
4B

Information

Professional Services Committee

Further Discussion of the Accreditation System: Basic Tenets, Unit Accreditation, Program Review, and Options for Potential Cost Recovery

Executive Summary: This item provides further information on the Commission's accreditation system, including a review of the basic tenets of the current system and an analysis of the challenges and benefits of unit accreditation and program review. Finally, the item presents potential options for the Commission regarding cost recovery for selected accreditation activities

Policy Question: Does the Commission find that the current tenets of the accreditation system are still appropriate? Does the Commission find that the current unit accreditation process with enhanced program review continues to serve the Commission's objectives for a strong accreditation system? Does the Commission support any of the cost recovery models presented in this item?

Recommended Action: For information only

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Strategic Plan Goal

II. Program Quality and Accountability

- ◆ 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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Further Discussion of the Accreditation System: Basic Tenets, Unit Accreditation, Program Review, and Options for Potential Cost Recovery

Introduction

This item provides a further discussion of the Commission's accreditation processes, including information on the history and basic tenets of the current accreditation system and the benefits and challenges of the unit accreditation and program review processes. Finally, this item presents information on potential cost recovery options for the Commission's accreditation system if the Commission were to charge for these activities.

Background

The Commission's accreditation system is defined in Education Code §§44370-44374 (Appendix A). The purposes of this accreditation system as outlined in the *2007 Accreditation Framework* are

- To be accountable to the public and the educator preparation profession regarding the knowledge, skills, and abilities of educators prepared in California.
- To promote quality - both in educator preparation and in candidate performance.
- To ensure that all educator preparation programs prepare all prospective educators to support students in acquiring the knowledge and skills defined in California's K-12 Student Academic Content Standards.
- To support all programs in focusing on continuous improvement based on the analysis of candidate competence and program effectiveness data.

The Introduction to the Commission's adopted *Accreditation Handbook* (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/accred-handbook.html>) provides background information about the Commission's accreditation system:

Under the auspices of Senate Bills 148 (Bergeson, 1988) and 655 (Bergeson, 1993), the education community in California launched an initiative to create a professional accreditation and certification system that would contribute to excellence in California public education well into the 21st Century. The Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), the nation's oldest independent teaching standards board, has long engaged in credential program reviews. The original *Accreditation Framework*, developed by the Accreditation Advisory Council to replace program review, represented a unique, pioneering effort to advance the quality of educator preparation through the creation of an integrated accreditation *and* certification system. The Accreditation Framework of December, 2007, details the requirements of the CTC's revised accreditation system and informed this version of the *Handbook*.

Information provided in Appendix B details the history of accreditation in California up to 2005, when the document was created for an Accreditation Study Session. Since that time, the Commission's accreditation system has changed significantly as a result of the work of the Accreditation Study Work Group and the Commission adoption of a new *Accreditation Framework* in 2007. Discussion of the revised accreditation system was presented to the Commission in December 2010 (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2010-12/2010-12-6E.pdf>).

Underlying all aspects of the Commission's accreditation system are some basic tenets. These tenets are foundational to the discussion that follows regarding unit accreditation and program review.

Basic Tenets of the Commission's Accreditation System

As indicated above, the Commission adopted its *Accreditation Framework* in December 2007 as the governing policy document for the accreditation system. At its August 2012 meeting, the Committee on Accreditation (COA) developed a one-page document identifying ten tenets of the system (Appendix C). Provided here is a review of these key tenets. For the purpose of this discussion, the summary statements below include reference to more than one tenet.

The Accreditation System is based on Standards adopted by the Commission (Tenets a, b, c)

The Commission develops and adopts standards which define what each institution and its approved programs must adhere to when sponsoring educator preparation program(s). The Common Standards (Appendix D) address the institutional infrastructure that support the educator preparation programs at the institution and the Program Standards (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/STDS-prep-program.html>) address specific program components for each type of educator preparation program offered by the institution. These components include the contents and services of the preparation program that must be provided to candidates and the fieldwork expectations. The local institutional program sponsor decides how it is going to meet each standard and is responsible for providing supporting documentation, data, and/or evidence that demonstrates that it is in fact, meeting the standard. The standards themselves are reviewed on a cyclical basis, since views of educator preparation constantly change as the field grows and develops. The standards must also remain current with educational needs in the field for qualified personnel.

For the activities of Accreditation, all the language in each standard is equally important and each institution must meet all parts of all standards. The standards are viewed holistically, but each phrase in each standard is reviewed to determine if the standard is met. An institution must provide multiple sources of data to support that it meets each standard.

Educators make decisions in the accreditation system (Tenets h, i, b)

Practicing educators and those who prepare educators are the individuals who may join the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR). BIR members must successfully complete the training and are responsible for making all accreditation decisions about an institution and its programs. BIR members make all decisions about the quality of each program offered by an institution through a calibrated review process. The possible decisions on standards at a site visit are that the program or institution has *Met* the Commission's standard, the standard is *Met with*

Concerns or the standard is **Not Met**. These decisions result in an accreditation recommendation to the Committee on Accreditation. At this time, there is no specified procedure in the accreditation system to identify where a program or institution has exceeded the Commission's standards or whether the program is "exemplary," only that it meets adopted standards.

The accreditation recommendation from the site visit team is presented to the COA, which is composed of 12 educators, six from the K-12 community and six from post-secondary institutions. Education Code §44373(a) specifies that only individuals with distinguished records of accomplishment in education are eligible to serve on the COA. The COA makes decisions about the accreditation status of each institution and the programs it is approved to offer based on the accreditation report from the site visit. The COA may grant full **Accreditation**, **Accreditation with Stipulations**, **Accreditation with Major Stipulations**, **Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations**, or **Deny Accreditation** to an institution after an accreditation site visit. Previously the COA could only deny accreditation if an institution had previously hosted a site visit, been placed under Stipulations by the COA and at the time of the institution's re-visit was found to not have adequately addressed the stipulations. During 2011-12, the COA reviewed and revised its procedures so that the decision of Denial of Accreditation is a possible option at the time of an initial site visit, and developed criteria to outline when this option may be considered.

The accreditation system should provide information to the Commission, the public, and the institution (Tenets d, e, g, j)

A key tenet of the Commission's accreditation system is to provide information to a variety of entities: the Commission for accreditation decisions, the public for transparency, and the institution for growth and improvement. The current system with its distributed activities requires the institution to evaluate and reflect on a routine basis. The Commission's web pages provide all accreditation site visit reports and COA actions (https://info.ctc.ca.gov/fmi/xsl/accreditation/accreditation_reports.html), including stipulations when applicable.

Accreditation activities should not be overly burdensome but result in valid and reliable findings (Tenets c, f, g)

The final key tenet discussed in this item is that the accreditation system should not be overly burdensome. The burden for the accreditation activities on the institution needs to be reasonable and in line with the benefits received from the activity. All institutions collect and analyze data annually as part of the Commission's accreditation system. This has been challenging for many institutions but staff hears regularly from deans and program coordinators how beneficial the expectation of annual data collection, analysis and planning for program and unit improvement has been. As institutions become more comfortable and adept at data collection and reporting, greater benefits are being reported from these institutions.

Reducing the burden of accreditation activities on institutions does not come without risks. As previously discussed, the Commission's current system and its tenets require that institutions and its programs be held to all parts of all standards – both Common and Program. To date, reviewers and members of the COA have been able to report a high degree of confidence in accreditation decisions given the evidence and documentation required through the Commission's accreditation decision. The Commission has been able to avoid any and all appeals and legal challenges to team and COA decisions, arguably because there has been sufficient evidence to

support those decisions. Some current Commission efforts offer significant promise in streamlining accreditation such as the development of a statewide program completion survey and use of performance assessment in accreditation decisions.

However, while streamlining efforts are critically important, care is needed to ensure that both review teams and the COA are able to maintain that high degree of confidence in decisions that are made about both programs and institutions. For instance, some reviewers have reported that some of the efforts by NCATE to streamline national accreditation have resulted in significant additional demands on the part of the reviewers. The current system already requires substantive time commitments from volunteers who read documents as well as time away from their home institutions during a site visit. As part of those efforts, there has been a substantial increase in the workload for the educators who volunteer to serve on the accreditation site visit teams.

Question for Commission Consideration:

Are the basic tenets of the Commission's accreditation system as outlined above still appropriate? If not, which tenets need to be discussed further and possibly modified?

Part I: Discussion of Unit Accreditation within the Accreditation System

Currently, California's Education Code §44374(d) specifies that the COA makes a single accreditation decision for an institution and all of its educator preparation programs.

(d) The Committee on Accreditation shall make a single decision to accredit, to accredit with stipulations, or to deny accreditation to an institution's credential programs, pursuant to Section 44373 and the accreditation framework.

This process is referred to as "unit accreditation." Within the unit accreditation process, an institution may operate multiple educator preparation programs. The Commission's unit accreditation process also includes a strong program review component. Accreditation by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing allows an entity to operate educator preparation programs and recommend individuals for licenses to teach or provide services in California's public schools.

A variety of national or regional organizations operate approval or accreditation systems. Six regional accrediting bodies in the United States accredit *institutions* of higher education (i.e., unit accreditation). Accreditation of an institution by a regional accreditor indicates that the institution has met a specified standard regarding the infrastructure of the organization, the identified student learning outcomes, and educational effectiveness. Regional accreditation allows an institution to award units that are accepted at other regionally accredited institutions.

Historically in California, the Commission used to implement a system based not on *unit accreditation* but on a *program review system*. The program review system operated from 1973 through the mid 1990s. With that system, when a program review visit took place at the institution, a large number of team members were necessary because each program at the institution was reviewed by a separate team, with each team preparing separate reports. It was, in essence, a number of program review visits all taking place at the same time. It was reported that in this system, consistency across programs was a constant challenge. Many institutions found this process to be burdensome and confusing. A unit accreditation system was adopted in the

late 1990's. Many institutions have indicated to staff that the unit accreditation system is more coherent from their point of view and provides for more efficient and effective feedback to the institution.

The Commission sponsored an advisory panel during 2004-2006 which studied the accreditation system and made a number of recommendations. The topic of unit accreditation and individual program review was reviewed in depth by this advisory group, including examining information from other professions in California and from education processes in other states and countries. The consensus recommendation from the advisory panel was to retain the Commission's unit accreditation focus but to also ensure that each approved educator preparation program is held to the Commission's adopted program standards. Provided below is the recommendation and supporting rationale as it was presented to the Commission at the July-August 2006 meeting (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2006-08/2006-08-6B.pdf>).

Preferred Option: Revise the system such that it addresses unit accreditation and enhances program review.

Background: Currently, California's accreditation system involves a single accreditation decision for the institution, in other words, unit accreditation. The individual programs are approved within the process of coming to the institution's accreditation decision. This system is often referred to as "unit plus" because it focuses on the program sponsor and all its credential programs.

Rationale: In gathering feedback from the constituencies represented on the Work Group, it was clear that there is overwhelming support for continuing a "unit" based system. Deans and administrators of education preparation commented that the unit based system allows them some degree of leverage with the university or district to initiate or implement improvements in programs, particularly with those programs that are out of their direct control. However, concerns were raised that accreditation review team members have sometimes failed to sufficiently address program concerns in the report for fear of risking the accreditation status of the institution. This seemed to occur most often with larger institutions that might have one identified weak program among several strong programs. It was acknowledged that this is in part a structural issue and, in part, one of implementation and training.

One of the major ways in which the proposed system will enhance program review is that under the proposed system, findings for each standard of each credential program would be included in the accreditation report, rather than just findings on the common standards. In addition, the program review team would recommend whether review of a particular program should be part of a larger site visit at the institution or district office.

A question that has been raised relative to the impact of unit accreditation as compared to individual program review is whether the Commission could directly close an individual program at an institution under the current accreditation system if that program were found to be not meeting the Commission's standards. Although under the current accreditation system the Commission cannot require an institution to close a specific program, the COA has the authority

to place program-specific stipulations on an institution and then require follow-up until those stipulations have been met. Placing stipulations on a program often leads to significant improvements in that program as the institution must provide further evidence that it has taken steps to address all stipulations and that program standards are met. Program related stipulations can, and does, also lead to the closing of ineffective programs since the Commission accreditation of the institution can be jeopardized if the institution does not correct the deficiencies identified in the stipulations. One of the restrictions that can be placed on a specific program by the COA is to require all candidates and applicants to be notified of the program's accreditation status and, in extreme cases, the COA can prohibit the program from accepting new candidates. Prohibiting a program from accepting new candidates may result in the closure of the program.

Question for Commission Consideration:

Does the current model of unit accreditation with enhanced program review meet the Commission's expectations for its accreditation system?

Part II: Discussion of Potential Cost Recovery Process

The Commission's accreditation activities include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- Six to eight meetings of the Committee on Accreditation
- Recruiting volunteer educators and organizing the work of volunteer educators who to come together to review proposals for Initial Institutional Approval for institutions not yet approved to offer educator preparation in California;
- Recruiting volunteer educators and organizing the work of volunteer educators who to come together to review Initial Program documents for proposed new educator preparation programs;
- Recruiting volunteer educators and organizing the work of volunteer educators who to come together to review Program Assessment documents and participate in site visits to institutions;
- Reviewing documentation addressing stipulations that are submitted by institutions not meeting the Commission's standards at the initial site visit;
- Reviewing quarterly reports submitted by institutions not meeting the Commission's standards at the initial site visit; and
- Conducting an accreditation re-visit as needed.
- All staff work to support the accreditation system such as reviewing biennial reports; tracking documents through initial institutional approval, initial program review, program assessment; reviewing biennial reports; providing technical assistance; training of reviewers; facilitating site visits; and providing support to the Committee on Accreditation.

Historically, a portion of each credential application fee and a portion of each examination registration fee have funded all the Commission's activities, including accreditation.

In 2012-13, the Commission's budget does not allow all accreditation activities to take place and accreditation site visits were postponed. One option for providing sufficient funding to fully operate the Commission's accreditation system would be to charge a fee to the users of the system either for initial institutional/program review and/or for accreditation activities that are

above and beyond the usual. Examples of “extraordinary “ accreditation activities would be a review of responses to stipulations, or review of quarterly reports from institutions that have been given stipulations as a result of an accreditation site visit. The concept of cost recovery is that the activities would be fully funded by the fee that the institution is charged. The fees would need to be reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate for the activity for which they are intended. To that effect, some possible cost recovery estimates for initial institutional review/program review and for a variety of extraordinary activities are provided below for the Commission’s discussion. It is important to note, however, that implementing a cost recovery process would require legislative and budget language.

Initial Institutional Review/Program Review: When the Commission adopts new standards or legislation, regulation or policy create new pathways to particular types of credentials, institutions (including colleges, universities, local education agencies or other types of entities) have the opportunity to submit proposals for new programs in these areas. A Commission approved institution may decide to propose an educator preparation program that it has not previously sponsored and this program proposal would complete the Initial Program Review process. Additionally, eligible institutions that have not previously sponsored an educator preparation program may choose to become an approved institution and implement an educator credentialing program. Each institutional proposal is reviewed by two expert educators from the field—faculty and/or practicing educators. At this time, the travel costs for the two individuals to review the proposal are estimated at **\$1,600 per document review**.

Extraordinary Activities: When an institution has received stipulations as a result of an accreditation site visit, the COA may require follow-up activities ranging from submitting documentation addressing the stipulations, undergoing a re-visit the year after the accreditation site visit, or undergoing a revisit and requiring quarterly reports. Depending on the seriousness of the issues requiring follow up, one or more of the following actions may be required of the institution:

- *Address Stipulations*—Institutions that fail to meet the Commission’s standards must demonstrate that they have remedied the problem, usually within one year of the site visit. Review of the institution’s progress may necessitate a staff visit to the institution to provide technical assistance, staff time to provide ongoing guidance and review documentation, or time for the original Team Lead to review documentation that has been submitted. **Estimated fee: \$500 per institution**
- *Accreditation Re-visit*—When a re-visit is required by the COA, typically the staff consultant and team lead return to the institution for a two day re-visit. At times additional team members are required because of the specific nature of the standards that were not fully met at the time of the initial site visit. **Estimated fee: \$1,000 per individual who attends the re-visit**
- *Quarterly Reports*—If the stipulations are significant and the COA has concerns that the institution may not make adequate progress throughout the year, the COA may stipulate that quarterly reports are due from the institution. Staff must provide ongoing guidance, review the documentation, may necessitate a staff visit to the institution to provide technical assistance, and time for the team lead to review the documentation that has been submitted. **Estimated fee: \$1,000 per institution**

- *Focused Site Visit Outside of the Regular Accreditation Cycle*—When an institution is not complying with the accreditation activities or if there are concerns expressed about a program or institution, the COA may send a small team for a Focused Site Visit. For instance, if some major issues arise from a review of an institution’s biennial report, staff can recommend and the COA can require a focused site visit to an institution at any point in time. **Estimated fee: \$1,000 per individual who attends the visit.**

Question for Commission Consideration:

Does the Commission support or want more information on either or both of the cost recovery processes presented in this item?

Next Steps

Depending on Commission discussion, additional agenda items could be developed and presented to the Commission regarding the accreditation system and its tenets and processes as well as regarding potential cost recovery.

Appendix A

California Education Code §§44370-44374

44370. The Legislature finds and declares that the competence and performance of professional educators depends in part on the quality of their academic and professional preparation. The Legislature recognizes that standards of quality in collegiate preparation complement standards of candidate competence and performance, and that general standards and criteria regarding the overall quality of a candidate's preparation are as essential as the assessment of the candidate's competence and performance.

44371. (a) The system for accreditation of educator preparation shall do all of the following:

- (1) Concentrate on the overall quality of educator preparation in credential programs.
- (2) Hold professional elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educators responsible for quality in the preparation of professional practitioners.
- (3) Contribute to improvements in educator preparation and recognize excellence in preparation programs and institutions.
- (4) Be governed by an accreditation framework that sets forth the policies of the commission regarding the accreditation of educator preparation.

(b) The accreditation framework shall do all of the following:

- (1) Establish broad, flexible policies and standards for accreditation of educator preparation.
- (2) Define the accreditation responsibilities, authority, and roles of the commission and the Committee on Accreditation.
- (3) Establish an accreditation system that is efficient and cost effective.
- (4) Require that accreditation decisions be based on sufficient, reliable evidence about the quality of educator preparation.

44372. The powers and duties of the commission regarding the accreditation system shall include the following:

- (a) Adopt and implement an accreditation framework, which sets forth the policies of the commission regarding the accreditation of educator preparation in California.
- (b) Establish and modify credential-specific standards, experimental program standards, and alternative program standards, as defined in the adopted accreditation framework.
- (c) Rule on the eligibility of an applicant for accreditation when the applying institution has not previously prepared educators for state Certification in California, pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 44227.
- (d) Appoint and reappoint the members of the Committee on Accreditation, in accordance with Section 44373, by selecting among nominees submitted by a panel of distinguished educators.
- (e) Review periodic accreditation reports by the Committee on Accreditation, and refer accreditation issues and concerns to the committee for its examination and response.
- (f) Hear and resolve appeals of accreditation decisions, pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section 44374.
- (g) Allocate resources annually for implementation of the accreditation system.
- (h) With the Committee on Accreditation, jointly design an evaluation of accreditation policies and their implementation.
- (i) Inform and advise the Legislature regarding statutory issues related to accreditation, and submit legislative recommendations, after considering the advice of the Committee on Accreditation, educational institutions, and professional organizations.

44373. (a) There is hereby established the Committee on Accreditation consisting of 12 members selected for their distinguished records of accomplishment in education. Six members shall be from postsecondary education institutions, and six shall be certificated professionals in public schools, school districts, or county offices of education in California. No member shall serve on the committee as a representative of any organization or institution. Membership shall be, to the maximum extent possible, balanced in terms of ethnicity, gender, and geographic regions. The committee shall include members from elementary and secondary schools, and members from public and private institutions of postsecondary education.

(b) The terms of committee members shall be in accordance with the accreditation framework. Appointment of the initial committee members shall be from nominees submitted by a panel of distinguished educators, who are named by a consensus of the commission and the accreditation advisory council, pursuant to Section 44371, as that section read on December 31, 1993. Appointment of subsequent committee members shall be from nominees submitted by a distinguished panel named by a consensus of the commission and the Committee on Accreditation. For each committee position to be filled by the commission, the panel shall submit two highly qualified nominees.

(c) The committee shall do, but shall not be limited to doing, all of the following:

(1) Make decisions about the accreditation of educator preparation. The committee's decision making process shall be in accordance with the accreditation framework.

(2) Make decisions about the initial accreditation of new programs of educator preparation in accordance with procedures established by the committee.

(3) Determine the comparability of standards submitted by applicants with those adopted by the commission, in accordance with the accreditation framework.

(4) Adopt guidelines for accreditation reviews, and monitor the performance of accreditation teams and other aspects of the accreditation system.

(5) Present an annual accreditation report to the commission and respond to accreditation issues and concerns referred to the committee by the commission.

44374.(a) The accreditation framework shall include common standards that relate to aspects of program quality that are the same for all credential programs. The framework shall also include multiple options for program standards.

(b) The accreditation framework shall include provisions regarding well-trained accreditation teams whose members shall be drawn from a pool of California college and university faculty members and administrators, elementary and secondary school teachers and other certificated professionals, and local school board members. For each accreditation visit there shall be one team, whose size, composition, and expertise shall be constituted according to the accreditation framework.

(c) An accreditation team shall present its report and recommendations to the Committee on Accreditation in accordance with the accreditation framework. The committee shall consider the accreditation team report and recommendations, and shall also consider evidence, which may be submitted by the institution, that the team demonstrated bias or acted arbitrarily or capriciously or contrary to the policies of the accreditation framework or the procedural guidelines of the committee.

(d) The Committee on Accreditation shall make a single decision to accredit, to accredit with stipulations, or to deny accreditation to an institution's credential programs, pursuant to Section 44373 and the accreditation framework.

(e) An institution has the right to appeal to the commission if the procedures or decisions of an accreditation team or the Committee on Accreditation are arbitrary, capricious, unfair, or contrary to the policies of the commission or the procedural guidelines of the committee. An institution also has the right to recommend changes in the accreditation policies of the commission, which shall be considered by the commission in consultation with the executive director and the Committee on Accreditation.

(f) At the request of an institution, the accreditation of an education unit or a specific program by a national accrediting body shall substitute for state accreditation provided that the national accrediting body has satisfied the applicable conditions set forth in the accreditation framework.

Appendix B

History of Accreditation in California

**Excerpt from the
Accreditation Study Session, May 2005, Commission Agenda item 6A** (pages 1-5),
<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2005-05/2005-05-6A.pdf>,

Introduction

Throughout education, accreditation plays an important role in assuring the public and students of program and institutional quality. In the preparation of teachers, the status of accreditation conveys that programs offered by institutions meet state adopted standards of quality and effectiveness and that sufficient quality characterizes the preparation of educators. The fundamental tenet of the existing system is that professional educators make professional judgments about the quality of educator preparation programs. This agenda item provides an overview of California's system of accreditation for educator preparation, examines through case studies the policies and procedures of that system, and includes a progress report on the review of the accreditation system that has occurred since June 2004.

Background

Prior to the Ryan Act of 1970, state oversight of educator licensing resided with the Bureau of Teacher Certification in the California Department of Education (CDE). Licensure requirements were defined through coursework and field experience expectations. Candidates submitted applications and transcripts to the Bureau for review and determination of eligibility for the credential. They were awarded a license if all established requirements were met. The Bureau conducted site visits to colleges and universities with two to three member teams of postsecondary educators to determine whether or not the institution should be recognized as eligible to offer educator preparation. During the late 1960s the concept of approved programs was introduced whereby institutions would be approved to offer specific preparation programs. Institutions would be responsible for determining that all requirements were met and would recommend candidates for the credential. However, this concept was not fully implemented before the credentialing system was reformed in 1970.

In 1970, the Ryan Act created the Commission on Teacher Preparation and Licensure (CTPL), later to be renamed the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC), and shifted the licensure of educators and the monitoring of teacher preparation programs to this new entity. The approved programs concept was refined over time and fully implemented by the Commission. During 1971-72, the Commission established an exhaustive set of detailed guidelines to govern the review of educator preparation programs. The guidelines were developed by Commission staff, with input from advisory groups, and addressed such aspects as program administration, faculty qualifications, curriculum, reading instruction, and program evaluation. There was a strong emphasis in these guidelines and in the process through which they were implemented on analyzing the minute details of a program as opposed to a more holistic approach.

In 1973-74, an External Assessment Process was launched with four pilot institutions. Under this new process, teams of thirty or more K-12 professionals and parents conducted site visits at colleges and universities to determine whether institutions were implementing the programs they

were approved to offer based on their written responses to the Commission's guidelines. Teams analyzed programs using a discrepancy approach wherein each element of the program was evaluated against each element of the guidelines to determine whether the program was doing what it said it was doing. Teams were drawn from the region in which the institution was located and received no training prior to conducting a site visit. Each of the pilot institutions were found to have a small number of discrepancies and received approval from the Commission with the requirement that all discrepancies be remedied within one year. This approach to conditional approval has been retained as an aspect of the Commission's accountability system through multiple reforms over the years. For the next two years, the Commission made a number of refinements to the External Assessment Process. In 1974-75 twelve institutions participated in the pilot process. Smaller teams, consisting exclusively of K-12 representative and parents visited the institutions and continued working with the discrepancy process. In the 1975-76 year, fourteen additional institutions participated in the process. One of the changes to the system that year was the addition of higher education professionals to the visiting teams. Teams provided the institutions with the written discrepancy reports, but also engaged them for the first time in dialogue about the overall quality of their programs.

A new Program Evaluation Process was introduced, replacing the External Assessment Process in 1976-77. Refined guidelines were adopted by the Commission that focused on broader domains of quality and moved away from the extreme detail of the earlier guidelines. Quantitative data regarding the number of hours and weeks spent in supervised student teaching and the nature and extent of K-12 and community involvement in the development and evaluation of programs became indicators of program sufficiency evaluated by teams. Mixed teams of higher education, K-12 and parent representatives continued to visit programs, though team size was substantially reduced. Teams of 2-5 individuals, depending on the size of the credential program, were provided with training on the first day of a visit, another first for the Commission. Teams were asked to make more holistic judgments about the overall adequacy of programs. Separate teams were formed for each program area, so multiple teams would be visiting at the same time. Thus the total number of team members visiting an institution could range from three to over thirty depending on the number and size of programs. Each individual program was recommended to the Commission for approval, approval with conditions, probation, or termination.

This was the beginning of a shift by the Commission toward stronger guidelines that focused on aspects of program quality. Three categories of guidelines emerged from this process: (a) Institutional Issues (resources, faculty, admissions, organization); (b) Candidate Competence (program curriculum and candidate outcomes); and (c) Program and Candidate Evaluation (how the program conducted needs analyses, engaged with the field, evaluated and recommended candidates for credentials). Teams began moving away from counting the elements within guidelines that were present in a program and toward making more qualitative judgments about programs. These shifts in the guidelines and procedures for program review were driven by an emerging concept of best practice based on the knowledge and expertise of professionals in the K-12 and higher education communities.

In the late 1980's the Commission started a transition from guidelines to standards for each of its program areas. In 1987 the Commission adopted standards of quality and effectiveness for multiple and single subject credential programs. The program approval process begun in 1976 was retained, but instead of evaluating programs based on guidelines, mixed teams of reviewers

(K-12 and higher education) were trained to review programs based on standards. Commission staff developed and implemented two-day training sessions for larger groups of professionals who formed a pool of reviewers from which teams were chosen.

The Program Evaluation system remained in place until the mid-1990's when the results of an extensive teacher preparation and accountability reform effort came to fruition. Senate Bill 148 by Marian Bergeson had been enacted in 1988 which led to the Commission adoption of an *Accreditation Framework* in May 1993, thus taking the first step in replacing its individual program approval system with a unit wide professional accreditation system. The Commission was among the first in the nation to establish a standards-based teacher preparation system. The background and context for this reform effort were detailed in an extensive analysis conducted by the Commission staff in 1991. Excerpts from this analysis are provided in the next two sections below.

Educator Preparation for California 2000: Background Information for a New Accreditation Framework (excerpted and updated from staff analysis in September 1991)

In the decade from 1980 to 1989, advocates for educational reform and school improvement turned their attention to the quality of teaching and learning in the K-12 schools. With mounting evidence of inadequate student standards, poor morale and high turnover among teachers, increasing numbers of observers expressed support for changes that would “professionalize” education, particularly teaching. The following reforms were among the changes frequently advocated by educational leaders and ‘reform commissions’ nationally and in California.

- Site-based decision-making that includes strong roles for classroom teachers, and other proposals for teacher empowerment.
- Mentoring programs and intensive summer institutes to upgrade teacher skills while preserving individual discretion and professional legitimacy.
- Basic skills tests to disqualify candidates who lack academic skills that are characteristic of well-educated adults.
- Performance assessments to establish high standards for the subject matter competence and pedagogical skills of beginning teachers.
- Professional standards for the initial preparation of teachers, and professional procedures for reviewing the quality of preservice programs.

Nationally, these proposals and others were recommended by the Holmes Group (1986), the Carnegie Forum on Teaching as a Profession (1986), the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education (1985), and many comparable bodies and leaders. In California, efforts to ‘professionalize’ teaching were strongly advocated by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, the California Commission on the Teaching Profession (1985), the Commission on Teacher Quality (1984), the Business-Education Roundtable (1984), and the Governor’s Commission on Educational Quality (1988).

In the context of this whirlwind of reform proposals, educators and policymakers also discussed extensively the review and approval of professional educator preparation programs in California by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Many of these dialogues tended to reinforce perceptions that had developed during the 1970’s -- that the Commission’s review and approval of programs was technical and narrow in scope, that it had the effect of inhibiting innovation and diversity in professional preparation, and that it was more bureaucratic than professional. The

Commission was transforming its policies and practices, but these reforms were ignored or downplayed by some observers. Nevertheless, the Commission continued to concentrate on improvements in its review of institutional programs.

Conceptual Origins of Senate Bill 148 (Chapter 1455, Statutes of 1988)

Throughout the 1980s, improving the quality and effectiveness of teaching and increasing its attractiveness as a profession were the policy goals of Senator Marian Bergeson, a former teacher and school board member. In 1987, the Senator introduced Senate Bill 148, which included the following reforms in teaching.

- A policy of support for beginning teachers, in the form of guidance and assistance to increase their effectiveness and retention, as a future requirement for earning a professional teaching credential.
- A policy of individual accountability according to standards of teaching performance, to be assessed independently to verify each new teacher's competence, as a future requirement for a professional teaching credential.
- Greater involvement by practitioners, especially teachers, in governing the profession through participation in the deliberations and decisions of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
- Greater independence and autonomy for the professional governing body – the Commission - - in establishing and administering high standards and other policies to improve teaching and learning in the schools.
- Higher standards for issuance and renewal of emergency certificates to practitioners who had not fulfilled the conventional standards for membership in the teaching profession.

As enacted, SB 148 included several provisions to direct the Commission in the area of accreditation. Among those were the following:

- 1) The legislation established an Accreditation Advisory Council (AAC). SB 148 dictated the structure of this representative body, which included representatives from each of the segments of higher education and the K-12 community. Two distinct groups fulfilled this requirement of law between 1989 and 1993. The function of the AAC was to advise the Commission regarding the establishment of an accreditation framework.
- 2) Several provisions governed the shift from program approval by the Commission to program accreditation by one or more nongovernmental accrediting entities. Motivated by a desire to “hold professional elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educators responsible for the quality of (educator) preparation, “ the legislation required the Commission to attempt to delegate the accreditation function to one or more “nongovernmental accrediting entities. “ Article 10 required that such an entity “include California elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educators. “ The law also provided for the contingency in which the Commission could not select a nongovernmental accrediting entity. The Commission determined that it was important, with respect to its role as a professional standards board, to retain some responsibility for this function, and neither practical nor desirable to shift accountability for educator preparation to another agency. The Committee on Accreditation

was established as a compromise solution. Consistent with the intent of SB 148, the body is considered to be non-governmental to the extent that it consists of six individuals from higher education and six individuals from K-12 who do not represent, per se, any agency, institution or system. Rather, members of the COA are selected for their distinguished records of accomplishment in education. Pursuant to subsequent legislation, the Commission retained overall responsibility for the accreditation system through its appointed Committee on Accreditation. Particular roles and responsibilities are defined in the *Accreditation Framework*, and described elsewhere in this report.

- 3) Several provisions related to the adoption, contents and use of an accreditation framework by the Commission. Two drafts of an accreditation framework were developed by the AAC during its four-year history. The first draft was rejected by the Commission for a variety of reasons, including (but not limited to) the perception that it would lower expectations for quality in educator preparation, it proposed to eliminate standards of candidate competence and performance, the approach to team size and structure for site visits was flawed, and it emphasized unit accreditation in a manner that would severely undermine the review of individual programs within the institution. The second version of the *Accreditation Framework* was adopted by the Commission in May 1993 for subsequent implementation under Senate Bill 655 (Bergeson, Chapter 426, Statutes of 1993), which became effective on January 1, 1994.

The adoption by the Commission of the *Accreditation Framework* and the creation of the Committee on Accreditation with the responsibility for the direct monitoring of educator preparation programs brought about three major shifts in the Commission's accountability system:

- 1) The *Framework* shifted the focus from individual credential programs operating independently within an institution, to a "unit-plus" approach, wherein the "unit" refers to the sponsoring agency (e.g., institution), and the "plus" refers to all of the educator preparation programs that are offered by the sponsoring agency. In this manner the Commission and the AAC sought to ensure that the sponsoring agency took appropriate responsibility for all of the credential programs being offered and that each program within the institution continued to be adequately monitored for quality. Unlike the Program Review Process, under the COA, accreditation decisions were made about the institution as a whole.
- 2) The second major shift in this reform had to do with the size and structure of review teams. Pursuant to the *Framework*, the Commission adopted Common Standards that addressed expectations of quality and effectiveness for the unit as a whole. Accreditation teams began to include a Common Standards cluster that focused on institutional issues cutting across all programs. Other clusters were formed within the accreditation team with responsibilities for the basic teaching credential (multiple and single subject), services credentials (administrative services, health services and pupil personnel services) and specialist credentials (education specialist, reading specialist). The whole accreditation team, including all of the clusters, is now required to vote on the accreditation status of the unit. Any issues or concerns within a particular program area are addressed as stipulations on the accreditation report.

- 3) The *Accreditation Framework* also impacted the role of the accreditation team leader in the process. Under the new system, the team leader serves as the primary point of contact for the team, the institution and the COA regarding the findings and recommendations of the team. Commission staff serve as facilitators of the process, and have primary responsibility for the logistical aspects of a visit.

Appendix C

Tenets of the Commission's Accreditation System

The Accreditation System is the Commission's means for ensuring that approved programs are preparing educators who are effective and are focused on continuous improvement

Basic tenets of the accreditation system include:

- a. Institutions are held to the adopted standards—both Common and Program—Each standard and each phrase of in each standard
- b. Currently, the institutions are held to meeting the specific language of the standard and there is no attempt to identify excellence beyond meeting the standard
- c. Evidence needs to be provided/collected from multiple sources to support standard decisions and accreditation recommendations
- d. What an institution is asked to do should be beneficial to the institution's educator preparation efforts and the Commission's accreditation- process
- e. When an institution is required to submit something, the submission should be reviewed and feedback provided from the Commission (COA, BIR, staff)
- f. If the CTC has necessary information already, do not request that the institution submit that information again
- g. Many of the activities previously conducted during the 4-day site visit have been distributed across the seven year cycle (Biennial Report, Program Assessment and the shorter site visit)
- h. Only BIR members make standard decisions and accreditation recommendations
- i. Only the COA makes accreditation decisions
- j. Accreditation ensures program quality which leads to better prepared educators

There are clear relationships among

- 1) effort on part of institution—time preparing documents and in preparation for accreditation activities, and effort on part of BIR and CTC staff—to review, understand and evaluate what the institution submits;
- 2) evidence available for review by BIR members and staff, and confidence in BIR member decisions regarding findings on standards and recommendations on accreditation status, which directly impact
- 3) consistency/accuracy of the COA's decisions on accreditation and stipulations

The system should maximize the reliability, validity and consistency of accreditation decisions while not exceeding a reasonable amount of effort on the part of institutions, members of the BIR, and CTC staff.

Appendix D

Common Standards

Standard 1: Educational Leadership

The institution and education unit create and articulate a research-based vision for educator preparation that is responsive to California's adopted standards and curriculum frameworks. The vision provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance and experiences, scholarship, service, collaboration, and unit accountability. The faculty, instructional personnel, and relevant stakeholders are actively involved in the organization, coordination, and governance of all professional preparation programs. Unit leadership has the authority and institutional support needed to create effective strategies to achieve the needs of all programs and represents the interests of each program within the institution. The education unit implements and monitors a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements.

Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation

The education unit implements an assessment and evaluation system for ongoing program and unit evaluation and improvement. The system collects, analyzes, and utilizes data on candidate and program completion performance and unit operations. Assessment in all programs includes ongoing and comprehensive data collection related to candidate qualifications, proficiencies, and competence, as well as program effectiveness, and is used for improvement purposes.

Standard 3: Resources

The institution provides the unit with the necessary budget, qualified personnel, adequate facilities and other resources to prepare candidates effectively to meet the state-adopted standards for educator preparation. Sufficient resources are consistently allocated for effective operation of each credential or certificate program for coordination, admission, advisement, curriculum and professional development, instruction, field-based supervision and/or clinical experiences, and assessment management. Sufficient information resources and related personnel are available to meet program and candidate needs. A process that is inclusive of all programs is in place to determine resource needs.

Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel

Qualified persons are employed and assigned to teach all courses, to provide professional development, and to supervise field-based and/or clinical experiences in each credential and certificate program. Instructional personnel and faculty have current knowledge in the content they teach, understand the context of public schooling, and model best professional practices in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service. They are reflective of a diverse society and knowledgeable about diverse abilities, cultural, language, ethnic and gender diversity. They have a thorough grasp of the academic standards, frameworks, and accountability systems that drive the curriculum of public schools. They collaborate regularly and systematically with colleagues in P-12 settings/college/university units and members of the broader, professional community to improve teaching, candidate learning, and educator preparation. The institution provides support for faculty development. The unit regularly evaluates the performance of course instructors and field supervisors, recognizes excellence, and retains only those who are consistently effective.

Standard 5: Admission

In each professional preparation program, applicants are admitted on the basis of well-defined admission criteria and procedures, including all Commission-adopted requirements. Multiple measures are used in an admission process that encourages and supports applicants from diverse populations. The unit determines that admitted candidates have appropriate pre-professional experiences and personal characteristics, including sensitivity to California's diverse population, effective communication skills, basic academic skills, and prior experiences that suggest a strong potential for professional effectiveness.

Standard 6: Advice and Assistance

Qualified members of the unit are assigned and available to advise applicants and candidates about their academic, professional and personal development. Appropriate information is accessible to guide each candidate's attainment of all program requirements. The institution and/or unit provide support and assistance to candidates and only retains candidates who are suited for entry or advancement in the education profession. Evidence regarding candidate progress and performance is consistently utilized to guide advisement and assistance efforts.

Standard 7: Field Experience and Clinical Practice

The unit and its partners design, implement, and regularly evaluate a planned sequence of field-based and clinical experiences in order for candidates to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support all students effectively so that P-12 students meet state-adopted academic standards. For each credential and certificate program, the unit collaborates with its partners regarding the criteria for selection of school sites, effective clinical personnel, and site-based supervising personnel. Field-based work and/or clinical experiences provide candidates opportunities to understand and address issues of diversity that affect school climate, teaching, and learning, and to help candidates develop research-based strategies for improving student learning.

Standard 8: District-Employed Supervisors

District-employed supervisors are certified and experienced in either teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential. A process for selecting supervisors who are knowledgeable and supportive of the academic content standards for students is based on identified criteria. Supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.

Standard 9: Assessment of Candidate Competence

Candidates preparing to serve as professional school personnel know and demonstrate the professional knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting the state-adopted academic standards. Assessments indicate that candidates meet the Commission-adopted competency requirements, as specified in the program standards.