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Action

Professional Services Committee

English Learner Authorization and Intern Credentials

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents draft policy language regarding English Learner Authorizations and Intern Credentials.

Policy Question: Does the Commission wish to clarify its policy regarding the awarding of an English Learner Authorization to an Intern candidate only after the intern has completed preparation to teach English learners?

Recommended Action: Adopt policy regarding interns and the awarding of an English Learner Authorization. Direct staff to develop 1) proposed regulations for the Commission to consider at the April 2013 meeting, and 2) a process to work with intern programs regarding how programs will plan to provide preparation for the English Learner Authorization to interns who do not already hold this authorization.

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Strategic Plan Goal

I. Educator Quality

- ◆ Maintain expectations for educator preparedness and performance that are responsive to the needs of California's diverse student population and promote 21st century teaching and learning.

English Learner Authorization and Intern Credentials

Introduction

This agenda item presents draft policy language regarding the English Learner Authorization (ELA) and Intern Credentials. Currently the ELA is awarded concomitantly with an Intern Credential for Multiple Subjects, Single Subject and Education Specialist Teaching Credentials.

Background

California's K-12 students who are English learners (EL) require teachers with the specialized knowledge and skills to support these students' English language acquisition as well as access to academic content across the curriculum.

According to the California Department of Education (CDE), there were 1.4 million English learner students in public schools in 2010-11 (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/cb/cefelfacts.asp>). CDE provides assistance to local schools and districts to achieve the following goals:

- Ensure that English learners acquire full proficiency in English as rapidly and effectively as possible and attain parity with native speakers of English.
- Ensure that English learners, within a reasonable period of time, achieve the same rigorous grade-level academic standards that are expected of all students.

The Commission has focused a variety of recent activities on addressing and improving preparation for meeting the needs of students who are English learners and on updating the knowledge and skills required of individuals who teach or provide services to these students. At the January-February 2013 meeting, the Commission discussed the appropriateness of issuing an ELA to credential holders who have not been prepared to teach English learners. (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2013-01/2013-01-4C.pdf>). This item provides additional background about statutory requirements for teachers of English learners, and presents draft policy language that will clarify the Commission's requirements for adding an English learner authorization to an intern credential.

Requirements for Earning an English Learner Authorization

Education Code §44253.3(b) specifies three requirements for earning an English Learner Authorization (see Appendix A). In brief, the individual must hold a valid credential or permit, as specified, must complete preparation or pass the examination as determined by the Commission, and must have satisfied a second language requirement. The language requirement is explicated in Title 5 §80015.

Commission-approved Routes for Earning an English Learner Authorization

The Commission has approved several routes for an individual to gain or demonstrate that he or she has the knowledge, skills, and abilities to teach English learners:

- Complete a Commission-approved Multiple Subject, Single Subject or Education Specialist Preliminary Teacher Preparation Program, where EL pedagogy is embedded in the program¹;
- Complete a Commission-approved California Teachers of English Learners (CTEL) Program or a Commission-approved Bilingual Authorization Program; or
- Pass the Commission-adopted California Teachers of English Learners (CTEL) Examination.

The scope of the content knowledge required for the authorization is addressed by the Commission-adopted CTEL Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) ([http://www.ctel.nesinc.com/PDFs /CX_SGsection2.pdf](http://www.ctel.nesinc.com/PDFs/CX_SGsection2.pdf)). This same set of KSAs is reflected in the Commission's program standards for Multiple Subject, Single Subject, and Education Specialist Preliminary Teacher Preparation, the CTEL and Bilingual Program standards, and in the content specifications for the CTEL examination.

Discussion of Commission Policy Relative to the English Learner Authorization and Intern Credentials

The key policy issue discussed in this agenda item concerns the timing of *when* an authorization to teach English learner students should be awarded to an individual who holds an Intern Credential.

Some Intern Credential holders already have a valid English Learner Authorization, such as, for example, a Multiple Subject Credential holder who is serving an on Special Education Intern Credential. Those who already hold a valid California credential may already have earned the full ELA by virtue of their prior preparation and/or examination history. For these candidates, current Commission policy is that the English Learner Authorization, once earned, applies to all credentials held by an individual. However, many Intern Credential holders do not hold any other form of valid teaching credential and therefore have not completed the Commission-approved routes for earning an ELA.

For Intern Credential holders who have not met the requirements for an ELA through any of the routes noted above, it is suggested that the Commission's policy be that the English Learner Authorization be awarded when the candidate completes the appropriate preparation or demonstrates competence with the appropriate test. If the Commission acts to clarify its policy in this way, it will create a means for interns to meet the standards through approved preparation or test passage. Interns who have not met the standards could teach in classrooms with English learners if their employers seek local governing board approval to apply for a Variable Term Waiver on behalf of the individual Intern until such time as the intern completes one of the Commission-approved routes.

¹ Approved programs may fit within a variety of delivery models, including one-year student teaching based programs, multi-year blended programs, and two-year intern programs. The intern model relies on job-embedded, supervised preparation and is the only route that currently allows the individual to begin teaching English learners prior to having completed preparation for an English Learner Authorization.

Proposed Policy for the Commission’s Consideration

To more clearly reflect the Commission’s position on earning the English Learner Authorization, the Commission could consider adoption of the following policy:

An individual must complete preparation to teach English learners (through a Commission-approved preparation program) or pass the Commission-adopted examination prior to earning an authorization to teach English learners.

If the Commission adopts this policy, individuals who are recommended for an Intern Credential (university or district intern credential) would qualify for an ELA when **one** of the following has occurred:

- 1) The intern holds an authorization to teach English learners by virtue of holding a different valid California teaching credential that includes an EL Authorization.
- 2) The intern passes the CTEL Examination and applies for the ELA.
- 3) The intern completes a Commission-approved CTEL or Commission-approved Bilingual Authorization program and is recommended by the program sponsor for the ELA.
- 4) The intern completes all relevant Teaching English Learners coursework and fieldwork, except the Teaching Performance Assessment, and is recommended by the program sponsor for the ELA.

Program Approaches to Meeting the Requirements for the ELA

All Commission-approved Intern Programs must ensure that each candidate completes a minimum of 120 hours of preservice and the Intern programs provide both preservice and inservice preparation for participants. A portion of the preparation relating to the teaching of English learners must be provided during the preservice preparation period. While it may be possible to front-load all of the preparation to teach English learners into the preservice training, educators and program sponsors have noted that such an approach would not be effective if it did not include a classroom context in which to understand and practice the required KSAs.

Some Intern programs’ preservice design includes providing an extended period of coursework along with fieldwork experiences in public school classrooms with English learners to relate the preservice content to the classroom context. This approach could potentially provide all of the preparation needed for the English learner authorization prior to the Intern becoming the teacher of record.

Program Standards and Content Relating to Preparation to Teach English Learners

The Commission-adopted Program Standards (*Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject* and *Preliminary Education Specialist*) define the knowledge, skills, and abilities that each candidate must demonstrate prior to being recommended for the Preliminary Teaching Credential. Specifically, preparation to teach students who are English learners is primarily addressed in one of the 19 Multiple/Single Subject Teacher Preparation Program Standards and one of the 16 Education Specialist Preliminary Teacher Preparation Program Standards, but additional references to teaching English learners can be found in additional standards.

The Commission could support intern program sponsors seeking to secure an ELA for their candidates prior to completion of the intern program by inviting them to provide specific information about how and when interns complete required preparation to teach English learners. A similar process is utilized by the Commission when reviewing proposed subject matter programs to determine alignment with standards. The prospective subject matter program submits an alignment matrix that shows what course, what key assignments and assessment address each of the specific Subject Matter Requirements. Sponsors of Intern programs could be invited to respond to an *English Learner Content Alignment Matrix* indicating where, how, and when the intern program provides the required preparation (including coursework and field experiences) to teach English learners. Program proposals would be reviewed by expert teams, consistent with the program review process enacted within the Commission's accreditation system.

Staff Recommendation

- 1) To more clearly reflect statutory requirements for interns seeking authorization to teach English learners, Education Code §44253.3(b)(2), staff recommends that the Commission adopt the following policy:
An individual must complete preparation to teach English learners (through a Commission-approved preparation program) or pass the Commission-adopted examination prior to earning an authorization to teach English learners.
- 2) Staff further recommends that the Commission initiate the rulemaking process to codify the Commission's policy and requirements for intern credentials and programs.
- 3) Staff further recommends that the Commission direct staff to initiate a process for reviewing proposals from sponsors of intern programs regarding preparation to teach English learners.

Next Steps

If the Commission adopts the recommendations in this agenda item, staff will develop and implement a program review and approval process for intern program sponsors and initiate the rulemaking process to codify the Commission's policy and requirements for intern credentials and programs.

Appendix A

44253.3 (b)

- (b) The minimum requirements for the authorization, which may be completed at the same time as the initial preparation for the prerequisite credential or at a later date, shall include all of the following:
- (1) Possession of a valid California teaching credential, services credential, visiting faculty permit, children's center instructional permit, or children's center supervision permit which credential or permit authorizes the holder to provide instruction to pupils in preschool, kindergarten, any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, or classes primarily organized for adults, except for any of the following:
 - (A) Emergency credentials or permits.
 - (B) Exchange credentials as specified in Section 44333.
 - (C) District intern credentials as specified in Section 44325.
 - (D) Sojourn certificated employee credentials as specified in Section 44856.
 - (E) Teacher education internship credentials as specified in Article 3 (commencing with Section 44450) of Chapter 3.
 - (2) Passage of one or more examinations, or by completing an approved program that consists of coursework or a combination of coursework and examinations, that the commission determines is necessary for demonstrating the knowledge and skills required for effective delivery of the services included in the authorization.
 - (3) Completion of at least six semester units, or nine quarter units, of coursework in a second language at a regionally accredited institution of postsecondary education. The commission shall establish minimum standards for scholarship in the required coursework. The commission also shall establish alternative ways in which the requirement can be satisfied by language-learning experience that creates an awareness of the challenges of second-language acquisition and development.