial and Special Education*, 12(5), 56-60.
- Rosenberg, M. S. & Sindelar, P. T. (2001). *The proliferation of alternative routes to certification in special education: A critical review of the literature*. Arlington, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.
- Russo, T., & Stark, N. B. (1976). Teacher certification trends. *Mental Retardation*, 14 (5), 24-26.
- Sargent, L. R., (1978). State certification requirements. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 29(6), 47.
- Schwartz, L. L. (1969). *A survey of teacher certification requirements in the field of learning disabilities*. Paper presented at the conference of the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, Fort Worth, TX. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED032999)
- Shive, J. J. (1988). Professional practices boards for teachers. *Journal of Teacher Educators*, 39(6), 2-7.
- Smith, B. J., & Powers, C. (1987). Issues related to developing state certification policies. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 7(3), 12-23.

- 
- Steffens, S. (1996). *A comparative analysis of state special education certification for working with students with disabilities: Certification practices and teacher competence*. Unpublished manuscript.
- Stile, S. W., Abernathy, S. M., Pettibone, T. J., & Watchel, W. J. (1984). Training and certification for early childhood special education personnel: A six-year follow-up study. *Journal of the Division for Early Childhood*, 8(1), 69-73.
- Striffler, N. (1995). *Selected personnel policies and practices under Part H of I. D. E. A*. Chapel Hill, NC: National Early Childhood Technical Assistance System. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED386896)
- Tait, P. E. (1987). Update on general education certification requirements concerning exceptional students. *Education of the Visually Handicapped*, 19(1), 27-30.
- Thurman, S. K., & Hare, B. A. (1979). Teacher training in special education: Some perspectives circa 1980. *Education and Training of the Mentally Retarded*, 14(4), 292-95.
- Trohanis, P., Barker, M., Button, J., Hazen, S., Jackson, E., Karp, J., May, M., Meyer, R., Moore, B., Norman, M., Osteen, B., & Rostetter, D. (1980). *The State Implementation Grant (SIG) Program: Three years in perspective*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED193875)
- United States Department of Education [USDOE]. (1997). *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997*. Washington, DC: Author.
- USDOE. (2002). *Meeting the highly qualified teachers challenge*. Washington, DC: Author.

## APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses

State		Special education credential categories												
		MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
AL			B	B	B						b-8 yrs	Collaborative teacher k-6 <sup>th</sup> , 6 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>		
AK		Credential titles are determined by approved preparation programs. Developmental levels of approved programs are used to determine grade ranges												
AZ		K	K	K	K	K	K			K	b-5 yrs	Special Education	Severe/ Profound K	K
AR	Current			K	K	K	K					b-5yrs		Mild Disabilities K Mod-Prof K
	New (2002)		b-8 yrs, 4 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup>		b-8yrs, 4 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup>						b-8yrs	Instructional Specialist 4 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>		
CA			B	B	B		B				b to k		Mild-Moderate K Moderate-Severe K	Aphasia B



**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State		Special education credential categories												
		MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
CO	Current	5-21 yrs	b-21 yrs	5-21 yrs	b-21 yrs	5-21 yrs					b-5 yrs		Moderate needs (5-21 yrs) Profound needs (b-21 yrs)	
	Proposed	Under revision												
CT	Current		P	P	P						b-k p-k	Comprehensive Special Education 1 <sup>st</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>		
	Proposed	Unified general education and special education licensures												
DE			K	K	K		K	K			b-k	Exceptional Children: Elem: 1 <sup>st</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Sec: 7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>		Trade and Industries
DC		K	K	K	K	K	K			K	p -3 <sup>rd</sup>	Non-categorical K		9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>



**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State	Special education credential categories												
	MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
FL	K	K	K	K	K	K			K	b-k b-3yrs 3yrs-3 <sup>rd</sup>	Varying Exception K	Prof. Hcp. K	O & M K
GA	K	K	P	K	K	K			K	3-5yrs	Interrelated K		
HI		3-20 yrs		3-20 yrs		3-20 yrs					Special Education 3-20 yrs	Mild/Mod (3-20 yrs) Ser/Prof (3-20 yrs)	Orien- tation & Mobi- lity  (3-20 yrs.) Deaf/ Blind (3-20 yrs.)
ID	K SMR	K		K	K	K				b-3 <sup>rd</sup>	Generalist K	Standard Exceptional children K Consultant teacher K	Multi- ple Hand. K

**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State		Special education credential categories												
		MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
IL		P EMR TMR	P	P	P	P	P			P				
IN	Current	K mild	K		K	K	K			K	b to k		Mild dis. K Severe dis. K	
	Proposed		Preschool Elem: Primary Elem: Intermed. Mid Sch. /Jr. Hi High Sch		Preschool Elem: Primary Elem: Intermed. Mid Sch. /Jr. Hi High Sch							Mild Intervention Preschool Elem: Primary Elem: Intermed. Mid Sch. /Jr. Hi High Sch Intensive Intervention Preschool Elem: Primary Elem: Intermed. Middle Sch. /Jr. High/ High Schools		

**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State		Special education credential categories												
		MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
IA	Current	k-6 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	k-6 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	b-20 yrs	k-6 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	k-6 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	k-6 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>			k-6 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	b-k b- 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Multi- categorical Resource k-6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Multi- categorical special class with inclusion k-6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>	Severe/ Profound K	
	Proposed		k-6 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>		k-6 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>						b- 3 <sup>rd</sup>		Mild-Mod. k-6 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup> Instructional Strategist I k-6 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup> Instructional Strategist II k-6 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	

**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State		Special education credential categories												
		MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
KS	Current	K k-9 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	K k-9 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	P	K k-9 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	K k-9 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	K k-9 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>		K k-9 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>		preK	Interrelated K k-9 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup> Severely Multi- disabled K K-9 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>		
	Proposed		P		P						b-3 <sup>rd</sup>	Adaptive K-6 <sup>th</sup> 5-8 <sup>th</sup> 6-12 <sup>th</sup> Functional K-6 <sup>th</sup> 5-8 <sup>th</sup> 6-12 <sup>th</sup>		
KY			K	K	K	(C)K				(C)K	b-k		Moderate/ Severe K	

**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State	Special education credential categories												
	MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
LA		Pre Sch., 1-8 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	K	Pre Sch., 1-8 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>						b-4 yrs		Mild/Mod. 1-12 <sup>th</sup> Sev/Prof. 1-12 <sup>th</sup>	
ME		K	K	K						b-4yrs	Teacher of students with disabilities k-3 <sup>rd</sup> k-8 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>	Teacher of students with Sev./Prof Impair. K	
MD		B		B						b-3 <sup>rd</sup>	Generic Elem: 1-8 <sup>th</sup> Sec: 6-12 <sup>th</sup>	Severe/ Profound B	
MA		B	B	B						p-3 <sup>rd</sup>	Teacher of students with special needs p-9 <sup>th</sup> 5-12 <sup>th</sup>	Teacher of students with intensive special needs B	
MI	K	K	K	K	K	(C)K	K	(C)K	K	b-5yrs			Home Bound K

**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State		Special education credential categories												
		MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
MN	Current	K Mild/ Mod Mod/ Sev	B	B	B	K	K			K	b-6 yrs			
	New (2000)	K Devel Dis.	B	B	B	K	(C)B		(C)B	K	b-6 yrs			
MS			K	K	K	K							Mild/Mod. Dis.K-8 <sup>th</sup> K Sev./Multi- ply Dis. K	
MO		K	K	K	K	K	(C)K		(C)K	K	b-3 <sup>rd</sup>		Sev. Dev. Dis. K Mild/Mod. Cross- categorical K	
MT												Generic Special Education P		

**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State	Special education credential categories												
	MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
NE		K K-8 <sup>th</sup> 7 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup>	P	K	K				K K-8 <sup>th</sup> 7- 12 <sup>th</sup>	b-4yrs		Mild/Mod K-8 <sup>th</sup> K-9 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup> K Severe/ Multiple Dis K	Adap. PE K
NV	3-21 yrs	3-21 yrs	3-21 yrs	3-21 yrs	3-21 yrs	3-21 yrs	3-21 yrs	3-21 yrs	3-21 yrs	b-7 yrs		Generalist (LD, ED, MR) Mild to Moderate Needs K	TBI 3-21 yrs Adapt PE 3-21 yrs
NH	K	K	K	K	K	K			K		General Special Ed. K		Special . in Assess. of intell. funct.



**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State		Special education credential categories												
		MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
NJ			P	P	P					P		Teacher of Handicapped P		
NM											b-4yrs	General Special Ed. P		
NY	Current		P	P	P							Special Ed. P		
	New (2004)		B	B	B						b-2 <sup>nd</sup>	Students with disabilities 1-6 <sup>th</sup> 5-9 <sup>th</sup> 7-12 <sup>th</sup>		
NC		K	K		K	K				K	b-k, 3-4yrs		Cross-categorical (Mild/Mod) K Sev/Prof. Disabled K	

**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State		Special education credential categories												
		MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
ND		K	K	K	K	K	K			K	b-3 <sup>rd</sup>			
OH	1998		3-21 yrs		3-21 yrs						3-8yrs		Mild-Mod 5-21 yrs Moderate- Intensive 5-21yrs	
OK			P		P								Mild/Mod, Disabilities P Sev/ Prof. Disabilities P	
OR			P	P	P						b-3 <sup>rd</sup>	Special educator: ECED & ELED p-8 <sup>th</sup> MCED & High Sch. 5 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>		

**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State		Special education credential categories												
		MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
PA			K	K	K							Mentally and/or Physically handicapped K		
RI			K		K						b to K		Mild/Mod Elem/Mid k-8 <sup>th</sup> Midd/Secd 7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Sev/Prof 3-20yrs	
SC	Current	K EMH TMH	K	K	K	K	K			K		Generic K		
	Proposed	K	K	K	K	K				K	p		Multi-categorical K Severe Dis. K	

**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State	Special education credential categories												
	MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
SD			K	b-21 yrs	K					b-8 yrs	Special Education k-8th K		
TN		P	P	P						b-1 <sup>st</sup>	Modified K Comprehensive K		
TX		P		P	(C)P		(C)P			p-6th	Generic Sped P 6 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>	Sev/Prof Handicapped P	
UT		K	K	K						b-5 yrs		Mild/Mod. K Severe K	
VT		K	K							b-7 yrs	Counsel. Teacher/ Learning specialist K	Intensive special needs K Special education resource Room K	Sec. divers. occup. 7-12 <sup>th</sup> Spec. needs teach 7-12 <sup>th</sup>
VA	K	K	K	K	K				K	b-4 yrs		Spe Ed. Sev/Prof. K	

**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State		Special education credential categories												
		MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other
WA											b-3rd	Special ed. K		
WI	Current	P p-9 <sup>th</sup> 6- 12 <sup>th</sup>	P	P	P	P p-9 <sup>th</sup> 6- 12 <sup>th</sup>	P p-9 <sup>th</sup> 6- 12 <sup>th</sup>			P p-9 <sup>th</sup> 6- 12 <sup>th</sup>	b-8 yrs			
	New (2004)	P mid child / early adol scen ce, e.g. ages 6-12 or 13	P	P	P	P Sam levels as MR	P Sam levels as MR			P Sam levels as MR	b-7 yrs	Cross- categorical with areas of concentration (LD, BD, MR) -Mid. Child./ OR Early Adolescence e.g., ages 6-12 OR 13 Early adolescence/ Adolescence e.g., ages 10-21 OR wide range P		

**APPENDIX A. Categories and Age/Grade Levels\* for Special Education Licenses (cont.)**

State	Special education credential categories													
	MR	HI	SL	VI	ED	OI	A	OHI	SLD	ECSE	General	General levels	Other	
WV	K 5-12 <sup>th</sup> Mild to Mod	B		B	K 5-12 <sup>th</sup>	K 5-12 <sup>th</sup>	K 5-12 <sup>th</sup>			K 5-12 <sup>th</sup>	b-4 yrs		Sev/prof. Handicapped B	
WY	K	K	K	K	K					K	b-5 yrs	Exceptional Children K Generalist K		

\*Legend:

B= Birth through 12<sup>th</sup> grade

P= Pre kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade

K=Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade

b = birth

p=pre kindergarten

k=kindergarten

- =through

C=combined with another category of disability which also is designed with a C

Mod.=Moderate

Prof.= Profound

Dis.=Disabilities

Spe Ed. = Special education

O & M= Orientation & Movement

## Appendix B. Required Assessments for Initial Licensure of Special Education Teachers

State	Minimum GPA	Knowledge of basic skills	Pedagogical knowledge	Knowledge of special education	Other	Performance assessment
AL	2.5 undergraduate 3.0 masters 3.25 sixth year	No	No	No		Yes
AK	No	Yes	No	No		No
AZ	No	No	Yes	Yes		No
AR	2.5	Yes	Yes	Yes		No
CA	C or IHE requirement that is higher than C	Yes	Yes (reading)		Yes Content knowledge	No
CO	No	No	No	Yes		Yes (Braille for teachers of visually impaired)
CT	B- for entry to teaching programs	Yes	No	Yes for comprehensive special ed license		No
DE	No	Yes	No	No		No
DC	No	Yes	No	Yes		No



## Appendix B. Required Assessments for Initial Licensure of Special Education Teachers (cont.)

State	Minimum GPA	Knowledge of basic skills	Pedagogical knowledge	Knowledge of special education	Other	Performance assessment
FL	2.5 in subject courses	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes for graduates of state's approved programs
GA	2.5	Yes	No	Yes		No
HI	No	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
ID	No	No	No	No		No
IL	No	Yes	Yes	Yes		No
IN	No	Yes	No	Yes in the areas of severe disabilities seriously emotionally handicapped, and learning disability		Yes (2002-2006)
IA	No	No	No	No		No

## Appendix B. Required Assessments for Initial Licensure of Special Education Teachers (cont.)

State	Minimum GPA	Knowledge of basic skills	Pedagogical knowledge	Knowledge of special education	Other	Performance assessment
KS	2.5	Yes	Yes except for speech/language pathologist, early childhood disabled, and severely multi disabled	No		No
KY	2.5	Yes	Yes	Yes		Performance is assessed in one-year internship program
LA	2.5	Yes	Yes	No		No
ME	None	Yes	No	No		No
MD	C	Yes	No	Yes for Generic Elem/Middle Infant primary, and secondary/ adult		No

## Appendix B. Required Assessments for Initial Licensure of Special Education Teachers (cont.)

State	Minimum GPA	Knowledge of basic skills	Pedagogical knowledge	Knowledge of special education	Other	Performance assessment
MA	No	Yes	No	Yes for teachers of students with special needs and early childhood teachers		No
MI	No	Yes	Yes	Yes		No
			For some areas of special education licensure			
MN	No	Yes	In development			
MS	2.5	Yes	Yes	Yes		No
MO	2.5 Overall and in major area of study	Yes	No	Yes		No
MT	2.5	Yes	No	No		No
NE	No	Yes	No	No		No

## Appendix B. Required Assessments for Initial Licensure of Special Education Teachers (cont.)

State	Minimum GPA	Knowledge of basic skills	Pedagogical knowledge	Knowledge of special education	Other	Performance assessment
NV	No	Yes	No information			No
NH	No	Yes	No	No		No
NJ	2.75	Yes	No	Yes for Speech language specialist only		No
NM	No	Yes	Yes	No		No
NY	No	Yes	Yes	Being developed		No
NC	2.5 for admission to programs only	Yes	No	Yes except for hearing impaired, birth thru kindergarten, and preschool educator 3 to 5		Yes

## Appendix B. Required Assessments for Initial Licensure of Special Education Teachers (cont.)

State	Minimum GPA	Knowledge of basic skills	Pedagogical knowledge	Knowledge of special education	Other	Performance assessment
ND	2.5	No	No	No		No
OH	2.5 By reference to NCATE	No	Yes	Yes		Yes (2000)
OK	2.5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes Foreign language proficiency	Yes
OR	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
PA	Beg. Sept. 2001 will require at least 2.6 in each area of teaching. Gradually increasing to 3.0 beginning 2003	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes Elementary content knowledge	No

## Appendix B. Required Assessments for Initial Licensure of Special Education Teachers (cont.)

State	Minimum GPA	Knowledge of basic skills	Pedagogical knowledge	Knowledge of special education	Other	Performance assessment
RI	No	Yes	Plan to require			Yes (2001)
SC	2.5	Yes	Yes	Yes		No
SD	No	No	No	No		No
TN	No	Yes	Yes	Yes		No
TX	No	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes For some teachers of deaf children
UT	No	No	No	No		No
VT	No	Yes	Being considered for implementation in 2002			No
VA	No	Yes	Being considered			No
WA	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

---

**Appendix B. Required Assessments for Initial Licensure of Special Education Teachers (cont.)**

State	Minimum GPA	Knowledge of basic skills	Pedagogical knowledge	Knowledge of special education	Other	Performance assessment
WV	2.5	Yes	Yes	Yes		No
WI	2.75 in major and minor and professional education courses, except for student teaching	Yes	No	Yes		Yes (2004)
WY	No	Yes Embedded in standards	Yes Embedded in standards	Yes Embedded in standards		Yes Embedded in standards



---

## APPENDIX C. Alternative Teacher Certification Interview Request Letter and State Interviews



Dear :

Richard Mainzer, the CEC Assistant Executive Director of Professional Standards and Practice, and I are seeking information about how states are addressing, developing, and/or implementing alternative routes to licensure (ARLs) for special education teachers. In order to obtain a clearer picture of both the policy and the practice in states, we have selected 10 states to evaluate in-depth. To ensure that we receive accurate and current information we would like to complete a phone interview with you or your designee. We have information on the alternative path policies in your state as published in the most recent edition of *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001*, published by the National Center for Education Information.

1. Is the information copied from this publication an accurate depiction of the policy for ARLs in your state? If you do not have the information available, we will be happy to fax you the respective pages.
2. Are there other routes to licensure not included in this list? Please describe briefly.
3. Which ARLs apply to special education teachers?
4. Does your state have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure by taking courses only (sometimes called a course credit or course count path)?
5. Describe the current ALR programs in your state that prepare special educators (e.g., institution or entity providing training, length of training, etc.)?
6. When were these programs begun?
7. What standards were used to develop the program(s)?
8. How many individuals have completed each program in the last 3 years?
9. Are there any licensing criteria graduates of these program(s) must meet that graduates of traditional programs are not required to meet?
10. Does your state ensure that graduates of ARLs are of at least the same quality as graduates of traditional programs? If so, please describe.
11. Describe how your state evaluates the individuals who complete these programs. Can you share any evaluation data with CEC?
12. Does your state track completers of these programs to evaluate retention and/or attrition by program?

Information you provide will assist CEC in describing the ARLs being used in states as part of a synthesis paper we are developing in collaboration with the Center on Professional Policy in Special Education (COPPSE). We would appreciate your help. Please let us know by return email whether you prefer we schedule a phone interview with you or with your designee. If you prefer we interview your designee, please let us know whom to contact

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret D. Crutchfield".

Margaret D. Crutchfield  
Director for Program Accreditation  
margiec@cec.sped.org

---

## Interview Summary Sheet: California

1. **Is the information copied from *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001* an accurate depiction of the policy for ARLs in your state?**  
Yes
2. **Are there other routes to licensure not included in this list? Please describe briefly.**  
Does not include information on Paraeducator Career Ladder programs
3. **Which ARLs apply to special education teachers?**  
Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) AUSD runs the only District Intern program for sped. Several institutions have University Intern programs in mild/moderate and moderate/severe. There are many Pre-Internship Teaching Certificate programs that include special educators at the local level. Many of the Paraprofessional Career Ladder programs include special education; some are exclusively special education.
4. **Does your state have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure by taking courses only (sometimes called a course credit or course count path)?**  
No
5. **Describe the current ALR programs in your state that prepare special educators (e.g., institution or entity providing training, length of training, etc.)?**  
See response to #3
6. **When were these programs begun?**  
Intern program was begun in late 1980's
7. **What standards were used to develop the program(s)?**  
California's teacher preparation programs.
8. **How many individuals have completed each program in the last 3 years?**  
Have not collected state-wide data
9. **Are there any licensing criteria graduates of these program(s) must meet that graduates of traditional programs are not required to meet?**  
No
10. **Does your state ensure that graduates of ARLs are of at least the same quality as graduates of traditional programs? If so, please describe.**  
Must pass same tests-CBEST and MSAT or appropriate PRAXIS II, may change requirement for Severe license from MSAT to PRAXIS II for Health.
11. **Describe how your state evaluates the individuals who complete these programs? Can you share any evaluation data with CEC?**  
Graduates of all programs must pass the same assessments.
12. **Does your state track completers of these programs to evaluate retention and/or attrition by program?**





---

## Interview Summary Sheet: Georgia

1. **Is the information copied from *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001* an accurate depiction of the policy for ARLs in your state?**

Does not include information on the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (TAPP)

2. **Are there other routes to licensure not included in this list? Please describe briefly.**

TAPP

3. **Which ARLs apply to special education teachers?**

All the TAPP programs include special education

4. **Does your state have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure by taking courses only (sometimes called a course credit or course count path)?**

No

5. **Describe the current ALR programs in your state that prepare special educators (e.g., institution or entity providing training, length of training, etc.)?**

*Georgia:* Georgia recently instituted a state-based ARL, the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (TAPP), at 15 sites including IHE's and Regional Education Service Agencies. All TAPP programs are open to special educators. Information about the TAPP program can be found at [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com). Candidates for TAPP: must have a Bachelor's degree from an accredited IHE with at least a 2.5 GPA, must have a major or equivalent in subject matter content, and must have a passing score on the Praxis I prior to program entry. Praxis II must be passed during the second year of the program. Participants in the program receive 3 to 6 weeks of intensive coursework during the initial summer. They are placed in classrooms and are required to serve an induction period of two years. During the induction period, the candidate is observed and supervised by a support team consisting of a trained mentor teacher, a school administrator, and a college faculty representative. Seminars are held throughout the year for the cohort group. The provider program and the support team make recommendation for full licensure.

6. **When were these programs begun?**

Summer 2001

7. **What standards were used to develop the program(s)?**

Georgia teacher preparation standards (NCATE)

8. **How many individuals have completed each program in the last 3 years?**

Program has just begun

9. **Are there any licensing criteria graduates of these program(s) must meet that graduates of traditional programs are not required to meet?**

No

10. **Does your state ensure that graduates of ARLs are of at least the same quality as graduates of traditional programs? If so, please describe.**

Graduates of TAPP and traditional programs must both take PRAXIS I and II and must meet same cut score.

---

## **Interview Summary Sheet: Georgia (continued)**

- 11. Describe how your state evaluates the individuals who complete these programs? Can you share any evaluation data with CEC?**

See response to question #10.

- 12. Does your state track completers of these programs to evaluate retention and/or attrition by program?**

Not yet.

---

## Interview Summary Sheet: Illinois

1. **Is the information copied from *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001* an accurate depiction of the policy for ARLs in your state?**  
Yes
2. **Are there other routes to licensure not included in this list? Please describe briefly.**  
No
3. **Which ARLs apply to special education teachers?**  
There are no ARL programs in Illinois at this time for special educators.
4. **Does your state have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure by taking courses only (sometimes called a course credit or course count path)?**  
Transitioning from course count to standards-based
5. **Describe the current ALR programs in your state that prepare special educators (e.g., institution or entity providing training, length of training, etc.)?**  
NA
6. **When were these programs begun?**  
NA
7. **What standards were used to develop the program(s)?**  
NA
8. **How many individuals have completed each program in the last 3 years?**  
NA
9. **Are there any licensing criteria graduates of these program(s) must meet that graduates of traditional programs are not required to meet?**  
NA
10. **Does your state ensure that graduates of ARLs are of at least the same quality as graduates of traditional programs? If so, please describe.**  
NA
11. **Describe how your state evaluates the individuals who complete these programs? Can you share any evaluation data with CEC?**  
NA
12. **Does your state track completers of these programs to evaluate retention and/or attrition by program?**  
NA



---

## Interview Summary Sheet: Louisiana

- 1. Is the information copied from *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001* an accurate depiction of the policy for ARLs in your state?**

No, Louisiana is in the middle of a major reform and many of the ARL programs are changing
- 2. Are there other routes to licensure not included in this list? Please describe briefly.**

3 new paths being developed—see detailed description in folder: Practitioner Teacher Program, Master’s Degree, and Certification Only. All programs are implemented through IHEs.
- 3. Which ARLs apply to special education teachers?**

All three of the above programs are available for special education. Eight of the nine new Practitioner Teacher programs include special education. It is unclear how special education will be incorporated into the other programs.
- 4. Does your state have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure by taking courses only (sometimes called a course credit or course count path)?**

Yes
- 5. Describe the current ALR programs in your state that prepare special educators (e.g., institution or entity providing training, length of training, etc.)?**

Candidates for the Practitioner Teacher program must possess a Baccalaureate degree from an accredited IHE with at least a 2.5 GPA. They must pass the Praxis I and during the program must pass the PRAXIS II in special education. Participants in the program receive intensive training in the summer (9 credit hours) prior to being placed in a classroom. During the school year, participants participate in a seminar each semester and receive one-on-one supervision through an internship provided by the program providers. The practitioner teacher also receives support from school-based mentor teachers. Teams made up of principals; mentors and practitioner teachers will review the first year teaching performance of practitioner teachers and determine the extent to which the practitioner teachers have demonstrated teaching proficiency. If successful, they will enter the assessment portion of the Louisiana Teacher and Assessment Program during the following fall. If not successful, a prescriptive plan will be developed and implemented.
- 6. When were these programs begun?**

2000-2001 school year
- 7. What standards were used to develop the program(s)?**

Louisiana teacher preparation standards, however, special education standards are currently under review
- 8. How many individuals have completed each program in the last 3 years?**

Programs are too new to have data
- 9. Are there any licensing criteria graduates of these program(s) must meet that graduates of traditional programs are not required to meet?**

In some disciplines areas, candidates can be licensed by passing PRAXIS II, but in special education, course work is required.
- 10. Does your state ensure that graduates of ARLs are of at least the same quality as graduates of traditional programs? If so, please describe.**

Same assessments, must pass PRAXIS I and II

---

## **Interview Summary Sheet: Louisiana (continued)**

- 11. Describe how your state evaluates the individuals who complete these programs? Can you share any evaluation data with CEC?**

See response to question #10

- 12. Does your state track completers of these programs to evaluate retention and/or attrition by program?**

IHE's will be accountable for their graduates whether they are from traditional or ARL programs

---

## Interview Summary Sheet: Michigan

1. **Is the information copied from *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001* an accurate depiction of the policy for ARLs in your state?**  
Yes
2. **Are there other routes to licensure not included in this list? Please describe briefly.**  
No
3. **Which ARLs apply to special education teachers?**  
Currently, there are no special education ARL programs in Michigan, except for a Limited License to Instruct program with the Detroit Public Schools. This is a pilot program to provide training to persons teaching on emergency certificates and will likely include special educators.
4. **Does your state have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure by taking courses only (sometimes called a course credit or course count path)?**  
No
5. **Describe the current ALR programs in your state that prepare special educators (e.g., institution or entity providing training, length of training, etc.)?**  
None other than the experimental program described above.
6. **When were these programs begun?**  
NA
7. **What standards were used to develop the program(s)?**  
Michigan Board of Education standards
8. **How many individuals have completed each program in the last 3 years?**  
NA
9. **Are there any licensing criteria graduates of these program(s) must meet that graduates of traditional programs are not required to meet?**  
No
10. **Does your state ensure that graduates of ARLs are of at least the same quality as graduates of traditional programs? If so, please describe.**  
NA
11. **Describe how your state evaluates the individuals who complete these programs? Can you share any evaluation data with CEC?**  
NA
12. **Does your state track completers of these programs to evaluate retention and/or attrition by program?**  
NA

---

## Interview Summary Sheet: New Jersey

1. **Is the information copied from *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001* an accurate depiction of the policy for ARLs in your state?**  
Yes
2. **Are there other routes to licensure not included in this list? Please describe briefly.**  
No
3. **Which ARLs apply to special education teachers?**  
There are no ARL programs for special educators in New Jersey.
4. **Does your state have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure by taking courses only (sometimes called a course credit or course count path)?**  
No
5. **Describe the current ALR programs in your state that prepare special educators (e.g., institution or entity providing training, length of training, etc.)?**  
NA
6. **When were these programs begun?**  
NA
7. **What standards were used to develop the program(s)?**  
NA
8. **How many individuals have completed each program in the last 3 years?**  
NA
9. **Are there any licensing criteria graduates of these program(s) must meet that graduates of traditional programs are not required to meet?**  
NA
10. **Does your state ensure that graduates of ARLs are of at least the same quality as graduates of traditional programs? If so, please describe.**  
NA
11. **Describe how your state evaluates the individuals who complete these programs? Can you share any evaluation data with CEC?**  
NA
12. **Does your state track completers of these programs to evaluate retention and/or attrition by program?**  
NA

---

## Interview Summary Sheet: Oregon

1. **Is the information copied from *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001* an accurate depiction of the policy for ARLs in your state?**

Yes; however, Oregon describes its programs as an “alternate route to entry” rather than an alternative route to licensure. The holder of the certificate is allowed to teach but must be accepted into a regular teacher education program in the state and complete that program within 3 years.

2. **Are there other routes to licensure not included in this list? Please describe briefly.**

No

3. **Which ARLs apply to special education teachers?**

NA

4. **Does your state have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure by taking courses only (sometimes called a course credit or course count path)?**

Not allowed for special education

5. **Describe the current ALR programs in your state that prepare special educators (e.g., institution or entity providing training, length of training, etc.)?**

NA

6. **When were these programs begun?**

NA

7. **What standards were used to develop the program(s)?**

NA

8. **How many individuals have completed each program in the last 3 years?**

NA

9. **Are there any licensing criteria graduates of these program(s) must meet that graduates of traditional programs are not required to meet?**

NA

10. **Does your state ensure that graduates of ARLs are of at least the same quality as graduates of traditional programs? If so, please describe.**

NA

11. **Describe how your state evaluates the individuals who complete these programs? Can you share any evaluation data with CEC?**

NA

12. **Does your state track completers of these programs to evaluate retention and/or attrition by program?**

NA

---

## Interview Summary Sheet: Texas

1. **Is the information copied from *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001* an accurate depiction of the policy for ARLs in your state?**  
Yes
2. **Are there other routes to licensure not included in this list? Please describe briefly.**  
No
3. **Which ARLs apply to special education teachers?**  
All are open to special educators
4. **Does your state have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure by taking courses only (sometimes called a course credit or course count path)?**  
No
5. **Describe the current ALR programs in your state that prepare special educators (e.g., institution or entity providing training, length of training, etc.)?**
6. **When were these programs begun?**  
Earliest began in 1986
7. **What standards were used to develop the program(s)?**  
Texas teacher preparation standards
8. **How many individuals have completed each program in the last 3 years?**  
1998 1,042 (traditional programs = 714)  
1999 1,045 (traditional programs = 836)  
2000 947 (traditional programs =586)
9. **Are there any licensing criteria graduates of these program(s) must meet that graduates of traditional programs are not required to meet?**  
No
10. **Does your state ensure that graduates of ARLs are of at least the same quality as graduates of traditional programs? If so, please describe.**  
All candidates must pass the EXCET test.
11. **Describe how your state evaluates the individuals who complete these programs? Can you share any evaluation data with CEC?**  
ExCET. Does not have a comparison of the EXCET scores of traditional and ARL graduates
12. **Does your state track completers of these programs to evaluate retention and/or attrition by program?**  
Not by discipline area, in general have data that shows ARL completers have a greater hiring rate after training and that retention was as good or better than IHE grads

---

## Interview Summary Sheet: Utah

1. **Is the information copied from *Alternative Teacher Certification: A State-by-State Analysis 2001* an accurate depiction of the policy for ARLs in your state?**  
Yes
2. **Are there other routes to licensure not included in this list? Please describe briefly.**  
No
3. **Which ARLs apply to special education teachers?**  
There is one special education ARL at Utah State University.
4. **Does your state have a procedure that permits students to obtain full licensure by taking courses only (sometimes called a course credit or course count path)?**  
No
5. **Describe the current ALR programs in your state that prepare special educators (e.g., institution or entity providing training, length of training, etc.)?**  
There is one program at Utah State. The program prepares 25 individuals per year in greater Salt Lake City for a mild/moderate license. These individuals must hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution and be employed in an approved special education setting serving students with mild/moderate disabilities. Training includes academic coursework taken concurrently with supervised field-based experiences. ([sped.usu.edu/pictures/programs/sped\\_prog\\_off.html](http://sped.usu.edu/pictures/programs/sped_prog_off.html))
6. **When were these programs begun?**  
NA
7. **What standards were used to develop the program(s)?**  
Utah teacher preparation standards. State accepts IHE's recommendation.
8. **How many individuals have completed each program in the last 3 years?**  
Not known at state level.
9. **Are there any licensing criteria graduates of these program(s) must meet that graduates of traditional programs are not required to meet?**  
No
10. **Does your state ensure that graduates of ARLs are of at least the same quality as graduates of traditional programs? If so, please describe.**  
Must meet all the same criteria as graduates of traditional program
11. **Describe how your state evaluates the individuals who complete these programs? Can you share any evaluation data with CEC?**  
Accepts IHE recommendation for licensure
12. **Does your state track completers of these programs to evaluate retention and/or attrition by program?**  
Not at state level