



## MINNESOTA BOARD OF TEACHING

January 11, 2013

Dear Colleagues;

The working group representing the Board of Teaching and the Divisions of School Finance, Special Education, Licensing, and Compliance and Monitoring of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has continued to meet to address questions and concerns around the impact of the Board's new Special Education licensure requirements. We are pleased to provide additional updates and information for you today.

### ***Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) License Transition Process***

As of December 1<sup>st</sup>, 99 Minnesota Special Education teachers have successfully completed the transition process and been determined eligible to apply for an ASD license. This is great news and is confirmation that the process is indeed working. We'll continue to monitor the pool and pipeline of licensed ASD teachers as we approach the **July 1, 2015 deadline** and we look forward to seeing many more Minnesota teachers proceed successfully through this process.

It has come to the Board's attention that districts have begun creating programs to offer teachers as a way to meet the new standards and earn an ASD license. While we recognize and applaud local efforts to support teachers through this transition, school districts, regional centers, and other educational entities are not eligible to provide an ASD licensure program unless they have been approved to do so by the Board of Teaching.

Please note that **the Board of Teaching has provided this transition opportunity to licensed Special Education teachers who can demonstrate both ASD experience and substantial ASD-specific professional training or coursework completed prior to the launch of the ASD licensure transition process (July 1, 2012)**. This option was not established for teachers wishing to begin work toward fulfilling the majority of the ASD standards and licensure requirements, and **application materials where all or most of the professional development or coursework are from after the launch of the transition process (July 1, 2012) will not be recommended for licensure**. These teachers must enroll in an approved ASD licensure preparation program. [View the resources specific to this option](#)

- *Autism Spectrum Disorder License Eligibility Review for Practicing Minnesota Special Education Teachers*
- *Autism Spectrum Disorder License - Introduction to the Catalog of Professional Development*
- *Autism Spectrum Disorder License Catalogs of Professional Development*  
*Available in 3 versions, organized by Provider, by Date of Offering, and by Title*
- *Autism Spectrum Disorders License Frequently Asked Questions*

***Funding for the New Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Academic and Behavioral Strategist (ABS) Licenses***

Beginning January 1, 2013, these licensure fields are eligible for both state and federal funding. All of MDE's reporting systems have been revised to ensure that funding can flow appropriately. Please remember that the new ABS license is specific to serving students with mild to moderate needs only.

***Requirements for ASD Licensure***

The Board of Teaching has provided guidance specific to Initial Evaluations / Eligibility Determinations and IEP Team Membership (**see guidance on page 3**). The Board has not issued specific guidance regarding case managing or daily delivery of services. The new ASD license will follow the same practice used in other disability areas where the delivery of services is determined by the IEP team.

*Note:* [View the full memo at MDE Special Education Licensure](#)

Remember that the new ABS license offers districts another way for teachers to serve students with ASD (within the mild to moderate range).

Please submit any questions or comments to the Special Education dedicated email account:  
[MDE.ASD-License@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.ASD-License@state.mn.us).

Sincerely,  
Karen Balmer

## ASD GUIDANCE

**\*\* Current practices and requirements will be in place until June 30, 2015; the new requirements will take effect beginning on July 1, 2015. \*\***

### ***Initial Evaluations and Eligibility Determinations***

MN Rule 3525.1325 contains the following language in Subpart 4:

*The team determining eligibility and educational programming must include at least one professional with experience and expertise in the area of ASD due to the complexity of this disability and the specialized intervention methods. The team must include a school professional knowledgeable of the range of possible special education eligibility criteria.*

As such, the following individuals will be able to serve in this capacity:

- Licensed ASD teacher, licensed at the age/grade level of the student; **OR**
- Licensed ABS teacher for students in K-12 (mild to moderate); **OR**
- Licensed ECSE teacher for students through age 6; **OR**
- Professionals with experience and expertise in ASD, including (not intended to be an exhaustive list):
  - School psychologist
  - Speech and Language Pathologist
  - Occupational Therapist
  - Other licensed special education teachers
  - Other related service personnel

The new **ASD and ABS licenses will create two additional options** for schools as they determine who should participate in the evaluation and eligibility determination processes.

### ***IEP Team Membership***

Beginning July 1, 2015, IEP teams for students with ASD **must** include one of the following types of teachers:

- Licensed ASD teacher, licensed at the age/grade level of the student; **OR**
- Licensed ABS teacher for students in K-12 (mild to moderate); **OR**
- Licensed ECSE teacher for students through age 6

The IEP team **may** also include professionals with experience and expertise in ASD, including (not intended to be an exhaustive list):

- School psychologist
- Speech and Language Pathologist
- Occupational Therapist
- Other licensed special education teachers
- Other related service personnel