



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mick Zais
Superintendent

1429 Senate Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

MEMORANDUM OEC 13-03

TO: Special Education Directors and Coordinators

FROM: Cathy Boshamer, Director, Office of Exceptional Children

DATE: April 23, 2013

RE: Early Childhood Special Education Certification

This memorandum serves to review the requirements of Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Certification in the State Board of Education (SBE) Regulation 43-62 (III)(A). Effective July 1, 2016, all individuals working as Early Childhood Special Education teachers will be required to hold certification in ECSE. This applies to individuals who will qualify to represent the early childhood special education interests of young children with disabilities (birth to sixth birthday). As part of the Individual Education Program team, they would be the special education teacher or, as appropriate, the special education provider of the child. All individuals who desire to work as ECSE teachers must complete the SBE program for certification or must be grandfathered in by July 1, 2016 per the requirements as outlined in the above regulation. Speech therapists do not have to acquire ECSE certification to provide speech therapy or services.

Individuals acquiring the ECSE certification must complete the required coursework outlined in SBE Regulation 43-62(III)(A) and score a minimum of 159 on the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Praxis, Special Education: Early Childhood (0691) test. Individuals who have an initial or a professional certificate at the early childhood or elementary level or in special education or Speech and Language and who have three years teaching experience within the last five years with young children with disabilities (birth to sixth birthday) will be granted add-on certification (grandfathered in) by achieving the minimum qualifying score Praxis for Special Education: Early Childhood (0691) within the five-year period.

We have received requests for clarification regarding students who are five years old, but in a Kindergarten class. If a special education teacher certified K-12 provides services to a 5 year old that is not in a preschool program, but in a Kindergarten class, the current K-12 teacher certification will suffice in that situation. If a special education teacher certified K-12 would be serving preschool students housed in a preschool classroom, she/he will need to acquire the ECSE certification by July 1, 2016.