

## Temporary VSBPE Waiver - Provisional Licensure for ECSE and K-12 Special Educators

### Purpose

In response to staffing shortages exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the AOE is supporting alternate pathways to receiving a provisional license with a special education, or early childhood special education (ECSE) endorsement. The VSBPE waiver below will allow districts to expand the applicant pool to include unlicensed educational professionals who have demonstrated their ability to provide high quality special education services in the classroom, but do not have the required coursework for provisional licensure. It will allow districts to fill vacant positions by supporting uncredentialed staff through to professional licensure. Districts will be expected to collaborate with the AOE to provide additional supports for these educators ensuring successful outcomes for them and the students on their caseload. While districts will have discretion to determine job responsibilities, it is anticipated that Directors of Special Education and/or licensed mentors will be primarily responsible for high skilled services such as writing IEP's and student evaluations until mentees have completed the appropriate training and/or coursework. Districts can submit a provisional license request to the AOE using normal procedures through the Online Licensing System.

### Text of VSBPE Waiver

For the 2021/22 academic year, applicants for a Provisional License with a special education or ECSE endorsement shall possess a baccalaureate degree, and meet at least one of the following criteria:

- a. possess any valid professional Educator license from Vermont or from another state;
- b. possess any expired professional Vermont Educator license or any expired professional Educator license from another state, provided the license expired no fewer than two (2) years and no longer than ten (10) years ago;
- c. have a major or the equivalent in the content area of the provisional endorsement sought;
- d. have successfully completed Praxis II licensure content assessment for special education (Test number 5354) with a passing score of at least 145 within 120 days of issuance of a provisional license.
  - i. Educators qualifying through criterion d) must have been admitted to an approved pathway to special education licensure.

### Contact Information:

For information on mentoring or learning modules, please contact Jacqui Kelleher - [Jacqui.Kelleher@vermont.gov](mailto:Jacqui.Kelleher@vermont.gov)

For information on provisional licensure, please contact Ron Ryan - [Ronald.Ryan@vermont.gov](mailto:Ronald.Ryan@vermont.gov)

For information on Praxis Testing, please contact Andrew Prowten - [Andrew.Prowten@vermont.gov](mailto:Andrew.Prowten@vermont.gov)

- ii. Educators qualifying through criterion d) must have a mentor designated by LEA with expectations that the mentor will participate in a Vermont-sponsored New Special Educator Mentoring Program.
- iii. Educators qualifying through criterion d) must participate in the Vermont Agency of Education-identified modules for introduction to federal special education law, policies, procedures and practice within 30 days of issuance of a provisional license.

This waiver automatically expires on 30 May 2022 unless reaffirmed by the Vermont Standards Board for Professional Educators on or before the date of expiration.

## **Praxis II**

For K-12 Special Educators: [Special Education: Core Knowledge & Applications \(5354\)](#) - passing score of 145

For Early Childhood Special Educators: [Special Education: Early Childhood \(5691\)](#) - passing score of 159

While Vermont normally does not require Praxis II testing for K-12 Special Educators and Early Childhood Special Educators, ETS does offer tests in these areas for other states. For the 2021/2022 school year, ETS will make Special Education: Core Knowledge & Applications (5354), and Special Education: Early Childhood (5691) available for test takers in Vermont. To avoid confusion for traditional licensure candidates, these tests will not be listed in Vermont's required tests on the ETS website. AOE and ETS is still developing a process for test takers to access these tests, with directions becoming available in the near future.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to utilize ETS's study materials, including the low-cost interactive practice tests. The interactive test will be an effective pre-assessment to develop a study plan before taking the full test within 120 days. Free practice tests for 5354 are also available through the Vermont [Department of Libraries](#) for those who hold a public library card anywhere in the State of Vermont.

## **Mentoring and Learning Modules**

Option "d" is the new provisional pathway for SY 2021/22. This option references Vermont's New Special Educator Mentoring Program, and the completion of a suite of AOE-identified learning modules.

The learning modules will serve as an orientation for applicants to special education and will supplement the classroom experience and on-site support that they will receive from their schools and districts. They will focus on the history of special education legislation, including related legislation and case law. Additionally, applicants will be oriented to research-based practices they can utilize within the classroom and as collaborators with colleagues and families.

A finalized list of learning modules will be issued by the AOE in the days to come. At this time, we anticipate that they will include the following:

Read: [The History of Special Education Law in the United States](#)

View: [What Every Educator Should Know About Special Education Law](#) - 1 hour

Completion of a series of Iris Vanderbilt Online Modules. The modules are available at no charge, address the needs of students who are ages 3-21, and are 1-2 hours in length. Required modules will likely include all of the following:

- [Accessing the General Education Curriculum: Inclusion Considerations for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Evidence-Based Practices \(Part 1\): Identifying and Selecting a Practice or Program](#)
- [Evidence-Based Practices \(Part 2\): Implementing a Practice or Program with Fidelity](#)
- [Evidence-Based Practices \(Part 3\): Evaluating Learner Outcomes and Fidelity](#)
- [IEPs: Developing High-Quality Individualized Education Programs](#)
- [Related Services: Common Supports for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [What Do You See? Perceptions of Disability](#)
- [Providing Instructional Supports: Facilitating Mastery of New Skills](#)
- [Assistive Technology: An Overview](#)
- [Secondary Transition: Helping Students with Disabilities Plan for Post-High School Settings](#)
- [Addressing Disruptive and Noncompliant Behaviors \(Part 1\): Understanding the Acting-Out Cycle](#)
- [Addressing Disruptive and Noncompliant Behaviors \(Part 2\): Behavioral Interventions](#)

The new teacher mentoring program is currently under development at the AOE. This program will primarily be focused on supporting District assigned mentors in their work with mentees under a provisional license. A full version is scheduled to be introduced in the late winter or early spring of SY 2021/22. But a targeted version that is specifically designed to support teachers applying for this provisional license will be introduced this fall, and will be structured around:

- Days 1-30: supporting mentees as they complete learning module coursework
- Days 31-120: supporting mentees in their classroom practice, and in their preparation for the successful passage of the Praxis II exam

More information about the mentoring program will be released in the weeks ahead.