



Minnesota Board of Teaching

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) License Transition Process For Minnesota Teachers

~ Frequently Asked Questions~
REVISED MAY 2013

ELIGIBILITY for ASD LICENSE TRANSITION PROCESS

1. Who IS eligible for the ASD license transition process?
 - o **NEW:** *Special Education teachers who were already invested in working with students with ASD, as evidenced by providing specially designed instruction to students with ASD and ASD-specific professional development prior to 2012 when the transition process became available in July 2012.*

To be eligible, a teacher must meet all of the following conditions:

- o *hold a current full-time (valid for 5 years) Minnesota teaching license in a special education field*
- o *verify at least one academic year of experience providing specially designed instruction to ASD students under an IEP (see question 6 for more information)*
- o *document coursework and/or professional development aligned to the ASD standards*

Note: Teachers holding a Developmental Adapted Physical Education (DAPE) license must also hold another Minnesota special education license to be eligible for this process.

2. **NEW:** Are all Special Education teachers eligible for the transition process?
 - o *No. Special Education teachers who do not have evidence of ASD-specific professional development prior to July 1, 2012 are not eligible. We now have several licensure programs operational and available for individuals who are fully new to the field of ASD.*
3. **NEW:** What is the required threshold of ASD professional development prior to July 2012 to be eligible for the transition process?
 - o *Our goal here is to ensure that the teachers who use this process are those who were already invested in working with ASD students; this process is not for special education teachers brand new to the ASD field. As such, the documentation must include evidence of professional investment in the field of ASD through ASD-specific professional development prior to July 1, 2012. The Board of Teaching has not established a specific threshold of professional development necessary to meet the new standards.*
 - o *The professional development must demonstrate that the special education teacher was already invested in the ASD field prior to the transition process opening. This provides a clear, consistent, and legally defensible basis for the Board of Teaching to allow teachers an alternative process for issuing a license.*

4. **NEW:** What can a teacher who is eligible do to meet any remaining ASD standards?
 - *These teachers can continue using coursework or professional development opportunities to supplement what they had already begun. This process is for special education teachers who were already invested in the work as a way to honor their prior experience and professional training in ASD.*
5. **NEW:** What if a teacher no longer has documentation of participation in ASD-specific professional development?
 - *We understand that some teachers are having difficulty finding documentation of all of their ASD professional training opportunities. In these situations, we will accept verification by a Special Education Director or professional development provider of a teacher's participation in the training; the verification should be noted on the "Demonstration of Professional Development" (page 11 in the Eligibility Review packet)*
6. What experience is required to be eligible for the ASD license transition process?
 - *A teacher must verify at least one academic year of successful classroom teaching experience for which s/he held a valid license to practice in a special education field and provided specially designed instruction to students with ASD served under an IEP. This verification of experience must be provided in order to complete the Eligibility Review materials and to be considered for the ASD license.*
7. Is there a minimum number of students required for the experience component of the transition process?
 - *Staff assignments and caseloads are determined by the individual needs of students and based on local decisions on how best to meet student needs; therefore there is no minimum number of ASD students required to fulfill this eligibility requirement for the transition process.*
8. Will successful completion of the ASD licensure eligibility process mean that the ASD license will be issued for Birth – Age 21?
 - *An ASD license issued as a result of this process will be limited to the age/grade range (scope) of the base license(s) in special education.*
Note: The application process for the ASD license is a separate process from the eligibility process.
9. Are teachers holding a DAPE endorsement eligible to complete the ASD transition process?
 - *Teachers holding a DAPE license must also hold another Minnesota special education teaching license to be eligible for this process.*
10. Will special education teaching license(s) issued prior to January 1, 2000, be eligible for the ASD license transition process?
 - *Yes. The January 1, 2000, date applies only to coursework and professional development opportunities that may be used for the eligibility process.*
11. Is a licensed related service provider (e.g., school psychologist, occupational therapist, speech/language practitioner, social worker, etc.) eligible to apply for the ASD license through this transition process?
 - *No. One of the prerequisites for the ASD license transition process is that the person holds a valid Minnesota-issued teacher license in special education. Related service providers have not met the Standards of Effective Practice, MN Rule 8710.2000, and Core Skills for Special Education, MN Rule 8710.5000, required for special education teachers.*
12. Can experience providing direct instruction in a state other than Minnesota be used to meet the

experience requirement?

- *Yes. The experience must be verified, but may come from another state.*

13. If someone provides related services to students with an IEP and has earned an ASD Certificate, what would it take to become licensed as an ASD teacher?

- *To become a licensed special education teacher, an individual must complete a Board of Teaching approved teacher education program and be recommended for licensure to the Board of Teaching. The person should work with a college or university with an approved program to determine what coursework is needed to complete the teacher education program and be eligible for licensure.*

TIMELINES and EXPECTATIONS

14. As a special education teacher, when am I required to have the new ASD license to be able to serve students with ASD under an IEP?

- *Through June 30, 2015, there is no change from current practice.*
- *Beginning July 1, 2015, an **IEP team** must include a teacher with an ASD, ABS (Academic & Behavioral Strategist) license for mild-moderate ASD, or ECSE (Early Childhood Special Education) license for students birth through age 6.*

See page 3 of the document entitled "[New Special Education Licensure Fields Letter](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/EdExc/Licen/SpecEdLicen/index.html)".
(<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/EdExc/Licen/SpecEdLicen/index.html>)

15. Beginning July 1, 2015, is an ECSE licensed teacher appropriately licensed to serve as the teacher on the IEP for students with ASD who are preschool aged or must there be an ASD licensed teacher in this age scope?

- *A licensed ECSE teacher can fulfill the requirement as an IEP team member for a student with ASD (through age 6). There does not need to be another ASD licensed teacher in this age scope on the IEP team. In accordance with MN Rule 3525.1325, the team determining eligibility and educational programming must include at least one professional "with experience and expertise in the area of ASD"*

ASD LICENSE TRANSITION PROCESS

16. When will the transition process for the ASD license be available for teachers to submit Eligibility Review materials and license applications for ASD and when will it end?
 - *The process began July 1, 2012.*
 - *Designated submission windows for submitting Eligibility Review materials are listed on the last page of the Eligibility Review form.*
 - *The ASD license transition process ends on June 30, 2015. Teachers must submit by March 1, 2015 in order to allow time for review and processing.*
 - *Detailed instructions and Eligibility Review Forms will be posted on the [MDE/Licensing/Special Education website](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/EdExc/Licen/SpecEdLicen/index.html). (<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/EdExc/Licen/SpecEdLicen/index.html>)*
17. What if my license will expire before I receive notification?
 - *If you need your license, complete the process to renew your current license. Do not wait to renew your license!*
18. What is the process for demonstrating the competencies?
 - *For eligible teachers, there will be an opportunity to verify coursework and/or professional development aligned to the new ASD standards. There are 3 possibilities:*
 - *Verify completion of an Autism Certificate Program.*
 - *Identify professional development opportunities or coursework from the Catalog of ASD Professional Development Activities that you participated in.*
 - *Provide evidence of professional development opportunities or coursework that align to the ASD standards that are not included in the Catalog of ASD Professional Development Activities.*
19. I lost some of my certificates (evidence of participation in trainings), how can I prove that I attended the trainings?
 - *Documentation is mandatory. If original certificate is not available, submit alternative documentation (i.e.: district record-keeping). Reviewers will determine if alternative documentation is sufficient.*
20. I would like to keep the original copies of my certificates, can I submit a photocopy?
 - *Yes. We strongly prefer that certificates be photocopied. Submitted materials will not be returned.*
21. I have an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, an ASD certificate and a doctoral degree; do I need to submit academic transcripts from every higher education institution that I attended?
 - *No. We only require you to submit transcripts from the institution in which you obtained an ASD certificate. A point of clarification: if you have earned academic credit in special education (autism or otherwise) that was not required for your ASD certificate, we do not need a transcript evidencing those academic credits.*
22. What is the best way to submit my academic transcripts?
 - *Only official transcripts (in the sealed envelope) from your college or university sent in the same envelope accompanying your eligibility review materials will be accepted. Do not submit opened transcripts or copies – as they are considered unofficial. Submit transcripts only from the institution in which you obtained an ASD certificate. A point of clarification: if you have earned academic credit in special education (autism or otherwise) that was not required for your ASD certificate, we do not need a transcript evidencing those academic credits.*

23. May I submit evidence that I have met the new standards using professional development opportunities or coursework that are not found in the Catalog of ASD Professional Development Activities?
- *Yes. Any training opportunities completed since January 2000 not listed in the catalog may be submitted for consideration. Required documentation for such activities includes: title of the training, date attended, number of hours attended or credits earned, short description and rationale for how it addressed a particular standard, and verification of attendance.*
24. How can a teacher fulfill the requirements for clinical and field experiences (including student teaching)?
- *An administrator must verify that a teacher has provided at least one academic year of specially designed instruction to student(s) with ASD served under an IEP while a licensed Minnesota special education teacher.*
25. Who will review the submissions?
- *A team of reviewers, consisting of BOT and MDE representatives and special educators from both P-12 and higher education will review and make a determination on each submission.*
26. How long will it take to hear back following submission of my Eligibility Review materials?
- *Notification is generally sent within 90 days after the close of each window. However, the timeline will depend on the volume of submissions within each window.*
27. What happens if a teacher submits Eligibility Review materials but does not successfully demonstrate that all standards are met?
- **NEW:** *An Eligibility Review packet with a small number of ASD-specific opportunities will undergo additional scrutiny and the teacher may be asked for additional evidence of training or coursework. The team of reviewers expects to see multiple coursework and professional development opportunities aligned to the ASD standards.*
 - *Until June 30, 2015, a teacher may work with his/her district, a college or university, the regional low-incidence projects, ASD network, the Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM), or other professional development providers to achieve competency on standards not effectively documented. After documenting additional professional development, a candidate may submit a new packet of materials for a full Eligibility Review during a later submission window.*
28. Is there a fee to submit (or resubmit) the Eligibility Review materials during the transition process?
- *No.*
29. What are the next steps in the process if the Eligibility Review is approved?
1. *Apply to MDE to add ASD to your existing license(s). A fee (\$62.70) will apply.*
 2. *The expiration date for a new ASD license will correlate to the expiration date for the existing licensure expiration dates.*

ASD Catalog

30. I just completed “Step 4- Demonstration of Professional Training” and I notice that I have four or five catalog entries for some standards and just one for others. How many catalog entries are required to demonstrate that I have met a particular standard?
 - *Evidencing a single entry from the catalog is sufficient to demonstrate that the standard has been met.*
31. I have coursework and professional development that is not included the catalog, why is that?
 - *When the catalog was developed, the BOT and MDE asked regional coordinators and representatives from higher education institutions to undergo a self-study and submit relevant information that would allow for practicing teachers to be recognized for their professional development and academic coursework.*
32. I have documentation of a course or training that is identical to one listed in the catalog but it is before January 1, 2000. Will this documentation of professional development before 2000 count?
 - *No. We are only recognizing courses and trainings after January 1, 2000.*
33. What if I taught a course or training?
 - *You will be credited for the course or training. You will still need to provide evidence of participation submitted using the Eligibility Review materials posted on the website below.*
34. If I enter the catalog item number from the catalog into the eligibility packet, will the standards be auto-filled?
 - *No.*

Please submit additional questions to the following email: MDE.ASD-License@state.mn.us Your question will be answered by the appropriate person as soon as possible. Some questions may need input from multiple staff members and as such, may take longer to provide a reply. We appreciate your patience as we seek to provide clear and timely guidance.

*Note: The Board of Teaching and MDE will continue to refine our guidance and information regarding the ASD license transition process. Please check the [Special Education Licensure website](http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/EdExc/Licen/SpecEdLicen/index.html) for updates:
(<http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/EdExc/Licen/SpecEdLicen/index.html>)*