



Board of Behavioral Sciences

Memo

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To: Committee Members

Date: March 21, 2024

From: Rosanne Helms
Legislative Manager

Subject: Discussion of Statutory Amendments to Requirements for Licensure as an Educational Psychologist

The purpose of this agenda item is to discuss potential amendments to the section of statute that specifies licensing requirements for licensed educational psychologists (LEPs) ([Business and Professions Code \(BPC\) §4989.20](#)).

Staff has identified three separate amendments for discussion. The text of these proposed amendments is shown in **Attachment A**:

1. Specifying Experience Requirements in Greater Detail
2. Clarifying Requirements for In-State Versus Out-of-State School Psychologists
3. Adding an Age Limit to a Passing Score on the LEP Exam

1. Specifying Experience Requirements in Greater Detail

Current requirements for LEP licensure are as follows:

- 60 semester hours of postgraduate work in pupil personnel services; and
- 2 years of full-time (or equivalent) experience as a credentialed school psychologist in the public schools; and
- One of the following:
 - 1 year of supervised professional experience in an accredited school psychology program; OR
 - 1 additional year of full time (or equivalent) experience as a credentialed school psychologist in the public schools under the direction of an LEP or a licensed psychologist.

Requiring experience based on years, instead of hours, can sometimes cause confusion. A school year is not a full calendar year. Additionally, some applicants may not work a full-time schedule. Therefore, staff proposes these clarifications:

- To clarify the required experience as a credentialed school psychologist, which is currently required in one year or two-year increments, staff has referenced a definition of “full time” and “equivalent to full time”. These references are in the Education Code. Education Code [§22138.5\(b\)](#) defines “full time” for pre-kindergarten to grade 12 as a minimum of 1,050 hours per year. Education Code [§22138.6](#) defines “full-time equivalent” as days or hours of service that a part-time employee would be required to perform in a school year if they were employed full-time.
- Specifying that all required experience as a credentialed school psychologist be gained over a period of at least one or two school years (depending on whether the section of law specifies that one or two school years of experience is required).
- Specifying that all required experience as a credentialed school psychologist be no more than 6 years old prior to filing the application for licensure.
- Clarifying that the required year of supervised professional experience in an accredited school psychology program must be 1,200 hours (instead of 1 year). This aligns with the field experience requirement of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing for a Pupil Personnel Services Credential in School Psychology. (Note that a minimum time to gain these hours of one school year, and a maximum age of these hours of 6 years, is not specified here due to these hours being gained in a qualifying degree program.)

Additionally, staff has also specified that the experience gained as a credentialed school psychologist may be gained in either the public schools or another school setting as specified in regulations. Current law states that the experience must be gained in public schools, but regulations then state that experience in a parochial or private school may be acceptable at the Board’s discretion. Staff is working on regulations to specify in more detail when parochial or private school experience is acceptable. However, statute needs to specifically state that regulations may specify when experience in non-public school settings is allowed in order to establish that regulatory authority.

2. Clarifying Requirements for In-State Versus Out-of-State School Psychologists

Statute does not currently specify if the experience as a credentialed school psychologist must be done while holding a California credential or one from another state. It also does not specify whether the additional year of experience must be California-specific experience.

The language proposed in **Attachment A** specifies that if the required 2 years of experience as a credentialed school psychologist was not gained with a California credential, that an additional 1 year of experience must be gained with a California credential and under the direction of either a California-licensed LEP or a California-licensed psychologist. This would ensure an out-of-state trained school psychologist has experience working within a California school system to become familiar with the complexity of California laws and cultures.

In addition, the proposal clarifies that for California credential holders, the one year of additional experience under the direction of an LEP or licensed psychologist must be under the direction of an individual with a California license.

3. Adding an Age Limit to a Passing Score on the LEP Exam

Current law does not specify an age limit for a passing score on the LEP exam.

For the Board's other clinical exams (for LMFT, LCSW, and LPCC) the law specifies that the Board will accept a passing score for seven years from the date the exam was taken.

Once the exam is passed, the next step is to submit the application for initial license issuance, along with the required fee, to the Board, and the license is issued. Most individuals do this right away. However, occasionally, an applicant will wait for a period of time before completing this final step. Although it is unlikely an individual would wait over seven years, the law should specify an age limit on the exam score for public protection purposes. Otherwise, an individual could technically submit for initial license issuance with a very old exam score, and the Board would have to issue the license.

Recommendation

Conduct an open discussion regarding the language shown in **Attachment A**. Direct staff to make any discussed changes and any non-substantive changes. Direct staff to draft corresponding regulations and bring both statute changes in **Attachment A** and the companion regulations, back to the Committee for consideration.

Attachments

Attachment A: Proposed Language

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ATTACHMENT A

Amend Business and Professions Code (BPC) §4989.20.

(a) The board may issue a license as an educational psychologist if the applicant satisfies, with proof satisfactory to the board, the following requirements:

(1) Possession of, at minimum, a master's degree in psychology, educational psychology, school psychology, counseling and guidance, or a degree deemed equivalent by the board. This degree shall be obtained from an educational institution approved by the board according to the regulations adopted under this chapter.

(2) Attainment of 18 years of age.

(3) Is not subject to denial of licensure pursuant to Section 480.

(4) Successful completion of 60 semester hours of postgraduate work in pupil personnel services.

(5) Two years of full-time, or the equivalent to full-time, experience as a credentialed school psychologist in the public schools or in another school setting as specified in regulations. The experience shall be gained over a period of at least two school years. The applicant shall not be credited with experience obtained more than six years prior to filing the application for licensure.

(6) One ~~One~~ year ~~year~~ A minimum of 1,200 hours of supervised professional experience in an accredited school psychology program.

(A) One year ~~A minimum of 1,200 hours~~ of supervised professional experience in an accredited school psychology program.

(B) ~~In addition to the requirements of paragraph (5), one~~ One year of full-time, or the equivalent to full-time, experience as a California credentialed school psychologist in the public schools, or in another school setting as specified in regulations, obtained under the direction of a California licensed educational psychologist or a California licensed psychologist. The experience shall be gained over a period of at least of one school year. The applicant shall not be credited with experience obtained more than six years prior to filing the application for licensure.

(7) If the credential required by Paragraph (5) was not a California credential, completion of one year of full-time, or the equivalent to full-time, experience as a California credentialed school psychologist in the California public schools, or in another school setting as specified in regulations, under the direction of a California licensed educational psychologist or a California licensed psychologist. The experience shall be gained over a period of at least one school year. The applicant shall not be credited with experience obtained more than six years prior to filing the application for licensure.

(78) Passage of an examination specified by the board. A passing score on this examination shall be accepted by the board for a period of seven years from the date the examination was taken.

(b) For purposes of this section, "full time" means the minimum standard hours as defined in subdivision (b) of section 22138.5 of the Education Code. "Equivalent to full time" has the same meaning as defined in section 22138.6 of the Education Code.