

Staff qualifications: Differences between draft new licensing standards and existing rules

Objective: To clarify the differences in educational requirements and definitions, and how they apply to teacher qualifications in Minnesota Rule 9503 and the new draft standards in 245K. This fact sheets aims to give child care providers a clearer understanding of the proposed changes and their implications.

Key differences in teacher qualifications for those with a high school diploma or equivalent

Both the existing Rule 9503 language and the Draft 245K language contain requirements for the education and experience that a person must have to qualify for a given position. Below is a summary of key differences between Rule 9503 and the Draft 245K licensing standard, for someone with a high school diploma or an equivalent diploma.

1. Educational Credit Requirement:

- **Existing Rule 9503:** Requires 24 quarter credits (16 semester credits).
- **Draft 245K:** Requires 12 semester credits.

2. Flexibility in Coursework:

- **Existing Rule 9503:** Narrower range of acceptable coursework, primarily focused on early childhood related topics.
- **Draft 245K:** Broader range of acceptable coursework, including general education subjects such as math, English, and science.

3. Distinction between general and child development post-secondary education:

- **Existing Rule 9503:** One definition of education, with acceptable coursework that is largely aligned with child development subjects.
- **Draft 245K:** Two definitions of education – general and child development – which taken together encompass a broader range of subjects. At least 50% of credits used to qualify must meet the definition of “child development education” in 245K.04, Subd. 1 (f).
- **Postsecondary Child Development Education:** Largely matches the existing Rule 9503.0030 definition of Education, with a few additional types of coursework accepted (e.g., elementary

education, child health and wellness) and one type of coursework (recreational sports, arts, and crafts methods or theory) moved and reclassified as a coursework subject in “postsecondary general education” (see below).

- **Postsecondary General Education:** New expanded definition which recognizes general education coursework as counting towards qualifications.

Comparing teacher qualifications for those with a high school diploma or equivalent

The chart below compares the first option for qualifying as a teacher in Rule 9503 and Draft 245K, which is for those with a high school diploma or an equivalent diploma. This example will illustrate how all of the staff qualification options would work, in terms of how a staff person’s educational attainment is considered.

Aspect of licensing standards	Existing Rule 9503 language	Draft 245K language
Basic credential	As specified in MN Rules 9503.0032: individuals at least 18 years old with a high school diploma or commissioner of education-selected high school equivalency certification.	As specified in 245K.06: individuals at least 18 years old, who are a graduate of a high school or hold an equivalent diploma, and who have completed Child Care Basics training within 90 days of employment
Additional experience and education required	Experience: 4160 hours as an assistant teacher. Education: 24 quarter credits (equivalent to 16 semester credits) of post-secondary education	Experience: 4160 hours of experience, as defined in 245K.04, Subd. 1 (d). <i>(note: matches current definition in 245A.02)</i> Education: at least 12 postsecondary semester credits (equivalent to 18 quarter credits) with at least 50 percent of credits being in child development education as defined (see below).

Aspect of licensing standards	Existing Rule 9503 language	Draft 245K language
<p>Definition of education</p>	<p>As specified in MN Rules 9503.0030:</p> <p>"Education" means accredited course work from an accredited postsecondary institution in child development; children with special needs; early childhood education methods or theory; curriculum planning; child study techniques; family studies; child psychology; parent involvement; behavior guidance; child nutrition; child health and safety; early childhood special education methods or theory; child abuse and neglect prevention; recreational sports, arts, and crafts methods or theory; or coordination of community and school activities.</p> <p>"Education," as specified on the charts in parts 9503.0032 and 9503.0033, is in addition to the credential specified in column A unless the course work has been completed as part of the credential.</p>	<p>Definition of Postsecondary General Education (245K.04, Subd. 1, (e):</p> <p>Accredited coursework in mathematics, science, English language arts, recreational sports, arts and crafts methods or theory, psychology, sociology, cultural studies, ethics, communication studies, history, government, or other coursework approved by the commissioner.</p> <p>Definition of Postsecondary Child Development Education (245K.04, Subd. 1, (f):</p> <p>Accredited coursework in child development, children with special needs, early childhood education, elementary education, curriculum planning, child study techniques, family studies, child psychology, parent involvement, behavior guidance, child nutrition, child health and safety, early childhood special education, elementary special education, child abuse and neglect prevention, child health and wellness, coordination of community and school activities, or other coursework approved by the commissioner.</p>

Example scenario

Scenario:

- An applicant has 4160 hours of experience, 8 semester credits in child development topics, and 8 semester credits in mathematics coursework.

Under Rule 9503:

- This applicant would not qualify as a teacher, due to the lack of sufficient educational credits in coursework that meets the current definition of "education." Only the 8 credits in child development topics meet the education definition in Rule 9503.0030, subpart 1 (b).

Under Draft 245K:

- This applicant qualifies, as they meet the requirement of 12 semester credits, with at least 50% in child development education, due to the broader and more flexible definitions of education in 245K.04.

Summary

The proposed changes in the draft 245K standards are designed to provide greater flexibility in staff qualifications. The reduction in required semester credits for some qualification options (such as Option 1) and the expanded definitions of acceptable coursework aim to make it easier for individuals to qualify as teachers while maintaining a focus on essential early childhood education skills and knowledge.

For more detailed information or specific concerns, please contact the Child Care Regulation Modernization Team at ccregmodernization.dhs@state.mn.us.