



Study V
Analysis of
State Certification
Requirements for
Early Childhood
Special Educators:
Certification Models

Web searches, telephone interviews and policy analyses were used to obtain information about state certification requirements for early childhood special educators who work with preschool children with developmental delays and disabilities. This "At a Glance" identifies definitions used for the study, the certification models identified, and the rationale for selecting those models.

Definition of Terms

- *Certification – the set of regulated requirements that lead to initial preparation in Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE).*
- *Endorsement – the set of regulated ECSE requirements that are in addition to the requirements for a specific certificate, such as Early Childhood Education (ECE), K-12 special education.*
- *Blended ECE and ECSE certification – the set of regulated requirements that lead to initial preparation in both ECE and ECSE through a single certificate.*

States with Single Routes/Options for Personnel to Teach Preschoolers with Developmental Delays and Disabilities

- Twenty-six of the 38 (68%) states represented have one certification model
- Twenty of the states' certification models were competency or standards based.

States' Certification Models	n	%
ECSE	13	50
ECSE Endorsement	6	23
Blended ECE & ECSE	3	12
Special Education	2	8
ECSE & Special Education Endorsement	1	4
ECE & Special Education Endorsement	1	4

Age Ranges Represented by Certification Models	n	%
Birth – 5 years	8	30
Birth – 8 years	5	19
3 – 5 years	4	15
3 years – grade 12	2	8
Birth – 6 years	1	4
Birth – grade 2	1	4
Birth – grade 4	1	4
3 years – grade 2	1	4
3 years – grade 3	1	4
3 – 20 years	1	4
* K – grade 12 and Birth – 5 years	1	4

States with Multiple Routes/Options for Personnel to Teach Preschoolers with Developmental Delays and Disabilities

- Twelve of the 38 (32%) states represented have two or more certifications and/or endorsements
- Nine of these states' have competency or standards based certifications or endorsements.



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At a Glance...

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States' Certification Models	n	%
Blended ECE & ECSE – 2 age ranges	2	17
ECSE; ECSE endorsement	2	17
Blended ECE & ECSE 2 age ranges; ECSE endorsement	1	8
Blended ECE & ECSE; ECSE	1	8
Blended ECE & ECSE; 2 ECSE endorsements	1	8
ECSE; ECE	1	8
ECSE; ECSE endorsement; Mild/Moderate endorsement	1	8
ECSE – 3 age ranges; ECSE endorsement – 2 age ranges; Special Education	1	8
ECSE; Special Education	1	8
Special Education – Severe/Profound; Special Education – Mild/Moderate	1	8

Age Ranges Represented by Certification Models	n	%
Birth – 5 years	8	80
3 years – grade 3	5	50
Birth – grade 3	5	50
3 years – grade 12	4	40
3 – 5 years	3	30
Birth – grade 2	2	20
Birth – 4 years	1	10
K – grade 5	1	10
K – grade 12	1	10
5 – 21 years	1	10

Rationale for Certification Models:

Respondents identified five primary models of certification to qualify personnel to teach preschoolers with developmental delays and disabilities. When asked the rationale for developing a specific model, responses were grouped into one or more themes. The models and themes are identified below:

- ECSE certification: (1) Consistency with national and state policies, (2) changes/trends in the field for increased preschool services, (3) depth of preparation in ECSE knowledge and skills.
- ECSE endorsement: (1) Legislative mandates for services for preschool age children, (2) political climate within the state that does not support “strong certification requirements” for preschool programs.
- Blended ECE and ECSE certification: (1) Preparation of personnel to work in inclusive community settings, (2) preparation of personnel for inter- and intra-agency collaboration and (3) professionalism of personnel and the field.
- Special education certification: Supply and demand in rural states with primarily itinerant services.
- Two endorsements (i.e., special education and ECSE, special education and ECE) : (1) Preparation of personnel to work in inclusive community settings, (2) preparation to work with preschoolers, not just students K-12.

For a copy of the full report go to: uconnuconnu.org

Prepared by: A. J. Papanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities
 Education, Research, and Service
 University of Connecticut
 263 Farmington Avenue, MC6222
 Farmington, Connecticut 06030-6222

Tel: (860) 679-1500
 Toll-free: (866) 623-1315
 TTY: (860) 679-1502
 Fax: (860) 679-1571
uconnuconnu.org

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