



PRESS RELEASE

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Commission Adopts New Credentials Aimed At Improving Student Math Skills

SACRAMENTO – The Commission on Teacher Credentialing, at its September 30, 2010 meeting, adopted a new approach to providers of mathematics instruction in the schools. Acknowledging that many of California’s students struggle with mastering advanced mathematical concepts, the Commission’s panel of math experts zeroed in on early math education through algebra as the essential underpinning for student success. The Panel recommended a two-pronged plan; first to provide immediate support and professional development for teachers currently in the classroom and second to ensure that new teachers will receive the math content and teaching skills necessary to provide students with a stronger foundation in math.

Mathematics Instruction Certificate

To provide intensive support to struggling students and to coach classroom teachers, the Commission adopted the new Mathematics Instruction Certificate. This Certificate will be available to credentialed teachers who can demonstrate mathematical knowledge and skill at an advanced level and who complete a program geared toward implementing and adapting curriculum, coaching teachers, designing and implementing intensive interventions, and showing teachers how to effectively differentiate instruction according to student needs. Another major focus of the new Certificate involves using student assessment to identify gaps in students’ knowledge and designing instruction to bridge the gaps.

Teachers can choose to specialize in working with younger students to ensure a strong math foundation or can go beyond that level to focus on in-depth algebra instruction. Preparation for both levels will involve extensive classroom field experience.

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Mathematics Instructional Leadership Specialist

Added to the Certificate program is the Mathematics Instructional Leadership Specialist Credential. The Specialist Credential and the Certificate detailed above are “nested” – meaning that the courses for the Specialist Credential can be taken after a teacher has earned the Certificate. The Specialist Credential is geared toward district level leadership in selecting mathematics instructional materials and curriculum, and developing a school or district level professional development system that involves teachers and administrators working collaboratively to increase student engagement and learning in mathematics. This individual would also analyze research as well as student, school and district data to inform district program designs and decisions.

Next Steps

With a view toward longer term instructional improvement and student achievement in math, the Panel will complete revised content and program standards for elementary school teachers for the Commission’s consideration.

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