REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
STANDARD PROFESSIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION,
BIRTH – AGE 8 OR GRADE 3 CERTIFICATE
ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – CERTIFICATION UNIT

An individual who holds the Early Childhood teaching certificate or the Early Childhood endorsement in combination with an Arizona Mild-Moderate Disabilities, Emotional Disability, Learning Disability, Intellectual Disability, Orthopedic / Other Health Impairment or Severely and Profoundly Disabled Special Education teaching certificate is not required to hold the Early Childhood Special Education certificate.

**STANDARD EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION, BIRTH – AGE 8 OR GRADE 3 CERTIFICATE**

The Standard certificate is valid for 12 years and is renewable.

Requirements for the Standard Professional Early Childhood Special Education certificate are:

1. Completed Application for Certification.
2. Appropriate fee (See Application for Certification).
4. A Bachelor’s or more advanced degree from an accredited institution. Official transcript(s) required.
5. Option A, B, or C. One of the following:
   A. Teacher Preparation Program: Completion of a teacher preparation program in early childhood special education from an accredited institution or a Board-approved teacher preparation program.
   B. Coursework and Experience: Thirty-seven (37) semester hours of early childhood which teach the standards described in R7-2-602, to include all of the following areas of study:
      - (1) Foundations of early childhood education and special education; (2) Behavioral interventions for children with and without disabilities; (3) Characteristic and quality practices for typical and atypical behaviors of young children; (4) Typical and atypical child growth and development, including health, safety and nutrition with an emphasis on special health care needs for children birth through age 8 or grade 3; (5) Child, family, cultural and community relationships including community organizations that support and assist children with disabilities and their families; (6) 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; (7) Early language and literacy development including communication methods in early childhood education/special education; (8) Assessment and evaluation for early childhood special education to include observing, assessing, monitoring and reporting on the progress of young children;
      **AND**
      - A minimum of eight semester hours of practicum, including:
         - A minimum of four semester hours in a supervised field experience, practicum, internship or student teaching setting serving children with identified special needs birth through preschool or one year of full-time teaching experience with children identified with special needs birth through preschool. Submit a Verification of Teaching Experience form signed and completed by the District Superintendent or Personnel/HR Director to verify teaching experience; **AND**
         - A minimum of four semester hours in a supervised student teaching setting serving children with identified special needs in kindergarten through grade 3 or one year of full time teaching experience with children identified with special needs kindergarten through grade 3. Submit a Verification of Teaching Experience form signed and completed by the District Superintendent or Personnel/HR Director to verify teaching experience.
   C. Out-of-State Certification: A valid, comparable Early Childhood Special Education certificate from another state. **Applicants who qualify under Option C are not required to meet requirements #6 and #7.**
6. Professional Knowledge Early Childhood Exam.
   **One of the following:**
   A. **AEPA:** A passing score on the AEPA Professional Knowledge Early Childhood (93) exam.
   B. **Out-of-State Exam:** A passing score on a substantially similar Professional Knowledge Early Childhood Education examination from another state or agency. Submit original score reports.
   C. **NBCT:** A valid comparable certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Submit a photocopy of the certificate.
   D. **Teaching Experience:** Three years of full-time teaching experience in any state, including Arizona, teaching children from birth through age 8 or grade 3. Submit a Verification of Teaching Experience form signed and completed by the District Superintendent or Personnel/HR Director to verify teaching experience. Note: Experience teaching in a foreign school does not meet this requirement.

7. Subject Knowledge Early Childhood Special Education Exam.
   **One of the following:**
   A. **AEPA:** A passing score on the AEPA Subject Knowledge Early Childhood Special Education (83) exam.
   B. **Out-of-State Exam:** A passing score on a substantially similar Subject Knowledge Early Childhood Special Education examination from another state or agency. Submit the original score report at time of application.
   C. **NBCT:** A valid comparable certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Submit a copy of the certificate.
   D. **Degree in Early Childhood Special Education:** A Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Doctorate degree from an accredited institution in a relevant content area. Submit official transcripts.
   E. **Teaching Experience:** Three years of full-time teaching experience in any state, including Arizona, in early childhood special education. Submit a Verification of Teaching Experience form signed and completed by the District Superintendent or Personnel/HR Director to verify teaching experience. Note: Experience teaching in a foreign school does not meet this requirement.
   F. **Post-Secondary Teaching:** Experience teaching courses relevant to early childhood special 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. Submit a verification letter from a department chair, dean, or personnel director, verifying employment for the specific durations from one or more qualifying postsecondary institutions.
   G. **Work Experience:** Demonstration of expertise in early childhood special education through five years of relevant work experience. Submit a verification letter, completed and signed by a supervisor or HR Representative documenting your relevant work experience.

**Requirements # 8 and # 9 are required within one year or three years,**

8. Arizona Constitution (a college course or the appropriate examination).

9. U.S. Constitution (a college course or the appropriate examination).

**NOTE:** If you otherwise qualify but are deficient in the Arizona Constitution and/or U.S. Constitution requirements, 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. If you do not complete the 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.

**Requirements may be subject to change and are fully referenced in the Arizona Revised Statutes and Administrative Code.**

Revised 8-28-2017
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