



Board of Behavioral Sciences

Memo

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To: Committee Members

Date: December 27, 2023

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 Required Hours of Experience
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 Required Hours of Experience

Current required postgraduate experience for LEP licensure is 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 be confusing, especially since a school year is not a full calendar year. Additionally, some applicants may not work a full-time schedule, adding further confusion to the number of hours required.

Staff believes it could be more concise to specify the number of required experience hours in statute, as is done for the Board's other three license types. Based on the assumption that one school year consists of 1,200 hours, this equates to 1,200 hours per year of experience required. The Committee may wish to discuss whether experience should be measured in years or hours.

In the proposed amendments, staff has also specified that the experience 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 should 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 the additional 1 year of experience must be gained with a California credential and under the supervision 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 California laws and cultures.

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 nonsubstantive changes. Direct staff to bring any changes back to the Policy and Advocacy Committee for further discussion.

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 applicant shall not be credited with experience obtained more than six years prior to filing the application for licensure.

(6) One if the credential required by Paragraph (5) was a California credential, completion of one of the following:

(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 year of full-time, or the equivalent to full-time, A minimum of 1,200 hours of 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.

(7) If the credential required by Paragraph (5) was not a California credential, completion of a minimum of 1,200 hours of 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.

(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.