

**Florida Department of Education  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services**

**Prekindergarten Disabilities Endorsement**

**Questions and Answers**

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) is providing the following questions and answers to assist school district personnel in implementing Rule 6A-4.01792, Florida Administrative Code, (F.A.C.), *Specialization Requirements for the Prekindergarten Disabilities Endorsement*. **This question and answer document replaces guidance previously provided via memorandum released on May 28, 2010, as well as earlier memorandums released on July 28, 2006 (K–12 Memo 2006-104), and September 30, 2005 (K–12 Memo 2005-135).** Exceptional student education (ESE) teachers should work with their principals, ESE directors and district personnel offices to determine their need for the endorsement.

**1. Who is required to have the endorsement in prekindergarten disabilities?**

In accordance with the *2012–2013 Florida Course Code Directory (CCD)*, the prekindergarten disabilities endorsement, as described in Rule 6A-4.01792, F.A.C., at <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=6A-4.01792>, is required for ESE teachers who teach **either course number 7650030 or 7650130** as listed in the CCD. This endorsement can be added to primary education, elementary education (K–6), early childhood education or any ESE Florida educator certificate.

**2. Are there any exceptions to this requirement?**

Yes, the exceptions to this requirement are for teachers who:

- Have certification in preschool education (birth through age 4 years) **or**
- Have certification in prekindergarten/primary education (age 3 years through grade three) **or**
- Can document at least two full years of teaching experience (including satisfactory teacher evaluations) with prekindergarten children with disabilities between July 1, 2006, and June 30, 2011

**3. For teachers exercising the “two full years of teaching experience” exception, how will the experience be documented?**

School districts will establish their own policies, procedures and/or practices regarding documentation of experience for the purpose of this exception.

**4. How is “satisfactory” defined within this exception?**

The definition of satisfactory will be included in any policies, procedures and/or practices the school district establishes regarding documentation of experience for the purpose of this exception.

**5. Is the prekindergarten disabilities endorsement the same as the prekindergarten handicapped endorsement?**

Yes. The *Florida Course Code Directory* references both the prekindergarten disabilities endorsement and the prekindergarten handicapped endorsement.

**6. Is there a test that a teacher can take to add the endorsement to their certificate?**

No, there is no test available to add an endorsement.

**7. Where can school personnel find information on courses offered at public universities in Florida?**

Most public universities in Florida offer coursework relating to the endorsement, and some offer approved endorsement programs. For specific information, visit Florida's Personnel Development: Supporting Exceptional Student Education website at <http://www.florida-ese.org/personneldevelopment/uco/endorsementsESE.aspx>.

**8. Is there any financial support for teachers pursuing the prekindergarten disabilities endorsement?**

Information on financial assistance programs that are available to educators in Florida can be found at [http://www.florida-ese.org/personneldevelopment/uco/financial\\_assistance.aspx](http://www.florida-ese.org/personneldevelopment/uco/financial_assistance.aspx).

**9. If a teacher decides to obtain the endorsement, can teaching experience count toward obtaining the endorsement?**

In certain circumstances, teaching experience may be used to satisfy the college course work required for the endorsement. Rule 6A-4.002(5), F. A. C., *General Provisions*, places a limitation on the use of teaching experience to satisfy certification course requirements. If the teacher has not already used the maximum experience allowed and if the experience is appropriate, the teacher may be able to satisfy up to six semester hours of coursework with two years of teaching experience.

The determination of possible use of teaching experience toward the endorsement is made by the FDOE, Bureau of Educator Certification when the teacher submits a complete certification application for the endorsement to the Bureau. The teacher should clearly document his or her experience on this form. In addition, to further substantiate this experience, the teacher may request that the district certification office complete a CT 113 form (Teaching Experience Verification Form). The district will submit this form to the FDOE electronically. Official transcripts of all relevant coursework that has been completed must also be submitted. Transcripts previously submitted to the Bureau of Educator Certification do not have to be resubmitted. Districts assist the Bureau in verifying teaching experience but do not make the determination regarding which course(s) may be waived.

**10. Can a National Board Certificate be used to satisfy requirements related to the prekindergarten disabilities endorsement?**

In the following circumstances, a national board certificate may be used: 1) A valid National Board Certificate in the area of "Early Childhood-Young Adulthood Exceptional Needs

Specialist: Early Childhood,” can be used to add the prekindergarten disabilities endorsement to the teacher's Florida certificate. 2) A valid National Board Certificate in the area of “Early Childhood Generalist (ages 3 through 8)” can be used to qualify for a Florida certificate in prekindergarten/primary education. For either situation, an online certification application, processing fee and a copy of the valid National Board Certificate must be submitted to the Bureau of Educator Certification.

**11. If a teacher decides to pursue certification in preschool education or prekindergarten/primary education in lieu of the endorsement in prekindergarten disabilities, what steps must be taken?**

A teacher could take and pass the subject area test and receive certification in preschool education (birth through age 4 years) and/or prekindergarten/primary education (age 3 years through grade three). A certification application and fee must be submitted to the teacher's district certification office to add preschool education or prekindergarten/primary education to a professional certificate based on passing the subject area test. To add either subject to a temporary certificate, the online application and fee must be submitted the Bureau of Educator Certification.

**12. Is information available to help a teacher prepare for these subject area tests?**

Yes. Test preparation guides are available to assist candidates taking the subject area test in preschool education and/or prekindergarten/primary education. These guides may be accessed online at <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/ftce/ftceguid.asp>. The competencies and skills for each test may be accessed online at <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/ftce/ftcecomp.asp>.

**13. Is there another option for obtaining the prekindergarten disabilities endorsement other than taking college courses?**

Yes. The Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services has developed a set of modules that school districts may use to create a district add-on endorsement program in prekindergarten disabilities. BEFORE offering these modules for credit, a school district MUST submit a District Add-On Plan to the FDOE for approval. Electronic copies of the Prekindergarten Disabilities Endorsement District Add-On Plan must be submitted to Denise Scheidler, program specialist, Bureau of Educator Recruitment, Development and Teacher Recruitment, at [Denise.Scheidler@fldoe.org](mailto:Denise.Scheidler@fldoe.org).

**14. If a teacher decides to participate in a district add-on endorsement program, can teaching experience or college courses be used to waive some of the content/participation time of the district add-on program?**

No. Teaching experience cannot be used to satisfy a portion of a district's add-on program. In order to satisfy specialization requirements in Rule 6A-4.01792, F.A.C., participants must complete all three modules. College credit cannot be substituted for any of the three modules.