



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
LANSING



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SUPERINTENDENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

January 6, 2011

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents  
Deans of Teacher Preparation Institutions  
Public School Academy Directors and Authorizers

FROM: Sally Vaughn, Ph.D. *Sally*  
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: Change in Endorsement Name and Code of the Early Childhood  
Education (ZA) to Early Childhood ZS (General and Special Education)

Revised Early Childhood Education (ZA) standards were presented and approved at the State Board of Education (SBE) meeting on September 9, 2008. These revised standards reflect the knowledge and skills identified to teach children from birth to age 8 in general education settings, as well as significant knowledge and skills for teaching children with disabilities.

It was then determined that to present a clear transition and indication of different knowledge and authorization, the revised standards should be known by a new name, Early Childhood ZS (General and Special Education), that represents the knowledge and skill changes presented in the standards. The name and code change for this endorsement was approved by the SBE on October 12, 2010.

The Office of Professional Preparation Services is in the process of approving the revised programs submitted by teacher preparation institutions. It is expected that the revised programs will be approved during the January-June 2011 review cycle and that the new Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC) Early Childhood ZS (General and Special Education) assessment will be available by October 2012. Currently enrolled students have the option of completing their coursework and completing the old Early Childhood ZA MTTC until July 2012.

A teacher who currently possesses a certificate with the Early Childhood Education ZA endorsement will continue to be authorized to teach in general education classrooms within the validity of the certificate and code.

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A teacher preparation institution with an approved ZS program may offer an opportunity for teachers possessing the old ZA endorsement to complete the additional coursework based on the institution's newly approved ZS program and documentation of the successful completion of the new Early Childhood ZS (General and Special Education) MTTC, and make the recommendation for the ZS as an additional endorsement.

A teacher who has earned a ZS endorsement will be qualified to teach in an early childhood general or special education program upon promulgation of the Administrative Rules for Special Education. A teacher who has earned a ZS endorsement will not be qualified to teach any other special education program.

Teachers prepared in new Early Childhood ZS (General and Special Education) programs are authorized to teach within the validity of the endorsement without the additional letter of authorization from the Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE-EIS) or the Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services. The ZS endorsed teacher will be able to teach in general education early childhood classrooms, inclusive early childhood classrooms, and in early childhood special education classrooms.

A teacher who possesses both a special education and an early childhood endorsement on his/her teaching certificate, or possesses a special education endorsement with a major or minor in early childhood education and a full approval letter from the OSE-EIS, will continue to be qualified to be an early childhood special education teacher.

The Administrative Rule for Special Education authorizing the use of the ZS endorsement has been approved for rulemaking. A memo will be distributed to institutions of higher education, local school districts, and intermediate school districts as soon as the new rule allowing the use of the ZS endorsement is promulgated.

Thank you for your continued attention to the needs of Michigan's youngest learners and the professionals who work with them. More information about the Early Childhood ZS (General and Special Education) can be accessed at:

[http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530\\_5683\\_6368-204349--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-6530_5683_6368-204349--,00.html)

Should you have questions please contact Thomas T. Bell, Higher Education Consultant, Professional Preparation and Development, at 517/241-0172 or [bellt1@michigan.gov](mailto:bellt1@michigan.gov).

cc: Michigan Education Alliance