



Teacher of Special Education License Review

Report to the Legislature

November 21, 2018

As required by Laws of Minnesota 2017, 1st Spec. Sess. chapter 5, article 3, section 31

For more information:

Alex Liuzzi
Executive Director
Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113
(651) 539-4180
alex.liuzzi@state.mn.us
mn.gov/pelsb

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Legislative charge

The *Teacher of Special Education License Review* report is due to the legislature by December 14, 2018. This report is mandated by Laws of Minnesota 2017, 1st Spec. Sess. chapter 5, article 3, section 31.¹ The legislation requires the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) to conduct a review of all the available teacher of special education licenses and determine the options for cross-categorical² licenses for teachers of special education.

PELSB Special Education License Review subcommittee group process

The Executive Director of PELSB convened the Special Education License Review subcommittee to assist in the development of the Teacher of Special Education License Review legislative report.³ Advisory group participants included representatives from state agencies, districts, service cooperatives, and other stakeholders in special education. After one meeting to establish an initial scope, PELSB engaged the services of Management Analysis and Development (MAD), a division of Minnesota Management and Budget, to facilitate the group meetings and compile and complete the report. The full subcommittee met seven times between May and October 2018 with additional meetings of smaller working groups to collect and analyze data and draft sections of the report.

The subcommittee developed and administered a survey, analyzed the survey results, and researched and discussed the Minnesota and national landscapes for special education licensing. Members spent much of the October meetings identifying and evaluating options and recommendations.

The subcommittee members appreciate the collaboration and partnership demonstrated during the group's time together. Members have shown a willingness to work together and learn from each other. The result is a strong commitment to clearly propose and evaluate options for Minnesota's special education cross-categorical licenses.

Minnesota landscape

The subcommittee reviewed recent changes in special education licensure in Minnesota, current data on teacher licensure, and student population data to provide a snapshot of the current landscape of special education in the state.

¹ See Appendix A for the full text of the legislation.

² Cross-categorical licenses empower teachers to make lessons available to students across a variety of specialized needs.

³ Appendix B contains the roster of subcommittee members.

Nearly seven years ago, stakeholders and state agency staff reviewed cross-categorical licensure in Minnesota using a similar process. 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 incidence⁴ 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 licensee 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. It would also allow teachers to work in the field and gain the experience to decide what disability-specific category they wanted to pursue.

The special education landscape has changed in the five years since the ABS license was created. This section of the report examines these changes:

- The impact of the ABS license in the state, including the impact on teacher preparation programs training special education teachers in Minnesota and the impact on number of licensed teachers.
- Enrollment numbers of candidates in teacher preparation programs.
- Currently licensed teachers in special education versus actively teaching, compared with the number of assignments in special education.
- The number of special permissions used in the area of special education, i.e., the number of open positions which are being filled by individuals not licensed for their assignment.
- The trends in primary disability categories for students in Minnesota.

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.

Minnesota students with disabilities

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) collects information about students with disabilities through the Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS). The numbers in Table 1 are based on district reporting of an unduplicated child count for students with an Individual Education Program (IEP) as of December 1 of that school year. Minnesota collects information for only a student’s primary disability. Students’ IEP teams may identify students with more than one disability through the special education evaluation process. For example, a team may identify Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) as a student’s primary disability and Speech/Language Impaired (S/LI) as a secondary disability. However, only the primary disability, in this example SLD, is reported to

⁴ High incidence refers to categories that are more commonly occurring compared to low incidence.

MDE. The child count data does not—on its own—suggest the level of need for teaches in various special education licensure areas.

Table 1: Minnesota child count ages 0-21 disability distribution 2013-2017

Year	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	Percent change 2013-2017	Number change 2013-2017
Autism Spectrum Disorder	16,603	17,067	17,647	18,483	19,386	16.76	2,783
Blind-Visually Impaired	460	460	467	489	503	9.35	43
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	2,464	2,450	2,529	2,545	2,553	3.61	89
Deaf-Blind	70	69	83	94	103	47.14	33
Developmental Cognitive Disabilities	7,812	7,633	7,576	7,594	7,454	-4.58	-358
Developmental Delay	15,358	15,996	16,716	17,441	18,417	19.92	3,059
Emotional/Behavioral Disorder	14,897	14,761	14,926	15,448	15,983	7.29	1,086
Other Health Disabilities	17,693	18,152	18,786	19,413	19,781	11.80	2,088
Physical Impairment	1,669	1,641	1,613	1,580	1,606	-3.77	-63
Severely Multiply Impaired	1,418	1,478	1,482	1,493	1,511	6.56	93
Specific Learning Disabilities	29,735	29,627	30,306	31,263	32,332	8.73	2,597
Speech/Language Impaired	21,036	21,100	21,098	21,309	22,186	5.47	1,150
Traumatic Brain Injury	454	452	449	449	455	0.22	1
Totals	129,669	130,886	133,678	137,601	142,270	9.72	12,601

Overall, the numbers of students with disabilities ages birth to 21 has steadily grown across Minnesota over the past five years, from 129,669 in 2008 to 142,270 in 2017, an increase of almost 10 percent. The overall K-12 student population has also increased over the past five years from 837,154 in 2008 to 862,970 in 2017, an increase of just over three percent. The number of special education K-12 students as a percent of overall K-12

enrollment over that same period increased by just over one percent from 13.6 percent to 14.3 percent. This change does not include children ages birth to two, as there is no general education comparison group included in school enrollment numbers.

The disability designations with the largest percent increase are Deaf-Blind (47.14 percent), Developmental Delay (19.92 percent), Autism Spectrum Disorder (16.76 percent), and Other Health Disabilities (11.8 percent). While Deaf-Blind saw the largest percent change, the overall numbers of students identified compared to all other disabilities is the smallest of all areas of disability. Disability designations with the largest overall number increases in the past five years (over 2,000 students in each category) are Developmental Delay (over 3,000), Autism Spectrum Disorder, Specific Learning Disabilities, and Other Health Disabilities. Areas of disability with moderate increases include Specific Learning Disability, Emotional/Behavioral Disorder, Blind/Visually Impaired, Severely Multiply Impaired, Speech/Language Impaired, and Deaf/Hard of Hearing. Designations of Traumatic Brain Injury, Physical Impairment, and Developmental Cognitive Disabilities stayed relatively flat or decreased in the past five years.

Impact of ABS licensure

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. While undergraduate options remain, enrollment is often low or non-existent. Based on current data from PELSB, there are currently eleven baccalaureate programs offering ABS licensure, while there are only 1-6 programs offering select categorical licensure areas (SLD, EBD, Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), Developmental Adapted Physical Education (DAPE), and Developmental Delay (DD).) The decrease in disability-specific licensure programs at the undergraduate level contrasts with an increase in ABS licensure in undergraduate work, with the 2017-2018 ABS enrollment more than all the other areas combined (513 compared to 332.)

Shortages of teacher preparation programs also exist for low incidence areas not addressed in the ABS license. There are currently no licensure programs for Blind/Visually Impaired licenses, only one program for Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Oral/Aural (DHH O/A) licensure, and one program for Physical/Health Disabilities (PHD) in Minnesota. In addition, The 2015 Report of Teacher Supply and Demand included Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI), DHH, and PHD in its list of the top 15 most difficult to fill vacancies.⁵ The most recent (2017) report did not include a similar 'top 15' analysis, but each of these three areas was again described as difficult to fill based on the same survey that was used in the 2015 report.⁶ There may be a higher level of teacher retirements in some of these assignment areas. In a 2015 MDE analysis of the average age of teachers by special education assignment, the three groups of teachers with the highest average age were (in descending order):

⁵ <https://www.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2015/mandated/150084.pdf> Accessed October 19, 2018.

⁶ <https://www.leg.state.mn.us/docs/2017/mandated/170245.pdf> Accessed October 19, 2018.

- Blind/Visually Impaired (51.1 years average age);
- Physically Impaired (49.1 years average age); and
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing (45.9 years average age)

The disability-specific anchor license for the ABS license helped create a model where the ABS license is more commonly taught at the undergraduate level, leaving the additional license to occur in a post-baccalaureate setting. A program that is providing the “add-on” to the ABS license needs to provide a practicum experience and meet the standards for the disability-specific category only at the moderate to severe level. The intent of the ABS was to streamline the additional requirement for licensees and not require significant expense or time. However, since teacher preparation providers are permitted to design programs to meet these standards in their own ways, there is wide variation for requirements of credits, time, and cost of the add-on license.

During the development of the ABS license, stakeholders discussed disability categories at length. At that time, licensure for some areas was not developed (Deaf/Blind, Traumatic Brain Injury). There is still a gap between the availability of licenses and the number of students in some disability categories.

Current licenses and assignments

Table 2 shows the current number of licensed teachers actively teaching in each special education field during the 2017-18 school year. The table includes the total number of assignments for each field, the number of permissions used for each field, and the number of newly licensed individuals. This gives a picture of the high number of special permissions used in special education—a gap that the number of newly licensed teachers cannot fill. Data on licensure is from PELSB licensure, employment, and assignment tables. Data on enrollment is from the 2018 Data Summary Report provided by each teacher preparation provider.

Table 2: Special Education Teacher licensure status 2017-2018

License	Active Licenses⁷	Total Permissions⁸	Assignments⁹ in FTE holding License/Permission	New Initial Licenses	New Additional Licenses
Academic and Behavioral Strategist	1643	354	208/67	519	84
Autism Spectrum Disorders	2143	463	639/137	64	181
Blind or Visually Impaired	165	30	61/10	3	14
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	386	34	134/10	13	4
Development Disabilities	2227	249	Not available	118	52
Developmental/ Adapted Physical Education (DAPE)	1778	91	306/18	28	21
Early Childhood Special Education	2381	253	1142/105	73	56
Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD)	6854	597	1786/241	119	117
Learning Disabilities (LD)	8775	397	2080/149	166	130
Mild to Moderate Mentally Handicapped	3430	Not available	661/42	0	0

⁷ Active License: Duplicated count of individuals who holds the license for the assignment and was actively teaching during the 17-18 academic year.

⁸ Permission: Number of permissions granted by the board to teach without full licensure, including limited license, non-licensed community expert, and personnel variance.

⁹ Assignment: The actual full-time equivalency of the teaching assignments for each area, separated by teachers licensed for the assignment and those permitted to teach for the assignment.

License	Active Licenses ⁷	Total Permissions ⁸	Assignments ⁹ in FTE holding License/Permission	New Initial Licenses	New Additional Licenses
Mildly Handicapped	23	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available
Moderate to Severe Mentally Handicapped	1591	Not available	662/24	0	0
Oral/Aural Deaf Education	95	0	23/0	5	5
Physical and Health Disabilities	186	37	55/7	5	8
Physically Handicapped	102	0	Not available	0	0

The difference between categories of licensure and types of assignments creates difficulty for a direct comparison. With the changing licensure titles, an individual with a “Moderate to Severe Handicapped” license still remains able to teach, but no longer aligns with new student categories or licensure categories.

The percentage of individuals working on a permission in a licensure area is the strongest measure 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. Of those holding a license for the assignment, that data includes a small percentage now licensed with an ABS license.

The alignment between teacher shortages (based on special permissions being used) and cross-categorical licensure is not straightforward. The number of special permissions in the area of ABS is just as high (if not higher) than in disability-specific areas. Creating a broader cross-categorical licensure does not, based on the data from the ABS license, reduce the teacher shortage. Based on this data, the ABS allows individuals without full preparation to teach a wider group of students on the ABS special permission.

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.

Minnesota landscape summary

As with many changes in education, it is difficult to gather data on impact when changes are often implemented before the initial proposal has been given time to provide evidence. This is certainly the case with the ABS license

and its impact on teacher preparation and teacher assignments. Since the legislature removed the requirement for an ABS teacher to add a disability-specific license within their first five years, we will not have long term data on how that requirement would have impacted the expertise of special education teachers, impacted the shortage areas in disability-specific categories, and fully shaped the role of teacher preparation at the graduate and undergraduate level.

National landscape

The subcommittee considered how other states approach special education licensure. Members used two main sources of information in this analysis: a published review of the special education licensure landscape¹⁰ and a collection of special education licensure information for the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Special education licensure landscape in 2016

In their research, Sindelar, Fisher, and Myers (2018) organized state special education licensure structures by two characteristics—the presence or absence of grade bands and differentiation by category or severity. They assessed the effects of these structure characteristics on student outcomes and special education teacher shortages. They also made a number of points in their article that are useful for the subcommittee’s efforts.

Sindelar et al. observed that scholarly reviews of special education licensure are rare with the last major one conducted in 2003 on licensure practices in 2000.¹¹ That report informed the Board of Teaching’s special education licensure review and revision process that began in 2008. They also noted that states’ licensure structures often change and that 34 states changed licensure structures between 2000 and 2016. There is no consensus regarding the pattern or direction of the changes that are occurring, suggesting that there are not particular trends Minnesota should be considering.

In their analyses of the 2016 information, the authors found that most states differentiate licensure for (a) preschool teachers, (b) teachers of students who are blind or visually impaired, and (c) teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Generic licenses are also very common. Relative to the landscape in 2000, fewer states are using disability categories and more differentiate based on of grade or severity. There were no relationships between the characteristics of grade bands or differentiation by category or severity on either student outcomes (as measured by National Assessment of Educational Progress reading and math scores for special education

¹⁰ Sindelar, P. T., Fisher, T. L., & Myers, J. A. (2018). The landscape of special education licensure, 2016. *Teacher Education and Special Education*. Published online March 5, 2018. DOI: 10.1177/0888406418761533.

¹¹ Geiger, W. L., Crutchfield, M. D., & Mainzer, R. (2003). The status of licensure of special education teachers in the 21st century (COPSSE Document No. RS-7). Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education, University of Florida.

students in the 4th and 8th grade) or states’ proportions of highly qualified special education teachers. The authors suggest that there may be differences in achievement if such analyses consider disaggregated data.

States’ approaches to special education licensure in 2018

The subcommittee conducted its own analysis of states’ special education licensure in June of 2018. The subcommittee collected information on the 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. Information about licenses in the areas of giftedness or adapted physical education was not included, nor was age or grade information when the license served an expansive range, such as Kindergarten-Grade 12 or Birth-21. The subcommittee did not contact state departments of education to verify or seek additional information on what appeared on their websites. Appendix C reports the full set of special education licenses collected.

Table 3 summarizes the information from Appendix C, 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;
- 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;
- Age distinctions: Holding early childhood aside, licenses by grade level or range, e.g., elementary and secondary.

Table 3: Special education licenses by state, 2018

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		X	X	X	
Alaska	X		4	X	X	X	
Arizona	X	X		X	X	X	
Arkansas	X		1	X	X	X	X
California	X	X	8	X	X	X	
Colorado	X			X	X	X	
Connecticut	X			X	X	X	
Delaware	X	X		X	X	X	
DC	X		3	X	X	X	

State	Cross-Categorical Option(s)	Severe Option(s)	# of Categorical Options	ECSE Option(s)	Deaf Hard of Hearing	Blind Visually Impaired	Age Distinctions
Florida	X	X	2	X	X	X	
Georgia	X		3	X	X	X	
Hawai'i	X	X	1		X	X	
Idaho	X			X	X	X	
Illinois	X		1	X	X	X	
Indiana	X	X			X	X	
Iowa	X		3	X	X	X	
Kansas	X	X					
Kentucky	X	X		X			
Louisiana	X	X	1	X	X	X	X
Maine	X	X		X	X	X	X
Maryland	X	X		X	X	X	X
Massachusetts	X	X			X	X	X
Michigan			5	X	X	X	
Minnesota	X		5	X	X	X	
Mississippi	X	X	2	X	X	X	X
Missouri	X	X		X	X	X	
Montana	X						
Nebraska	X	X	1	X	X	X	
Nevada	X		2	X	X	X	
New Hampshire	X		4	X	X	X	
New Jersey	X				X	X	
New Mexico	X					X	
New York	X			X	X	X	X
North Carolina	X	X	3		X	X	
North Dakota	X		3	X	X	X	
Ohio	X	X		X	X	X	
Oklahoma	X	X	4		X	X	
Oregon	X		3	X	X	X	X
Pennsylvania	X		1		X	X	X
Rhode Island	X	X		X	X	X	X
South Carolina	X	X	3	X	X	X	
South Dakota	X			X	X	X	
Tennessee	X			X	X	X	X
Texas	X	X	7	X	X	X	X
Utah	X	X	1		X	X	

State	Cross-Categorical Option(s)	Severe Option(s)	# of Categorical Options	ECSE Option(s)	Deaf Hard of Hearing	Blind Visually Impaired	Age Distinctions
Vermont	X	X		X	X	X	
Virginia	X	X		X	X	X	
Washington	X			X	X		
West Virginia	X	X	4	X	X	X	
Wisconsin	X		3	X	X	X	
Wyoming	X		4	X	X	X	
TOTALS	50 (98%)	26 (51%)	27 (53%)	40 (78%)	47 (92%)	47 (92%)	12 (24%)

According to these 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. Special education licenses based on limited age bands were less common (only 24 percent of the states.) The results for Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Blind/Visually Impaired, Early Childhood Special Education, Severe, and age distinctions are similar to what Sindelar et al. (2018) found. While there are differences in the degree of use of our cross-categorical versus their generic options, this is probably due to the use of different classification approaches. There are also differences in the degree of use of categorical licenses.

Summary of national approaches to special education licensure

The subcommittee highlighted two main points from their review of other state approaches. First, with its options for a cross-categorical license, some categorical licenses, and licenses for early childhood special education, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, and Blind/Visually Impaired, 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 or unique in any way.

Second, in addition to their analyses, Sindelar et al. made a key observation that was useful to the subcommittee’s deliberations. They suggested that the desirability of special education licensure structures might differ based on the interests and perspectives of the various stakeholders. For instance, schools might want the flexibility of generalist licenses but parents and teacher educators might prefer the specificity of categorical approaches. As such, they noted that “[s]tates engaging in licensure reform must endeavor to balance the competing interests of schools, teacher educators, and parents and other advocates” (p. 14). The subcommittee kept this recommendation in mind as it considered options.

Special education license review survey

The subcommittee surveyed a range of stakeholders across Minnesota in order to collect their opinions about specific special education licensure topics. The subcommittee used an iterative group process to draft, review, revise, and finalize an online survey, and administered the survey using SurveyGizmo software.

The goals for the survey were to:

- a) Collect information related to the charges to the subcommittee;
- b) Keep the survey as simple and short as possible;
- c) Use survey logic when appropriate to solicit more information from some groups of respondents; and
- d) Avoid collecting confidential or identifying information.

Survey methodology and limitations

The survey included items that collected basic demographic information about the respondents as well as questions addressing which special education categories of students could or could not be well-served by a cross categorical license, and the positive impacts and the challenges of the ABS license. The survey items were designed to provide quantitative data for ease of analysis but also solicited the respondents' reasoning for their answers through open-ended questions.

Development of the survey began in June of 2018 and was completed in August of 2018. The survey was distributed by email on August 14, 2018 and closed on August 29, 2018. The subcommittee provided guidance on the constituencies to whom the survey should be sent and, in some cases, the names of specific organizations. PELSB sent the survey via email to those groups and to other relevant email distribution lists. The lists and the groups included:

- Minnesota Administrators for Special Education;
- PACER Center;
- Education Minnesota lists of member educators (teachers and education support professionals) who identify as special educators;
- Statewide educator listservs for: Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Blind/Visually Impaired, Physical and Health Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Other Health Disabilities, Traumatic Brain Injury, Developmental and Cognitive Disabilities; and
- PELSB special education and teacher preparation listservs.

Recipients were also asked to distribute the survey to others whom they thought might want to provide input. Given this distribution approach, it is not possible to determine a response rate for any of the stakeholder groups. For those stakeholder groups where the Minnesota population is known, that number is provided in Table 4. Some surveys are designed to gauge the opinion of an entire population or group, and the results can be said to be representative. This survey, however, was designed to gather as much information as possible from special education license stakeholders, and the individuals who responded to this survey may not be representative of the populations of the stakeholder groups.

The timeline of the PELSB charge from the legislature necessitated that the survey be distributed early enough for responses to be collected and analyzed for inclusion in this report. The subcommittee worked to select a distribution window that would overlap with many educators returning to work for the 2018-2019 school year. However, due to the variability in district schedules, there was no way to ensure that all schools were back in session prior to the closing date of the survey. Given the large number of responses—1,498 (1,364 complete and 134 partial)—as well as the distributions of respondents across stakeholder roles, regions of the state, and

urban/suburban/rural settings, the subcommittee feels it can reasonably use the information collected to help understand the current situation and identify patterns and trends.

Survey results

This section provides a summary of the survey results. A complete report of the quantitative survey results is included in Appendix D.

Table 4 is a count of survey respondents' indicated role in special education. The subcommittee met during the time that the survey was open for responses and reviewed the response rates and the special education roles indicated by respondents. Based on this review, staff sent a second wave of emails encouraging stakeholders to participate in the survey. Particular effort was focused on soliciting input from families of students receiving special education services as well as teacher holding an ABS license, because the 'Parent/Family Member' response rate was initially low as was the response rate from teachers indicating ABS licensure. The email push was successful in increasing response rates.

Table 4: Respondent count by role (N=1364)

Role	Count	Percent
Building Principal (N=4910)	20	1.5
Other - (Please describe)	94	6.9
Paraprofessional/Educational Assistant	52	3.8
Parent/Family Member	136	10.0
Related Service Provider	56	4.1
Special Education Director (N=834)	40	2.9
Special Education Supervisor/Coordinator	48	3.5
Special Education Teacher (N=10012)	893	65.5
Teacher Preparation Faculty	25	1.8

The survey asked respondents to indicate the Minnesota Economic Development Region in which they work and/or live, as well as their geographic area. Region 11 (the Twin Cities Metro Area) represented 466 (34.2 percent) of respondents, and the geographic area responses were: Urban, 20 percent; Suburban, 33.9 percent; and Rural, 46.1 percent. Given the high percentage of respondents (65.8 percent) from Regions outside the Twin Cities Metro area and the high percentage of respondents who indicated 'Rural' (46.1 percent) as their geographic area, the subcommittee felt that stakeholders from greater Minnesota were well represented.

Table 5 and Table 6 summarize survey respondents' views on the disability category areas that could be served by cross-categorical or categorical licenses. Among respondents who indicated 'Parent/Family Member' as their role in special education, a high percentage also indicated that their child is receiving services under an Autism

Spectrum Disorders label (52.7 percent, 72 respondents). The highest ratings (greater than 40 percent) for disability categories that the respondents indicated could be well-served by a cross-categorical license included ASD (57.4 percent), Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD) (42.9 percent), EBD (47.0 percent), Other Health Disabilities (OHD) (54.8 percent), and SLD (48.2 percent). These are the same disability categories currently included in the ABS license. The lowest rating (less than 10 percent) included BVI (9.9 percent), DB (8.9 percent), and DHH (9.9 percent).

Table 5: Are there disability category areas that could be well-served by a cross-categorical license?

Value	Count	Percent
Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)	782	57.4
Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI)	135	9.9
Deaf-Blind (DB)	121	8.9
Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)	135	9.9
Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD)	585	42.9
Developmental Delay (DD)	451	33.1
Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD)	641	47.0
Other Health Disabilities (OHD)	747	54.8
Physically Impaired (PI)	230	16.9
Severely Multiply Impaired (SMI)	262	19.2
Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)	657	48.2
Speech or Language Impairments (SLI)	129	9.5
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	330	24.2
Other - (Please describe)	113	8.3

Table 6: Are there disability category areas that should have a separate categorical license?

Value	Count	Percent
Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)	557	40.9
Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI)	677	49.7

Value	Count	Percent
Deaf-Blind (DB)	639	46.9
Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)	670	49.2
Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD)	330	24.2
Developmental Delay (DD)	185	13.6
Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD)	433	31.8
Other Health Disabilities (OHD)	119	8.7
Physically Impaired (PI)	328	24.1
Severely Multiply Impaired (SMI)	382	28.0
Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)	211	15.5
Speech or Language Impairments (SLI)	607	44.5
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	266	19.4
Other - (Please describe)	94	6.9

Table 7 summarizes the average rating of the perceived positive impacts of the ABS license in Minnesota by respondent role. A rating of one represents very low positive impact, and a rating of five represents very high positive impact. Most of the respondent groups indicated a middle rating, close to three, of the positive impact of the ABS license. The respondent group with the lowest average rating was 'Parent/Family Member' (2.98). The qualitative data associated with this question suggested that some of the parents and family members who responded to the survey were either unsure of the license(s) held by the teachers providing special education services to their child or family member or unfamiliar with the ABS license, or both.

Special Education Directors indicated a higher than average positive impact (4.02). Through their comments, directors indicated that they are able to overcome the challenges they face by providing professional development and that the ABS license offers a welcome flexibility in addressing staffing challenges.

Table 7: Average positive impact rating of the ABS license by respondent role (scale of 1 to 5)

Role	Average Rating
Building Principal	3.52
Other	3.22
Paraprofessional/Educational Assistant	3.66
Parent/Family Member	2.98
Related Services Provider	3

Role	Average Rating
Special Education Director	4.02
Special Education Teacher	3.2
Supervisor	3.6
Teacher Preparation Faculty	3.66

Table 8 summarizes the average rating of the perceived challenges of the ABS license in Minnesota by respondent role. A rating of one represents very low challenges, and a rating of five represents very high challenges. Most of the respondent groups indicated a middle rating close to three.

Table 8: Average challenges rating of the ABS license by respondent role (scale of 1 to 5)

Role	Average Rating
Building Principal	3.43
Other	3.4
Paraprofessional/Educational Assistant	3.21
Parent/Family Member	3.33
Related Services Provider	3.24
Special Education Director	2.82
Special Education Teacher	3.18
Supervisor	3.12
Teacher Preparation Faculty	3.21

Respondents were also asked to provide more information about the positive impacts and challenges of the ABS license in Minnesota. More than 2,300 comments were received in response to these questions. These responses were categorized by respondents' role in special education. Due to time constraints related to this report, a thorough qualitative analysis was not possible. Table 9 provides a sample of comments received from survey respondents that the subcommittee felt were illustrative of respondent comment themes.

Table 9: Sample unedited comments by respondent role

Role	Positive Comments	Challenges Comments
Building Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For small, rural districts, an ABS license would allow districts to be financially responsible as they determine the amount of Special Education teachers based on the needs of the students. Many students struggle and a specialist in this area can offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University systems will need to make adjustments to the classes that are required in order to prepare those who obtain an ABS license. Professional development opportunities will also need to reflect training for multiple needs as well.

Role	Positive Comments	Challenges Comments
	<p>support to students, staff, and families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is too broad -- other than licensing, students who come out of school with an ABS have a low-level of understanding of what disabilities the license is supposed to cover. I loathe hiring candidates with ABS because they need TONS of support.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach a variety of students not just one disability. • The ABS licensed teacher serves well on the IEP team since they have the cross-categorical training • Our special education team works with students from every disability category. There are no longer silos in special education. The ABS license would allow more flexibility and greater quality of service for all special needs students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not provide the in-depth knowledge of specific disabilities that require more knowledge to effectively support. Most people licensed in ABS that I know have gone back for a more specific license later. • New staff have to enter master's program so quickly - this costs a lot in a profession that pays so poorly and is also a lot of time and energy for those already putting in tons of extra hours as a new teacher. • One of the biggest challenges may be to get parents to understand & support this change.
Paraprofessionals or Educational Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They can give an outside perspective by monitoring the behavior. Providing staff with recommendations as to how to best serve the students' needs academically and behavioral. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers might feel more apt with a particular disability but is forced by their administration to serve other students that they aren't as comfortable with in order to fill positions.
Parents or Family Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special ed teachers need more training in specific disabilities in general. The ABS licensed teacher is better equipped to help their kids because they're working from a position of greater knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think this is good, but my wife is educator and may have a different opinion. The bigger issue for us in a rural school district is finding someone qualified in special ed. Last year, my daughter's special ed

Role	Positive Comments	Challenges Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain strategies learned through an ABS licensure/specialization bring more tools into the schools to address an array of issues that teachers face. The special ed kids of today were labeled 'problem children' historically. With a deeper understanding that we have gained over the years, we can help a greater variety of students to become successful rather than giving up (due to not having enough useful strategies and tool in one's toolkit). • It would give them more skills to work specifically work with a wide range of children, Can also help with providing assistance to children who are those in between categories and/or multiple disabilities. 	<p>teacher had zero background or experience in special ed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It does not give the detailed specific education needed to be a quality provider to each of those disability areas to actually impact change for students. I believe it helped schools meet licensure requirements but did not improve quality education for students. • Each area has so many variations and strategies needed, let alone the variations with the spectrum itself, that we could end up with more of a melting pot than a specialty.
Related Service Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a wider range of knowledge is beneficial, as it provides a stronger base for collaboration across disability areas. • This license has made it easier for districts to fill positions, resulting in students being able to be serviced by a licensed special ed teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff that I have worked with ABS certificates are not as well trained as staff licensed in a specific disability area. • As with all newly licensed SpEd staff, there are gaps in both procedural (due process, running meetings, etc.) as well as missing skills. Both can be taught and addressed via experience
Special Ed Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can have one resource serve many students, so I can spend more money on developing them professionally versus contracting or employing multiple people with limited skill sets and not be able to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could be a catch-all and candidates could hide behind this licensure. • The only challenge I can see is the limitation that the license holds in working with only mildly disabled students. Many colleges have dropped their undergraduate

Role	Positive Comments	Challenges Comments
	<p>afford the develop their skill set professionally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In rural Minnesota, the reality is that teachers have multiple disabilities on their caseloads. We need teachers who are cross-trained to work with students with a variety of disabilities. 	<p>programs for EBD, making it challenging to find appropriately licensed staff for setting IV programs. I would like to see the limitations to the cross-categorical ABS license removed so that this license can also be used for setting IV programs.</p>
Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers are learners. The majority of teachers will seek and access training opportunities to fill gaps in their knowledge. Special education students in a resource setting are typically served in a cross-categorical setting. The ABS license allows us to appropriately do this. Districts are able to grow their own in that they can provide additional mentoring to teachers in order to fill needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Districts are not using ABS teachers for mild/moderate students but instead hiring them for any special education position. 2. ABS teachers do not receive the training needed to effectively work with students with moderate+ needs. 3. Categorical licensing serves to provide teachers the knowledge and skills they need to effectively teach unique populations of students. I have found that the teachers are not well trained in any of the areas. Reading instruction is weak, behavior management skills are weak, etc.
Special Education Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can work with a variety of disability areas. Are able to teach to the entire child. Allows for flexibility in serving children. This license allows small/rural districts to hire a trained special educator. The need for special educators is great in rural areas. This is a highly qualified teacher with a broad background. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Districts may dump more challenging students on this teacher. Need more specialized training for moderate to severe students This license offers breadth but not depth
Teacher Preparation Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More teachers can fill more positions, teachers have a wider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This license was issued just so that school administrators could fill

Role	Positive Comments	Challenges Comments
	<p>variety of job opportunities. Students span disability categories, so should teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SpEd teacher vacancies are a little less of a problem when people are trained to cover a wider range of disabilities...so service minutes and the like are more able to be met, and schools/districts are more able to fill their teaching positions. • ABS license also reflects more typically the types of caseloads teachers have in smaller schools. Typically teachers aren't serving students in just one or two disability categories, they are serving the students in their school that qualify for services regardless of disability area. This makes sense and should continue. 	<p>hard-to-fill teaching positions. That is not a good enough reason for de-skilling and de-professionalizing our teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perhaps because of the breadth of the license, there isn't as much depth of knowledge attained. • This license also stretches teachers very thinly, particularly in the rural areas where caseloads can be enormous yet direct contact service minimal (just because everyone is spending all their time traveling from school to school and/or on SpEd paperwork).

Survey conclusions

As noted in the national landscape review, perspectives across stakeholder groups differ. Districts and administrators are looking for more flexibility and ways to expand their pool of educators in a time of teacher shortages. Preparation providers and parents emphasize the need for high quality, specific training and have high expectations to meet the needs of each individual child. This difference is evidenced in the survey data, with overall responses leaning towards neutral on our current cross-categorical option.

Options for cross-categorical licenses

The subcommittee reviewed the data collected and analyzed by smaller groups within the subcommittee. From this review, the subcommittee listed a number of reasonable options for special education licensing in Minnesota. A summary of those options can be found in Appendix E. Subcommittee members representing different

stakeholder groups reviewed these options with others in their organizations and selected their top choices. Through this process, three options stood out.

Option 1: No Change

While there are unintended consequences with the mild-moderate, cross-categorical ABS license (as outlined in this report), stakeholders agreed that there has not been enough time to ascertain the full impact of this change. Districts are becoming more accustomed to the licensure type and how to use ABS licensed individuals with students and on IEP teams. The ability to add special education licensure fields, while no longer required, remains a manageable option for teachers to gain further expertise working with students. Stakeholders noted that this option should include clear guidelines for the placement/settings of ABS teachers within a school.

Option 2: Low-Incidence Micro-Credential

Designing standards and the ability to add disability-specific licensure areas, particularly in areas without a license and in low-incidence areas, appealed to many stakeholders. Stakeholders differed in how the details of such a model would work, noting the continued challenge to ensure robust preparation for special education teachers with less time intensive and less expensive preparation options.

Option 3: Micro-Credential Endorsement

Similar to the low-incidence micro-credential, this option would allow a student in a special education preparation program to add a disability-specific focus within the cross-categorical licensure program. There remains concern over teacher preparation providers' ability to support the add-ons and that additional requirements would prevent candidates from completing their degree in a reasonable timeframe. However, stakeholders agreed that this option would provide the cross-categorical flexibility without losing disability-specific expertise in the field.

Conclusion

Board co-chairs on the subcommittee and board staff prepared a draft of this report for board members. Board members support the process and analysis provided by the subcommittee. Board members were encouraged to hear stakeholders on the subcommittee call for additional time to analyze data, process cross-categorical options with more stakeholders, and fully evaluate the consequences of another major change to special education licensure before moving forward. Board members have also heard concerns regarding the preparation of teachers in disability-specific licensure areas, hearing that preparation for Level IV settings is not as strong as needed by districts.

Board members look forward to conversations with legislators that ensure students with the greatest need in Minnesota are taught by highly trained individuals. They hope that alternative and innovative ways to quality preparation are a continual part of the conversation.

Appendix A: Text of legislation

Laws of Minnesota 2017, 1st Spec. Sess. chapter 5, article 3, section 31

TEACHER OF SPECIAL EDUCATION LICENSE REVIEW.

The Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board must conduct a review of all the available teacher of special education licenses and determine the options for cross-categorical licenses for teachers of special education.

The board must report its findings and draft legislation, if needed, to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 education by December 14, 2018.

Appendix B: Special education subcommittee roster

Name	Organization	Email
Brenda Ackerson	RLIF	backers@wao.k12.mn.us
David Aron	Education Minnesota	David.aron@edmn.org
Ingrid Aasan	RLIF	Ingrid.aasan@metroecsu.org
Jennifer Eldred	North Branch Area Public Schools	jeldred@isd138.org
Heidi Hahn, Co-Chair	PELSB	heidi.hahn@state.mn.us
Cheryl Hall	Faribault School District	chall@northfieldschools.org
Becca Jackson	MDE/Staff	rebecca.jackson@state.mn.us
Clay Keller	MDE	clay.keller@state.mn.us
Justin Killian	Education Minnesota	Justin.Killian@edmn.org
John Klaber	MASE	jpklaber@gmail.com
Anne Lindgren	PELSB	anne.lindgren@state.mn.us
Alex Liuzzi	PELSB Director	Alex.Liuzzi@state.mn.us
Gerry Nierengarten	University of Minnesota Duluth	gniereng@d.umn.edu
Jamie Nord	St. Croix River Education Dist.	jnord@scred.k12.mn.us
Debby Odell	PELSB	debby.odell@state.mn.us
Laura Pingry-Kile	Eastern Carver County Schools	pingry-kile@district112.org
Brian Rappe, Co-chair	PELSB	brian.rappe@state.mn.us
Lynn Stansberry	University of St. Thomas	lstansberry@stthomas.edu
Christian Wernau	RLIF	cwernau@zumbroed.org
Robyn Widley	MDE	robyn.widley@state.mn.us

MASE: Minnesota Administrators for Special Education

MDE: Minnesota Department of Education

PELSB: Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board

RLIF: Regional Low Incidence Facilitator

Appendix C: Special education licensure 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"> • Mild/Moderate • Moderate/Severe • Language and Academic Development

State	Special Education Licenses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and Health Impairment • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Visual Impairment • Early Childhood Special Education (B-PK) • Endorsements/Additional Authorizations: • Emotional Disturbance • Autism Spectrum Disorders • Other Health Impairment • Orthopedic Impairment • Traumatic Brain Injury • Deaf-Blind • Early Childhood Special Education (B-PK)
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)

State	Special Education Licenses
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
Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education General Curriculum • Special Education Adapted Curriculum • Special Education Transition Specialist • Learning Disabilities • Behavior Disorders • Physical and Health Disabilities • Deaf Education • Visual Impairment • Special Education General Curriculum/Early Childhood Education (P-5) • 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

State	Special Education Licenses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior Intervention Specialist • Bilingual Special Education Specialist • Technology Specialist • Transition Specialist • Deaf-Blind Specialist
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)
Kentucky	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and Behavior Disorders • Moderate and Severe Disabilities • Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education
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

State	Special Education Licenses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher of the Deaf or Hearing Impaired • Teacher of Blind or Visually Impaired • Teacher of Students with Disabilities (0-Age 5)
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-Inclusion and Collaboration Specialist • Special Education-Functional Academic Skills and Independent Living Specialist • Special Education-Behavior Intervention Specialist • Special Education-Deaf or Hard of Hearing • Special Education-Visual Impairment • Special Education-Early Intervention Specialist (B-PK) • Special Education Early Childhood (B-K) • Early Childhood Inclusive
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)
New Jersey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Disabilities

State	Special Education Licenses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with Disabilities (1-6) • Students with Disabilities (7-12) • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Blind and Visually Impaired • Students with Disabilities (B-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 • Severe-Profound/Multiple Disabilities • Deaf/Hard of Hearing • Blind/Visual Impairment • Certificates available: • Multiple Disabilities • Autism • Other Health Impairment

State	Special Education Licenses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traumatic Brain Injury • Deaf-Blindness
Oregon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional Children • Special Education Early Childhood/Elementary • Special Education Elementary/Middle Level • Special Education Middle Level/High School • Mentally Retarded • Physically Handicapped • Autism Spectrum Disorder Specialist • Deaf • Hard of Hearing • Visually Impaired • Early Intervention/Special Education
Pennsylvania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education (PK-8) • Special Education (7-12) • Autism Endorsement • 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

State	Special Education Licenses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Interventionist (K-8) • Special Education Interventionist (6-12) • Special Education Hearing • Special Education Vision • Special Education Preschool/Early Childhood (PK-3)
Texas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic Special Education • Elementary Generic Special Education • Secondary Generic Special Education • Special Education Supplemental • Severely and Profoundly Handicapped • Language and/or Learning Disabilities • Emotionally Disturbed • Severely Emotionally Disturbed and Autistic • Mentally Retarded • Physically Handicapped • Full-Time Teacher of Orthopedically Impaired or Other Health Impaired in a Hospital Class or Home-Based Instruction • Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Deaf School (Texas State School for the Deaf only) • Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments • Blind School (Texas State School for the Blind and Visually Impaired only) • Deaf-Blind • Early Childhood Education for Handicapped Children (Infants-Grade 6)
Utah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild/Moderate • Severe Disabilities • Deaf and Hard of Hearing • Visual Impairments • Deaf-blind
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

State	Special Education Licenses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
Wisconsin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-Categorical Special Education • Specific Learning Disabilities • Emotional Behavioral Disabilities • Intellectual Disabilities • Deaf or 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 D: Survey

Question 1: Please indicate your current role in special education

Value	Percent
Building Principal	1.5
Other	6.9
Paraprofessional/Educational Assistant	3.8
Parent/Family Member	10
Related Service Provider	4.1
Special Education Director	2.9
Special Education Supervisor/Coordinator	3.5
Special Education Teacher	65.5
Teacher Preparation Faculty	1.8

Question 2: Which of the following best describes where you work or live?¹²

Value	Percent
Region 1	1.8
Region 2	2.4
Region 3	4.5
Region 4	4.3
Region 5	7.4
Region 6	5.7
Region 7	16.5
Region 8	4.2
Region 9	6.3
Region 10	12.7
Region 11	34.2

Question 3: Which of the following best describes the area where you work or live?

Value	Percent
Rural	44.1
Suburban	38.9
Urban	17.0

¹² The MDE region map can be found here: <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/Data/Maps/> and select the Economic Development Regions Map, accessed October 17, 2018.

Question 4: Please indicate the special education license(s) that you currently hold in Minnesota. (Check all that apply.)

Value	Percent
Academic and Behavioral Strategist (ABS)	22.5
Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)	20.5
Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI)	2.0
Deaf or Hard of Hearing, or Oral/Aural Deaf Education (DHH)	3.8
Developmental Disabilities (DD)	24.2
Developmental/Adaptive Physical Education (DAPE)	0.9
Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)	11.2
Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD)	36.8
Learning Disabilities (LD)	49.1
Other	14.0
Physical and Health Disabilities (PHD)	2.9

Question 5: Please indicate the area(s) in which you provide related services. (Check all that apply.)

Value	Percent
Counseling Services (Including Rehabilitation Counseling)	6.7
Early Identification and Evaluation Services	11.7
Medical Services (for Diagnostic or Evaluation Purposes)	1.7
Occupational Therapy Services	18.3
Parent Counseling and Training Services	3.3
Physical Therapy Services	1.7
Psychological Services	13.3
School Health and/or School Nurse Services	8.3
Social Work Services	16.7
Speech-Language Services	38.3

Question 6: Please indicate the special education label(s) under which your child or family member is currently receiving special education services. (Check all that apply.)

Value	Percent
Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)	52.7
Blind-Visually Impaired (BVI)	1.4
Deaf-Blind (DB)	1.4
Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)	3.4
Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD)	27.7
Emotional or Behavioral Disorders (EBD)	24.3
Other Health Disabilities (OHD)	23.0
Physically Impaired (PI)	6.1

Value	Percent
Severely Multiply Impaired (SMI)	4.7
Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)	17.6
Speech or Language Impairments (SLI)	25.0
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	0.7
Other	11.5
Not Sure	0.7

Question 7: Are there disability category areas that could be well-served by a cross-categorical license? (Check all that apply.)

Value	Percent
Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)	57.4
Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI)	9.9
Deaf-Blind (DB)	8.9
Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)	9.9
Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD)	42.9
Developmental Delay (DD)	33.1
Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD)	47.0
Other Health Disabilities (OHD)	54.8
Physically Impaired (PI)	16.9
Severely Multiply Impaired (SMI)	19.2
Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)	48.2
Speech or Language Impairments (SLI)	9.5
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	24.2
Other	8.3

Question 8: Are there disability category areas that should have a separate categorical license? (Check all that apply.)

Value	Percent
Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)	40.9
Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI)	49.7
Deaf-Blind (DB)	46.9
Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)	49.2
Developmental Cognitive Disabilities (DCD)	24.2
Developmental Delay (DD)	13.6
Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD)	31.8
Other Health Disabilities (OHD)	8.7
Physically Impaired (PI)	24.1
Severely Multiply Impaired (SMI)	28.0

Value	Percent
Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)	15.5
Speech or Language Impairments (SLI)	44.5
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	19.4
Other	6.9

Question 9: On a scale of 1-5, please share your perception of the positive impacts of the Academic and Behavioral Strategist (ABS) license in Minnesota. (One being very low positive impact, 5 being very high positive impact.)

Value	Percent
1	13.4
2	13.8
3	29.3
4	21.6
5	21.9

Question 10: On a scale of 1-5, please share your perception of the challenges of the Academic and Behavioral Strategist (ABS) license in Minnesota. (One being very low challenges, 5 being very high challenges.)

Value	Percent
1	12.4
2	12.8
3	33.9
4	22.1
5	18.7

Appendix E: Options for cross-categorical licenses

Options	Description
1. Stay the same (one Mild - Moderate, Disability Specific for all others)	Make no changes to the current ABS cross-categorical license for mild to moderate students with EBD, DD, LD, and ASD, with no requirement to add a disability-specific license after five years.
2. Stay the same, but add anchor back with the five year	Make no changes to the current ABS cross-categorical license for mild to moderate students with EBD, DD, LD, and ASD. Add the requirement back to add a disability-specific license before a teacher's first renewal (five years).
3. Stay the same, but add anchor back with the 10 year	Make no changes to the current ABS cross-categorical license for mild to moderate students with EBD, DD, LD, and ASD. Add the requirement back to add a disability-specific license, but allow the teacher 10 years to complete the additional requirement.
4. Keep ABS and add cross-categorical that combines TBI, PI, and OHD (more moderate to severe needs)	Make no changes to the current ABS cross-categorical license for mild to moderate students with EBD, DD, LD, and ASD. Add another cross-categorical license that combines TBI, PI, and OHD for more moderate to severe needs.
5. Moderate to severe cross-categorical	Make no changes to 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.
6. Micro-credentialing that could lead to endorsement or certificate	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.
7. Micro-credentialing for additional Low Incidence areas and non-licensed areas (for specific competencies in areas such as OHD, DB, TBI)	Create a licensure pathway to add disability-specific licensure areas only for low incidence disability areas (DHH, BVI, DAPE) and/or non-licensure areas (OHD, DB, TBI).