

Special Education **[S E I D]**

FROM PRE-SERVICE
TO
NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION



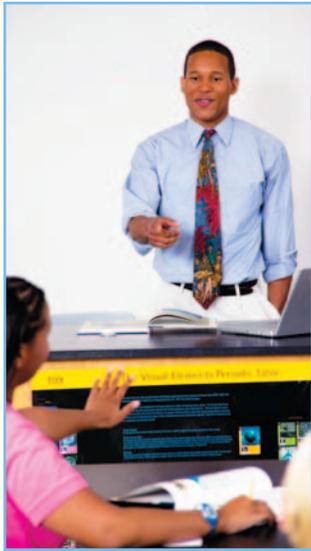
Special Education



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Overview of Special Education Certification



The purpose of this booklet is to inform certified teachers and prospective teachers of the opportunities in Louisiana to add special education areas to existing certificates and the process to gain initial certification as a special education teacher. Information is also provided for capacity-building professional development and National Board Certification.

In order to create a world-class education system for all students in Louisiana, the Louisiana Department of Education understands that effective classroom learning begins with effective classroom teachers. The mission of the Department is to ensure that higher academic achievement is available to all students, that all achievement gaps are eliminated, and that all students are prepared to be effective citizens in the global market.

The Louisiana Department of Education's Critical Goals are:

- » ***Students enter Kindergarten ready to learn.***
- » ***Students are literate by 3rd grade.***
- » ***Students will enter 4th grade on time.***
- » ***Students perform at or above grade level in English Language Arts by 8th grade.***
- » ***Students perform at or above grade level in math by 8th grade.***
- » ***Students will graduate on time.***
- » ***Students will enroll in post-secondary education or graduate workforce-ready.***
- » ***Students will successfully complete at least one year of post-secondary education.***
- » ***Achieve all eight Critical Goals, regardless of race or class.***

Routes to Attaining Special Education Certification

Traditional Undergraduate Programs

A *traditional teacher preparation program* is offered exclusively through an institution of higher education. Teacher candidates earn a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree that includes general education courses, one or more subject focus areas, professional education courses, supervised field experiences, and student teaching in a school setting under the supervision of a classroom teacher and supervisor from the university.

Traditional special education programs in *General/Special Education Mild-Moderate: An Integrated to Merged Approach for Grades 1-5, 4-8, & 6-12* are offered at the following universities:

Grambling State University (Grades 1-5 & 6-12)

Louisiana State University (Grades 1-5)

Louisiana Tech University (Grades 1-5)

Southeastern Louisiana University (Grades 1-5 & 4-8)

Southern University (Grades 1-5 & 4-8)

University of LA at Monroe (Grades 1-5 & 6-12)

University of New Orleans (Grades 1-5)

Note: Mild/Moderate programs lead to dual certification in a general education content area and Mild/Moderate in either grades 1-5, 4-8 or 6-12.

A traditional special education program in *Early Interventionist Birth to Five Years* is offered at the following university:

Nicholls State University

Note: Upon completion of a traditional undergraduate program and all PRAXIS examinations, a candidate is eligible for a three-year standard Level 1 teaching certificate.

Alternate Programs

An alternate teacher preparation program is a streamlined pathway to teacher licensure for candidates who already possess a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution (<https://oesprd01.doe.louisiana.gov/pdf/AccreditingAssociations.pdf>). Courses include knowledge of the learner, methodology and teaching, supervised field experiences, and an internship. During the internship, the candidate must be employed as the teacher of record for one year in a school setting under the supervision and mentoring of the program provider.

Louisiana offers three alternative paths to certification: Practitioner Teacher Program, Certification-Only Program, and a Master’s Degree Program.

Practitioner Teacher Program Alternative Path - The Practitioner Teacher Program is a fast track certification path that combines intensive coursework during the summer or fall and full-time teaching during the school year. This program may be offered by a university or by a non-university private provider. For admission, candidates must:

1. Possess a non-teacher education bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited university;
2. Have a 2.50 or higher grade point average to enter a non-university private provider program;
3. Have a 2.20 or higher grade point average to enter a college or university program;
4. Pass the Praxis I: Pre-Professional Skills Tests (PPSTs) in reading, writing, and mathematics. Candidates who already possess a graduate degree will be exempted from this requirement. In addition, an ACT composite score of 22 or an SAT combined verbal and math score of 1030 may be used in lieu of Praxis I.
5. Pass the Praxis II content-specific subject assessment(s).

Note: A Practitioner License 1 (PL1) is issued to a candidate that is enrolled in the Practitioner Teacher Program. This certificate is valid for one year and renewable for a maximum of two years.

Practitioner Teacher Programs in *Mild/Moderate* are offered at:

- Northwestern State University** (Grades 1-5, 4-8, & 6-12)
- University of New Orleans** (Grades 1-5, 4-8, & 6-12)
- The New Teacher Project** (Grades 1-5, 4-8, & 6-12)

Certification-Only Program Alternative Path – The Certification-Only Program offers flexibility in delivery (e.g., face-to-face and/or online) and is designed to serve candidates who may not elect to participate in or be eligible for certification under either the Practitioner Teacher Program or the Master’s Degree Alternate Program. State approved non-university private providers and Louisiana colleges or universities may offer a Certification-Only Program. For admission, candidates must:

1. Possess a non-teacher education bachelor’s degree from a regionally-accredited university

2. Meet one of the following certification GPA requirements:
 - a. Have a 2.50 or higher grade point average to enter a private provider program, or
 - b. Have a 2.20 or higher grade point average to enter a college or university program

Note: The GPA may be calculated using the last 60 hours of coursework earned from a regionally accredited university.

3. Pass the Praxis I: Pre-Professional Skills Tests (PPSTs) in reading, writing, and mathematics. Candidates who already possess a graduate degree will be exempted from this requirement. In addition, an ACT composite score of 22 or an SAT combined verbal and math score of 1030 may be used in lieu of Praxis I.
4. Pass the Praxis II content-specific subject assessment(s).

Note: A Practitioner License 2 (PL2) is issued to a candidate that is enrolled in the Certification-Only Program. This certificate is valid for one year and renewable for a maximum of two years.

Certification-Only Programs in *Early Interventionist Birth to Five Years* are offered at:

- Southeastern Louisiana University**
- University of Louisiana at Lafayette**

A Certification-Only Program in *Significant Disabilities Grades 1-12* is offered at:

- University of New Orleans**

Master’s Degree Program Alternative Path to Certification - The Master’s Degree Program leads to certification and a Master of Arts in Teaching. A Louisiana college or university with an approved teacher education program may offer this program. For admission, candidates must:

1. Possess a non-teacher education bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited university;
2. Have a 2.50 or higher grade point average;
3. Pass the Praxis I: Pre-Professional Skills Tests (PPSTs) in reading, writing, and mathematics. Candidates who already possess a graduate degree will be exempted from this requirement. In addition, an ACT composite score of 22 or an SAT combined verbal and math score of 1030 may be used in lieu of Praxis I.
4. Pass the Praxis II content-specific subject assessment(s).

Note: A Practitioner License 3 (PL3) is issued to a candidate that is enrolled in the Master’s Degree Program. This certificate is valid for one year and renewable for a maximum of three years.

Note: Universities may require candidates to take the Graduate Records Examination (GRE) and/or meet additional entrance requirements.

Master’s Alternate Degree programs in *General/Special Education Mild-Moderate: An Integrated to Merged Approach for Grades 1-5, 4-8, & 6-12* are offered at:

- Nicholls State University** (Grades 1-5, 4-8 & 6-12)
- Northwestern State University** (Grades 1-5, 4-8, & 6-12)
- University of LA at Lafayette** (Grades 1-5 & 6-12)
- University of Louisiana at Monroe** (Grades 1-5 & 6-12)
- University of New Orleans** (Grades 1-5 & 4-8)
- Xavier University** (Grades 1-5, 4-8, & 6-12)

Master’s Alternate Degree program in *Early Interventionist Birth to Five Years* are offered at:

- Louisiana Tech University**
- Southeastern Louisiana University**
- University of New Orleans**

A Master’s Alternate Degree program in *Hearing Impaired Grades K-12* is offered at:

- University of New Orleans**

A Master’s Alternate Degree program in *Visually Impaired Grades K-12* is offered at:

- Louisiana Tech University**

A Master’s Alternate Degree program in *Significant Disabilities Grades 1-12* is offered at:

- University of New Orleans**

Special Education Add-On Endorsements

Mild/Moderate: Grade-Specific Effective July 1, 2010

Mild/Moderate: 1-5 - Individuals holding a valid early childhood certificate, elementary certificate, or Early Interventionist certificate must complete 18 semester hours of coursework and PRAXIS exam Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications (#0543).

Mild/Moderate: 1-5 - Individuals holding a valid upper elementary or middle school certificate, secondary certificate, all-level special education certificate, or an all-level K-12 certificate must complete 18 semester hours of coursework and PRAXIS exams Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications (#0543) and Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT): K-6, and Elementary Content Knowledge Exam (0014).

Mild/Moderate: Middle Grades 4-8 - Individuals holding a valid early childhood certificate, elementary certificate, or Early Interventionist certificate must complete 18 semester hours of coursework and PRAXIS exams:

- a. Mild/Moderate (4-8)—Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications (#0543); and
- b. Mild/Moderate (4-8)—Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT): 5-9 and Middle School Content Exam(s); or

Individuals holding a valid upper elementary or middle school certificate must complete 18 semester hours of coursework and PRAXIS exam:

- a. Mild/Moderate (4-8)—Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications (#0543); or

Individuals holding a valid secondary certificate (e.g., 6-12, 7-12, 9-12), all-level special education certificate, or an all-level K-12 certificate must complete 18 semester hours of coursework and PRAXIS exams:

- a. Mild/Moderate (4-8)—Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications (#0543); and
- b. Mild/Moderate (4-8)—Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT): 5-9 and Middle School Content Exam(s).

Mild/Moderate: Secondary 6-12 - Individuals holding a valid early childhood certificate, elementary certificate, or Early Interventionist certificate must complete 18 semester hours of coursework and PRAXIS exams:

- a. Mild/Moderate (6-12)—Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications (#0543); and
- b. Mild/Moderate (6-12)—Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT): 7-12 and High School Exam(s); or

Individuals holding a valid upper elementary or middle school certificate must complete 18 semester hours of coursework and PRAXIS exams:

- a. Mild/Moderate (6-12)—Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications (#0543); and
- b. Mild/Moderate (6-12)—Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT): 7-12 and High School Content Exam(s); or

Individuals holding a valid secondary certificate (e.g., 6-12, 7-12, 9-12), all-level special education certificate, or an all-level K-12 certificate must complete 18 semester hours of coursework and PRAXIS exam:

- a. Mild/Moderate (4-8) and (6-12)—Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications (#0543).

Early Interventionist (Birth - Age 5) Eighteen hours of coursework that pertain to special education infant, toddlers, and preschool students must be completed to achieve this add-on to a standard Louisiana teaching certificate. PRAXIS exams: Early Childhood Education (#0521) and Special Education: Core Knowledge and Applications (#0354) must also be completed for this certification. A complete list of required courses can be found at www.teachlouisiana.net.

Significant Disabilities (1-12) Twenty-one semester hours of coursework that pertain to students with significant disabilities must be completed. PRAXIS exam: Special Education: Core Knowledge and Severe to Profound Applications (#0545) must also be completed for the certification. A complete list of required courses can be found at www.teachlouisiana.net.

Note: Courses for add-on certification are offered at the **University of New Orleans**.

Visual Impairments/Blind (K-12) Twenty-one semester hours of coursework that pertain to students with visual impairments must be completed. PRAXIS Education of Exceptional Students: Core Content Knowledge exam (#0354) must also be completed for this certification. A complete list of required courses can be found at www.teachlouisiana.net.

Note: Courses for add-on certification are offered at the **University of New Orleans** and **Louisiana Tech University**.

Hearing Impairments (K-12) Twenty-one semester hours of coursework that pertain to students with hearing impairments must be completed. PRAXIS exams: Special Education: Core Knowledge and Applications (#0354) and Education of Exceptional Students: Hearing Impairment (#0271) must also be completed for this certification.

The teacher must also have proficiency in signed, cued, or oral communication, as evidenced by completing Intermediate on the Educational Sign Skills Evaluation: Teacher (ESSE:T) or Advanced on the Signed Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI) or Level III of the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment or mini-proficiency, as measured on the Basic Cued Speech Proficiency Rating Test (BCSPR c1983, Beaupre) or successfully passing an additional course in Methods in Oral/Auditory Education. A complete list of required courses can be found at www.teachlouisiana.net.

Note: Courses for add-on certification are offered at the **University of New Orleans**.

Academically-Gifted The first requirement for certification in this area is to hold a master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university. Fifteen graduate semester hours of prescribed coursework within a master's degree program or as an add-on to an existing master's degree must be completed. In addition to the fifteen hours of graduate credit, there must also be a three semester hour practicum for gifted, internship for gifted, or three years of teaching academically-gifted.

Academically gifted certification will be valid only in the teaching area(s) in which the individual is certified. The secondary teacher of academically gifted students who is to award Carnegie Units in the secondary subject area(s) must be certified in the subject area(s) in which Carnegie Units are awarded. Elementary and secondary teachers who are also certified in academically gifted may offer approved special education elective (enrichment) courses or self-contained gifted classes at either the elementary or secondary level. A complete list of required courses can be found at www.teachlouisiana.net.

ATTENTION: Passing Praxis exam scores on #0353, #0542 or #0544 obtained prior to January 1, 2011, will be accepted for special education certification purposes.

Professional Development



The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) provides professional development and resources for both general and special education personnel.

- » For information about specific professional development events and registration procedures, refer to Coursewhere on the LDOE's website at <https://www.solutionwhere.com/l DOE/cw/main.asp>. Coursewhere allows you to search for events in a variety of categories (e.g., area of interest, month, location).
- » For information and registration procedures related to on-line modules pertaining to serving students with autism, refer to <http://www.hdc.lsuhs.edu/lasard/index.html>.
- » For information about resources related to curriculum, assessment, and instruction for *struggling learners* and *students with mild disabilities*, refer to the LDOE's Access Guide website at <http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov/accessguide>.
- » For information about resources related to curriculum, assessment and instruction for *students with significant disabilities*, refer to the LDOE's Access Guide (Significant Disabilities) website at <http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov>.
- » To speak to a Louisiana Department of Education representative regarding professional development issues, contact the LDOE toll-free at 877.453.2721.

The LDOE also partners with the Louisiana Low Incidence Disabilities Consortium (LA-LIDC) which was established to increase Louisiana's capacity for statewide availability of initial and advanced university teacher education programs. Course offerings are available in the following areas: Significant Disabilities, Blind/Visually Impaired, and Deaf/Hard of Hearing. The majority of coursework is offered on-line in a synchronous, interactive manner. For further information, visit www.lalidc.org.

Targeting Special Education Certification

The overall objective of Targeting Special Education Certification (TSEC) is to provide specific resources for special education teachers on their path toward certification. Suggested topics to be addressed during the current TSEC support sessions include: certification resources, PRAXIS preparation, classroom management and discipline, inclusive practices, development of individualized education programs (IEPs), assessment issues, and other specific instructional strategies related to SPED. TSEC, in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), project administrators, and district advisors are fully committed to supporting new teachers placed in special education positions that do not hold Special Education (SPED) teacher certification credentials. TSEC district participation is based on shortages of teachers certified in special education.



National Board Teacher Certification (NBTC)

The National Board Certification process offers experienced teachers the professional development opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and practices against high and rigorous standards. Candidates pursue certification by completing two major assessment components: a portfolio of classroom teaching practice and an assessment of content knowledge administered at a computer-based testing center. Candidates applying for certification in the Exceptional Needs Specialist certificate area must select one of the following specialty areas when applying:

1. Deaf/Hard of Hearing (birth to 21+ years)
2. Early Childhood (birth to 8 years)
3. Mild/Moderate Disabilities (5 to 21+ years)
4. Severe and Multiple Disabilities (5 to 21+ years)
5. Visual Impairments (birth to 21+ years)

The Louisiana Department of Education recognizes the need to create teacher leaders and encourages participation in the National Board Certification process. In an effort to establish a consortium of teacher leaders in the field of special education, the Louisiana Department of Education is excited to offer special education teachers the following opportunities to pursue this prestigious certification.

1. Professional Development: job-embedded, practical, student-centered focus on classroom practice
2. Fee Assistance: the state subsidy pays \$2,000 of the \$2,565 cost of the certification process
3. Candidate Support: the state assigns each candidate to a candidate support provider (NBTC) who supports and guides him/her through the certification process.
4. Networking: candidates have the opportunity to work in collegial professional learning communities with other educators.



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EDUCATION

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