

**TITLE: One-Time Approval of a Program Exception for the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's 2022-2024 BEd in Early Childhood Education/Early Childhood Special Education Mild/Moderate Dual Licensure Program.**

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The Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) approves a one-time program exception for the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's (UH Mānoa) 2022-2024 BEd Dual Licensure Program in Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education Mild/Moderate. The exception would allow these teacher candidates to fulfill their special education student teaching concurrently prior to completing their final three (3) courses required to meet their special education content requirement.

All subsequent cohorts shall complete content requirements prior to student teaching.

Subject to approval, UH Mānoa shall report this exception in their 2024 Annual Report to HTSB. They shall submit a list of teacher candidates in the 2022-2024 BEd Dual Licensure Program in Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education Mild/Moderate by December 31, 2023.

This one-time exception shall expire on August 31, 2024.

**Rationale/Background:**

UH Mānoa's BEd Dual Licensure Program in Early Childhood Education/Early Childhood Special Education Mild/Moderate was first approved by HTSB on June 2, 2017 ([NBI 16-42](#)).

This is a seventy-eight (78) credit 2-year BEd dual licensure program in Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Education which includes two field placements.

In 2021-2022 program faculty were working on the restructuring of these courses. In the fall of 2022, the changes were finalized and received final approval from the university. At the time of approval, the 2022-2024 cohort had already started their program track. Due to the timing of the final approval, this current cohort's course and field sequence were impacted.

Attached to this New Business Item (NBI) is UH Mānoa's formal request for an exception.

**Cost:**

All costs are included in the current staff job duties/responsibilities.

**Submitted by:** Branden Kawazoe

**Referred to:** Teacher Education Committee



October 10, 2023

Felicia Villalobos, Executive Director  
Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board  
650 Iwilei Road, Suite 201  
Honolulu, HI. 96817

Dear Ms. Villalobos:

We are requesting that the Hawai'i Teacher Standards Board (HTSB) grant an exemption for the sequence of completion of program requirements for the BEd in Early Childhood Education/Early Childhood Special Education (ECE/ECSE) program (approved June 2, 2017; NBI 16-42). Teacher candidates (TCs) enrolled in the Blended BEd ECE/ECSE track complete an intensive 2-year program comprised of 78 credits, which address standards and competencies for both early childhood and early childhood special education. In addition to meeting content requirements for both early childhood and special education, candidates complete three field placements prior to student teaching. In each of the field placements TCs are required to complete applied content assignments that reflect the courses taken concurrently in a given semester. In addition to completing three semesters of course and fieldwork, TCs take courses over the summer in order to fulfill requirements for their program.

The BEd ECE/ECSE was delivered to a cohort during the COVID-19 pandemic and this 2020-2022 cohort fulfilled content requirements in the summer following their student teaching semester in spring 2022. They were able to complete their rigorous program through the challenges posed by COVID-19 restrictions as HTSB had approved NBI 20-27, which had suspended its rules regarding content requirements during this restrictive time.

In fall 2021 recruitment for another cohort of TCs occurred with application in spring 2022, and this cohort began their program in fall 2022. Program faculty were engaged in restructuring the course and field sequence when NBI 20-27 was approved. Changes were finalized and approved by UHM in fall 2022; however, these organizational changes will apply to the incoming group, targeted to start in fall 2024. The cohort admitted for fall 2022 engaged in a sequence of courses, in which the TCs complete one special education course concurrently with their student teaching and two courses in the summer session after student teaching in the spring.

***We are requesting an exemption for the cohort completing in summer 2024 to fulfill their special education student teaching concurrently with or prior to completing three final courses required for their special education content requirement.*** Program faculty have worked on modifying the BEd ECE/ECSE program and have secured UHM approval to deliver the track with all content requirements completed prior to student teaching with the incoming fall 2024 cohort. This request is exclusive to the one cohort admitted for fall 2022 as all UHM program changes had not been approved until fall 2022. Completion of content requirements prior to student teaching will not be an issue for subsequent BEd ECE/ECSE cohorts.

The critical need for early childhood special education professionals is recognized in our State and nationally. This dual track was developed in response to the growing need for licensed, qualified early childhood educators. There continues to be a great need to address teacher preparation and licensure in early childhood and this has been underscored by the Lieutenant Governor's Ready Keiki Initiative. Act 46, passed in the 2020 legislative session calls for 50% of all underserved three- and four-year-old children in Hawai'i to have access to a preschool program by December 31, 2027, and 100% of preschool-aged children to have access by December 31, 2032.



The following provides an overview of the teacher candidate demographics and program specifics:

- **The teacher candidates in this statewide program are non-traditional students** and include the following demographics: 56% reside on neighbor islands, 48% receive the HIDOE Special Education stipend for tuition assistance and commit to teaching in special education positions for 3 years, 44% are employed as educational assistants or part-time teachers, 30% will engage in classrooms in HIDOE hard-to-staff communities for their student teaching, 33% are Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 52% are parents.
- **Alignment of course and fieldwork that address professional standards for the field.** The Early Childhood Personnel Center (ECPC), in collaboration with the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children, and the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC) recognizes the need to address children with a range of abilities, including those with identified disabilities.
- **Dual preparation which is reflected in 56 course credits and 22 field credits.** Program rigor requires field experiences in each semester and this ensures that TCs have opportunities to learn and apply content in early childhood as well as special education environments.

Given the rigor, credit hour demands, and the fact that this current 2022 cohort was admitted while UHM changes were being approved, we respectfully request **a one-time exemption for the BEd ECE/ECSE cohort who were admitted in fall 2022 to fulfill their special education student teaching prior to completing three final courses required for their special education content requirement.**

Sincerely,

Rhonda S. Black  
Chair, Department of Special Education

Jon Yoshioka  
Director, School of Teacher Education

Lori Fulton  
Associate Director, School of Teacher Education

Leah Muccio  
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