

New special education (SPED) licensure rules were effective January 2013. At that time, the special education advisory group provided the following guidance for teaching training programs intending to develop SPED teacher licensure programs.

As of January 2016 new rules for the approval of initial teacher licensure programs were effective.

All special education teacher licensure programs must require a set of courses that address the pedagogy standards of MN RULE 8710.2000, and the special education core standards of MN rule 8710.5000, as well as standards for a specific SPED disability area as in MN rules 8710.5050 through 5850...

Guidance for Standards of Effective Practice (SEP) Programs

Presently approved SEP programs range from 18-20 semester credits
The overall focus of the SEP program is on **general education pedagogy**, not special education pedagogy.

Typical courses include:

- Educational Psychology/Child Development
- Foundations of Education/School & Society
- Introduction to Exceptionalities/Inclusive Education
- Learner Assessment
- Multicultural education/human relations
- Introduction to Education/Learning & Teaching
- Professional ethics

All special education licensure programs require a “core program” that addresses the foundations of special education as per rule 8710.5000.

Guidance for 8710.5000 Core Skills for Special Education Programs

Expected range of 15-20 semester credits

TYPICAL COURSES REQUIRED BY APPROVED PROGRAMS ARE:

- Foundations/intro to special education
- Legal and professional issues in special education
- Behavior management
- Communications/collaboration
- Assessment of needs/ academic instructional methods
- Reading Methods course that complies with statute 122A.09 subdivision 4e addressing the elementary reading competencies of rule 8710.3200 subparts 3C, D, E, F.

Guidance for disability specific, initial SPED licensure programs:

8710.5050 Academic and Behavioral Strategist
8710.5100 Blind or Visually Impaired
8710.5200 Deaf or Hard of Hearing
8710.5250 Oral/Aural Deaf Education
8710.5400 Developmental Disabilities
8710.5500 Early Childhood (Special Education)
8710.5600 Emotional Behavioral disorders
8710.5700 Learning Disabilities
8710.5800 Physical and Health Disabilities
8710.5850 Autism Spectrum Disorders

19-22 course credits **in the specific disability** (these course credits cannot be SEP or Special Education Core courses)

Practicum/student teaching in the disability area, across the learner ages/grades is required as per licensure rules. K-12 programs must have practicum experiences at three levels: elementary, middle school and high school. The scope for some SPED programs includes "birth-K"; [these programs](#) -would require a practicum in that range as well.

Guidance for Academic Behavioral Strategist (ABS) program:

19-22 course credits (these course credits cannot be CORE courses nor SEP courses)

Coursework must address the standards of rule 8710.5050 which include foundational knowledge and methods of teaching learners

- with primary disability areas of autism spectrum disorders (ASD), developmental cognitive disability (DCD), emotional or behavioral disorders (EBD), other health disorders (OHD), and specific learning disabilities (SLD) and
- who have a range of mild to moderate needs in the areas of academics, behavior, social, emotional, communication, and functional performance.

To renew the ABS license after the initial five year validity period, the teacher must demonstrate completion of an approved "Additional to ABS" special education endorsement licensure program to meet licensure requirements in one of the following disability fields:

8710.5400 Developmental Disabilities
8710.5600 Emotional Behavioral Disorders
8710.5700 Learning Disabilities
8710.5850 Autism Spectrum Disorders

Note: "Additional to ABS" special education licensure programs are Board approved programs that meet the following criteria:

Guidance for adding 8710.5400 Developmental Disabilities (DcD) licensure to ABS for renewal of ABS license:

9-12 additional semester credits (not including CORE, SEP or ABS courses) intended to provide a DEEP and comprehensive preparation in a specific disability area including additional practicum experiences as per rule. Note: most in-service teachers prefer to take additional coursework at graduate level for salary advancement purposes

Coursework similar to:

- Characteristics of **severe to profound** DcD with advanced pedagogy/issues/programs
- Instructional methods & behavioral strategies for DcD with a focus on learners with **severe to profound** needs including focus on lifespan, transition, jobs, physical needs, positions, etc.
- Communication/literacy/technologies competencies
- Practicum in both K-6 and 7-12 scope with learners with **severe to profound** DcD. ABS licensed teachers/teacher candidates already have experiences with mild to moderate DcD learners.

Guidance for adding 8710.5600 Emotional Behavioral Disorders licensure (EBD) to ABS for renewal of ABS license:

9-12 additional credits (not including CORE, SEP or ABS courses) intended to provide a DEEP and comprehensive preparation in a specific disability area including additional practicum experiences as per rule. Note: most in-service teachers prefer to take additional coursework at graduate level for salary advancement purposes

Coursework similar to:

- Characteristics of **severe** EBD with advanced pedagogy/issues/programs
- Methods of instruction for learners with **severe** EBD
- Practicum in both K-6 and 7-12 scope with learners with **severe** EBD. ABS licensed teachers/teacher candidates already have experiences with learners with mild to moderate EBD.

Guidance for adding 8710.5850 Autism Spectrum Disorders licensure (ASD) licensure to ABS for renewal of ABS license:

9-12 additional credits (not including courses from CORE, SEP or ABS) intended to provide a DEEP and comprehensive preparation in a specific disability area including additional practicum experiences as per rule. Note: most in-service teachers prefer to take additional coursework at graduate level for salary advancement purposes

Coursework addressing:

- Characteristics of learners with **severe** ASD needs with advanced issues and programming
- Advanced methods and behavioral strategies for ASD
- Communication and social skills
- Academic instructional skills/collaboration
- Practicum with **birth to K**, K-6 and 7-12 scope with learners with **severe** ASD. ABS licensed teachers/teacher candidates already have experiences with learners with mild to moderate ASD.

Guidance for adding 8710.5700 Learning Disabilities (LD) licensure to ABS for renewal of ABS license:

9-12 additional credits (not including SEP, CORE or ABS courses) intended to provide a DEEP and comprehensive preparation in a specific disability area including additional practicum experiences as per rule. Note: most in-service teachers prefer to take additional coursework at graduate level for salary advancement purposes

Coursework addressing:

- Characteristics of learners with **severe** LD with advanced issues and programming
- Methods of instruction for learners with **severe** LD
- Practicum in both K-6 and 7-12 scope with learners with **severe** LD. ABS licensed teachers/teacher candidates already have experiences with learners with mild to moderate LD.