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Information

Professional Services Committee

Plan for a Study of the Preparation of Leaders for California Schools

Executive Summary: This item presents a plan for a one-year study of the preparation of leaders for California schools to determine what changes might be appropriate in administrator preparation to meet the needs of today's schools.

Recommended Action: For information only

Presenter: Lawrence Birch, Director,
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

January 2010

Plan for a Study of the Preparation of Leaders for California Schools

Introduction

This agenda item provides a basic plan for the study of the preparation of leaders for California schools. In 2009, legislation was proposed by Assembly Member Coto (AB 148) requesting the Commission to undertake a study of administrator preparation. The Commission adopted a support position on the bill, however, the bill did not make it out of the Legislature last year due to a decision by the Senate Rules Committee to not refer any study bills during last year's legislative session. Subsequently, the Executive Director received a letter from the President Pro Tempore of the California State Senate and the Speaker of the California State Assembly (Appendix A) asking the Commission to consider conducting the study in accordance with the bill's intent, without specific legislation asking it to do so. The letter recognized that our schools are in need of systemic change. The preparation of school leaders for the job ahead is essential. This calls for examination of the content of preparation programs as well as the structure of the credential itself. This study could also serve as an important initial step in the reconsideration of program standards for the Administrative Services Credential scheduled for 2013. This item describes in general terms a plan for the study of administrator preparation.

Background

One of the goals of the Ryan Act in 1970 was to simplify the credentialing structure and to provide options to coursework completion for the credential. At that time several different administrative credentials were condensed into a single Administrative Services Credential that authorized any type of administrative service at any grade level. The minimum requirements were a teaching or pupil personnel credential, three years of successful teaching or pupil personnel service, and completion of a Commission approved program of professional preparation for the credential. The legislation also allowed for the professional preparation program to be waived by passage of an approved written examination.

As part of the implementation of the Ryan Act, the Commission established procedures for the development of a set of professional preparation competencies and the adoption of specific program approval guidelines for the credential. A representative advisory panel assisted in the development of the guidelines and professional preparation competencies for school administrators that were adopted in 1973. Most programs consisted of 24-36 semester units and were closely aligned with master's degree requirements at the university. There was no requirement for any further courses or experiences to serve in any administrative position or to maintain the credential.

Based upon recommendations of advisory groups, in 1984 the Commission initiated a two-level administrative credential structure--the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential and the Professional Administrative Services Credential--and defined the content of the programs at each level. This structure was designed to provide preparation for entry into a first administrative position, and included a plan for advanced preparation and targeted professional growth during

the initial years of service, regardless of the administrative service the credential holder performed. Preparation programs under this structure were developed to meet Commission guidelines.

In 1990, the Commission initiated a comprehensive study of the implementation of these earlier reform measures related to administrator preparation to examine both the content and structure of preparation programs, professional development experiences, and other credentialing policies for school administrators, and to recommend needed changes. Research was conducted over a two year period in consultation with an expert advisory panel appointed to represent practicing administrators, higher education, school boards, teachers, parents, and the business community.

The report entitled *An Examination of the Preparation, Induction, and Professional Growth of School Administrators for California* presented the findings and resulting policy recommendations that were adopted by the Commission on March 5, 1993. The recommendations included a proposal to retain the two-level structure for the Administrative Services Credential that had been established in the early 1980's, but to modify the structure to eliminate identified weaknesses and respond more effectively to the professional development needs of aspiring and practicing administrators. In adopting these recommendations, the Commission made structural modifications to the administrative services credential and called for new standards defining the content of programs at both the preliminary and professional levels.

Due to changes in school practices and priorities, including the adoption of student content standards and a call for greater accountability, expectations for California school administrators continued to change. In June 2000, the Commission approved another review of the administrative services credential structure in light of these challenges. In 2000 and 2001, Commission staff conducted a series of forums throughout the state to gather information about the quality of administrative services credential programs, appropriateness of the program standards addressing those programs, and the level to which the programs were meeting those standards. The Commission also assembled a task force of experts in school administration and administrator preparation to analyze the information collected and develop recommendations for possible changes to administrative services credential programs and requirements.

In late 2001 and early 2002, the Commission discussed a number of policy issues related to administrator preparation and created a series of policy objectives for administrative services credential reform to guide staff work in this area. The Commission also sponsored legislation (Chap. 225, Stats. 2002) to partially address these objectives by 1) creating an option for establishing alternative administrator preparation programs at both the preliminary and the clear credential levels; and, 2) establishing examination-based routes for obtaining administrative services credentials.

In March, 2002, the Commission adopted an action plan for meeting its objectives for reforming administrative services credential preparation and assignment. Included in this plan was the revision of applicable Title 5 regulations related to certification requirements for central office administrators and preconditions for entities interested in offering administrator preparation programs. The plan also called for the creation of the Administrative Services Credential Design

Team to recommend revisions to the Commission's standards for administrator preparation programs. The Design Team was guided by the Commission's objective to recast administrator standards and preparation to focus on instructional leadership and success for all students, as reflected in the California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL), which had been developed independently by leaders in California's school administrator community. For the clear credential level, the reform included restructuring clear credential requirements to focus on mentoring, support and assistance. The current standards for preliminary administrative credential programs were adopted by the Commission in May, 2003. One of the features of the standards adopted by the Commission was a narrative statement of each standard followed by a number of required elements, all of which were to be addressed in the responses by the program sponsor. In October 2008, the Commission took action to modify the format of the Preliminary Administrative Services program standards to eliminate the use of the required elements and to reduce duplication of efforts in the preparation of program documents. The modified standards were adopted by the Commission at its August 2009 meeting.

Although some modifications have been made as described above, nonetheless, the current structure of administrator credentialing remains largely unchanged since the inception of the single administrative credential in 1970 and the two-tier requirement in 1984.

Plan for a Study of the Preparation of Educational Leaders

The major purpose of this study is to review the content, structure and requirements for administrator preparation to ensure that these remain appropriate to the needs of administrators serving in California schools. Further, the study should also provide recommendations concerning how to effectively identify administrators who would be adept in providing instructional leadership and be able to effectively lead transformational change within California schools.

An additional consideration for the proposed study will be to determine whether or not a single administrative credential authorizing all types of administrative service is still an appropriate model to meet the complexity of the demands and expectations of administrators at this time in California. Another important consideration would be to look at the range of role expectations for administrators and determine if these expectations can be met by a single individual regardless of credentialing structure. Other considerations for the study would be to identify who should prepare administrators for California schools and which aspects of administrator preparation should be required during pre-service and which should be required during the administrator's beginning years of service.

In accordance with Commission policy and past practices, staff proposes that the Commission create an advisory panel of K-12 teachers and administrators, Administrative Services Credential program instructors, other experts in the field, parents, and business community representatives to review the current structure and requirements for the Administrative Services Credential and make recommendations to the Commission regarding the issues and topics for the preparation of school administrators. The advisory panel would start its work in July 2010 and provide final recommendations to the Commission by July 2011. The proposed schedule for the advisory panel is outlined below.

May 2010	Announce the nomination and selection process for the advisory panel on the Commission's website.
June 2010	Provide recommendations to the Executive Director for appointment of the advisory panel members.
July-December 2010	Gather information on administrator preparation in other states, conduct focus groups with California educators and analyze findings for use by the panel.
July 2010-June 2011	Hold six or seven two day meetings with the advisory panel to review the structure and requirements as well as develop recommendations for the Commission.
July 2011	Present findings and recommendations of the advisory panel to the Commission for review and potential action and/or direction related to the structure and the requirements of the Administrative Services Credential.

California Legislature



STATE CAPITOL
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

Mr. Dale Janssen, Executive Director
Commission on Teacher Credentialing
900 Capital Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95811

September 23, 2009

Dear Mr. Janssen:

We request your assistance and that of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing in implementing the goals of AB 148 (Coto). The bill was unfortunately stalled in the Senate due to a Rules Committee decision this year not to refer any study bills.

AB 148 holds significant promise in improving California schools. It calls on the CTC to spend one year studying the standards and demonstration of mastery by candidates for administrative credentials. Such a study may well result in recommendations to refocus standards and assessment of mastery of those standards. An underlying premise focuses on the demonstrated importance in the role of school principals in bringing about school change and improvement. At the same time, administrative training programs may not focus enough on equipping leaders with the knowledge, skills and values to facilitate the kind of fundamental change called for in California schools. Shouldn't those who are asked to bring about organizational change be equipped with the tools to do the job? It remains clear, especially at the middle and high school levels, that our state has had limited success in bringing about long term, sustained, systematic change and improvement in schools. This includes much needed promotion of and student success in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs.

We know that you, personally, and the CTC staff have worked with Assembly Member Coto to craft the language of AB 148. We know that the Commission Board has endorsed and supported the work. We note that CTC testimony has been that the study can be completed without extra cost. We note that others, notably UCLA ACCORD, the California Teachers Association, the California School Boards Association, and the Association of California School Administrators, have enthusiastically supported this work.

Mr. Janssen, we request that you and the CTC take on this assignment and make the results available to us in the Legislature. For our part, we offer whatever assistance we can in the process. We will also look carefully on any recommendations which call for legislation. We have an opportunity to add to the improvement of California's schools and broaden the success of California students. It is an opportunity we actively support.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Darrell Steinberg in black ink.

DARRELL STEINBERG
President Pro Tempore
California State Senate

Handwritten signature of Karen Bass in black ink.

KAREN BASS
Speaker
California State Assembly

Handwritten signature of Joe Coto in black ink.

JOE COTO
Assembly Member
California State Assembly

copy: Mr. Caleb Cheung, Chair, Commission on Teacher Credentialing