DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARD
1500 Professional Standards Board

1573 Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities

1.0 Content

1.1 This regulation shall apply to the issuance of a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities (Category) Standard Certificate pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §1220(a).

1.1.1 The Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate is required for an educator whose primary assignment is teaching students with autism or severe intellectual disabilities in an approved program or in Delaware public schools. For the purpose of this regulation, "approved program" means a program encompassing or within a public school designated by the Department and the State Board of Education as a component of the Delaware Autism Program.

1.1.2 The Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate is a category Standard Certificate and does not certify an educator to practice in a particular area or teach a particular subject. A category Standard Certificate only establishes that an educator has met the prescribed education, knowledge, or skill to instruct a particular category of students. This certification is limited to the category of students with autism or severe intellectual disabilities.

1.1.3 An educator shall hold at least 1 content area Standard Certificate.

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24 DE Reg. 372 (10/01/20)
28 DE Reg. 812 (05/01/25)

2.0 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this regulation, shall have the following meaning:

"**Autism**" shall have the same meaning as provided in 14 **DE Admin. Code** 925, subsection 6.6.

"**Department**" means the Delaware Department of Education.

"**Educator**" means a person licensed and certified by the State under 14 **Del.C.** Ch. 12 to engage in the practice of instruction, administration or other related professional support services in Delaware public schools, including charter schools, pursuant to rules and regulations promulgated by the Professional Standards Board and approved by the State Board of Education. The term 'educator' does not include substitute teachers.

"**Employing authority**" means any entity which employs educators, and includes school districts, charter schools, boards of directors, and management companies.

"**Immorality**" means conduct which is inconsistent with the rules and principles of morality expected of an educator and may reasonably be found to impair an educator's effectiveness by reason of the educator's unfitness or otherwise.

"**Intellectual disability**" shall have the same meaning as provided in 14 **DE Admin. Code** 925, subsection 6.12.

"**License**" means a credential which authorizes the holder to engage in the practice for which the license is issued.

"**Regionally accredited**" means institutional accreditation from an agency that was designated as a regional accreditor before July 1, 2020, and is currently recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a reliable indicator of the institution's educational quality.

"**Severe intellectual disability**" shall have the same meaning as provided in 14 **DE Admin. Code** 925, subsection 6.12.

"**Standard Certificate**" means a credential issued to certify that an educator has the prescribed knowledge, skill or education to practice in a particular area, teach a particular subject, or teach a category of students.

"**Standards Board**" means the Professional Standards Board established pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §1201.

"**Valid and current license or certificate**" means a current full or permanent certificate or license issued by another state or jurisdiction as an educator. This means the applicant is fully credentialed by having met all of the requirements for full licensure or certification in another state or jurisdiction. It does not include temporary,

emergency, conditional certificates of eligibility or expired certificates or licenses issued from another state or jurisdiction.

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3.0 Issuance of a Standard Certificate

3.1 In accordance with 14 **Del.C.** §1220(a), the Department shall issue a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate to an applicant who:

3.1.1 Holds a valid Delaware Initial, Continuing, or Advanced License or a Standard or Professional Status Certificate issued by the Department prior to August 31, 2003 and meets the requirements set forth in Section 4.0 of this regulation; or

3.1.2 Has met the requirements for an educator's license in Delaware and holds a valid and current license or certificate in teaching students with autism or severe intellectual disabilities.

3.2 Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary herein, the Department shall not act on an application for a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate if the applicant is under official investigation by any national, state, or local authority with the power to issue educator licenses or certifications. The Department shall not act where the allegations include conduct such as immorality, misconduct in office, incompetence, willful neglect of duty, disloyalty, or falsification of credentials until the applicant provides evidence of the investigation's resolution.

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4.0 Prescribed Education, Knowledge, and Skill Requirements

4.1 An applicant shall have satisfied the requirements in subsections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2.

4.1.1 An applicant shall have satisfied 1 of the following education requirements:

4.1.1.1 Obtained and currently maintain an Exceptional Needs Specialist certificate in the specialty area of Mild/Moderate Disabilities or Severe and Multiple Disabilities from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; or

4.1.1.2 Earned a bachelor's or master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university with a minimum of 30 semester hours of coursework in special education with a concentration in autism and severe intellectual disabilities from an educator preparation program approved or recognized by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) or a state where the state approval body employed the appropriate standards; or

4.1.1.3 Satisfactorily completed an alternative routes for licensure or certification program to teach students with autism and severe intellectual disabilities as provided in 14 **Del.C.** §§1260 - 1266; or

4.1.1.4 Satisfactorily completed a Department-approved educator preparation program to teach students with autism and severe intellectual disabilities; or

4.1.1.5 Earned a bachelor's or master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university with a minimum of 30 semester hours of coursework in special education and satisfactorily completed 15 college credits with a focus in autism and severe intellectual disabilities in the areas provided in subsection 4.1.1.5.3 or an equivalent number of hours in professional development with 1 credit equating to 15 hours taken either as part of a degree program or in addition to a degree program from a regionally accredited college or university or a professional development provider approved by the Department in the areas provided in subsection 4.1.1.5.3.

4.1.1.5.1 For the purpose of subsection 4.1.1.5, professional development means a combination of focused, in-depth learning, practice, feedback, reflection, and expert support experiences designed to change the participants' attitudes, insights, and perspectives and ultimately results in improved professional practice.

4.1.1.5.2 Professional development hours may be approved if the applicant shows that the activity meets all of the following criteria:

4.1.1.5.2.1 Relevant courses from a regionally accredited college or university in special education are not available to the applicant online or in the applicant's county of residence; and

4.1.1.5.2.2 The activity is grounded in research and current best practices as judged by the Department's content specialist in special education; and

4.1.1.5.2.3 The activity is documented by the provider to provide knowledge and skills that are required for the special education certification; and

4.1.1.5.2.4 The activity is part of a professional development program that includes knowledge acquisition, skill mastery, descriptive feedback, and refinement of practice in the work setting.

4.1.1.5.3 For the purpose of subsection 4.1.1.5, the areas are the areas specified in subsections 4.1.1.5.3.1 through 4.1.1.5.3.5.

4.1.1.5.3.1 Introduction to autism and severe intellectual disabilities (3 credits);

4.1.1.5.3.2 Methods of Instruction in Academic Standards and Functional Skills (3 credits);

4.1.1.5.3.3 Functional Communication Training (3 credits);

4.1.1.5.3.4 Applied Behavior Analysis for Educators (3 credits); and

4.1.1.5.3.5 Competency-Based Practicum in Behaviorally Based Teaching Techniques (3 credits); or

4.1.1.6 Currently hold a Special Education Teacher of Students with Disabilities Standard Certificate (14 **DE Admin. Code** 1571) and satisfactorily completed 15 college credits with a focus in autism and severe intellectual disabilities in the areas provided in subsection 4.1.1.5.3 or an equivalent number of hours in professional development with 1 credit equating to 15 hours taken either as part of a degree program or in addition to a degree program from a regionally accredited college or university or a professional development provider approved by the Department in the areas provided in subsection 4.1.1.5.3.

4.1.2 An applicant applying after June 30, 2027 shall also have satisfactorily completed 6 college credits in evidence-based reading instruction pursuant to 14 **Del.C.** §1280(c)(3) or an equivalent number of hours in professional development with 1 credit equating to 15 hours taken either as part of a degree program or in addition to a degree program from a regionally accredited college or university or a professional development provider approved by the Department.

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5.0 Application Requirements

5.1 If an applicant is applying for an Initial License, a Standard Certificate must be applied for simultaneously with the application for the Initial License, and the applicant shall also provide all required documentation for the license.

5.2 If the applicant is also applying for the issuance or renewal of an educator's license or paraeducator's permit, the applicant must disclose the applicant's criminal conviction history upon application. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction history is grounds for denial of the license or permit application as specified in 14 **Del.C.** §1219 and it could delay the processing or result in the denial of the application for a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate.

5.3 The following documentation is required with the application for a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate:

5.3.1 Evidence of obtaining and maintaining an Exceptional Needs Specialist certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, if applicable; and

5.3.2 Official transcript from the applicant's regionally accredited college or university.

5.3.2.1 Electronic transcripts may be submitted by the applicant's employing authority or regionally accredited college or university; or

5.3.2.2 Sealed paper transcripts may be submitted by the applicant, the applicant's employing authority, or the applicant's regionally cccredited college or university.

5.3.2.3 The Department will not accept copies of transcripts; and

5.3.3 Documents verifying successful completion of Department-approved professional development, if applicable; and

5.3.4 Additional documentation as required by the Department.

5.4 For applicants who have met the requirements for licensure and hold a valid and current license or certificate in teaching students with autism or severe intellectual disabilities, the following documentation is required in the application for a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate:

5.4.1 An official copy of the valid and current license or certificate; and

5.4.2 Additional documentation as required by the Department.

24 DE Reg. 372 (10/01/20)

28 DE Reg. 812 (05/01/25)

6.0 Secretary of Education Review

6.1 The Secretary of Education may, upon the written request of a local school district or charter school, review credentials submitted in an application for a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate on an individual basis and grant such a Standard Certificate to an applicant who otherwise does not meet the requirements for a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate but whose effectiveness is documented by the local school district or charter school.

6.2 The request shall be approved as provided in subsections 6.2.1 and 6.2.2.

6.2.1 For school districts, requests shall be approved by the superintendent of the school district.

6.2.2 For charter schools, requests concerning the head of school of the charter school shall be approved by the charter school's board of directors and requests concerning all other applicants shall be approved by the charter school's head of school.

28 DE Reg. 812 (05/01/25)

7.0 Validity of a Standard Certificate

7.1 A Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate is valid regardless of the assignment or employment status of the holder provided that the educator's license remains current and valid.

7.2 A Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate is not subject to renewal.

24 DE Reg. 372 (10/01/20)

28 DE Reg. 812 (05/01/25)

8.0 Disciplinary Action

8.1 An educator's Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate may be revoked, suspended, or limited for cause as provided in 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1514 Limitation, Suspension, and Revocation of Licenses, Certificates, and Permits.

8.2 An educator's Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate shall be revoked if the educator's Initial, Continuing, or Advanced License or Standard or Professional Status Certificate is revoked or the educator made a materially false or misleading statement in the educator's application in accordance with 14 **Del.C.** §1222.

8.3 An educator whose certificate is noticed for disciplinary action is entitled to a full and fair hearing before the Standards Board. Hearings shall be conducted in accordance with 14 **DE Admin. Code** 1515 Hearing Procedures and Rules.

24 DE Reg. 372 (10/01/20)

28 DE Reg. 812 (05/01/25)

9.0 Past Certificate Recognized

9.1 The Department shall recognize a Standard Teacher of the Autistic Child or Professional Status Certificate issued by the Department between January 1, 1982 and August 31, 2005, if otherwise valid. An educator holding a Standard Teacher of the Autistic Child or a Professional Status Certificate issued between January 1,

1982 and August 31, 2005 shall be considered certified to instruct students with autism or severe intellectual disabilities.

9.2 The Department shall recognize a Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate issued by the Department prior to the effective date of this regulation. An educator holding such a Standard Certificate shall be considered certified to instruct students with autism or severe intellectual disabilities.

28 DE Reg. 812 (05/01/25)

10.0 Contact Information and Change of Name or Address

10.1 All applicants and educators are required to update their contact information in DEEDS if their contact information changes.

10.2 An educator who legally changes the educator's name and wishes to change the name on the Teacher of Students with Autism or Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Standard Certificate shall provide a notarized copy of evidence of the name change such as a marriage license or court action.

10.3 An applicant or educator whose mailing address, email address, or phone number changes shall provide the Department with the new mailing address, email address, or phone number within 14 calendar days of the change.

9 DE Reg. 550 (10/01/05)

Renumbered effective 06/01/07 - see Conversion Table

16 DE Reg. 767 (01/01/13)

24 DE Reg. 372 (10/01/20)

28 DE Reg. 812 (05/01/25)