

---

# 3G

## Information

### *Professional Services Committee*

### Quality Professional Learning Standards

---

**Executive Summary:** This agenda item provides the Quality Professional Learning Standards for the Commission's information.

**Recommended Action:** For information only

**Presenters:** Carrie Roberts, Director, Professional Learning Support Division, California Department of Education and Teri Clark, Director, Professional Services Division

#### Strategic Plan Goal

#### *II. Program Quality and Accountability*

- ◆ Develop and maintain rigorous, meaningful, and relevant standards that drive program quality and effectiveness for the preparation of the education workforce and are responsive to the needs of California's diverse student population.

December 2014

---

# Quality Professional Learning Standards

---

## Introduction

This item presents information on the Superintendent's Quality Professional Learning Standards (QPLS) that have been developed based on the recommendations contained in the *Greatness by Design* (GbD) report (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/documents/greatnessfinal.pdf>) issued in September 2012.

## Background

Recognizing the critical relationship between educator effectiveness and student outcomes, the California Department of Education (CDE) and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) convened the California Educator Excellence Task Force, which published the GbD report. In partial fulfillment of the recommendations outlined in Chapter 5 of GbD ("Opportunities for Professional Learning"), the CDE convened a group of educators from across the state, the Core Design Team (CDT), to guide the development of the QPLS.

As part of the development process, the CDT researched professional learning standards from other states, districts, and professional organizations, particularly Learning Forward's *Standards for Professional Learning* (2011). The *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2009) and the *California Professional Standards for Education Leaders* (California School Leadership Academy at WestEd & Association of California School Administrators, 2000) were also used as reference points, as were the expectations for educators related to implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the English Language Development Standards. In drafting the QPLS, the CDT reviewed a selection of research regarding effective professional learning and continually referenced the California context, ensuring a focus on the state's diverse student population.

The QPLS present the elements of a quality professional learning system that, if well implemented, will benefit educators focused on increasing their professional capacity and performance. These standards are intended to help educators, local educational agencies, and the state contextualize professional learning system goals and plans to create a coherent set of professional learning guidelines and activities that span the career continuum of an educator; improve educators' knowledge, skills, and dispositions; and, ultimately, increase student learning results. The standards are not meant to be used to evaluate any educator in any aspect of his or her work. If confidential data is used to inform professional learning objectives it must be used appropriately and with the permission of the educator to protect his or her privacy.

The first two drafts of the QPLS were sent to a substantial number of stakeholder groups for review and comment. The feedback for both rounds of review and comment were carefully considered. The introductory sections for the overall set of standards and introduction for each individual standard reflect stakeholder comments. The State Superintendent of Public

Instruction (SSPI), Tom Torlakson, approved the QPLS in December 2013 and subsequently posted them to the CDE web site.

The QPLS have been presented to the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) on three occasions: July 12, 2013, May 16, 2014, and November 20, 2014. At its May 2013 meeting, the IQC recommended that the QPLS be subject to a 60-day public review and comment period and that the standards be recommended to the State Board of Education to take action as deemed necessary and appropriate. Language explicitly stating the appropriate uses of the QPLS was added to the document as a result of the feedback gathered during the 60-day public review.

Since the SSPI's approval in 2013, the QPLS have been put into use in various California contexts, providing convincing evidence that they are useful in program and system development and improvement. For example, they have been used by administrative preparation programs as a basis for analyzing the quality of services provided to their candidates. A county office of education is using the QPLS to guide its work with mentor teachers and the professional learning opportunities it offers to new teachers. Institutions of higher education applying for grants are using the QPLS to design professional learning projects and as guidance to determine the effectiveness of current grant projects. Professional learning providers have incorporated the QPLS into their collaborative discussions and planning with teacher leaders when developing priorities for professional learning to support the transition to the CCSS.

The QPLS identify a clear outcome for professional learning – to continuously develop educators' capacity to teach and lead so that all students learn and thrive – and seven interdependent professional learning standards focused on:

- **Data:** Quality professional learning uses varied sources and kinds of information to guide priorities, design, and assessments.
- **Content and Pedagogy:** Quality professional learning enhances educators' expertise to increase students' capacity to learn and thrive.
- **Equity:** Quality professional learning focuses on equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for all students, with an emphasis on addressing achievement and opportunity disparities between student groups.
- **Design and Structure:** Quality professional learning reflects evidence-based approaches, recognizing that focused, sustained learning enables educators to acquire, implement, and assess improved practices.
- **Collaboration and Shared Accountability:** Quality professional learning facilitates the development of a shared purpose for student learning and collective responsibility for achieving it.
- **Resources:** Quality professional learning dedicates resources that are adequate, accessible, and allocated appropriately toward established priorities and outcomes.
- **Alignment and Coherence:** Quality professional learning contributes to a coherent system of educator learning and support that connects district, school, and individual priorities and needs with state and federal requirements and resources.

By utilizing the QPLS, educators, policymakers, education officials, and other stakeholders will share a common understanding regarding the features of high quality professional learning and how best to support it. The QPLS are available on the CDE Quality Professional Learning Standards Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ps/qpls.asp>.

**Next Steps**

Based upon the Commission's discussion, staff will bring future agenda items as appropriate.