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Information/Action

Professional Services Committee

Options for Reviewing Bilingual Certification

Executive Summary: At the February 1, 2005 meeting, staff presented the Commission with a plan to involve stakeholders and to address four policy questions pertaining to bilingual certification. At the request of the Commission, this follow-up agenda item provides a more detailed description of this plan, and provides estimated costs for each of the steps.

Recommended Action: That the Commission adopt an action plan to address the four policy questions related to bilingual certification.

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Strategic Plan Goals:

Goal 1: Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators.

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation of professional educators.
- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation of credential candidates.

Options for Reviewing Bilingual Certification

Introduction

California law requires teachers who provide instruction to English learners in their primary language to hold a certificate or credential that authorizes bilingual instruction. The Commission currently issues two types of authorizations for bilingual instruction: the Bilingual, Crosscultural, Language and Academic Development (BCLAD) Certificate and the Bilingual, Crosscultural Specialist Credential. Since only a handful of Bilingual Crosscultural Specialist Credentials are issued each year by the Commission, the overwhelming majority of teachers with bilingual authorizations have earned the BCLAD Certificate. There are two routes to earning the certificate. The first is to complete a BCLAD Emphasis program as part of a teacher preparation program, and the second route is to pass all the tests within the BCLAD Examination. Test specifications for the BCLAD Examination have not been revalidated since 1994. In light of new developments in theories, program models, and policies regarding bilingual education instruction, BCLAD Examination and course routes for teachers are in need of review.

At the October 2004 Commission meeting, staff presented an agenda item to the Commission that provided a historical background on bilingual education and bilingual certification in California. At that time, the Commission directed staff to develop a proposal for the review of bilingual certification requirements. Commission staff presented a plan at the February 1, 2005 meeting that included the involvement of stakeholders in reviewing the Commission's bilingual certification structure. This proposal would also ensure that the requirements remain aligned with the curriculum models used in California public schools, including the *English Language Arts Content Standards for Public Schools* and the standards for English Language Development (ELD) adopted by the State Board of Education. The Commission directed staff to prepare a detailed proposal of a plan that would include options for stakeholder involvement, estimates of costs, and a description of how standards would be developed.

Policy Questions related to Bilingual Certification

With the advice and assistance of experts in the field of bilingual education, Commission staff developed the following four policy questions to consider before bilingual certification routes can be updated:

1. Should the Commission explore alternatives to the BCLAD Certificate for already-credentialed teachers? Currently, the BCLAD Examination offers the only route for credentialed teachers to earn the BCLAD Certificate, and Education Code Section 44298 requires that candidate test fees be sufficient to cover the full cost of the examination system. Since 1998, the Commission has issued more Spanish BCLAD Certificates than for all other languages combined. Although there are over 237,000 English learners who speak other

languages, there are still comparatively few teachers taking BCLAD Examinations in these less commonly taught languages. Based upon the low numbers of teachers who have taken BCLAD Examinations in the last five years, development of examinations for several languages would result in very high test fees for teachers.

2. How shall the Commission maintain a structure for bilingual certification for those candidates who are in the process of earning a credential? Standards for BCLAD Emphasis programs require institutions to incorporate competencies and assessments for bilingual teaching within Multiple/Single Subject Teaching Credential programs within the maximum number of units for the program (i.e., a “unit cap”). Institutions have found it challenging to develop high quality BCLAD Emphasis programs while maintaining the unit cap. The Commission approved the standards for SB 2042 programs in September of 2001. The intent was to return to the development of standards for bilingual teacher preparation the following year; however, budgetary constraints prevented this activity. As a temporary measure institutions were given permission to continue offering BCLAD Emphasis programs until a new certification structure is in place.
3. Given the increased number of languages spoken by students in California classrooms, how can the Commission provide bilingual certification for more languages? BCLAD Examinations are offered for ten languages and Emphasis programs are offered for twelve languages. However, there are currently over fifty languages spoken by English learners in California classrooms. Statewide, the number of bilingual teachers needed for less frequently spoken languages remains relatively low, yet local and regional needs for teachers certified to teach in these languages have increased significantly in the past ten years. Informal surveys and information gathered from the field have shown that there is much interest in creating pathways to bilingual certification that allow for inclusion of these less frequently spoken languages.
4. How should newer models of instruction be considered in the development of updated requirements for bilingual certification? Experts have observed that two-way, or dual immersion bilingual programs require teachers to have high oral and written language proficiency levels in English and in the target language. New models of instruction may need to be taken into consideration as the Commission proceeds with the development of updated routes to bilingual certification.

Bilingual Education Services in California

Bilingual education instructional services are provided to meet the following needs of English learners:

1. To access core curriculum (particularly for English learners in secondary schools)

2. To augment ELD instruction and assist with positive transfer of linguistic and literacy knowledge that the student has learned in the primary language¹
3. To become literate in both English and in a student's primary language

Education Code §44253.4 establishes the minimum requirements for the certificate and requires the Commission to issue certificates that authorize the following services:

- Instruction in English Language Development,
- Specially designed content instruction delivered in English,
- Content instruction in the pupil's primary language, and
- Instruction for primary language development.

The law requires candidates to pass one or more examinations that the Commission determines are necessary for demonstrating the knowledge and skills required for the effective delivery of bilingual services. Education Code §44253.5 also requires that the scope and content of the examinations to be congruent with the content of professional preparation programs for prospective teachers of limited-English-proficient pupils. This statute requires the examinations to consist of the professional skills and knowledge that are determined by the Commission to be necessary and must include (but need not be limited to) the following:

1. First and second language development and the structure of language,
2. Methodology of English language development and specially designed content instruction in English,
3. Culture and cultural diversity,
4. Methodology of content instruction in the pupil's primary language,
5. The culture associated with a specific language group, and
6. Competence in a language other than English that is spoken by limited-English proficient pupils in California.

Number of students receiving bilingual education services in California

According to data gathered by the California Department of Education, 25.4% of all California students are English Learners. The Department of Education also gathers data on the types of services that English learners receive as part of their English language development (ELD) instruction. These data show that approximately 264,448 students received primary language services in 2003-2004 statewide (see Table 1). Of this number, approximately 137,902 English learners were enrolled in classes where students are taught English and other subjects through bilingual education techniques. Since the passage of Proposition 227, a bilingual education program is also referred to as an "alternative course of study" and requires parental exception waivers for children to attend (Education Code §310 and §311). The remaining 126,546 students received a program of English Language Development (ELD) along with academic instruction in

¹ Education Code (§ 44253.2) provides the following definition and rationale for teaching English learners in their primary language: "Instruction for primary language development' means instruction 'designed to develop a pupil's listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in the primary language of the pupil."

the primary language for two or more subjects. Both of these services require a valid California bilingual authorization [the Bilingual Crosscultural, Language, and Academic Development (BCLAD) Certificate for experienced teachers, or the BCLAD Emphasis credential for new teachers.]

Table 1

Primary Language Services in California Schools

Course of Study	Numbers of student enrolled statewide
Alternative course of study (bilingual waiver programs):	137,902
Receiving ELD + academic instruct. in 2 or more content classes	126,546
Total number of English learners receiving bilingual education services in California	264,448

Source: California Department of Education

An additional 329,000 students are in ELD programs that provide primary language support. These placements do not require BCLAD teacher certification. Bilingual para-educators often provide primary language support in these settings. Further information on student demographics and instructional services for English learners is available on the California Department of Education’s website at: www.cde.ca.gov/demographics/.

Enrollment in Two-way Immersion Programs

Approximately 12% or about 15,000 of the total number of English learners receiving bilingual instruction are enrolled in two-way immersion programs. The total number of students enrolled in two-way immersion programs, including native English speakers, is 28,000.

There are currently 184 two-way immersion programs in California. Formal data are not kept by the California Department of Education, and information on two-way immersion programs are based upon self reported data collected by the Language, Policy, and Leadership Office at the California Department of Education. These figures for dual immersion programs are only estimates. This is the fastest-growing area of bilingual education. Thirty-six new two-way immersion programs have been added statewide since 2003.

The Demand for Teachers Authorized to Teach in Two Languages

BCLAD Certificates are issued in specific language specialty areas. The table on the following page provides information about the numbers of BCLAD Certificates issued to experienced teachers in the 2003-2004 school year. The data do not include information about the numbers of new teachers who completed a BCLAD Emphasis program in conjunction with their professional preparation program. This table also provides information on the numbers of BCLAD Emergency Permits that were issued in the same period.

Table 2

BCLAD Certificates/Permits Issued during 2003-04 by Subject Area (Language)

Languages	BCLAD Certificates (examination only)	BCLAD (Emergency Permits)	Total
Cantonese	7		7
Chinese	4	1	5
Korean	6		6
Mandarin	4		4
Filipino	1	1	2
Portuguese	1		1
Spanish	437	49	486
Vietnamese	3		3
Grand Total	463	51	514

The total numbers of teachers that are placed in assignments requiring bilingual authorizations is approximately 8,500.

Plan for Stakeholder Involvement and Cost Analysis

The proposed plan presented to the Commission at the February 1, 2005 meeting outlined three steps for addressing the policy questions: 1) survey data, 2) stakeholder meetings, and 3) an advisory work group. The estimated costs for each of these steps are outlined below, and in Appendix A. At the request of the Commission, staff has also included the costs and scope of work of a supported work group as an alternative to the volunteer work group outlined in the original proposal. The supported work group option is also included in Appendix A, Step 3B.

Survey Data

The first step involves the use of mailed and electronic surveys to enable staff to collect specific information about the demand for teachers who are authorized to teach in two languages.

Staff would design survey instruments, to be posted on the Commission website and mailed to representatives of various stakeholder groups. If necessary, different survey instruments would be developed for various stakeholder groups. These surveys would ask specific questions regarding bilingual education needs in schools, including, but not limited to: the need for certificated bilingual educators in the schools, districts, and geographic areas of the respondents; knowledge and skills needed for current bilingual education models and bilingual educator roles; and the specific language needs of the district or community of the respondents. Copies of this survey would be mailed to the following groups and representatives: bilingual educator groups, groups representing parents of children in bilingual education programs, institutions of higher

education with accredited bilingual teacher preparation programs, teachers' unions, organizations representing school administrators and school boards, directors of teacher induction programs, and other groups that may be identified during the review process. Additionally, surveys would be posted on the Commission's website, and could be posted on the website of interested stakeholder groups or agencies (public or private).

Estimated costs for mailing 200 surveys with pre-paid return envelopes: \$480

Stakeholder Meetings

The second step involves a series of meetings to address the policy questions identified that would provide an opportunity for broad stakeholder involvement in the process. The agenda item presented in February 2005 outlined two approaches to stakeholder meetings:

Local Meetings

A series of five or six meetings would be held in Sacramento at the Commission offices. Staff would advertise meetings to be held at the Commission offices in Sacramento. All groups and individuals would be encouraged to participate in this series of meetings. Notification of these meetings might be distributed on the Commission website, websites of other advocacy groups (with permission), e-mail list serves, phone calls, and targeted mailings. Each meeting would solicit testimony from the public on all four of the bilingual education policy questions. Each meeting would be structured so that Commission staff would provide participants with a brief background on the four policy issues related to bilingual certification. The rest of the meeting would be devoted to public discussion, while staff record comments and recommendations. The first meeting would be held in late spring or early summer of 2005, and the final meeting would be held the fall of 2005. The cost of these meetings would be nominal, and would include overhead costs (for paper and duplication of handouts and notices).

Regional Meetings

Alternatively, stakeholder meetings could be held at five or six locations throughout California. The series of meetings would also be held in late spring or early summer of 2005 and conclude in fall of 2005. Holding stakeholder meetings in various locations around the state would allow participation by groups and individuals that are not able to travel to Sacramento. Estimated costs for these stakeholder meetings are based upon the travel costs for two Commission staff members for five meetings. Costs for meeting rooms were not included in this estimate, since it is assumed that colleges, universities, public schools, or county offices would provide meeting rooms at no cost to the Commission. The estimated costs for holding five stakeholder groups around the state: \$4,800.

Advisory Work Group

A work group constituted to provide advice on the specific issues identified through the stakeholder surveys and stake holder meetings is the third step in the review process and will help ensure that teachers who attain bilingual certification are qualified to help students access the core curriculum in two languages. Work groups provide a way for classroom teachers, faculty members, administrators, and other individuals with specific expertise or knowledge to aid in the development of examinations and programs for educator preparation. Advisory groups have been used historically to provide advice in developing draft standards for credential programs and subject matter preparation programs, and to recommend content specifications for teacher examinations.

In recent years, the Commission has moved toward using terms such as “design teams” or work groups instead of the term “panel” to describe this advisory process. Regardless of the term, it has been the policy of the Commission to confer with practitioners and other experts who are knowledgeable and experienced in the areas of education for which standards and/or examinations will address. The Commission has also endeavored to assemble advisory work groups that reflect the geographic, cultural, and linguistic diversity of California’s student population.

Prior to 2003, the Commission would reimburse advisory group members for costs associated with travel and where appropriate, reimburse districts for the cost of employing substitutes for teachers who participated in the work group meetings. Some of these activities were supported by a federal teacher quality grant that ended in 2003.

Due to budget restrictions in the past two years, the Commission has turned to less costly approaches to seeking advice from the field. Costs associated with advisory groups working on test development are paid by the testing contractor and built into the fee that is charged to candidates taking the examination. Costs associated with those groups advising the Commission on matters of policy, such as the Accreditation Study Work Group, have been supported by the constituency groups that participate in the process. Individuals who agree to serve on behalf of a particular constituency group are not reimbursed by the Commission for their travel costs. As was the case when the Commission supported travel costs, composition of the work group is determined relative to the stakeholders and experts who can best provide advice on the specific policy issue, however, it is the stakeholder groups that support their participation in the process. For example, participants of the Accreditation Study Work Group are sponsored or “supported” by the group they represent. To ensure consistency, the stakeholder groups agree to have the same representative available at each meeting of the work group. Depending on the topic to be addressed, work group representatives have typically been drawn from among those stakeholders identified in Table 3.

Table 3

Stakeholders

Association of California School Administrators	Association of Independent California Colleges & Universities
California Council on Teacher Education	Credential Counselors & Analysts of California
California County Superintendents of Education	California County Superintendents Educational Services Association
California Department of Education Staff*	California Federation of Teachers
California School Boards Association	California State PTA
California State University system	California Teachers Association
Induction program directors	Reading Specialists
Subject Matter Experts	University and District Intern program directors
University of California system	

* CDE staff provides technical assistance and serve as liaisons to the Department and the State Board of Education

For the development of examinations for bilingual certification, Education Code §44253.5 requires the Commission to confer with selected professionals who are knowledgeable of and experienced in the education of limited-English proficient pupils, with colleges and universities that prepare teachers to teach English learners, and with the California Department of Education. For the review of bilingual certification, additional criteria for membership in an advisory work group could include individuals who possess expertise in specific languages, linguistics experts, parents of English learners, teacher candidates, and may include (but not be limited to) individuals from the following stakeholder groups:

- Bilingual Coordinators Network
- Bilingual Teacher Training Programs
- Student California Teachers Association
- BCLAD Emphasis Program Directors
- California Association of Bilingual Educators
- Intern Program Directors
- Language Experts for specific languages and language groups
- Parents of students receiving bilingual services

At the February 2005 meeting, the Commission discussed two approaches to using an advisory work group:

Volunteer Advisory Work Group

In this step, the Commission would determine which stakeholder groups and experts would comprise the work group and the Executive Director would invite those stakeholder groups to select representatives to participate in a series of meetings to be held at the Commission offices

in Sacramento. The Commission may wish to consider inviting representatives from the above list of stakeholder groups to serve on the volunteer advisory group. The Commission may also choose to include individuals representing the State Board of Education/California Department of Education to serve as liaisons to the group and provide technical assistance. This group would convene its first meeting in late spring or early summer of 2005 and meet until late fall of the same year. All meetings would be held in Sacramento at the Commission offices. The volunteer work group would be responsible for reviewing the findings from the surveys and stakeholder meetings, and for assisting Commission staff with identifying options for answering the four policy questions. The options would be brought to the Commission in late fall or winter of 2005. The work group could, with direction from the Commission, continue its work into 2006 to implement the plan to update bilingual certification routes as adopted by the Commission.

The estimated costs for a volunteer advisory work group meeting five or more meetings at the Commission offices in Sacramento would be approximately \$100 per meeting or \$500 for five two-day meetings, and would include costs for preparing and reproducing materials for the meeting.

Supported Advisory Work Group

In this option, the Commission would determine which stakeholder groups and experts would comprise the work group and the Executive Director would invite those stakeholder groups to nominate individuals to be considered for selection to the work group and to participate in a series of meetings to be held at the Commission offices in Sacramento. The Commission would pay the travel costs for members selected to participate on the work group.

The scope of work of the supported advisory work group would be to the same as that of the volunteer advisory work group, and would adhere to the same timelines as the volunteer work group. The findings of the surveys and stakeholder groups would be considered as the work group assisted staff in developing answers to the four policy questions for the Commission's consideration. Either the supported work group or the volunteer work group would continue to meet through 2006, if the Commission chose to convene the same experts to implement changes for bilingual certification routes.

The costs for convening a supported advisory work group would be significant. Staff estimates that the average per member cost for a supported advisory work group to be approximately \$2,250. The cost assumptions include travel costs and reimbursements to districts for costs incurred by employing substitutes for those panel members with teaching assignments. Costs for preparing and reproducing meeting materials would be similar to the costs for the volunteer advisory work group, about \$100 per meeting. The estimated costs for a 12-member supported work group would be approximately \$27,000 for five two-day meetings.

Given the budget shortfall in the current year and additional constraints in the 2005-06 fiscal year, this option could have serious consequences for the Commission's budget.

**Follow-Up Activities Once the Four Policy Questions are Answered:
Possible Implementation Activities for Updating Bilingual Certification Routes**

After the three steps for stakeholder involvement are concluded, staff will report back to the Commission late in 2005 or early in 2006 with options for addressing the four policy questions, as well as a proposed plan of action for updating bilingual certification routes for California teachers. The options for answering the four policy questions might require the Commission to direct any or all of the following activities:

1. Release of an RFP for test development for bilingual certification for fewer languages than is currently offered for the current BCLAD Examination. Alternatively, new test development might address only one or two of the domains (tests) offered in the current BCLAD Examination.
2. Convene a new supported advisory work group, a new volunteer advisory work group, or expand the scope of work of those experts already assembled for the purpose of addressing the policy questions, to address the work of updating standards and/or guidelines for bilingual education course routes for California teachers.
3. Convene language-specific work groups to consult with the scope of work in either 1) or 2) (above) and to determine whether there are existing language proficiency examinations that would fulfill all or some of the requirements of BCLAD Test 6;
4. Request another extension of the current BCLAD contract so that the final administration would be extended to 2007.

The above activities may be only a partial list of a plan that the Commission may wish to implement, depending upon the results of the stakeholder involvement.

Staff Direction

Staff presents the plan with options for discussion and potential action. Commission staff is seeking direction from the Commission regarding the options presented.

Appendix A
Steps for Plan to Involve Stakeholder Involvement
To Update Bilingual Education Pathways

Step	Description	Stakeholders Represented	Scope of Work	Start Date	End Date	Estimated Costs
1	<u>On-line & Mailed Survey</u> , to be posted on CTC website and mailed to targeted groups to gather information from the field and from the public regarding bilingual certification issues.	Any interested parties-- stakeholders, experts, members of the public, etc. from on-line posting. Targeted mailings to: IHE's, bilingual educator groups, district and county office personnel, bilingual educators, teachers' unions	Survey(s) would address current issues in the field related to bilingual education and teacher certification, particular focus on the four policy questions.	May 2005	June 2005	\$480 for mailing
2A	<u>Open Stakeholder Meetings in Sacramento</u> : Five or six meetings, to be held at the Commission offices in Sacramento	Any interested individuals or groups: educators, stakeholder groups, members of the public, etc.	Each stakeholder meeting would ask for public comment on all four policy questions related to bilingual certification for California teachers. Information from these meetings would advise Commission staff and the volunteer work group or advisory panel.	June 2005	November 2005	\$500 - \$600 for overhead costs
2B	<u>Open Stakeholder Meetings around the State</u> : Five meetings, to be held in locations around the state; meeting space provided by district or county offices or IHE's	Any interested individuals or groups: educators, stakeholder groups, members of the public, etc.	Each stakeholder meeting would ask for public comment on all four policy questions to advise Commission staff and the volunteer work group	June 2005	November 2005	\$4,800 (Travel costs for 2 staff for 5 meetings)
3A	<u>Volunteer Work Group</u> Up to 12 members Four 2-day meetings	Members nominated by various language groups, professional organizations, K-12 and higher education.	Would assist staff in drafting answers to policy questions for the Commission to consider. If resources are available, this group could continue work into 2006 to assist with the drafting of standards for bilingual certification	July 2005	December 2005	\$400 for overhead costs
3B	<u>Supported Work Group</u> Up to 12 members Four 2-day meetings	Members represent various language groups, professional organizations, K-12 and higher education.	Would assist staff in drafting answers to policy questions for the Commission to consider. If resources are available, this group could also continue work into 2006 to assist with the drafting of standards for bilingual certification.	July 2005	December 2005	\$27,000

