

Education Preparation for Inclusive Classrooms (EPIC)
A Credentialing Program for Education Specialists
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)s

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Overview

The EPIC program prepares candidates to become teacher specialists in an inclusive classrooms. It provides instructional and experiential opportunities to work with families, develop collaborative skills, and become proficient classroom managers. Candidates learn from experts in the field – current and past teachers, special education directors and scholars.

Coursework is divided into modules covering a two-year period, while candidates will work as interns in their second year. While in a cohort throughout the program, participants share their learning experiences and begin cross program collaborations –learning collaborative behaviors that will assist them throughout their careers as Education Specialists. Each EPIC module unit is equivalent to ten hours of classroom instruction. Each Specialist Credential is equal to 45 quarter units. To accommodate work schedules, classes meet late afternoons and evenings, and on some Saturdays. There are also some summer courses.

Q: What credentials are being offered through EPIC?

- A: 1) *Preliminary Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) 45 quarter units over two years
(2 year cohort program)*

The Education Specialist Instruction Credential: Early Childhood Special Education authorizes the holder to conduct assessments, provide instruction, and special education related services to children from *birth through pre-kindergarten*, with a primary disability of specific learning disabilities, mild/moderate intellectual disability, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, autism spectrum disorder, moderate/severe intellectual disability, deaf-blindness, serious emotional disturbance, and multiple disabilities in services across the continuum of program options available.

- 2) *Preliminary Moderate/Severe (Mod/Severe) 45 quarter units over two years
(2 year cohort program)*

The Education Specialist Instruction Credential: Moderate/Severe Disabilities authorizes the holder to conduct assessments, provide instruction, and special education related services to individuals with a primary disability of autism, moderate/severe intellectual disability, deaf-blind, emotional disturbance, and multiple disabilities, in kindergarten, *grades 1 through 12 to age 22*, and classes organized primarily for adults in services across the continuum of program options available.

- 3) *Clear Education Specialist Induction Program
(2 year program)*

The Clear Education Specialist Induction Program is available to individuals who hold a Preliminary Education Specialist Credential. This program leads to completion of a Clear Education Specialist Credential with specialization in Early Childhood Special Education, Mild/Moderate Disabilities, or Moderate/Severe Disabilities.



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The Clear Credential must be completed within five years of the date of issuance of the Preliminary or Level I Education Specialist Credential. The purpose of the Clear Credential Program is to provide a mechanism for the successful induction of a new professional special educator. The Clear Credential Program includes collaboration with the teacher’s employer; multiple opportunities for support and professional development, an individualized learning plan (ILP), and weekly coaching with just-in-time (JIT) support. The program is a 2 year job embedded job coaching support design with a few required day long seminars.

Q: Do you offer a Mild to Moderate credential program?

A: We are in the process of applying for this program and hope to offer in the fall of 2018.

Preliminary Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) and Preliminary Moderate/Severe (Mod/Severe)

Q: What unit modules are the credentials being offered in, semester or quarter?

A: Quarter system, each unit is equivalent to ten hours of class time.

Q: What are the times/days classes are being offered?

A: The majority of classes are offered weeknights from 5:30PM-8:30PM, with occasional Saturdays depending on credential.

2018-2019 Tentative Quarter schedule

Fall Quarter	Sept 4-Nov 28, 2018
Winter Quarter	Jan 7-Mar 13, 2019
Spring Quarter	Apr 2-June 6, 2019
Summer Quarter	July 8-July 25, 2019

Q: Where can we find the class schedules?

A: The current class schedule is available on our website: Epic.sccoe.org. The schedules for the upcoming school year will be posted in early August.

Q: What is the tuition cost for the different credentials?

A: All tuition is PRIOR to the first day of class each quarter. The cost per (quarter) unit is \$350.



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- ECSE & Moderate/Severe: \$15,750 for two years; Year 1: \$8,750 Year 2: \$7,000
- Clear Education Specialist Induction Program \$7,000 for two years; \$3,500 per year

Q: Is financial aid or scholarships available?

A: Financial aid is not available at this time. However, we partner with Santa Clara County Federal Credit Union and they offer low interest loans to their members. At the time of this posting they do have a small grant to cover books and other expenses for any EPIC student that has an account with them prior to starting our program. Any employee working in Santa Clara County can become a member. Please go to their website: <https://www.sccfcu.org/> to get more information about membership.

Q: What if I have a transcript, degree, etc. from a foreign country?

A: Individuals who have completed college or university course work at an institution in a country other than the United States must obtain a full or course-by-course complete evaluation from an agency approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing for Foreign Transcript evaluation of foreign transcripts, degrees, and other relevant documents from outside of the United States prior to applying to the SCCOE Preliminary Intern Credential Program. For more information please visit: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/cl635.pdf>

Q: What if I have taken similar classes from another institution; can they count towards the credential (course transfer equivalency)? If classes are accepted as equivalent, does that lower my tuition?

A: Evaluation of courses and transferability of any course will be evaluated upon receipt of application (\$75 fee). Specific course equivalencies require review based upon the unique characteristics of each college and university and may differ from one institution to another. Applicants must submit transcripts and class description for any course in question. If any courses are deemed equivalent, your tuition cost will be reduced as you would be taking fewer courses required for the completion of your program.

Q: Can I take any of the courses for professional development purposes? (I have a cleared credential)

A: Yes, you may take any of the courses for professional development purposes. Please contact us for registration of courses you wish to attend.

Q: Is it possible to start the program in the Winter or Spring quarters?

A: The program begins in the Fall quarter. When you enroll, you are a member of a cohort and the cohort takes required coursework together for two years.



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Q: What is a cohort?

A: The dictionary definition of cohort is “a group of people banded together or treated as a group.” That is a perfect way to define the “cohort program” in its educational context. A cohort program is “a group of people banded together or treated as a group” in a degree program or course of study. A simple way to view a cohort program is as a group of classmates. One of the number one things current and former students say they appreciate about our program is the cohort model. The sharing of ideas, the support through challenges and the collegial learning of a cohort really make the learning experience inspirational, relevant and EPIC.

Q: What is an internship program? Do we get placed? Is it paid?

A: Internships allow individuals to be the teacher of record while completing a teacher preparation program. Internships are self-procured by each candidate and completed in the second year of our program. You are hired by a district or SCCOE. You would then apply for and maintain an intern credential until you satisfactorily complete the program. It is a paid position, as you are the teacher of record for the students on your caseload. Completion of an intern program results in the recommendation for and issuance of the preliminary credential.

Q: What is the time commitment for the internship?

A: You complete preservice coursework in the first year that includes 25 units of coursework in the first year. Once you have met all of the requirements including passing the CSET test, you are eligible to procure a teaching position in the second year. You work as a full time intern while completing another 20 units of coursework. As a full time intern, you are the teacher of record with all of the roles, responsibilities and obligations. In addition to that, you have all of the roles, responsibilities and obligations of your EPIC coursework and mentoring/coaching. Doing both requires excellent time management. Please refer to the FREE Time Management Resource Guide at epic.sccoe.org for more support and ideas.

Q: Can I have my current teaching position count as the internship? I am an SCCOE employee in a teaching position, can that count?

A: You must be the teacher of record of a class of students with disabilities. (51% of the students must have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) A Head Start teacher or state preschool teacher who has students in their classroom with IEPs is not considered a teacher for students with disabilities, and as such is not hired for that purpose.



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Q: What are the pre-requisites for Preliminary Education Specialist Credential (ECSE & Mod/Severe) EPIC Credentialing program?

A:

Moderate/Severe AND ECSE:

1. Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Sciences (**in any major**) from an accredited institution
 - a. Minimum cumulative grade point average 2.75
2. Child Development Course (any topic) (minimum 3 units)
3. Principles of US Constitution Requirement
 - a. US Constitution course OR
 - b. A BA from a University of California institution OR
 - c. US Constitution exam
http://www.usconstitutionexam.com/Common_Questions.html
4. Basic Skills Requirement can be met in any of the following ways (See https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/leaflets/cl667.pdf?sfvrsn=91a6cf60_16)
 - a. Pass all three sections of the CBEST (reading, writing and math)
 - b. Pass all three sections of the CSET for multiple subjects AND the [CSET: Writing Skills](#) subtest
 - c. Pass the CSU Early Assessment Program or the CSU Placement Examinations
 - d. Achieve a qualifying score on the ACT or SAT
 - e. For more information on how to meet this BASIC SKILLS requirement click [here](#)
 - f. Please check out the TEST PREP RESOURCE GUIDE at epic.sccoe.org for more information on how to prepare. SCCOE offers some test preparation classes at our county office as well as digital study guides and test booklets in our Learning Media Center. 1 408 453 6800

Moderate/Severe only:

1. Meet Commission Approved subject matter requirements as appropriate. Currently, the only Commission-approved subject-matter examinations used to verify subject-matter competence is the California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET), administered by Evaluation Systems, Group of Pearson (formerly National Evaluation Systems [NES] Inc.). For more information go to https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/leaflets/cl674m.pdf?sfvrsn=3a689042_4 for almost all situations or <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/cl674s.pdf> if the context you plan on teaching in while always be secondary.

In order to apply to the EPIC program, you must take the CSET before being admitted. If you do not pass, you must be registered to take the exam again and submit verification with your application. You MUST pass the CSET before you can work as a teacher intern in the second year of the program.



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2. Pass Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) prior to recommendation for preliminary credential. For more information, please go to: <http://www.ctcexams.nesinc.com>. You do not need to take the RICA in order to be admitted to EPIC, but you must take it and pass it before you complete the program.

Q: Can I participate in the credential program while finishing my BA/BS?

A: No, you need to have completed your Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Sciences in any major before applying to EPIC.

Q: What are the courses being offered for the Preliminary Early Childhood Special Education & Preliminary Moderate/Severe?

A: Common Courses for the Preliminary Early Childhood Special Education and Preliminary Moderate/Severe:

- Curriculum for Inclusive Classroom (3 quarter units)
- Classroom Management (3 quarter units)
- Typical/Atypical Child Development (3 quarter units)
- Working within Language Diverse Communities (3 quarter units)
- Development of Language/Literacy (3 quarter units)
- Medical/Health Aspects, Movement & Mobility (3 quarter units)
- Augmentative Alternative Communication & Assistive Technology (2 quarter units)
- Collaboration (2 quarter units)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (3 quarter units)
- Fundamentals of Assessment (2 quarter units)
- Alternative Assessment (2 quarter units)
- Professional, Legal and Ethical Aspects of Special Education (3 quarter units)
- Family Systems and Parent Education (3 quarter units)

Coursework Unique to Preliminary Early Childhood Special Education:

- Intervention for Young Children with Special Needs (4 quarter units)
- Infant/Toddler Intern/Field Experience (3 quarter units)
- Preschool Intern/Field Experiences (3 quarter units)

Coursework Unique to Preliminary Moderate/Severe:

- Curriculum and Instruction for Individuals with M/S Disabilities (4 quarter units)
- Reading and Language Arts (3 quarter units)
- Moderate Severe: Intern/Field Experience (3 quarter units)



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Q: What are the pre-service requirements?

A: The Pre-service requirements are met by completing the following 120 hours of coursework at EPIC in the first year and BEFORE you can become an intern. It is required that you take preservice courses before you become an intern. You must also have completed observation hours, passed the CSET and be CPR/First Aide trained. The preservice coursework includes the following courses:

- Curriculum for Inclusive Classroom (3 quarter units)
- Classroom Management (3 quarter units)
- Working within Language Diverse Communities (3 quarter units)
- Typical/Atypical Child Development (3 quarter units)

Clear Education Specialist Induction Program

Q: Does the Clear Education Specialist Induction Program work in place of a new teacher induction program like Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program?

A: Some districts offer their own CTC approved new teacher induction program such as the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program. These programs serve employees in that district.

Some will support new teachers with an Educational Specialist credential. Check with your district to see if the program will clear your credential.

Q: What are the pre-requisites for the EPIC Clear Education Specialist Induction Program?

1. Completion of a Preliminary Education Specialist Credential
2. If you have a Level I Preliminary Education Specialist Credential you need to take a CTC approved course in the following areas (courses to be completed by the end of the program):
 - a. Health Education*: Complete a course in Health Education, including but not limited to, nutrition; the physiological and sociological effects of alcohol, narcotic and drug abuse; and the use of tobacco. This requirement must include training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) that covers infant, child, and adult CPR skills
 - b. Computer Education*: Complete a course in Computer Education, including instruction in general and specialized skills in the use of computers in educational settings (For more info: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/cl808c.pdf>)
3. Verification of being employed as an education specialist teacher.

Q: For Level 1: What if I have completed a health and/or computer class when I cleared another one of my credentials, do I need to take them again?

A: No you do not need to retake them, please provide proof of completion in application.



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- Q: I have an out-of-state credential; can I apply to the Clear Education Specialist Induction Program?**
Prior to applying for a Clear Education Specialist Induction Program, you must be sure that your out-of-state credential meets California Education Specialist requirements.
- A:** Contact the Credentials Services office at the Santa Clara County Office of Education (408) 453-6767 to see if your out of state credential meets the requirements for the California Preliminary Services Credential before enrolling in a program for the Clear Education Specialist credential. See [Coded Correspondence 13-07](#) for more information. Prior to entering into the Clear program the credential needs to be converted to a California Preliminary Services Credential.
- Q: Can I clear my expired credential?**
- A:** No, you must have a valid preliminary education specialist credential. Please visit California Commission on Teaching Credentials (CTC) at <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/expired.html> for renewal process.
- Q: What happens if you do not clear your preliminary credential with the five years of the date of issuance?**
- A:** If your preliminary credential is not cleared within five years from the date of issuance, it will expire. Commission staff may issue an extension of time by appeal for a credential or permit when an applicant verifies good cause for not completing the renewal requirements. This is, however, on a case-by-case basis and there is no guarantee that a credential will be issued. Please visit for more information: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/al3.pdf>. Please visit California Commission on Teaching Credentials (CTC) at <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/expired.html> for renewal process.
- Q: Can I clear more than one credential at the same time?**
- A:** Yes, you may clear more than one credential at the same time (there may be an additional fee). When it is time for recommendation and application to send to CTC you will pay a fee for **each** credential that is to be cleared.
- Q: What credentials can be cleared through the EPIC: Clear Education Specialist Induction Program?**
- A:** Early Childhood Special Education, Mild/Moderate Disabilities, or Moderate/Severe Disabilities.



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Application Process

Q: What is needed for the application?

A: Please register on our CAESAR. The application link is on our website available in January 2018.
<http://www.sccoe.org/credentialing-programs/Pages/epic.aspx>

You will be required to do the following during the registration process in CAESAR.

1. Pay the \$75.00 non-refundable registration fee.
2. Submit a 1-2 page Letter of Intent stating why you are applying to the program citing experience working with students and your personal mission in wanting to become a teacher. The format for the Letter of Intent can be located at Epic.sccoe.org
3. Two signed letters of recommendations. One letter must be from your supervisor and all must be less than a year old. Letters of recommendation are not required for applications to the Clear Induction Program.
4. Documents verifying you have met the [prerequisites for your selected program](#). Please make sure each document you upload is titled correctly with your last name. For example for your CBEST results, the document name should say CBEST Results SMITH.pdf.)

Q: Is there an application fee?

A: A \$75 (non-refundable) application fee must be submitted with your application; You may pay with a credit card when you register online. Our office is located in the Credentialing Programs Department at SCCOE on the second floor.

Q: Do transcripts need to be official or unofficial?

A: Official transcripts must be submitted when you enroll in our program. Unofficial transcripts may be uploaded to the CAESAR website if you don't have an official transcript at the time you register. The official transcripts must be brought or mailed to Brenda Mariano-Paz, Credentialing Programs Department.

SCCOE Credentialing Programs Department
Brenda Mariano- Paz
1290 Ridder Park MC 255B
San Jose Ca 95131

Q: Do letters of recommendation need to be sealed?

A: No, letters of recommendation do not need to be sealed. Please be sure to include signed copies with your application when you enroll.



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Q: Can I apply if I have not taken one or all of the following courses: child development course (minimum 3 units), principles of US Constitution or exam?

A: No, you must have completed both courses before admission. If you did not complete a child development course, (minimum 3 units), in your undergraduate work, please check out our **CHILD DEVELOPMENT COURSE GUIDE** at epic.sccoe.org to explore potential places where you can fulfill this requirement.

To meet the US Constitution requirement you need to have either taken a course such as U.S History, Political Science, Asian Americans in U. S. history, Western Culture & Society, etc. which is often attained while pursuing your BA at a University of California institution or passed the US Constitution [exam](#). Here are some answers to some common questions about the exam.

http://www.usconstitutionexam.com/Common_Questions.html

Q: Can I apply if I have not met the California Basic Education Skills Test (CBEST) requirement?

A: No, but there are multiple ways to meet the requirement other than taking the CBEST. To meet the BASIC SKILLS requirement you can do one of the following:

- Pass all three sections of the CBEST
- Pass all three sections of the CSET and add the [CSET: Writing Skills](#) subtest to meet the requirement
- Pass the CSU Early Assessment Program or the CSU Placement Examinations
- Achieve a qualifying score on the ACT or SAT

For more information on how to meet this BASIC SKILLS requirement click [here](#)

Please check out the **TEST PREP RESOURCE GUIDE** at epic.sccoe.org for more information on how to prepare. SCCOE offers some test preparation classes at our county office as well as digital study guides and test booklets in our Learning Media Center. 1 408 453 6800

https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/leaflets/cl667.pdf?sfvrsn=91a6cf60_16

Q: Can I apply if I have not taken or passed the California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET)?

A: It depends on the program you are applying for. If you are applying for the ECSE program the CSET is not required. However, for Moderate-Severe candidates, you must have either passed all three sections of the CSET or show proof that you have attempted and are registered to take the unpassed portions of the CSET again. As an Education Specialist candidate, you are required to complete the same sections of the CSET as those attaining a Multiple Subjects Credential. Here is a [document](#) explaining those requirements. Please visit <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/FAQ/faq-exams.html> for more information on examinations.



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Q: Can I apply if I have not taken or passed the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA)?

A: Yes. The RICA (Moderate/Severe only) must be completed prior to completion of the preliminary credential during the **2nd year** of the program. So you can apply and prior to having taken or passed the RICA because you do not to pass it until your **2nd year** Moderate/Severe program. Further, this is not a requirement for ECSE candidates. Please visit <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/FAQ/faq-exams.html> for more information on examinations. Further, the **TEST PREP RESOURCE GUIDE** available at epic.sccoe.org has some options of where to take some RICA test prep including right here at the county office.

Q: What is the application selection process? How will I be notified of application status?

A: The selection process for acceptance will include review of the application, pre-requisites and requirements for specific credentials. In addition each Preliminary Education Specialist applicant will be interviewed if application, pre-requisites and requirements were met upon initial review. Candidates will be notified by email by June 30, 2018 of their acceptance to the program.

Q: Do you offer a Master's degree?

No, we do not.

For program information please visit epic.sccoe.org or for information on credentialing visit State Of California Commission On Teacher Credentialing: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/>



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