



Special Education Licensure Reciprocity

Report to the Legislature

February 1, 2025

As required by Laws of Minnesota 2024, Chapter 109, Article 5, Section 5

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As requested by Minnesota Statutes, section 3.197: This report cost approximately \$4,858.25 to prepare.

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Legislative charge

The *Special Education Licensure Reciprocity* report is due to the legislature by February 1, 2025. This report is mandated by Laws of Minnesota 2024, Chapter 109, Article 5, Section 5.¹ The legislation requires the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) to convene a work group to review current statute and rules for out-of-state special education teachers seeking licensure in Minnesota and provide recommendations for streamlining such requirements.

PELSB special education license review subcommittee group process

The PELSB Executive Director appointed PELSB's Director of External Relations to convene the Special Education Licensure Reciprocity work group to assist in the recommendations and development of the *Special Education License Reciprocity* legislative report.² Advisory group participants included representatives from teachers, service cooperatives, administrators, and other community partners in special education. The work group met monthly between August 2024 and January 2025 to discuss special education licensure and provide recommendations on licensure changes. Monthly updates on the work group's progress were provided at PELSB's board meetings, with in-depth presentations on the recommendations occurring in December 2024 and January 2025.

The work group reviewed PELSB's tiered licensure structure, the rules for special education teachers, and researched and discussed the Minnesota and national landscapes for special education licensing. Members spent much of the November and December 2024 meetings identifying and evaluating options and recommendations.

The work group members appreciate the collaboration and partnership demonstrated during the group's time together. Members showed a willingness to work together and learn from each other. The results are a strong commitment to clear recommendations that will benefit special education teachers and students in Minnesota.

Minnesota landscape

As part of the work group's efforts to understand the entirety of the special education licensure backdrop in Minnesota, the committee reviewed a variety of data and policies. This included policies such as PELSB's tiered licensure structure; legislative, rule, and policy changes for applicants applying from out-of-state since 2014; ten years of data on teacher licensure; and the number of teachers teaching special education on permissions. The committee also reviewed Minnesota's teacher preparation programs and the availability of special education licensure programs in the state. All of this helped provide a snapshot of the current landscape of special education in Minnesota.

¹ See Appendix A for full text of law

² A list of all committee members can be found in Appendix B

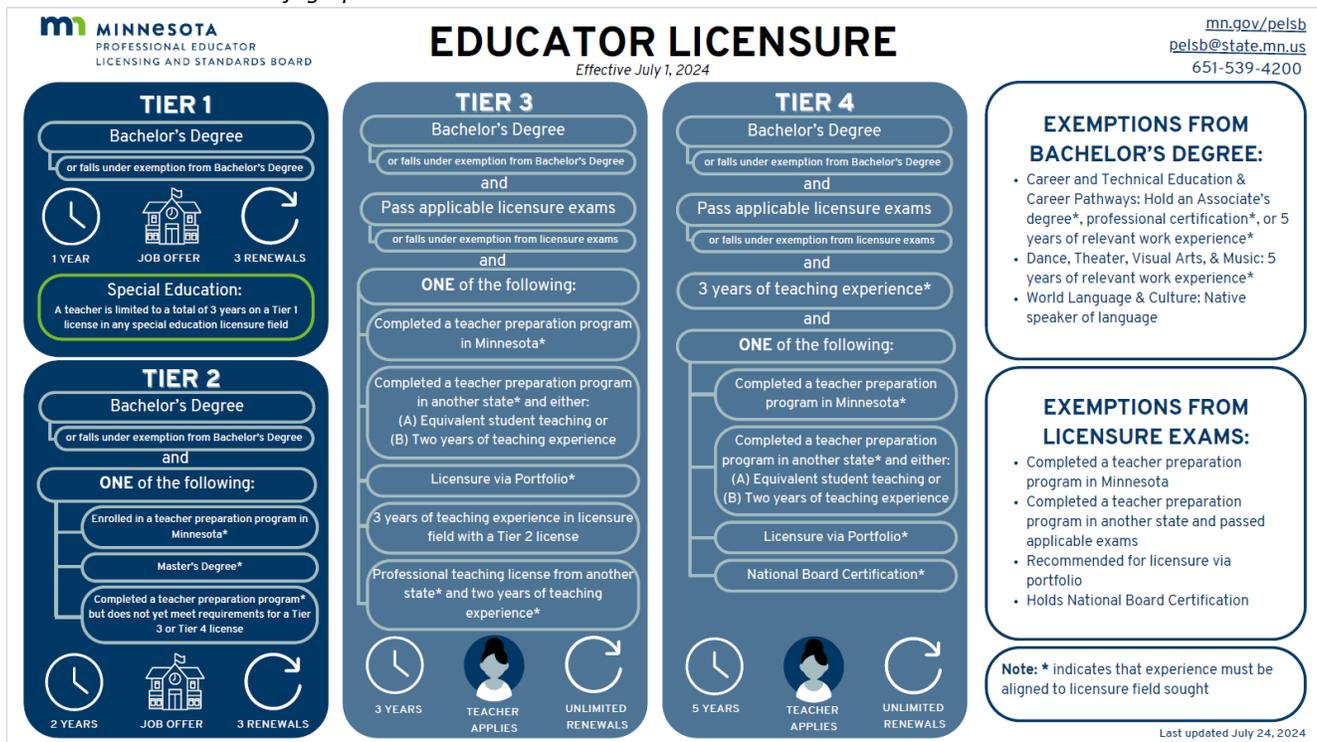
Tiered licensure structure

During the 2017 legislative session, there was a complete overhaul of Minnesota’s educator licensure structure. Beginning July 1, 2018, the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board began issuing teaching licenses under a new tiered licensure structure. Tiered licensure consists of four tiers, which are scaled based on education, training, and time in the teaching field. A Tier 1 license is valid for one year, while a Tier 4 license is valid for five years. The system establishes several different avenues by which an individual can become a fully licensed teacher (Tier 3 or Tier 4).

Table 1: Tiered Licensure Requirements

Tiered Licensure Requirements	TIER 1	TIER 2	TIER 3	TIER 4
TERM	1 school year	2 school years	3 years	5 years
RENEWALS	Limited to 3	Limited to 3	Unlimited	Unlimited
ASSIGNMENT	Tied to a District (job offer required)	Tied to a District (job offer required)	Mobile (can use in any district)	Mobile (can use in any district)
TESTING	Content exams required to renew	Not required	Optional- testing exemptions in place	Optional- testing exemptions in place

Figure 1: Educator Licensure Infographic



There have been several changes to the tiered licensure structure since its inception in 2018. Many of these changes have helped out-of-state teachers by removing unnecessary barriers and helping them receive a higher tier of licensure. For example, in 2018 a teacher coming from out-of-state with five years of teaching experience would likely have received a Tier 2 license. A Tier 2 would have been the only option due to the teacher needing to take Minnesota exams and demonstrate three years of Minnesota teaching experience before being eligible to move to Tier 4. Now, that same teacher coming from out-of-state with five years of work experience would be eligible for a Tier 4 and would not be required to take additional exams or demonstrate Minnesota-specific teaching experience.

Licensure policy changes for out-of-state teachers

Before tiered licensure, there were many changes that the Legislature and the former Board of Teaching had adopted to help streamline licensure for teachers coming from out-of-state now applying for a Minnesota teaching license. Prior to 2015, Minnesota required out-of-state teachers to demonstrate “essential equivalency”. This meant that teachers must show their teacher preparation program in another state was the same, or almost the same, as that of Minnesota teacher preparation program. Many teachers were given “restricted licenses”, which meant their license was limited to the areas for which they were prepared (e.g. a restricted license in history instead of social studies). Teachers were required to lift the restriction within three years or their license was no longer valid.

Additionally, teachers were required to take the Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exams (MTLEs) to qualify for licensure. Many out-of-state teachers found themselves needing to take additional testing and/or coursework from a Minnesota teacher preparation program in order to receive a full teaching license in Minnesota.

In the past decade, Minnesota teacher licensure has moved away from requiring essential equivalency and instead honors teachers’ diverse education and teaching experiences as assets in the classroom. Additionally, many out-of-state teachers now qualify for testing exemptions, or the tests have been altogether eliminated, making the licensure application process more streamlined.

Table 2: Abridged Teacher Licensure Changes by Year

Year	Policy Change
2014	ACT or SAT scores were accepted for meeting basic skills (reading, writing, and math) testing requirements ³ . Prior to this, all teachers were required to take the MTLE basic skills exams.
2015	“Essential Equivalency” was removed from statute. Out-of-State teachers who held a license in their home state and completed a teacher preparation program that included at least one of the following: field-specific teaching methods, student teaching, or two years of teaching experience as the teacher of record could qualify for licensure. ⁴
2015	Legislation changes allowed the Board of Teaching to adopt additional basic skill exam options, including GRE and Praxis CORE ⁵

³ Minnesota Statute 122A.18, subdivision 2, subpart b (2014).

⁴ Minnesota Statute 122A.23 subdivision 2, subpart c (2015).

⁵ Minnesota Statute 122A.18, subdivision 2, subpart b (2015).

Year	Policy Change
2015	Out-of-state teachers who held “restricted licenses” were no longer required to remove the restriction on their license. ⁶
2017	Academic and Behavioral Strategist (ABS) teachers were no longer required to hold an “anchor license” in a disability specific licensure area in order to keep their ABS license. ⁷
2018	Tiered licensure began. Out-of-state candidates who completed a teacher preparation program with equivalent student teaching to that of a Minnesota program can qualify for a Tier 3 license with passing Minnesota exams (MTLEs). ⁸
2020	The Legislature authorized PELSB to issue a one-year conditional Tier 3 license to candidates who were not able to take MTLE tests due to COVID-19. ⁹
2021	PELSB started accepting out-of-state licensure exams for candidates who completed out-of-state teacher preparation programs and held the out-of-state license. Candidates’ out-of-state exams must be equivalent to Minnesota tests. ¹⁰
2023	Legislation changed to allow three years of teaching experience (not just Minnesota) to qualify for a Tier 4 license. ¹¹
2023	Out-of-state teachers who met testing requirements in their home state are exempt from needing testing in Minnesota. ¹²
2023	Basic skills exams in reading, writing, or math were eliminated for all teachers. ¹³
2024	Teachers who completed National Board Certification can qualify for a Tier 4 license (new route to licensure). ¹⁴

Historical data on special education teachers

The work group spent its October 2024 meeting reviewing a variety of special education data points. This was to help understand the number of out-of-state teachers seeking licensure in Minnesota, and if the number of out-of-state applications were on the rise. Additionally, the work group was interested in the number of Tier 1 and Tier 2 licenses that were issued each year to help understand the teacher shortage. Tier 1 and Tier 2 licenses are granted to individuals who have not been fully prepared in special education and therefore do not yet qualify for a professional teaching license (Tier 3 or Tier 4).

Table three provides five years of data on the number of licenses PELSB issued and how many of those licenses were issued to Minnesota teacher preparation completers versus out-of-state program completers. The table also

⁶ Minnesota Statute 122A.23, subdivision 2, subpart 3 (2015).

⁷ Minnesota 1st Special Session Law, Chapter 5, Section 32 (2017).

⁸ Minnesota Statute 122A.183, subdivision 2, subpart 2 (2018).

⁹ Minnesota Session Law, Chapter 166, Article 4, Section 1, subpart b (2020).

¹⁰ PELSB Resolution, “Resolution to authorize the use of out-of-state content and pedagogy exams for teachers trained and licensed in another state”, adopted October 8, 2021, revised February 11, 2022 and August 12, 2022.

¹¹ Minnesota Statute 122A.184, subdivision 1, subpart 2 (2023).

¹² Minnesota Statute 122A.185, subdivision 1, subpart a3 (2023).

¹³ Minnesota Statute 122A.185, subdivision 1, subpart a (2023).

¹⁴ Minnesota Statute 122A.184, subdivision 1, subpart 1(iii) (2024).

indicates the number of Tier 1 and Tier 2 issued each year. Please note that the number of total licenses processed, the unduplicated head count, the number of Minnesota and out-of-state completers only include Tier 3 and Tier 4 licenses.¹⁵ Tiers 1 and 2 do not require an individual to complete a teacher preparation program to qualify for the license, while Tiers 3 and 4 do require PELSB to document the pathway for which a person received their preparation.¹⁶

Table Three: Five Years of Minnesota and Out-of-State Program Completers Licensure Data

School Year	Total Licenses Processed (Tier 3 and 4) ¹⁷	Unduplicated Head Count (Tier 3 and 4) ¹⁸	Number of Minnesota Completers	Number of Out-of-State Completers	Number of Tier 1 and Tier 2 Licenses
2019-2020	1567	1429	1362	205	739
2020-2021	1417	1276	1177	240	470
2021-2022	1523	1373	1318	205	679
2022-2023	1637	1477	1370	267	812
2023-2024	1819	1636	1423	396	803

The table above shows that the majority of new special education teachers teaching in Minnesota have completed Minnesota teacher preparation programs. However, PELSB can account for the rise of out-of-state teachers seeking a Tier 3 or Tier 4 license. The increase is based on several factors. First, while there was overall decrease in licenses issued during the 2020-2021 school year, the number of out-of-state completers increase. PELSB suspects this was due to the increase in online learning during the pandemic. Virtual teaching allowed teachers from other states to teach Minnesota students while not needing to live or work in Minnesota to do so.

Additionally, changes in legislation in 2023 accounts for the additional rise of out-of-state teachers applying for licensure. Beginning August 1, 2023, out-of-state teachers who completed testing in their home state were no longer required to meet Minnesota testing requirements. Also included in this change was the removal of basic skills testing in reading, writing, and math for all teachers. Many out-of-state teachers who were on a Tier 2 license were able to move to a Tier 3 or Tier 4 license with relative ease.

Finally, the data above shows the significant district need to fill special education positions with individuals holding Tier 1 and Tier 2 licenses. While the number of candidates completing special education teacher preparation programs has rebounded from the COVID-19 pandemic, there continues to be gap in the number of prepared special education teachers teaching in assignments versus the number of special education assignments districts need to fill. Data from PELSB’s 2023 *Supply and Demand Report* shows that special education remains in the top three highest licensure areas filled by Tier 1, Tier 2, and out-of-field permissions.¹⁹ Positions filled by teachers on Tier 1, Tier 2, or permissions correlates to the greatest impacts of the teacher shortage.

¹⁵ See Appendix C for specific data notes on Table Three.

¹⁶ Minnesota Statute 122A.187, Subdivision 1 (2024).

¹⁷ Number of special education licenses PELSB issued. A teacher may be issued more than one license.

¹⁸ Number of individuals who received a special education license.

¹⁹ Minnesota [Teacher Supply and Demand Report](#), 2023, page 8

Minnesota special education teacher preparation programs

Before 2012, the only special education licensure programs in Minnesota were disability-specific licensure programs, including both undergraduate and post-baccalaureate programs. Since the adoption of a cross-categorical ABS license, disability-specific programs have steadily moved to post-baccalaureate, or have been sunsetted altogether. While undergraduate options remain, enrollment is often low or non-existent. Based on current data from PELSB, there are currently 20 programs offering ABS licensure, while there significantly less disability-specific licensure programs offered in the state. Table Four shows the special education licensure programs offered in the state of Minnesota.

Table Four: Special Education Teacher Preparation Programs in Minnesota

SPECIAL EDUCATION LICENSURE AREA	NUMBER OF PROGRAMS
<i>ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL STRATEGIST</i>	20
<i>AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS</i>	11
<i>BLIND/VISUALLY IMPAIRED</i>	0
<i>DEAF/HARD OF HEARING</i>	1
<i>ORAL/AURAL DEAF EDUCATION</i>	1
<i>DEVELOPMENTAL ADAPTIVE PE</i>	6
<i>DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES</i>	7
<i>EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION</i>	6
<i>EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR DISORDERS</i>	11
<i>LEARNING DISABILITIES</i>	9
<i>PHYSICAL AND HEALTH DISABILITIES</i>	1

Current licenses and assignments

Table Five shows the current number of active teaching licenses in each special education field during the 2023-2024 school year. The table also includes the number of out-of-field permissions used for each field. Table Six shows the active number of assignments by full time equivalency (FTE) for each field, broken down by the FTE of individuals with the appropriate license, those on an out-of-field permission, and the number of teachers teaching out-of-compliance. Data on licensure is from PELSB’s Staff Automated Report (STAR), which collects licensure and assignment data each year for compliance purposes.

Table Five: Active Special Education Licenses and OFPs for the 2023-2024 school year

LICENSE	ACTIVE LICENSES ²⁰	TOTAL OUT-OF-FIELD PERMISSIONS ²¹
ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL STRATEGIST	4641	580
AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS	2775	188
BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED	162	11
DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING	377	10
DEVELOPMENT DISABILITIES	2350	96
DEVELOPMENTAL/ ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION	1752	103
EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION	2456	185
EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR DISORDERS	6308	198
LEARNING DISABILITIES	7469	150
MILD TO MODERATE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED	2169	NOT APPLICABLE
MILDLY HANDICAPPED	19	NOT APPLICABLE
MODERATE TO SEVERE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED	898	NOT APPLICABLE
ORAL/AURAL DEAF EDUCATION	91	0
PHYSICAL AND HEALTH DISABILITIES	192	11
PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED	60	NOT APPLICABLE
TOTAL	31719	1532

²⁰ Active License: Duplicated count of individuals who held a non-expired special education license in the 23-24 academic year.

²¹ Out-of-Field Permission: a variance granted by the PELSB board for a teacher to teach outside of their current licensure field in the 23-24 academic year.

Table Six: Special Education Assignment Data for the 23-24 School Year

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION	LICENSED	PERMISSIONS	VIOLATIONS	OVERALL
	FTE ²²	FTE ²³	FTE ²⁴	TOTAL FTE
ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL STRATEGIST	1190.81	175.86	20.24	1386.91
AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS	1157.35	126.26	11.7	1295.31
BLIND/ VISUALLY IMPAIRED	77.06	6.93	0	83.99
DEAF/ BLIND	10.38	1	0	11.38
DEAF/ HARD OF HEARING	178.91	8.05	2.4	189.36
DEVELOPMENTAL ADAPTIVE PHYSICAL EDUCATION	299.28	25.42	0.17	324.87
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES	900.17	52.28	4.37	956.82
EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION	1210.57	101.35	8.95	1320.87
EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR DISORDERS	2062.47	167.76	11.38	2241.61
LEARNING DISABILITIES	2626.33	147.89	17.54	2791.76
ORAL/ AURAL DEAF EDUCATION	32.98	0	0	32.98
OTHER HEALTH DISABILITIES	291.37	20.1	2.68	314.15
PHYSICAL DISABILITIES	49.07	4.41	0.96	54.44
SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER ON SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT (NON-CATEGORICAL SPECIFIC)*	54.38	3.53	0	57.91
TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY*	4.29	0.46	0	4.75
OVERALL TOTAL SPED ASSIGNMENTS	10145.42	841.3	80.39	11067.11

*Teaching assignments that can be taught by any special education licensure.

²² Licensed FTE: The actual full-time equivalency of the teaching assignments for teachers who are licensed in the appropriate special education area. A fulltime position is considered a 1.00 FTE.

²³ Permissions FTE: The actual full-time equivalency of the teaching assignments for teachers who are on an out-of-field permission in special education area. A fulltime position is considered a 1.00 FTE.

²⁴ Violations FTE: The actual full-time equivalency of the teaching assignments for teachers who are teaching out-of-compliance and do not hold an appropriate license or permission for the assignment. A fulltime position is considered a 1.00 FTE.

The work group chose to include both headcount data and FTE assignment data to show the differences between the number of individuals who hold special education licensure, versus the number of those currently teaching special education in the 23-24 school year. Table 6 assignment data helps identify overall workforce issues and how many assignments are being filled with special education teachers compared to those who are teaching on an out-of-field permission. The FTEs of individuals working on a permission in a licensure area is one of the largest predictor of teacher shortages. The data above shows the continued shortages in all special education categories, even when accounting for individuals teaching on an ABS license. This picture helped the work group determine that there is a high need for highly-qualified, trained special education teachers and that changes need to occur to help with the special education teacher shortage.

ABS and disability-specific licensure

More than ten years ago, community partners and state agency staff reviewed the possibility of a cross-categorical licensure in Minnesota. That intensive, multi-year process concluded by developing the Academic and Behavioral Strategist (ABS) license. This license allows the licensee to teach in five high incidence²⁵ disability categories at the mild to moderate level. The licensing standards did not define “mild to moderate” so that local districts and IEP teams could assess each student and their needs individually. The standards require a teacher to complete a disability specific licensure program before their first renewal (within five years.) The broad standards ensured that there would continue to be teachers licensed in disability-specific categories, with the training required to meet the specific needs of students with those disabilities from mild to severe levels. This requirement has since changed, allowing a teacher to hold only an ABS license. Disability-specific licensure requirements have been removed.

The names or categories of special education teacher licensure have changed significantly over time, and districts can use different licenses to teach different student populations. For example, one district might allow an ABS licensed teacher to teach a student identified with Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBD) in an instructional setting three program while another district would require the EBD-specific license. Therefore, it is not possible to make direct comparisons between areas of special education teacher licensure and student special education disability categories. Please note that disability-specific licensure areas have been offered for a much longer period of time compared to the ABS license. The data in Table 5 shows a much larger headcount of special education teachers who hold a disability-specific license compared to the ABS.

The current landscape of special education licensure in Minnesota does not end with the creation of the ABS license and its impact on teacher preparation and teacher assignments. There remain many low incidence disability categories with their own considerations as cross-categorical options are considered. Low incidence disability categories are disability-specific areas with low student counts that require a very specialized skill set. These include Developmental and Adaptive Physical Education (DAPE), Blind/Visually Impaired, and Deaf/Hard of Hearing. Minnesota continues to separate these areas from cross-categorical licensure.

Although the Academic and Behavioral Strategist license has been useful to districts to help with students with mild-moderate needs, there continues to be additional supports needed to help students with severe or profound needs. The FTE data shows the highest number of FTEs are in disability-specific areas of Emotional

²⁵ Licensure areas include: Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), Developmental Disorders (DD), Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD), Learning Disabilities (LD) and Other Health Disorders (OHD)

Behavior Disorders and Learning Disabilities, which often require needs beyond mild to moderate.

Minnesota landscape summary

The work group found no surprises that the data reflects a continued need for additional special education teachers. While the number of licenses issued has rebounded from the pandemic, there is still a significant need to increase the number of Tier 3 and Tier 4 special education teachers to help with the teacher shortage. Enough time has passed since the inception of the Academic and Behavioral Strategist license to show that this license, while helpful to districts, has not cured the teacher shortage. Additional changes to special education licensure may be needed to help districts with flexibility and to meet the needs of special education students.

National landscape

The work group considered how other states approach special education licensure. Members used a collection of special education licensure information for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Similar data was collected in 2018 for a legislative report on special education licensure.²⁶ The work group was able to compare 2018 data to 2024 data and determine where changes in special education licensure occurred within the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

States' approaches to special education licensure in 2018

The 2018 Special Education License Review work group conducted its own analysis of states' special education licensure. A table of the 2018 special education licenses collected are listed in Appendix D of this report. According to the 2018 data, a number of categories of special education licensure were prevalent across the states: Cross-categorical (98 percent of the states), Deaf/Hard of Hearing (92 percent), Blind/Visually Impaired (92 percent), and Early Childhood Special Education (78 percent). Categorical options (53 percent) and Severe options (51 percent) were also common.

States' approaches to special education licensure in 2024

The 2024 work group used a similar process to collect and review special education licenses used in the 50 states and the District of Columbia from state department of education websites. Only the names of the licenses were collected. The group did not contact state departments of education to verify or seek additional information on what appeared on their websites. Appendix E reports the full set of special education licenses collected.

Table Seven summarizes the information from Appendix E, describing the extent to which different types of special education licenses are common across the states. The following rules were used to categorize the information:

- Cross-categorical: Licenses, not including ECSE or Severe options, that are stated in broad terms or that serve students across a number of specified special education categories;
- Severe: Licenses, not targeted to a specific disability (e.g., intellectual disabilities), for which intensive student levels are identified, using terms such as intensive, severe, profound, and adaptive curriculum;

²⁶ Report titled "[Teacher of Special Education License Review](#)".

- Categorical: Licenses for which a specific special education or disability category is listed; the count does not include D/HH or BVI; the count does not include licenses for topical areas of services, like transition or technology;
- Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE): Licenses that are targeted to specific age ranges mainly prior to, but sometimes reaching into, elementary grades;
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Blind/Visually Impaired: Licenses specifically targeted to the deaf and/or blind student populations; these licenses are stand-alone and separate from other special education licenses
- Licensure changes from 2018: Based on the licenses collected from the 2018 special education committee, has a state changed their special education licensure from 2018 to 2024.

Table Seven: Special education licenses by state, 2024

State	Cross-Categorical Option(s)	Severe Option(s)	# of Categorical Options	ECSE Option(s)	Deaf Hard of Hearing	Blind Visually Impaired	Licensure Changes from 2018
Alabama	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Alaska	X		4	X	X	X	none
Arizona	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Arkansas	X		1	X	X	X	none
California	X	X	none	X	X	X	X
Colorado	X		none	X	X	X	none
Connecticut	X	none	none	X	X	X	none
Delaware	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
DC	X	none	3	X	X	X	none
Florida	X	X	2	X	X	X	none
Georgia	X	none	3	X	X	X	X
Hawai'i	X	X	1		X	X	none
Idaho	X	none	none	X	X	X	none
Illinois	X		1	X	X	X	none
Indiana	X	X	none	none	X	X	none
Iowa	X		3	X	X	X	none
Kansas	X	X	none	none	X	X	X
Kentucky	X		none	X	none		X
Louisiana	X	X	1	X	X	X	none
Maine	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Maryland	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Massachusetts	X	X	none		X	X	none
Michigan	none	none	5	X	X	X	none
Minnesota	X		5	X	X	X	none
Mississippi	X	X	2	X	X	X	none
Missouri	X	X	none	X	X	X	none

State	Cross-Categorical Option(s)	Severe Option(s)	# of Categorical Options	ECSE Option(s)	Deaf Hard of Hearing	Blind Visually Impaired	Licensure Changes from 2018
Montana	X		none		none		
Nebraska	X	none	none	X	X	X	X
Nevada	X		2	X	X	X	
New Hampshire	X	none	4	X	X	X	none
New Jersey	X		none		X	X	
New Mexico	X	none	none	none	X	X	X
New York	X		none		X	X	X
North Carolina	X	X	3	none	X	X	none
North Dakota	X		3	X	X	X	none
Ohio	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Oklahoma	X	X	none	X	X	X	X
Oregon	X	none	none	X	X	X	X
Pennsylvania	X		none		X	X	X
Rhode Island	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
South Carolina	X	X	3	X	X	X	none
South Dakota	X	none	none	X	X	X	none
Tennessee	X		none	X	X	X	none
Texas	X	X	none	none	X	X	X
Utah	X	X	1	X	X	X	X
Vermont	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Virginia	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Washington	X	none	none	X	X	none	none
West Virginia	X	X	4	X	X	X	none
Wisconsin	X	none	none	X	X	X	X
Wyoming	X		4	X	X	X	none
TOTALS	50 (98%)	24 (47%)	20 (39%)	40 (78%)	49 (96%)	48 (94%)	13 (25%)

While the teacher licensure data from 2018 to 2024 remained relatively the same, a few topics of consideration did emerge. First, the work group noticed a slight reduction in the amount of states who offered a severe special education license. However, looking further into this change, it was noted that many of the states who removed their severe special education license(s) have moved in favor of more generalized special education licensure, including states like California moving to one broad cross-categorical license.

More significantly, seven states have removed their disability-specific special education licenses since 2018. While the work group was not able to concretely determine the motivations behind the removal, an educated guess would be to help with the teacher shortage. Moving away from disability-specific licensure to broader special education licenses allow teachers more flexibility within their teaching assignments. Additionally, cross-categorical special education teachers are poised to help students with multiple needs, thus helping with workloads. It is

noted that Minnesota's neighbor, Wisconsin, has removed almost all of their disability-specific special education licensure in favor of one cross-categorical special education licensure as part of the effort to address the teacher shortage.

Finally, 25% of states have seen changes to their special education licenses since 2018. These changes ranged from significant, such as Wisconsin or New York doing a complete overhaul of all their special education licensure fields, to small, such as Utah adding an early childhood special education license. PELSB's 2018 report on special education licensure noted that there has been a trend since the early 2000s of states moving away from disability-specific licenses in favor of cross-categorical training. The shift from 2018 to 2024 shows that at a national level, states are having rapid-paced policy changes regarding special education licensure and how licensure affects teachers, their training, and their willingness to stay in special education.

Summary of national approaches to special education licensure

As with the 2018 special education committee, the 2024 work group found that Minnesota is currently within the range of the approaches and types of licenses that many states use. Minnesota is neither at one of the ends of a possible continuum of state approaches (e.g., with Kansas and only two cross-categorical licenses at one end or Michigan with no categorical option at the other) nor is it an outlier. However, if the trend continues that states remove their disability-specific licensure, Minnesota may find itself in a unique position as Minnesota has more disability-specific licenses available than cross-categorical licenses.

The work group spent a significant amount of time talking about licensure portability among states. The more unique licenses that Minnesota offers, the more difficult it can be for teachers with training in other states to receive the most appropriate teaching license equivalencies when moving to Minnesota. Additionally, teachers who were trained in Minnesota may find it challenging to move their license across state lines if there are no comparable or direct licensure options in another state. The work group found it important to study licensure trends, especially in states bordering Minnesota, when considering their recommendations for this report.

Recommendations for streamlining licensure

Throughout the work group's meetings, the committee reviewed Minnesota's special education statutes, rules, policies, and licensure data. From this review, the committee listed a number of reasonable options for streamlining special education licensure for out-of-state applicants. A summary of those options can be found in Appendix E. After extensive deliberation, two recommendations emerged as top consideration for PELSB and the Legislature to pursue further.

Recommendation 1: Cross-categorical moderate/severe license

The work group felt strongly that a new special education cross-categorical license to serve moderate/severe students would be beneficial for the state of Minnesota. Minnesota has seen that the Academic and Behavioral Strategist (ABS) license has allowed district flexibility and it prepares teachers to serve a variety of special education students. The work group envisioned that a cross-categorical moderate/severe license would be modeled after the ABS license.

There were several reasons the committee felt a new cross-categorical license is needed. First, as shown from the national data above, many other states have adopted cross-categorical licensure. Developing this kind of license allows those who were trained out-of-state to receive a similar license in Minnesota for which they were prepared. Second, a moderate/severe cross-categorical license provides additional and ongoing district flexibilities. Based on conversations from the work group, school districts need to recruit teachers who have training working with moderate/severe special education students. Often, these students have multiple needs, which currently means a teacher needs training in multiple disability-specific licensure areas. Having a cross-categorical license to serve these more profound needs means teachers can be better prepared to serve their students.

As part of their recommendation, the work group implores the PELSB Board to create a separate task force specifically to study the feasibility of creating this new license. The task force would be responsible for reviewing standards and create specific recommendations for a cross-categorical moderate/severe special education license. Members of this group should include teacher preparation (both traditional and alternative pathways), current special education teachers, special education administrators, the union, and other key special education community partners. The work group encourages the task force to consider and seek advice from other states who have recently adopted moderate/severe special education licenses on lessons learned to help make the transition smoother in Minnesota. Additionally, considerations should be made for teachers who have the ABS license to have easy access to add the additional cross-categorical license. The ability to use on the job training and other prior experiences should be built into the licensure standards. With this, the work group encourages the PELSB Board to also review and make changes to the ABS license to better align with the new moderate/severe cross-categorical license.

The current work group feels it should be the decision of the new task force if PELSB should remove most of the disability-specific special education licenses currently offered: Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), Developmental Disorders (DD), Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD), and Learning Disabilities (LD). PELSB's existing ABS license covers these licensure areas for students with mild/moderate needs, and a new moderate/severe license would cover these licensure areas for students with higher needs. While the work group did not feel it was within their jurisdiction to recommend keeping or removing the disability-specific licenses, the committee does encourage the future task force to keep the low-incident special education fields of Blind/Visually Impaired (BVI), Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE). Given the nature of the specific training needed for these licensure areas, the work group felt these licenses fall outside of the scope of a cross-categorical license.

Recommendation 2: Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact

In addition to creating a new special education license, the work group also recommends Minnesota enter into the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact (ITMC). The ITMC was originally created by the Department of Defense to help military members and their spouses more easily transfer their teaching license from one state to the next. The compact has grown in use and the Department of Defense has partnered with the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) and the Council of State Governments (CSG) to help solidify the compact between states.

The Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact is a legally binding, legislatively enacted document. It requires member states to submit teacher licenses that are eligible for the compact and to accept other states' licenses that meet compact requirements. Compact requirements include things such as holding a bachelor's degree, completion of a state-approved teacher preparation program, and holding a professional teaching license.²⁷ If a teacher from a compact state applies for a license in another compact state, their license should transfer without additional testing, coursework, or submitting extra materials. The teacher would then receive the closest equivalent license in the state where they are transferring to. Currently, ten states have adopted the compact, including Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Kansas, Kentucky, Nevada, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Utah.

The work group feels strongly that the ITMC is a crucial next step to streamlining licensure in Minnesota. It guarantees reciprocity for out-of-state teachers to receive licensure in Minnesota, while still upholding high standards for teacher preparedness. There is interest in the compact from several other states, which means more states could have reciprocity with Minnesota in coming years. Entering in the compact may make Minnesota a more desirable place to come and teach if teachers know their license will be accepted from their home state.

There are a few hurdles that must be cleared for Minnesota to enter into the compact. The compact requires that teachers complete a teacher preparation program to qualify for an eligible compact license. Minnesota currently offers a pathway to licensure that does not include teacher preparation: the Tier 2 to Tier 3 pathway. Individuals who teach for three years on their Tier 2 license without being placed on an improvement plan can move to a Tier 3 license (provided they also pass the applicable exams). This pathway would need to be removed in order for Minnesota to be accepted into the compact.

Additionally, the compact requires legislative action. Legislation would need to be created and enacted for Minnesota to become a compact state. The work group recognizes that at the time of this report, legislative platforms have been set for the upcoming session. The desire of the work group is that more awareness is made of the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact. Members of the group strongly encourage the PELSB Board to advocate for entering the ITMC as part of their 2026 legislative agenda. Between now and next legislative session, the work group requests that PELSB staff be proactive in contacting ITMC officials on how to begin the process of adopting the compact. The work group also encourages other legislative community partners to put the ITMC as part of their special education platform for upcoming legislative sessions.

Conclusion

Recommendations by the special education work group were presented to the PELSB Board for further consideration. The Board is committed to increasing the teacher workforce, particularly in high needs areas like special education. The work group is optimistic that their recommendations will lead to policy changes at both the board and state levels.

The work group also wanted to recognize that while creating changes to help streamline out-of-state special education licensure is important, there is a bigger conversation needed about maintaining and supporting current special education teachers. PELSB data shows that it is difficult for special education teachers to reach longevity in

²⁷ More information can be found at <https://teachercompact.org/>

their careers due to the nature of their positions and the increased levels of teacher burnout. The work group recommends that additional time, money, and resources be devoted to help support the current special education workforce in Minnesota. Conversations within the work group included additional special education administrative and leadership support, teacher support within classrooms, and ongoing professional development to ensure teachers are trained in the best practices available. Systematic changes are needed to help recruit, retain, and grow special education teachers in Minnesota.

Appendix A: Text of legislation

Laws of Minnesota 2024, Session Law. chapter 109, article 5, section 5

SPECIAL EDUCATION LICENSURE RECIPROCITY WORKING GROUP.

Subdivision 1. Working group established.

The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board must establish a working group on special education licensure reciprocity.

Subd. 2. Members.

(a) The board must consult with the organizations identified in paragraph (b) before naming appointed members to the working group.

(b) By July 1, 2024, the board must appoint the following members to the working group:

- (1) the executive director of the board or the executive director's designee;
- (2) one representative from the board;
- (3) two representatives from Minnesota Administrators for Special Education, consisting of one member from the seven-county metropolitan area and one member from outside the metropolitan area;
- (4) two representatives from the Minnesota Association of School Administrators, consisting of one member from the seven-county metropolitan area and one member from outside the metropolitan area;
- (5) two representatives from the Minnesota School Boards Association, consisting of one member from the seven-county metropolitan area and one member from outside the metropolitan area;
- (6) two representatives from Education Minnesota, consisting of one member from the seven-county metropolitan area and one member from outside the metropolitan area;
- (7) four licensed special education teachers, consisting of two members from the seven-county metropolitan area and two members from outside the metropolitan area;
- (8) two representatives from the Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education;
- (9) two representatives from alternative teacher preparation programs; and
- (10) one representative from the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools.

Subd. 3. Duties.

The working group must meet on a regular basis and review current statutory and rule requirements for persons with a special education license from another state to qualify for a special education license in Minnesota, and make recommendations on statutory or rule changes necessary to streamline requirements for out-of-state applicants. The working group must submit its recommendations to the board for consideration for inclusion in the board's legislative priorities, and by February 1, 2025, must submit a report to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 education.

Subd. 4. Administrative provisions.

(a) The executive director of the board, or the director's designee, must convene the initial meeting of the working group. Upon request of the working group, the board must provide meeting space and administrative services for the group.

(b) Members of the working group serve without compensation or payment of expenses.

(c) The working group expires February 1, 2025, or upon submission of the report to the legislature required under subdivision 3, whichever is earlier.

Appendix B: Special education subcommittee roster

NAME	ORGANIZATION
EMILY BUSTA	PELSB BOARD STAFF
JUSTIN HOELSCHER	PELSB BOARD MEMBER
STACEY DAHLBY	MASE- TWIN CITIES
SARAH MITTELSTADT	MASE- GREATER MN
DR. VAL RAE BOE	MASA- TWIN CITIES
DR. REGGIE ENGBRITSON	MASA- GREATER MN
DR. MICHAEL REMUCAL	MSBA- TWIN CITIES
PAT MEDURE	MSBA- GREATER MN
JASMAN MYERS	EDUCATION MINNESOTA
MALEAH KAGAN	SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER- TWIN CITIES
BRIAN RAPPE	SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER- TWIN CITIES
ADEYOOLA AJAYI	SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER- GREATER MN
KATHLEEN PFANNENSTEIN	SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER- GREATER MN
DR. SUZANNE GIKAS	MACTE
JENNIFER CHISTENSEN	MACTE
THERESA WALLACE	ALTERNATIVE TEACHER PREPARATION
DR. JENNIFER CHRISTENSEN MACARI	ALTERNATIVE TEACHER PREPARATION
SHIRLEY VOLK	MACS

Appendix C: Notes for interpreting table 3 licensure data

- It is possible for a person to hold more than one license and it is possible for a person to receive a license with one scope level at the beginning of the year and then move to a different scope level during the year. For this reason each area begins with a list of total licenses that were processed and then the unduplicated headcount of those who received the license.
- “In State” includes anyone who was recommended for licensure by a Minnesota Approved Preparation Program, an Alternative Preparation Program, Licensure via Portfolio, or recommended by Board of Teaching.
- “Out State” includes anyone who was recommended for licensure by an institution or program outside of Minnesota or outside of the United States.
- If a license had no recommending institution listed it is counted in the total, but is not included in the birth year break down.
- “Legacy License” is a license that cannot be issued as a new license, but it can be renewed and is still considered an active license.

Appendix D: 2018 special education licensure by state

State	Cross-Categorical Option(s)	Severe Option(s)	# of Categorical Options	ECSE Option(s)	Deaf Hard of Hearing	Blind Visually Impaired	Age Distinctions
Alabama	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Alaska	X		4	X	X	X	none
Arizona	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Arkansas	X		1	X	X	X	X
California	X	X	8	X	X	X	none
Colorado	X		none	X	X	X	none
Connecticut	X	none	none	X	X	X	none
Delaware	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
DC	X	none	3	X	X	X	none
Florida	X	X	2	X	X	X	none
Georgia	X	none	3	X	X	X	none
Hawai'i	X	X	1		X	X	none
Idaho	X	none	none	X	X	X	none
Illinois	X		1	X	X	X	none
Indiana	X	X	none	none	X	X	none
Iowa	X		3	X	X	X	none
Kansas	X	X	none	none	none	none	none
Kentucky	X	X	none	X	none		none
Louisiana	X	X	1	X	X	X	X
Maine	X	X	none	X	X	X	X
Maryland	X	X	none	X	X	X	X
Massachusetts	X	X	none		X	X	X
Michigan	none	none	5	X	X	X	none
Minnesota	X		5	X	X	X	none
Mississippi	X	X	2	X	X	X	X
Missouri	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Montana	X	none	none	none	none	none	none
Nebraska	X	X	1	X	X	X	none
Nevada	X	none	2	X	X	X	none
New Hampshire	X		4	X	X	X	none
New Jersey	X	none	none	none	X	X	none
New Mexico	X		none		none	X	none
New York	X	none	none	X	X	X	X
North Carolina	X	X	3		X	X	none

State	Cross-Categorical Option(s)	Severe Option(s)	# of Categorical Options	ECSE Option(s)	Deaf Hard of Hearing	Blind Visually Impaired	Age Distinctions
North Dakota	X		3	X	X	X	none
Ohio	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Oklahoma	X	X	4		X	X	none
Oregon	X	none	3	X	X	X	X
Pennsylvania	X		1		X	X	X
Rhode Island	X	X	none	X	X	X	X
South Carolina	X	X	3	X	X	X	none
South Dakota	X	none	none	X	X	X	none
Tennessee	X		none	X	X	X	X
Texas	X	X	7	X	X	X	X
Utah	X	X	1		X	X	none
Vermont	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Virginia	X	X	none	X	X	X	none
Washington	X	none	none	X	X	none	none
West Virginia	X	X	4	X	X	X	none
Wisconsin	X	none	3	X	X	X	none
Wyoming	X		4	X	X	X	none
TOTALS	50 (98%)	26 (51%)	27 (53%)	40 (78%)	47 (92%)	47 (92%)	12 (24%)

Appendix E: 2024 special education licensure areas by state

State	Special Education Licenses
Alabama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Special Education Teacher (K-6) • Collaborative Special Education Teacher (6-12) • Multiple Abilities Program (P-3) Special Education • Multiple Abilities Program (K-6) Special Education • Severe Disabilities • Hearing Impaired • Visually Impaired • Early Childhood Special Education
Alaska	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education • Resource • Multi-Handicapped • Learning Disability • Emotionally Disturbed • Cognitively Impaired • Physically Handicapped • Hearing Impaired • Visually Handicapped • Special Education – Early Childhood
Arizona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild-Moderate Disabilities • Severe and Profound Disabilities • Hearing Impaired Special Education • Visually Impaired Special Education • Early Childhood Special Education (B-Grade 3)
Arkansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education • Special Education Resource—Elementary (K-6) • Special Education Resource—English Language Arts (7-12) • Special Education Resource—Math (7-12) • Special Education Resource—Science (7-12) • Dyslexia • Special Education—Hearing Specialist • Special Education—Visual Specialist • Early Childhood/Special Education Integrated (B-K) • Age 3-4 Special Education Endorsement
California	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Specialist Instruction

State	Special Education Licenses
Colorado	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Generalist • Special Education Specialist • Special Education Specialist: Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired • Early Childhood Special Education (Ages 0-8) • Early Childhood Special Education Specialist (Ages 0-8)
Connecticut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive Special Education • Hearing Impaired • Partially Sighted • Blind • Integrated Early Childhood/Special Education (B-K) • Integrated Early Childhood/Special Education (Nursery-K-Grades 1-3)
Delaware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Teacher of Students with Disabilities • Teacher of Students with Autism or with Severe Intellectual Disabilities • Teacher of Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing • Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments • Early Childhood Exceptional Children Special Education Teacher
District of Columbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education: Non-Categorical • Bilingual Special Education • Special Education: Categorical, Learning Disabilities • Special Education: Categorical, Emotional Disturbance • Special Education: Categorical, Intellectual Disabilities • Special Education: Categorical, Hearing Impairments • Special Education: Categorical, Visual Impairments • Early Childhood Special Education (PK-Grade 3)
Florida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional Student Education • Hearing Impaired • Visually Impaired • Endorsements: • Severe or Profound Disabilities • Autism Spectrum Disorders • Orientation and Mobility • Prekindergarten Disabilities

State	Special Education Licenses
Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education General Curriculum • Special Education Adapted Curriculum • Special Education Transition Specialist • Physical and Health Disabilities • Deaf Education • Visual Impairment • Dyslexia • Autism • Special Education Preschool (Ages 3-5)
Hawai'i	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education—Mild/Moderate • Special Education—Severe/Profound • Special Education—Orthopedically Handicapped • Special Education—Deaf/Hard of Hearing • Special Education—Blind/Visually Impaired • Special Education—Orientation and Mobility
Idaho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generalist—Special Education • Deaf/Hard of Hearing • Visual Impairment • Early Childhood Special Education (PK-3)
Illinois	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Behavior Specialist I • Learning Behavior Specialist II • Bilingual Special Education • English as a Second Language Special Education • Blind or Visually Impaired • Deaf or Hard of Hearing • Early Childhood Special Education • Endorsements on LBS II: • Curriculum Adaptation Specialist • Multiple Disabilities Specialist • Behavior Intervention Specialist • Bilingual Special Education Specialist • Technology Specialist • Transition Specialist • Deaf-Blind Specialist

State	Special Education Licenses
Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild Intervention • Intense Intervention • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Blind and Low Vision
Iowa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Strategist I: Mild/Moderate • Instructional Strategist II: Behavior Disorder/Learning Disabilities • Instructional Strategist II: Intellectual Disabilities • Instructional Strategist II: Physical Disabilities • Mildly Disabled • Deaf/Hard of Hearing • Visually Disabled • Early Childhood Special Education • PreK-3 Including Special Education
Kansas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Incidence (Adaptive) • Low Incidence (Functional) • Deaf/Hard of Hearing • Visual Impairments • Early Childhood Unified (birth-grade 3) • Elementary Education Unified
Kentucky	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional Children
Louisiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild/Moderate Grades 1-5 (added to teaching certificates at different grade levels) • Mild/Moderate Grades 4-8 (added to teaching certificates at different grade levels) • Mild/Moderate Grades 6-12 (added to teaching certificates at different grade levels) • Significant Disabilities • Behavior Analyst • Hearing Impaired with Signed Cued Attachment • Visually Impaired • Early Interventionist
Maine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher of Students with Disabilities (K- 8) • Teacher of Students with Disabilities (7-12) • Special Education Consultant • Teacher of Severely Impaired Students • Teacher of the Deaf or Hearing Impaired • Teacher of Blind or Visually Impaired • Teacher of Students with Disabilities (0-Age 5)

State	Special Education Licenses
Maryland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary/Middle (1-8) • Secondary/Adult (Grade 6-Adult) • Severely and Profoundly Disabled • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Blind/Visually Impaired • Infant/Primary (B-Grade 3)
Massachusetts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher of Students with Moderate Disabilities (PK-8) • Teacher of Students with Moderate Disabilities (5-12) • Teacher of Students with Severe Disabilities • Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Teacher of the Visually Impaired
Michigan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Disabilities • Emotional Impairment • Cognitive Impairment • Autism Spectrum Disorders • Physical or Other Health Impairment • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Visual Impairment • Early Childhood (PK) General and Special Education
Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic and Behavioral Strategist • Learning Disabilities • Emotional Behavioral Disorders • Developmental Disabilities • Autism Spectrum Disorders • Physical and Health Disabilities • Deaf and Hard of Hearing (Oral–Aural Deaf Education) • Blind or Visually Impaired • Early Childhood Special Education
Mississippi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Mild/Moderate Disability • Dyslexia Therapy • Emotional Disability • Early Oral Intervention Hearing Impaired (B-K) • Special Education B-K • Endorsements: • Special Education Fundamental Subjects

State	Special Education Licenses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild/Moderate Disability (K-12) • Mild/Moderate Disability (K-8) • Mild/Moderate Disability (7-12) • Severe Disability • Hearing Impaired • Visually Impaired
Missouri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild/Moderate Cross-Categorical Disabilities • Severe Developmental Disabilities • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Blind and Low Vision • Early Childhood Special Education
Montana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Disabilities (P-12)
Nebraska	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Generalist • Deaf or Hard of Hearing • Visual Impairment • Early Childhood Special Education
Nevada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generalist Resource Room • Alternative Education (Special Education License) • Intellectual Disabilities (Moderate to Intense) • Autism Special • Hearing Impairments • Visual Impairments • Orientation and Mobility • Early Childhood Developmentally Delayed
New Hampshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Special Education • Specific Learning Disabilities • Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities • Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities • Physical and Health Disabilities • Deaf and Hearing Disabilities • Blind and Vision Disabilities • Early Childhood Special Education (N-3)

State	Special Education Licenses
New Jersey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Disabilities • Deaf or Hard of Hearing: Sign Language Communication • Deaf or Hard of Hearing: Oral/Aural Communication • Blind or Visually Impaired
New Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education (PK-12) • Blind and Visually Impaired • Deaf/Hard of Hearing
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Disabilities (preK-12) • Students with Disabilities (birth-grade 2)
North Carolina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education: General Curriculum • Special Education: Adapted Curriculum • Severely and Profoundly Disabled • Learning Disabled • Behaviorally-Emotionally Disabled • Mentally Disabled • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Visually Impaired
North Dakota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategist Special Education • Specific Learning Disabilities • Emotional Disturbance Special Education • Intellectual Disabilities Special Education • Hearing Impaired Special Education • Visually Impaired Special Education • Early Childhood Special Education
Ohio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education of the Handicapped <i>or</i> Mild/Moderate Educational Needs • Intervention Specialist <i>or</i> Moderate/Intensive Educational Needs • Hearing Impairments • Visual Impairments • Early Childhood Intervention Specialist
Oklahoma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild-Moderate Disabilities • Moderate/Intensive Disabilities • Deaf/Hard of Hearing • Blind/Visual Impairment • ESCE Primary (P-5)

State	Special Education Licenses
Oregon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Generalist • Deaf/Hard of Hearing • Visually Impaired • Early Intervention/Special Education
Pennsylvania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education • Hearing Impaired • Visually Impaired
Rhode Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary Special Education Teacher (1-6) • Middle Grades Special Education Teacher (5-8) • Secondary Grades Special Education Teacher (7-12) • All Grades Special Education Severe Intellectual Disability Teacher • All Grades Special Education Deaf and Hard of Hearing Teacher • All Grades Special Education Visually Impaired Teacher • Early Childhood Special Education Teacher (B-Grade 2)
South Carolina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-categorical • Severe Disabilities • Learning Disabilities • Emotional Disabilities • Intellectual Disabilities • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Blind and Visually Impaired • ECE Special Education
South Dakota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education • Deaf or Hearing Impaired (Elementary and Secondary) • Blind or Visually Impaired (Elementary and Secondary) • Early Childhood Special Education (B-Grade 3)
Tennessee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Comprehensive Program • Special Education Interventionist (K-8) • Special Education Interventionist (6-12) • Special Education Hearing • Special Education Vision • Special Education Preschool/Early Childhood (PK-3)

State	Special Education Licenses
Texas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deaf and Hard of Hearing (EC-12) • Gifted and Talented • Special Education (EC-12) • Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (EC-12)
Utah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild/Moderate • Severe Disabilities • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Visual Impairments • Deaf-blind • Special Education Mathematics • Preschool Special Education
Vermont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Educator • Special Education Consulting Teacher • Intensive Special Education Teacher • Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Teacher of the Visually Impaired • Early Childhood Special Educator
Virginia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education—General Curriculum • Special Education—Adapted Curriculum • Special Education Hearing Impairments • Special Education Visual Impairments • Special Education Early Childhood (Birth-Age 5)
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education • Deaf Education • Early Childhood Special Education
West Virginia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Categorical (SLD, BD, MI) including Autism • Multi-Categorical (SLD, BD, MI) excluding Autism • Severe Disabilities • Specific Learning Disabilities • Behavior Disorders • Mentally Impaired (Mild/Moderate) • Autism • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Visually Impaired • Preschool Special Needs

State	Special Education Licenses
Wisconsin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-12 Special Education • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Visual Impairment • Early Childhood Special Education
Wyoming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional Specialist—Generalist • Exceptional Specialist—Learning Disability Exceptional Specialist—Behavioral and Emotional Disabilities • Exceptional Specialist—Cognitive Disability • Exceptional Specialist—Physical and Health Disability • Exceptional Specialist—Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Exceptional Specialist—Visual Disability • Early Childhood/Special Education

Appendix F: Options for streamlining licensure

Options	Description
1. No changes	Make no changes to special education statute or rule. Keep the ABS cross-categorical license and disability specific licenses. Out-of-state licensure requirements remain the same.
2. Create micro-credentialing	Create a licensure pathway to add disability-specific licensure areas to a cross-categorical license. This could be attached to the initial licensure program or accomplished after the completion of a licensure program.
3. Create moderate/severe cross-categorical license	Keep the current ABS cross-categorical license for mild to moderate students with EBD, DD, LD, and ASD. Add another cross-categorical license for the same high-incidence disability categories, but for moderate to severe needs. Disability specific licenses may or may not be sunsetted.
4. Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact	Seek legislation that would enter Minnesota into the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact (ITMC). The compact would allow those who hold a teaching license in a state that also is in the ITMC to receive a Minnesota teaching license with an expedited application process and no additional testing or coursework required.
5. Changes to PELSB’s licensure process	Seek legislation and policy changes that would change PELSB’s licensure process. Ideas include streamlining the fingerprinting process, allowing teacher candidates to receive their license the day they graduate, changing the out-of-field permission process, and allowing teachers to add licensure areas based on experience.