

FACT SHEET: SB 368

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SPECIAL EDUCATION CREDENTIAL ADDED AUTHORIZATIONS

As amended, August 15, 2013

THE PROBLEM

Special education, as with other fields in the teaching profession, is facing a shortage of teachers. In 2011-2012, there were 686,352 individuals who received special education instruction at the K-12 level. However, the most recently available data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics reveals that there are only 31,380 special education teachers in California. This massive disparity is likely to grow due to retirements and advances in science and medicine increasing the identification of children with special needs.

The special education credentialing and authorization system is needed in order to ensure that teachers have the training and experience needed to teach for specific disabilities. However, there is currently no specified method for crediting coursework and experience taken across multiple Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)-approved programs. This has resulted in well-qualified candidates seeking added authorizations being required to take redundant and unnecessary classes, both costing money and making it more difficult to become a special education teacher.

THE SOLUTION

SB 368 allows special education credentialing program sponsors to offer comparability and equivalency for coursework taken across multiple CTC-approved programs. SB 368 only applies to special education credential holders seeking added authorizations.

BACKGROUND

The CTC requires candidates wishing to teach special education classes to obtain an education specialist credential. Additionally, candidates for an education specialist credential must also obtain a disability-specific authorization prior to teaching. The CTC currently offers six different authorizations, relating to physical, emotional, mental, or other disabilities.

In 2010, the CTC published guidelines in order to facilitate the acceptance of coursework from multiple programs. These guidelines were published pursuant to AB 2226 (Ruskin, 2008). SB 368 is based on these CTC guidelines.

FEDERAL LAW AND OTHER STATES

Federal law requires that every state afford a free and appropriate education to students with disabilities. Additionally, Federal law requires local school districts to identify disabled students and develop an Individualized Educational Program for them.

States are responsible for establishing teacher credentialing standards and regulations, such as educational, professional training, and other criteria which is necessary for obtaining a credential.

SUPPORT

California Federation of Teachers (Sponsor)
California Teachers Association
Association of California School
Administrators
California State Parent-Teacher Association
Special Education Local Plan Area
Administrators