Requirements for the Standard Professional Early Childhood Special Education

Arizona Department of Education – Certification Unit

Standard Professional Early Childhood Special Education

*The Standard certificate is valid for 12 years and may be renewed.*

Requirements for the Standard Professional Early Childhood Special Education are:

1. **Application:** Submission of a completed [Application for Certification](#) and the appropriate fee (see Application for Certification).

2. **AZDPS IVP fingerprint clearance card:** A photocopy of your valid [Arizona Department of Public Safety Identity Verified Prints (IVP)](#) fingerprint clearance card.

3. **Bachelor’s degree:** A Bachelor’s or more advanced degree from an accredited college or university.
   - **Required Documentation:** Official transcript(s) posting the degree and date awarded.

4. **One of the following (Option A, B, or C):**
   - **Option A. Teacher Preparation Program:** Completion of a teacher preparation program in Early Childhood Special Education from a Board-approved educator preparation program or from an accredited institution offering substantially similar training, addressing the topics listed below and any others as required by law: Research-based systematic phonics; Research-based instructional strategies for delivering differentiated reading instruction, assessment, intervention and remediation to support readers of varying ages and ability levels, including students with dyslexia; Teaching students with exceptionalities; Characteristics and quality practices for typical and atypical behaviors of young children, including behavioral interventions for children with and without disabilities; Typical and atypical child growth and development, including health, safety and nutrition with an emphasis on special health care needs for children birth through grade three; Child, family, cultural and community relationships including community organizations that support and assist children with disabilities and their families; Developmentally appropriate instructional and inclusive methodologies for teaching social and emotional development, language arts, math, science, social studies, the arts and diagnosis and remediation of learning difficulties; Early language and literacy development including communication methods in early childhood education/special education; Assessment and evaluation for early childhood special education to include observing, assessing, monitoring and reporting on the progress of young children; Substantial experience in practicum as described in R7-2-604 serving children with exceptionalities birth through preschool and kindergarten through grade three; Professional responsibility and ethical conduct; and Twelve weeks of capstone experience as described in R7-2-604 serving children with exceptionalities in birth through grade three, which may be completed during the valid period of a teaching intern certificate.
   - **Required Documentation:** Official transcripts or an Arizona Institutional Recommendation (IR) documenting completion of the teacher preparation program.

   - **Option B. Teaching Experience and Coursework/Training.** Both of the following (B-1 and B-2):
     - **B-1.** Two (2) years of full-time teaching experience in Early Childhood Special Education, Birth-Grade 3 or Age 8.
     - **Required Documentation to meet B-1:** A [Verification of Teaching Experience](#) form, completed, signed, and submitted to [Certification@azed.gov](mailto:Certification@azed.gov) by the school Superintendent or Personnel/HR director, verifying completion of the required teaching experience.

     - **AND-**

     - **B-2.** Completion of Board approved or accredited coursework or trainings which teach the knowledge and skills described in Arizona Administrative Code R7-2-602 and address the following topics:
       - a. Research-based systematic phonics;

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*Requirements may be subject to change and are fully referenced in the Arizona Revised Statutes and Administrative Code.*
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b. Research-based instructional strategies for delivering differentiated reading instruction, assessment, intervention and remediation to support readers of varying ages and ability levels, including students with dyslexia;
c. Teaching students with exceptionalities;
d. Characteristics and quality practices for typical and atypical behaviors of young children, including behavioral interventions for children with and without disabilities;
e. Typical and atypical child growth and development, including health, safety and nutrition with an emphasis on special health care needs for children birth through grade three;
f. Child, family, cultural and community relationships including community organizations that support and assist children with disabilities and their families;
g. Developmentally appropriate instructional and inclusive methodologies for teaching social and emotional development, language arts, math, science, social studies, the arts;
h. Diagnosis and remediation of learning difficulties;
i. Early language and literacy development including communication methods in early childhood education/special education;
j. Assessment and evaluation for early childhood special education to include observing, assessing, monitoring and reporting on the progress of young children;
k. Substantial experience in practicum as described in R7-2-604 serving children with exceptionalities birth through preschool and kindergarten through grade three;
l. Professional responsibility and ethical conduct

☐ Required Documentation to meet B-2: Official transcript(s) documenting completion of the coursework or trainings.

Option C. Out-of-State Certification. The applicant holds a valid, comparable Early Childhood Special Education certificate from another state and is in good standing with that other state. Applicants who qualify under this option are not required to meet the exam requirements listed under #5 and #6.

☐ Required Documentation: A photocopy of the valid, comparable teaching certificate from another state.

5. Professional Knowledge Special Education Exam Requirement.

ONE of the following (Option A, B, C, or D):

Option A. Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment (AEPA): A passing score on the AEPA Special Education: Early Childhood (AZ 083) exam.

☐ Required Documentation: A photocopy of the official AEPA passing score report.

Option B. Out-of-State Exam: A passing score on a substantially similar Special Education: Early Childhood examination from another state or agency.

☐ Required Documentation: An original, official score report, or a verification letter from the state agency that accepted the exam, documenting that you passed the exam.

Option C. NBPTS: A valid comparable certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

☐ Required Documentation: A photocopy of the NBPTS certificate.

Option D. Teaching Experience: Three years of full-time, contracted teaching experience in any state, including Arizona, in a Special Education Birth-Grade 3 or Age 8 classroom. Note: Experience teaching in a foreign school does not meet this requirement.

☐ Required Documentation: A Verification of Teaching Experience form, completed, signed and submitted to Certification@azed.gov by the District Superintendent or Personnel/HR Director, verifying the required teaching experience.
6. **Subject Knowledge Exam Requirement.**

   **ONE** of the following (Option A, B, C, D, E, F, or G):

   **Option A. Arizona Educator Proficiency Assessment (AEPA):** A passing score on the AEPA Subject Knowledge: Early Childhood Education (AZ 036) exam.

   □ *Required Documentation:* A photocopy of the passing score report.

   **Option B. Out-of-State Exam:** A passing score on a substantially similar Subject Knowledge: Early Childhood Education examination from another state or agency.

   □ *Required Documentation:* An original, official score report, or verification letter from the agency that accepted the exam, documenting that you passed the substantially similar exam.

   **Option C. NBPTS:** A valid comparable certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

   □ *Required Documentation:* A photocopy of the NBPTS certificate.

   **Option D. Degree in the Subject:** A Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Doctorate degree from an accredited institution in Early Childhood Special Education or Early Childhood Education.

   □ *Required Documentation:* Official transcripts documenting the degree.

   **Option E. Teaching Experience:** Verification of three years of full-time, contracted teaching experience in any state, including Arizona, in Early Childhood Special Education, Birth-Grade 3 or in a self-contained, Birth-Grade 3 classroom. *Note:* Experience teaching in a foreign school does not meet this requirement.

   □ *Required Documentation:* A [Verification of Teaching Experience](#) form, completed, signed, and submitted to Certification@azed.gov by the District Superintendent or Personnel/HR Director verifying the required teaching experience.

   **Option F. Post-Secondary Teaching:** Experience teaching courses relevant to Early Childhood Special Education or Early Childhood Education for the last two consecutive years and for a total of at least three years, at one or more regionally or nationally accredited postsecondary institutions.

   □ *Required Documentation:* A letter(s) from the college or university Department Chair, Dean, or Personnel Director, verifying postsecondary teaching experience for the specific durations.

   **Option G. Work Experience:** Demonstration of expertise in Early Childhood Special Education through five years of relevant work experience.

   □ *Required Documentation.* One of the following:

   - A letter from a public school Superintendent or Personnel/HR Director verifying that they have five years of work experience which demonstrates expertise in the subject area-

   - A resume which details work experience of at least five years which demonstrates expertise in the subject area. *Note:* The Department will review your resume to determine if you have demonstrated expertise through five years of relevant work experience.
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Requirements #7, #8, #9, #10, and #11 are allowable deficiencies which must be completed in the specified timeframe

The following requirements must be completed within one year or three years to maintain the validity of the certificate:

7. Arizona Constitution: A college course or the appropriate examination covering the provisions and principles of the Arizona Constitution.

8. U.S. Constitution: A college course or the appropriate examination covering the provisions and principles of the United States Constitution.

9. Phonics: A college course or Board approved or accredited training in research-based systematic phonics.

10. Dyslexia: A college course or Board approved or accredited training in research-based instructional strategies for delivering differentiated reading instruction, assessment, intervention and remediation to support readers of varying ages and ability levels, including students with dyslexia.

11. Ethics: A college course or Board approved or accredited training in professional responsibility and ethical conduct.

Arizona and U.S. Constitution Requirements: If you otherwise qualify but are deficient in the Arizona Constitution and/or U.S. Constitution, you have three years under a valid teaching certificate to fulfill these requirements, except that if you are certified to teach an academic course on history, government, social studies, citizenship, law, or civics, you have one year to fulfill the Arizona and U.S. Constitution requirements. **

Phonics, Dyslexia, and Ethics Requirements: If you otherwise qualify but are deficient in the Phonics, Dyslexia, and/or Ethics requirements, you have three years under a valid teaching certificate to fulfill these requirements. **

**NOTE: If you do not complete the allowable deficiency requirements within the allowable time frame, your Standard teaching certificate will be temporarily suspended and will not be valid for employment until the deficiency is corrected. A temporary suspension for failure to meet these requirements is not considered a disciplinary action and a person shall be allowed to correct the deficiency within the remaining timeframe of the certificate. **