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# 2D

## Action

### *Educator Preparation Committee*

#### Initial Institutional Approval

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**Executive Summary:** This agenda item presents, as part of the Initial Institutional Approval process, one prospective program sponsor's responses to the Eligibility Requirements for consideration and possible approval by the Commission.

**Policy Question:** Has the institution satisfied the Eligibility Requirements sufficiently to move forward in the Initial Institutional Approval process?

**Recommended Action:** That the Commission review the responses to the Eligibility Requirements and determine if the institution may move forward in the Initial Institutional Approval process.

**Presenters:** Cheryl Hickey, Administrator and Lynette Roby, Consultant, Professional Services Division

#### Strategic Plan Goal

##### *II. Program Quality and Accountability*

- b) Effectively and efficiently monitor program implementation and outcomes and hold all approved educator preparation programs to high standards and continuous improvement through the accreditation process.

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# Initial Institutional Approval

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## Introduction

This agenda item presents, as a part of the Initial Institutional Approval process, one prospective program sponsors' responses to the twelve eligibility criteria for consideration by the Commission.

## Background

California law provides the Commission on Teacher Credentialing with the authority to accredit institutions and approve all programs that lead to a credential to serve as an educator in California's public schools. Among other responsibilities, Education Code section 44372(c) sets forth the Commission's responsibility to rule on the eligibility of an applicant for initial accreditation for the purpose of offering a program of educator preparation.

The Commission on Teacher Credentialing requires that an institution seeking to offer new educator preparation program(s) must first be approved for initial accreditation as a new program sponsor and must do so by completing the Commission's *Initial Institution Approval (IIA)* process.

At the [December 2015 Commission meeting](#), the Commission approved a new Initial Institutional Approval Process as part of the Strengthening and Streamlining Accreditation project. This agenda item presents one prospective program sponsor to be considered using this new process. In summary, the process requires the satisfactory completion of five approval stages: A summary of the process is included below for reference. (A detailed description of the process can be found in the Initial Institutional Approval Requirements at <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/accred-files/IIA-requirements.pdf>).

## Initial Institutional Approval Process

### Stage I: Prerequisites

1. Regional Accreditation and Academic Credit (*To be provided at the time of registration*)
2. Register and attend Accreditation 101 - Expectations and Responsibilities for Commission Approved Institutions

Upon receiving confirmation that the institution has successfully completed Stage I, the institution will be invoiced for cost recovery fees associated with the IIA process. Once the invoice has been paid and stage I prerequisites have been met the institution may move on to Stage II.

### Stage II: Eligibility Requirements

Prospective program sponsors submit responses to twelve criteria. The Commission determines at a regularly scheduled public meeting if the prospective program sponsor has satisfactorily addressed the twelve criteria and may then move forward with the IIA process.

Stage III: Review to Determine Alignment with Applicable Standards and Preconditions

Once an institution is determined to have met the Eligibility Requirements, the institution may submit responses to the required standards and preconditions. The Common Standards and the Preconditions are reviewed, and once determined to be aligned, the institution’s application is brought before the Commission to determine provisional approval or denial.

Stage IV: Provisional Approval or Denial

Once an institution has satisfied Stages I, II, and III of the Initial Institutional Approval process, the institution’s application will be brought before the Commission for its consideration and a determination regarding Provisional approval or denial. Annual Accreditation fees will be applicable following provisional approval.

Stage V: Granting Full Institutional Approval

If an institution receives Provisional Approval, it will be required to demonstrate adherence to all expectations and responsibilities of an approved program sponsor. After completing 2-3 years on Provisional Approval, as determined by the Commission, providing required data, and participating in a focused site visit, the Commission will determine if the institution is eligible for Full Approval.

In keeping with the new process summarized above, no staff recommendation will be made at this stage, which is the submission of the Eligibility Requirements. Rather, the Commission can consider whether the responses provided are sufficient and move the institution forward in the process, request additional information be brought forward at a future meeting, or deny the application based on the information provided by the applicant.

Staff brings before the Commission one institution seeking approval as program sponsor – Relay Graduate School of Education.

**Relay Graduate School of Education**

Relay Graduate School of Education is seeking approval as a program sponsor for the purpose of offering a Preliminary General Education Multiple Subject/Single Subject credential program and a General Education Induction program. As illustrated in the table below, Relay Graduate School of Education completed the Prerequisites as a part of the first stage of the Initial Institutional Approval process.

<b>Relay Graduate School of Education</b>	
<b>Prerequisite</b>	<b>How the Prerequisite was met by Relay GSE</b>
Prerequisite 1 - Regional Accreditation and Academic Credit	Accredited by Middle States Commission on Higher Education
Prerequisite 2 - Accreditation 101 – Expectations and Responsibilities for Commission Approved Institutions	Full team from Relay Graduate School of Education attended and completed Accreditation 101 training session held on May 10, 2016

Relay Graduate School of Education has submitted its responses to the Eligibility Requirements for the Commission’s consideration. A summary of the responses to the Eligibility Requirements is provided in the table below. The full document submitted by Relay Graduate School with supporting documentation is included as [Appendix A](#).

<b>Relay Graduate School of Education</b>	
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Response</b>
Criterion 1: Responsibility and Authority	Submitted hyperlinks to organization charts for national leadership, institutional structure, national administrative structure, national faculty structure, Bay Area faculty and staff structure. – page 3 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a>
Criterion 2: Mission and Vision	Submitted hyperlinks to Mission and Vision statements with additional links to a mock-up of a website where the mission and vision statements will be provided to the public – page 3 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a>
Criterion 3: Lawful Practices	Submitted hyperlink on page 4 to a non-discrimination policy, admissions policy, student retention policy, employment policy including a commitment to diversity.
Criterion 4: Commission Assurances and Compliance	Submitted a hyperlink on page 4 to responses affirming assurances and submission of preconditions. Submitted a hyperlink to statement regarding a “teach-out” plan if the program must close – page 5 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a>
Criterion 5: Requests for Data	Provided a hyperlink on page 4 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a> to narrative identifying a research team as the responsible parties who will respond to the requests for data from the Commission
Criterion 6: Veracity in All Claims and Documentation Submitted	Submitted a hyperlink to an affirmation of veracity signed by the President/CEO – page 5 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a>
Criterion 7: Grievance Process	Submitted a hyperlink on page 5 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a> to documentation of an appeals process.
Criterion 8: Communication and Information	Submitted hyperlinks on page 5 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a> to the Relay Graduate School of Education website
Criterion 9: Student Records Management, Access and Security	Submitted documentation for each subsection regarding maintenance of student records, access and availability of the records to candidates and security procedures – page 5 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a>
Criterion 10: History of Prior Experience and Effectiveness in	Hyperlink on page 6 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a> to a history of Relay Graduate School of Education, and retention and completion data.  Staff conducted an internet search related to the history of Relay GSE in states where they are currently approved as an educator preparation

<b>Relay Graduate School of Education</b>	
<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Response</b>
Education Preparation	<p>program sponsor including New York, New Jersey, Louisiana, Texas, Illinois, Delaware, Tennessee, and Colorado and Pennsylvania.</p> <p>Relay has also applied to be an institution of higher education in Pennsylvania and the following information was found during the search:</p> <p>*In Pennsylvania, Relay GSE offers a Graduate Alternate Route Certification program which is a part-time, graduate-level program designed for teachers who want to become certified in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Additionally they offer their Relay Teaching Residency program which is an AmeriCorps program. However, in July 2016 the Pennsylvania Department of Education denied Relay GSE’s application to “operate an education enterprise in Pennsylvania to offer courses for academic credit toward the awarding of a MAT degree through Relay’s degree-granting authority in New York.” – page 16 of <a href="#">Appendix B</a>.</p> <p>*Relay is seeking approval in San Antonio, Texas to offer its M.A.T. program and in Connecticut to offer alternative certification programs. See their Campus webpage at: <a href="http://www.relay.edu/campuses">http://www.relay.edu/campuses</a></p> <p>Relay has also submitted an application in Washington DC</p> <p>Third party comments are requested on Relay’s website and they have provided a hyperlink to the posting on page 6 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a></p>
Criterion 11: Capacity and Resources	<p>Provided hyperlinks to Relay GSE’s Fiscal Year 2015 audited financials, Relay GSE’s proposed Bay Area operational budget and narrative regarding instructional and support personnel, K-12 school partnerships, facilities and digital learning.</p> <p>Also provided narrative about a teach-out plan for candidates in the event the program were to close - page 6 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a></p>
Criterion 12: Disclosure	<p>A narrative response is provided stating that the model is blended – 60% in-person and 40% online. Relay GSE currently operates in New York, New Jersey, Louisiana, Texas, Illinois, Delaware, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Colorado- page 6 of <a href="#">Appendix A</a></p>

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Commission review the responses to the Eligibility Requirements submitted by Relay Graduate School of Education and take one of three possible actions for each:

- 1) *Approval of the Eligibility Requirements as submitted.* If approved, a review of the institution’s Common Standards, program standards, and preconditions would occur and, if appropriate, the proposed Common Standards and preconditions would move forward to the Commission for consideration and potential provisional approval. The program standards would begin

review but would not be completed until the Common Standards and preconditions receive approval by the Commission

- 2) *Request for further information.* Staff would communicate with the institution and bring forward resubmission of additional information to the Commission at its next regularly scheduled Commission meeting after it has been received; or,
- 3) *Denial of the Eligibility Requirements as submitted.* The institution would not be permitted to return to the Commission for further consideration as a prospective program sponsor unless specific conditions were met, based upon the established criteria.

**Next Steps**

Based on the Commission's action, staff will take appropriate next steps related to the option chosen.