

# SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER CREDENTIAL ACTION TEAM

## RECOMMENDATION

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### WITHIN THREE YEARS

Michigan will move to a PK-12 Special Education Generalist credential, thereby reducing or eliminating the overly restrictive categorical endorsements currently in place. In addition, this credential eliminates the requirement for a General Education endorsement.

### WHY?

A comprehensive special education program will equip special education teachers with the basic skills to provide services based on student need, rather than eligibility area. No two individuals are the same – regardless of label. This credential provides a strong foundation for teachers to be more well-rounded in their knowledge of disabilities and the strategies to address variability within disabilities.

### REQUIREMENTS

In order to earn a standard certification as a Special Education Generalist, the candidate must earn a bachelor's degree and have completed an approved, accredited educator preparation program, with a focus on comprehensive special education consistent with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) standards as well as essential components of general education content.

Coursework alone does not prepare one for teaching. Therefore, a one-year paid residency within the program is required.

With this certification, candidates will be able to more efficiently add micro-credentials to gain more specific areas of expertise.

### IMPLICATIONS

Educators will be better equipped to address the range of learner variability. In addition, it will mitigate the silos *within* special education, allowing educators to collaborate more effectively and professionalizing the teaching profession. It also sets the stage for additional convergence and cohesion beyond special education.

A Special Education Generalist degree provides a straightforward path into special education by reducing the time and costs currently associated with becoming a special educator. Additionally, allowing multiple pathways for completion, including but not limited to the possibility of an interim or initiation certificate option for those who currently hold a bachelor's degree while they complete a residency.

As a result, it is anticipated that the number of individuals entering the profession will increase.