



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, APRIL 26, 2010

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Accreditation Committee Members Appointed by Commission

SACRAMENTO – The Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) appointed two representatives from K-12 schools and one from postsecondary education to fill three vacancies on the Committee on Accreditation (COA). The new members are **Joyce Abrams, Kiran Kumar and Dr. Iris Riggs**. A fourth applicant, **Dr. Gary Railsback**, was appointed as an alternate to the COA. Their terms will begin on July 1, 2010 and extend through June 30, 2014. This action was taken at the Commission's April 22-23, 2010 meeting.

Joyce Abrams recently retired from 39 years of public school teaching in the Chula Vista Elementary School District and has been a K-12 representative on the COA since 2005. She was recommended for another term. Abrams holds both a Bachelor's and Master's degree from San Diego State University, with the latter in Special Education. In addition to her Standard Elementary Life credential, she also holds an Administrative Services credential. She has been an instructor at the University of California San Diego and a faculty member at San Diego State University. Abrams currently sits on the board of directors for several entities including the Association of San Diego Educators of the Gifted and the La Jolla High School Scholarship Foundation and continues to substitute teach in the Chula Vista Elementary School District.

Kiran Kumar, a teacher in the Pomona Unified School District, received her National Board Certification in Early Adolescence/English Language Arts in 1999 and recently renewed through 2019. In 2000, Kumar traveled to the People's Republic of China as a member of the National Board Teaching Standards Delegation to share best practices techniques and strategies with teachers and administrators in Beijing, Shanghai, and Nanking. She holds both a Bachelor's and Master's degree from California State University, Fullerton and has a Clear Multiple Subject credential with a Supplementary Authorization in English and a Language Development Specialist credential. Kumar has

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spent six years as a mentor and support provider for her school district's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program, assisting and supporting new teachers to become successful in their careers. She was previously appointed as an alternate to the COA for 2009-10.

Iris Riggs of San Bernardino, California, was appointed to be one of the postsecondary education representatives on the COA. A professor at California State University, San Bernardino for 22 years, Dr. Riggs also served as Associate Dean of Teacher Education. She earned her Bachelor's degree at Bethany College in Kansas, and her Master's and Doctorate degrees from Kansas State University. She also obtained her Kansas teaching credential in Elementary Education. Dr. Riggs was an elementary teacher for 5 years and continues to teach and tutor on intermittent special assignments and has taken part in a number of accreditation activities at both the K-12 and postsecondary levels.

The COA is a 12 member committee consisting of six representatives from postsecondary education and six certificated professionals from public schools, school districts, or county offices of education in California. In addition to approving new programs for teacher preparation, the COA coordinates an ongoing cycle of program accreditation. A COA team conducts a site visit at each program institution. These site visits include extensive review of program data and documentation. Also part of site visit activities are interviews with faculty, program participants and graduates, administrators and public school personnel. Following a site visit, a full report with accreditation recommendations is brought to the COA for final review and approval. It is the responsibility of the members of the COA to understand the accreditation framework and the standards for professional preparation that are developed and adopted by the Commission. This accreditation process ensures programs are providing complete and effective training for future school personnel that meet the standards adopted by California for the preparation of credential candidates.

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