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Action

Professional Services Committee

Waiver Request In Order to Pilot the National Praxis Performance Assessment for Teachers (PPAT) in California

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents a request from three Commission-approved teacher preparation programs for a waiver in order to pilot the nationally available PPAT during 2014-16. If the Commission were to approve the request, a passing score on the PPAT for the specified candidates at the requesting institutions would waive the requirement that the candidates pass a Commission-approved teaching performance assessment.

Policy Question: Does the Commission wish to allow three institutions to pilot the PPAT during 2014-16 and waive the requirement that candidates pass a Commission-approved TPA in order to earn a preliminary multiple or single subject teaching credential?

Recommended Action: Staff recommends that the Commission approve the waiver request as presented in this item with the specified provisos and any additional stipulations or requirements that might be established by the Commission for the pilot.

Presenters: Wayne Bacer, Consultant, and Phyllis Jacobson, Administrator, Professional Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal

I. Educator Quality

- ◆ Develop, maintain, and promote high quality authentic, consistent educator assessments and examinations that support development and certification of educators who have demonstrated the capacity to be effective practitioners.

October 2014

Waiver Request In Order to Pilot the National Praxis Performance Assessment for Teachers (PPAT) in California

Introduction

This agenda item presents a request from three Commission-approved Multiple and Single Subject Teacher Preparation Programs (Antioch University, California Lutheran University, and Chapman University) for a Commission waiver of the requirement that candidates must pass a Commission-approved teaching performance assessment so that these institutions may pilot the nationally available PPAT performance assessment during the 2014-16 academic years. Candidates would begin the PPAT during January 2015 and would complete the final two tasks during student teaching in fall 2015. Thus, the pilot would run over two academic years, 2014-15 and 2015-16. Passage of a teaching performance assessment approved by the Commission is a requirement for each candidate who initially enters teacher preparation for a Multiple or Single Subject California Teaching Credential on or after July 1, 2008.

The institutions requesting the waiver have been implementing a Commission-approved teaching performance assessment instrument and are in good accreditation standing. The programs now wish, however, to pilot the nationally available PPAT with a small number of candidates.

Background

Education Code §44320.2 requires all candidates for a Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject Teaching Credential to pass an assessment of their teaching performance with K-12 public school students as part of the requirements for earning a teaching credential. The teaching performance assessment must be an instrument approved by the Commission that meets the Commission's Assessment Design Standards.

Commencing July 1, 2008, for a program of professional preparation to satisfy the requirements of paragraph (3) of subdivision (b) of Section 44259, the program shall include a teaching performance assessment that is aligned with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession and that is congruent with state content and performance standards for pupils adopted pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 60605.

Currently there are four Commission-approved TPA models: CalTPA, edTPA, FAST, and PACT. Completion of a Commission-approved TPA is a comprehensive process that takes a good portion of a candidate's preliminary preparation program but it is only one of multiple measures that an approved preliminary preparation program uses in deciding to make a credential recommendation.

Description of the *Praxis*® Performance Assessment for Teachers (PPAT)

The Educational Testing Service (ETS), developer and owner of the PPAT, states that the *Praxis*® Performance Assessment for Teachers was designed in collaboration with teacher education faculty, cooperating teachers and department of education officials to ensure that the assessment addressed the need to verify that teachers are ready for the classroom before they receive a license to teach.

ETS states that the PPAT is based on an evidence-centered assessment that includes four tasks (one initial task scored by the program as a formative assessment and three tasks that are centrally scored – see below). The PPAT is stated to provide performance indicators of a teacher candidate's effectiveness in the classroom. By embedding teaching and clinical experiences with both summative and formative components, the PPAT is stated to offer a comprehensive picture of a teacher candidate's potential for classroom success. Below are some of the indicators provided by ETS about the characteristics of the PPAT:

- **Addresses all content areas and grade levels** — ETS states that the PPAT was designed specifically to provide flexibility needed to accommodate all content areas and grade levels.
- **Aligned to National Standards** — ETS states that the PPAT tasks are aligned with the InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards and foster an opportunity to demonstrate the application of Common Core Standards.
- **Offers Formative Feedback** — ETS states that teacher candidates will benefit from support during the student teaching experience, and that the assessment is designed to provide the candidate with feedback from both the supervising instructor and teacher mentor that will help refine the teacher candidate's teaching.
- **Includes a Professional Growth Plan** — ETS states that through the assessment, teacher candidates work with their supervising instructors and cooperating teachers to develop a professional growth plan that shows their strengths and areas for improvement to further improve their teaching practice.
- **Includes Double Scoring** — ETS states that all centrally scored tasks (tasks 2–4) will be reviewed twice to ensure greater transparency and interrater reliability.
- **Ongoing Feedback** — ETS states that candidates gain understanding of their growth throughout the clinical experience based on quick turnaround scoring time as tasks are submitted.
- **Ability to Resubmit** — ETS states that candidates who do not meet the qualifying score can resubmit some or all of their summative tasks.

ETS states that the PPAT will demonstrate that teacher candidates understand how to:

- gauge their students' learning needs
- interact effectively with students
- design and implement lessons with well-articulated learning goals
- design and use assessments to make data-driven decisions to inform teaching and learning

ETS also states that information from the assessment will help identify the areas where candidates have strengths, as well as areas where there are opportunities for professional development.

The chart below provided by ETS presents an overview of the four tasks of the *Praxis*[®] Performance Assessment for Teachers (PPAT), the focus of each task and what evidence candidates must provide to demonstrate their proficiency in each task.

Task Title	Type of Task	Description	Scoring
Task 1: Knowledge of Students and the Learning Environment	Formative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires candidates to demonstrate the knowledge and skills that pertain to their student teaching assignment in regard to the students, the school and the community. These factors will help candidates understand the implications on instruction and student learning. • Focuses on the beginning steps of a teacher candidate's practice, including the ability to identify individual learning needs requiring differentiated instruction • Provides first steps for the creation of a portfolio • Includes feedback from the supervising instructor and the cooperating teacher • Requires a written commentary and artifacts to be submitted 	Locally evaluated by supervising instructor
Task 2: Assessment and Data Collection to Measure and Inform Student Learning	Summative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires candidates to demonstrate their understanding, analysis and application of assessment and data collection to measure and inform student learning • Focuses on InTASC standards for using data both to inform instruction for the whole class and to meet individual learning needs • Requires a written commentary and artifacts to be submitted 	Centrally scored anonymously by trained educators
Task 3: Designing Instruction for Student Learning	Summative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires candidates to demonstrate their ability to develop instruction, including the use of technology, to facilitate student learning both for the whole class and for students with individual learning needs • Focuses on InTASC standards for classroom instruction, including the use of technology • Requires a written commentary and artifacts to be 	Centrally scored anonymously by trained educators

Task Title	Type of Task	Description	Scoring
Task 4: Implementing and Analyzing Instruction to Promote Student Learning	Summative	submitted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires candidates to demonstrate their ability to plan and implement a lesson and includes a 15-minute video of the candidate teaching a lesson • Focuses on the ability to use research-based instructional strategies and adapt instruction for individual needs • Assesses a range of standards with some overlap from other tasks • Reflects on overall teaching practice • Requires a written commentary and artifacts, including a 15-minute video submission 	Centrally scored anonymously by trained educators

The content of this assessment is aligned with national InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards. Task 1 is formative and candidates will work with their preparation programs to receive feedback on this task. Scores will be provided for tasks 2, 3 and 4 and as a cumulative score.

The Educational Testing Service (ETS) is in the process of submitting documentation for Commission review of the PPAT assessment in order to become a Commission-approved teaching performance assessment but has not yet fully responded to the Commission’s standards.

Commission Authority to Issue a Waiver

The Commission has the authority to grant waivers that are requested from school districts, county offices of education, private schools and postsecondary institutions through Education Code §44225(m), which states that:

44225 The commission shall do all of the following:

- (m) Review requests from school districts, county offices of education, private schools, and postsecondary institutions for the waiver of one or more of the provisions of this chapter or other provisions governing the preparation or licensing of educators. The commission may grant a waiver upon its finding that professional preparation equivalent to that prescribed under the provision or provisions to be waived will be, or has been, completed by the credential candidate or candidates affected....

The PPAT has not completed the Commission’s review process, does not yet have a passing score standard, and is not ready to be recommended to the Commission for approval. However, the Commission has the authority to allow specified candidates at the institutions requesting this waiver to earn a passing score on the PPAT assessment rather than on a Commission-approved teaching performance assessment in order to meet the statutory TPA requirement. The Commission has previously allowed a waiver under similar circumstances for the initial pilot of the edTPA during 2012-13.

Institution Requesting the Waiver

The three institutions identified below request a waiver to pilot the PPAT and for this assessment to waive the requirement for completion of a Commission-approved TPA for the following candidates:

Content Area	Institution	Antioch University	California Lutheran University	Chapman University	Totals
Multiple Subject		8	8	15	31
SS-Math			2	5	7
SS-English			2	1	3
SS-Science			2	1	3
SS-Social Science				5	5
SS-Physical Education			2	2	4
SS-Music				1	1
Institution Total		8	16	30	
Pilot Total			54		

All of the candidates participating in the pilot would not begin their program coursework until January 2015 and would be doing their student teaching primarily starting in fall 2015.

Staff note: A pilot total of 54 candidates is a very small number, and some content areas have only 1 student. Under these circumstances it would not be possible to obtain generalizable information from this small sample regarding the appropriateness and applicability of the PPAT model for wider use in California. It is possible however, that ETS might recruit additional institutions and candidates for an expanded pilot in 2015-16 if the Commission approves the waiver request for the initial pilot.

Discussion of the Request for a Waiver

A Commission-approved TPA provides assurance to the Commission that each candidate demonstrates the ability to teach the state-adopted content standards to California's public school students. Each Commission-approved model has been reviewed against and found to meet all aspects of the Commission's Assessment Design Standards. There are many aspects a proposed assessment must satisfy before it is recommended to the Commission for approval. But specific key essential aspects from the Education Code and the Assessment Design Standards are identified below with a staff analysis of the degree to which the PPAT currently addresses each of these essential aspects, based on materials submitted by ETS to the Commission for review.

Assess each candidate on the CSTP

The Education Code specifies that the TPA assess each candidate on the CSTP. The Commission has developed more specific indicators of the level of teaching that needs to be demonstrated through its *Teaching Performance Expectations* (TPEs), which reflect the CSTP as exemplified at

the level of a beginning teacher. The PPAT assesses each candidate on the INTASC Model Core Teaching Standards but indicates that feedback could potentially be provided with respect to the TPEs.

Staff analysis: The INTASC standards are closely aligned with the CSTP and the TPEs, and therefore this is not a reasonable basis on which to deny the waiver request to pilot the PPAT in California.

Assess each candidate's ability to teach the state-adopted academic content standards to California students

The TPA must assess each candidate's ability to teach the state-adopted content standards. California has adopted academic content standards in the single subject content areas and in 2010 also adopted the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. California's adopted academic content standards are aligned with, but not identical to, the national professional associations' standards. PPAT has not been piloted in California so there is no information available about the candidates' ability to teach California's adopted content standards to California students through this assessment.

There is no explicit requirement within the national version of the PPAT to address the effective teaching of English learners and special needs students in the regular education classroom. These are key areas of required emphasis in California.

Staff analysis: For multiple subject candidates, the two academic content areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics are reflected in the PPAT and are relatively well aligned with California standards since California has also adopted the Common Core along with some additional state-specific content in these two subject areas. The PPAT does not address the other two core content areas for multiple subject teachers, History/Social Studies and Science.

The lack of explicit requirements within the national version of the PPAT to address the effective teaching of English learners and special needs students within the regular education classroom is an issue for the applicability of this assessment for California teacher preparation programs and candidates. However, ETS has responded to this concern by indicating that for the California pilot, there will be a stipulation that one of the two focus students within the tasks must be an English learner in the general education classroom and the other must be a special needs student in the general education classroom. ETS further indicated that California-specific candidate materials will be prepared for the pilot consistent with this requirement.

A further concern for the national PPAT's use in California is the issue of scorers and the qualifications for scorers of California candidate responses. ETS has responded to this concern indicating that for the pilot, it will use only a scorer pool that consists of California K-12 teachers, program faculty members, and recently retired educators. The scorers who are teachers will be required to have a valid credential and either five years of teaching experience, and/or be a cooperating teacher or mentor for an educator preparation program, and/or have current National Board Certification. Scorers who are retired teachers would have to have

retired within the past four years and held a valid California credential while teaching, and would also have to meet one of the requirements listed above for an actively employed teacher. Scorers who are retired faculty members would have to have retired within the past four years and have prepared teacher candidates and/or supervised beginning teachers.

Staff analysis: ETS has been responsive to the issue of identifying an appropriate scorer pool for California candidates taking the assessment. However, the fact that the PPAT does not provide for any assessment, whether within the PPAT or within local program assessments, for the multiple subject areas of History/Social Science and Science is a concern for the Commission's consideration since candidates taking the PPAT pilot would be subject to different assessment requirements than all other candidates using Commission-approved TPA models and these candidates would have no assessment of their ability to instruct students appropriately and effectively in History/Social Science or Science.

This issue could potentially be a basis to deny the request to pilot the PPAT in California multiple subject programs and for candidates to be allowed to use the PPAT in lieu of a Commission-approved assessment.

Appropriately support candidates in preparation for the TPA, protect the candidates' and each student's rights

The development of PPAT has a foundation in the Commission-approved CalTPA teaching performance assessment model. The institutions requesting this waiver have been implementing a Commission approved TPA for a minimum of four years.

Staff analysis: As long as the institutions requesting to pilot PPAT submit verification that the current level of candidate support and protection of the candidate and K-12 student rights will at a minimum be maintained, this is not a reasonable basis on which to deny the request to pilot the PPAT in California. In addition, since candidates who are participating in a Commission-approved teacher preparation program using the CalTPA model may have already completed Task 1 of the CalTPA, an agreement has been reached that for pilot institution candidates in this situation, PPAT will waive completion of PPAT Task 1 if the candidate has successfully already completed CalTPA Task 1. None of the candidates in the three institutions requesting the waiver will have begun the CalTPA, and thus this agreement would not apply to the pilot candidates for this waiver request.

Validly and reliably score the assessment

The PPAT developers have significant experience with performance assessment and scoring performance assessments including experience with the CalTPA. In addition, ETS is a well-respected company with significant experience in validly and reliably scoring educator assessments. ETS has also indicated its willingness to review providing a local scoring process in the eventuality that the PPAT becomes an approved California TPA model.

Staff analysis: Centralized scoring of a performance assessment can appropriately provide evidence of scoring validity and reliability, with the proviso that the documentation provided

describes how the centralized scoring process for the PPAT will provide evidence of initial and ongoing scorer reliability. If this proviso is met, then this is not a reasonable basis on which to deny the requested waiver to pilot the PPAT in California.

Institute a passing score standard for California candidates

Developers of TPA models typically conduct a passing standard study in order to establish the requirements for successful completion of the assessment. PPAT intends to conduct a national standard setting study during the pilot period in June 2015.

Staff analysis: Since PPAT intends to conduct a passing score standard setting during the pilot period, and since the candidates participating in the pilot will not be completing the final two tasks until after the national standard setting study, the current lack of a California passing score standard is not per se a reasonable basis on which to deny the request to pilot the PPAT in California. However, given that a very small number of candidates would be included in the pilot, ETS may not be able to conduct a passing score standard setting based on California candidate results without a significant increase in the number of California participants prior to June 2015. This is a concern for the Commission's consideration with respect to the validity of the scoring for California candidates and for fairness to California candidates in the assessment process. Once the standard setting activities have been completed in June 2015, there would be a passing standard set on the basis of national participation which could potentially be applied to California candidates pending sufficient numbers to do a California-specific standard setting. This was also the case during the initial pilot of the edTPA in 2012; one of the reasons for the extended pilot of the edTPA in 2013-14 was to obtain enough California participation to do a California-specific standard setting study.

Provide formative assessment information to candidates and for program improvement purposes

One of the statutory requirements for the TPA is that it serves a formative purpose, providing information to both candidates and programs for improvement purposes, including use in induction. The PPAT can be both a locally and centrally-scored assessment, and the link between central scoring and the provision of formative assessment information to candidates and to programs should be clearly demonstrated.

Staff analysis: As long as the institution requesting to pilot PPAT submits verification that the current level of formative assessment information provided to candidates and used for program improvement purposes will at a minimum be maintained, this is not a reasonable basis on which to deny the request to pilot the PPAT in California.

Staff Recommendation

Staff supports the request by three institutions to pilot the PPAT during the 2014-16 academic years with the provisos that (a) the PPAT system will need to address the content areas of History/Social Science and Science for the Multiple Subject pilot candidates; (b) ETS will need to address the issue of standard-setting appropriate for California candidates within its scope of

standard-setting processes and activities; and (c) ETS would need to address any additional stipulations or requirements that might be established by the Commission for the pilot.

Next Steps

If the Commission approves the request for a two-year waiver in order to pilot the PPAT, staff would work with the identified institutions and with ETS to implement the Commission's direction. If the Commission denies the request for a waiver, staff would communicate the Commission's decision to the institutions. Staff would continue to work with the developers of the PPAT to provide technical assistance concerning the Commission's standards and expectations for Commission-approved TPA models for California use.