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Information

Professional Services Committee

Proposed Requirement for Pre-service Preparation For All Teaching Internship Programs

Executive Summary: This item proposes to amend Commission policy to require that all teaching interns complete foundational preparation before an Intern Credential is issued. In order to meet NCLB “Highly Qualified” status, all interns must complete pre-service preparation.

Recommended Action: For information only

Presenters: Michael McKibbin, Administrator,
Professional Services Division.

Strategic Plan Goal: 1

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

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation and performance of professional educators and for the accreditation of credential programs.

Proposed Requirement for Pre-service Preparation For All Teaching Internship Programs

Introduction

This agenda item discusses the inequities in the specificity of pre-service requirements for district based and university based intern programs. It proposes several measures for Commission consideration to bring greater parity to the two types of intern programs and to ensure that all interns complete foundational preparation before an Intern Credential is issued.

Background

The Teacher Education Internship Act of 1967, Education Code Sections 44450 – 44468 authorizes institutions of higher education to partner with local education agencies to develop internships. Internships maybe developed for teaching and services credentials. The common name used for these programs is university internship. Education Code Sections 44325-44329 and 44830.3 authorize a local education agency (LEA) in consultation with an institution of higher education (IHE) to develop teaching internships in the area of Multiple Subject, Single Subject and Education Specialist. The common name for these programs is district internships. The district internship programs are all teaching intern programs.

For both types of internships, candidates must meet all admissions requirements and are subject to the same process and performance standards as credential candidates in traditional preparation programs. For some standards there are higher expectations for interns (e.g., admissions, support and supervision). In intern teaching credential programs, admissions requirements include: a baccalaureate or higher degree, character identification, demonstration of basic skills knowledge, knowledge of the US Constitution, and subject matter competence. Programs may add other requirements including minimum grade point average, local requirements, such as TB tests, and particular types of experiences with children or youth. All interns must secure an offer of employment which usually requires letters of recommendation and successful employment interviews by the employing district.

The university intern and district intern sections of the Education Code vary in terms of the degree of specificity of their respective requirements, but both types of intern program must meet the Commission adopted program standards. University intern statutes are specifically related to admission requirements, including subject matter competence and the other requirements listed above. The statutes are also explicit regarding the need for supervision and assistance (Education Code Section 44465). However, the statutes are less specific about what is included in the preparation program. Education Code Section 44460 provides direction stating that programs include "...developing of integrated, well organized and sequential programs", but does not offer the same detail as district intern program statutes concerning the instructional program. District intern statutes are quite specific in terms of length of program, supervision, and elements within an intern's instructional plan.

Education Code Section 44225(q) requires that all teacher preparation programs meet the Commission's *Standards of Program Quality and Effectiveness*. This includes all internship programs. Since 1988, the Commission has set standards for teacher preparation programs. Included in those standards are requirements, specifically for intern programs, that each approved program include some type of pre-service component. Pre-service preparation is that portion of the intern's preparation that occurs prior to the intern taking responsibility for a classroom or students as teacher of record. In a District Intern program the pre-service requirements are quite specific as stated in Education Code Section 44830.3(b)(3). These requirements are listed in the District Intern Preconditions. University Intern Program statutes or Preconditions do not have the same specificity.

The most common method of pre-service preparation is offering intensive instruction and field experience in teaching methodology immediately prior to taking responsibility as teacher of record. District intern statutes and alternative certification funding requirements (for both funded university and district intern programs) state that this experience must be at least 120 clock hours in duration. This requirement may also be met by completion of coursework equivalent to 120 clock hours before becoming an intern such as the semester before or summer term prior to taking responsibility for the intern's classroom. Regardless of the format, the instruction must provide foundational knowledge of the skills and abilities addressed in the Commission's Teaching Performance Expectations or equivalent in special education. This preparation includes instruction about:

- classroom management and planning;
- developmentally appropriate teaching practices;
- general and subject or specialty specific pedagogy;
- teaching English learners; and
- communication skills including reading.

Discussion

This agenda item proposes to bring parity between the two types of intern programs and to assure that before an intern credential is issued that pre-service preparation is completed. Staff proposes implementing the following measures to accomplish this.

First, the Commission's preconditions would be modified to require the pre-service precondition currently in effect for district intern programs to also apply to university intern programs. To accomplish this, the district intern precondition needs to be updated to include requirements set forth in federal No Child Left Behind statutes and be adopted as a requirement for all internship programs. The proposed precondition would read as follows:

Prior to recommending for an internship credential, the program must certify that each candidate has completed a mandatory pre-service training for interns tailored to the grade level or class to be taught, through either of the following options:

- (1) 120 clock hours of pre-service training and orientation in the aspects of child development, classroom organization and management, pedagogy, teaching English learners and methods of teaching the subject field or fields in which the intern will be assigned. This training period must be under the direct supervision of an experienced permanent teacher. In addition, Education Specialist interns must receive orientation in methods of teaching pupils with special needs. At the conclusion of the pre-service

- training period, the permanent teacher must provide the district with information regarding the area that should be emphasized in the future training of the intern.
- (2) The successful completion, prior to service of the intern in any classroom, of six semester units of coursework (nine quarter units) from a regionally accredited college or university, designed in cooperation with the district to provide instruction and orientation in the aspects of child development, teaching English learners and the methods of teaching the subject field or fields in which the intern will be assigned.

Second, the Intern credential application process should include an affidavit that requires applicants to stipulate that pre-service preparation has been completed. For Funded Alternative Certification programs, the Consent Form, used to certify participation and authorize per capita funding, needs to verify that pre-service preparation has been completed, and therefore, the candidate is eligible for funding. Further, the annual reporting process (Program Improvement Plan) for funded Alternative Certification programs will be revised to confirm that pre-service preparation is occurring. Finally, the Commission's accreditation system will scrutinize programs to assure that pre-service preparation at those teacher preparation programs that utilize internships meets the Commission's standards.

On the occasion when school districts are not able to employ prospective intern teachers in time to receive pre-service preparation, these candidates would not be eligible for an intern credential, and therefore, are not eligible for alternative certification funding pursuant Education Code Section 44386(b). In the meantime candidates hired too late to complete pre-service preparation prior to taking responsibility for a classroom would need an authorization to teach. The Short-Term Staff Permit offers the most feasible authorization. Once the person would complete the pre-service preparation, that person would be eligible for an intern credential.