Accreditation Framework

Educator Preparation in California

Adopted by the Commission
December 2007
Updated with revised Common Standards December ~~2008~~2015

TITLE PAGE, TABLE OF CONTENTS AND INTRODUCTION

WILL BE ADDED PRIOR TO THE

FEBRUARY COMMISSION MEETING

Section 1
Authority and Responsibilities of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Pertaining to the accreditation of educator preparation, the authority and responsibilities of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing include the following.

A. Responsibilities Related to Accreditation Policies

1. **Adopt and Modify the *Accreditation Framework.*** Pursuant to *Education Code* 44372(a), the Commission has the authority and responsibility to adopt an *Accreditation Framework,* "which sets forth the policies of the Commission regarding the accreditation of educator preparation in California". The present document is the adopted *Accreditation Framework. Education Code* 44372(i) establishes that the Commission may modify the *Framework* in accordance with Section 8 of the *Framework*. Modifications occur in public meetings after the Commission considers relevant information provided by the Committee on Accreditation, institutions/program sponsors, Board of Institutional Review members, the Commission's staff, and other concerned individuals. The Commission determines when a policy modification takes effect.

2. **Establish and Modify Standards for Educator Preparation.** Pursuant to *Education Code* Section 44372(b), the Commission has the authority and responsibility to establish and modify standards for educator preparation in California.

B. Responsibilities Related to the Accreditation System

1. **Initial Institution/Program Sponsor Approval.** In accordance with *Education Code* Sections 44227(b) and 44372(c) and Section 4 of this *Framework*, the Commission determines the eligibility of an institution/program sponsor that applies for initial approval and that has not previously prepared educators for state certification in California. The Commission recognizes institutions/program sponsors that meet the Commission established criteria. This approval by the Commission establishes the eligibility of an institution/program sponsor to submit specific program proposals to the Committee on Accreditation.

2. **Hear and Resolve Accreditation Appeals.** The Commission hears appeals of accreditation decisions, which must be based on evidence that accreditation procedures or decisions were "arbitrary, capricious, unfair, or contrary to the policies of the Commission or the procedural guidelines of the Committee on Accreditation" *Education Code* Section 44374(e). The Commission resolves each appeal, and the Executive

Director communicates the Commission's decision to the Committee on Accreditation, the accreditation team, and the affected institution/program sponsor.

3. **Allocate Resources Annually for Accreditation Operations.** The Commission annually allocates resources for accreditation operations to implement this *Accreditation Framework.* Consistent with the Commission's general practice, staff assignments to accreditation operations are made by the Executive Director, in accordance with state budgets, laws and regulations. Pursuant to *Education Code* 44374.5, the Commission implements a fair and consistent fee policy that is reviewed periodically.

4. **Review and Sponsor Legislation Related to Accreditation.** The Commission reviews legislative proposals to amend the *Education Code* related to the accreditation of educator preparation institutions/program sponsors. As the need arises, the Commission sponsors legislation related to accreditation, after considering the advice of the Commission's professional staff, the Committee on Accreditation, educational institutions, program sponsors and professional organizations.

C. Responsibilities Related to the Committee on Accreditation

1. **Establish a Nominating Panel.** In collaboration with the Committee on Accreditation, the Commission establishes a Nominating Panel to solicit and screen nominations and recommend educators to serve on the Committee on Accreditation.

2. **Appoint the Committee on Accreditation.** Pursuant to *Education Code* 44372(d) and Section 2 of this *Framework,* the Commission appoints members and alternate members of the Committee on Accreditation for specific terms. The Commission selects the Committee members and alternate members from nominees submitted by the Nominating Panel. The Commission ensures that the Committee on Accreditation is professionally distinguished and balanced in its composition, but does not appoint members to represent particular institutions, organizations or constituencies.

3. **Address Issues and Refer Concerns Related to Accreditation.** The Commission considers issues and concerns related to accreditation that it identifies, as well as those brought to the Commission's attention by the Committee on Accreditation, postsecondary institutions, the Commission's staff, or other concerned individuals or organizations. At its discretion, the Commission may refer accreditation issues and concerns to the Committee on Accreditation for examination and response.

4. **Review Annual Reports by the Committee on Accreditation.** The Commission reviews an *Annual Accreditation Report* submitted by the Committee on Accreditation. *The Annual Report* includes, but is not limited to, information about the dimensions and results of the accreditation process.

Section 2
Functions of the Committee on Accreditation

The functions, membership and appointment of the Committee on Accreditation are set forth in *Education Code* Section 44373 and this section of the *Framework.*

A. Functions of the Committee on Accreditation

1. **Comparability of Standards.** In accordance with Section 3 of this *Framework*, the Committee determines whether standards submitted by institutions/program sponsors under Option 2 (National or Professional Program Standards) or Option 3 (Experimental Program Standards), taken as a whole, provide a level of program quality comparable to standards adopted by the Commission under Option 1 (California Program Standards). If the Committee determines that the proposed standards are collectively comparable in breadth and depth, when taken as a whole, to the Commission-adopted standards, the Committee on Accreditation may approve the proposed standards as Program Standards in California.

2. **Initial Approval of Programs.** The Committee on Accreditation reviews proposals for the initial accreditation of programs submitted by institutions/program sponsors that have been determined to be eligible by the Commission. New programs of educator preparation may be submitted under Options One, Two, or Three as defined in Section 3 Category II (Program Standards) of this *Framework*. If the Committee on Accreditation determines that a program meets all applicable standards, the Committee on Accreditation grants initial approval to the program.

3. **Continuing Accreditation Decisions.** After reviewing the recommendations of accreditation teams, the Committee makes decisions about the continuing accreditation of educator preparation institutions/program sponsors and programs, consistent with Section 5 of this *Framework*. Pertaining to each institution/program sponsor, the Committee makes one of three decisions: Accreditation, Accreditation with Stipulations, or Denial of Accreditation.

4. **Accreditation Procedures.** Consistent with the terms of Section 5, the Committee recommends appropriate guidelines for reports as well as other accreditation materials and exhibits to be prepared by institutions/program sponsors. The Committee also adopts guidelines for all accreditation activities, which emphasize the use of narrative, qualitative explanations of team recommendations. The Committee may provide additional guidance to institutions/program sponsors, site visit teams and the Executive Director regarding accreditation procedures. The procedural guidelines of the Committee are published by the Commission as an *Accreditation Handbook.*

5. **Monitor the Accreditation System.** The Committee monitors the performance of accreditation teams and oversees other activities associated with the accreditation system.

6. **Communication With and Reporting to the Commission.** The Committee provides updates on accreditation decisions, activities, implementation matters or other items on an "as needed" basis to ensure the Commission is kept well apprised of the effectiveness of its accreditation policies and procedures.

7. **Evaluation of Accreditation Policies and Practices.** The Committee shares responsibility with the Commission for the on-going evaluation and monitoring of the effectiveness of the accreditation system. Evaluation and monitoring of the system as well as modification to that system will be conducted in a manner consistent with Section 8 of this Framework.

8. **Conduct Business in an Open, Transparent Manner.** The Committee conducts its business and makes its decisions in meetings that are open to the public, except as provided by statute. All meeting agendas, team reports, and final accreditation decisions will be available on the public on the Commission's website.

B. Membership of the Committee on Accreditation

1. **Membership Composition.** The Committee consists of twelve members. Six members are from postsecondary education institutions, and six are certificated professionals in public schools, school districts, or county offices of education in California. Selection of members is based on the breadth of their experience, the diversity of their perspectives, and "their distinguished records of accomplishment in education" (*Education Code* Section 44373-a). All members serve as members-at-large. No member serves on the Committee as a representative of any organization, institution/program sponsor, or constituency. To the maximum extent possible, Committee membership is balanced according to ethnicity, gender, geographic regions and across credentials awarded by the Commission. The Committee includes members from the public K-12 school system, and from public and private postsecondary institutions. The elementary and secondary school members include certificated administrators, teachers, and at least one member involved in a professional educator preparation program. The postsecondary members include administrators and faculty members, both of whom must be involved in professional educator preparation programs.

2. **Membership Criteria.** The criteria for membership on the Committee are: evidence of achievement in the education profession; recognized professional or scholarly contributions in the field of education; recognition of excellence by peers; experience with and sensitivity to issues of human diversity; distinguished service in the field of educator preparation; knowledge of issues related to the preparation and licensing of

education professionals; length of professional service; and possession of appropriate educational degrees and professional credentials.

3. **Membership Orientation and Training.** Members of the Committee will receive an orientation and training to adequately prepare them to effectively carry out their roles and responsibilities on the Committee on Accreditation.

C. Appointment of the Committee on Accreditation

1. **Nominating Panel.** A Nominating Panel of four distinguished members of the education profession in California identifies and nominates individuals to serve on the Committee on Accreditation. The Nominating Panel is comprised of two educators appointed by the Committee on Accreditation and two educators appointed by the Commission. Each entity will appoint one college or university member and one K-12 public school member to the Nominating Panel. The terms of Nominating Panel members are four years. Members of the Panel may not serve more than one term.

2. **Nomination of Committee Members.** To select members for the Committee on Accreditation, a vacancy notice is posted on the Commission website and nominations are solicited, in writing, from a broad base of professional organizations, agencies, institutions, and individuals in education. Each nomination must be submitted with the consent of the individual. A written endorsement from the nominee's employer confirming understanding of and agreement to the nominee's participation on the Committee must be submitted (The Commission provides travel, per diem, and substitute reimbursement, if needed). The nominee's professional resume must be submitted. Self-nominations are not accepted.

3. **Selection of Committee Members.** Based on the membership criteria and the principles of balanced composition set forth in this section, the Nominating Panel screens the professional qualifications of each nominee and recommends for appointment at least two highly qualified nominees for each vacant seat on the Committee. The Commission selects and appoints the members and alternate members of the Committee by selecting from the nominations submitted by the Panel.

4. **Terms of Appointment.** The Commission appoints members of the Committee on Accreditation to four-year terms. A member may be re-nominated and re-appointed to a second term of four years. A member may serve a maximum of two terms on the Committee. Terms of appointment shall commence on July 1, or the date of the appointment, whichever is later, and shall expire on June 30.

5. **Committee Vacancies.** When a seat on the Committee becomes vacant prior to the conclusion of the member's term, the Executive Director fills the seat for the remainder of the term by appointing a replacement from the list of alternate members.

6. ~~**Transition of Committee Membership.** In the first year of the implementation of the revised *Framework*, three new members will be appointed to the Committee for four year terms. Nine members of the prior Committee will continue to serve: three for one additional year, three for two additional years, and three for three additional years. Each subsequent year, three additional members will be appointed to the Committee. These changes will transition the membership from the *Accreditation Framework (1995)* to the revised *Framework* (2007).~~

Section 3
Accreditation Preconditions and Standards

~~There are two categories of accreditation standards for institutions/program sponsors that prepare professional educators in California : 1)~~Preconditions, ~~2)~~ Common Standards and ~~3)~~ Program Standards are all foundational requirements that institutions and credential programs are expected to address at all times.~~ An accredited institution/program sponsor is expected to satisfy the standards in both categories .~~

Preconditions are requirements grounded in statute, regulations and/or Commission policy. Programs must provide a response to each precondition and include appropriate supporting evidence and/or documentation.

~~**Category 1.**~~ **Common Standards** ~~relate to aspects of program quality that are the same for all educator preparation programs. This category includes standards relevant to the overall leadership and climate for educator preparation at an institution/program sponsor, as well as standards pertaining to quality features that are common to all programs. An institution/program sponsor responds to each Common Standard by providing pertinent information, including information about individual programs.~~ Common Standards ~~deal with~~address aspects of program quality that cross all approved educator preparation programs within an institution and demonstrate that the program sponsor has sufficient infrastructure to support each program's successful implementation. An institution must respond to each Common Standard by providing pertinent information, including information about individual programs.

~~**Category II**~~ **Program Standards** address the quality of program features that are specific to a credential, such as curriculum, field experiences, and knowledge and skills to be demonstrated by candidates in the specific credential area. Programs must be in alignment with all credential program standards at all times. ~~Different options may be exercised by different credential programs at an institution/program sponsor. Options that are selected will be the basis for the review of specific programs and will guide the selection and orientation of program reviewers. Pertaining to each program, the~~The institution/program sponsor responds to ~~each~~ the standards ~~in the selected option~~ by providing program-specific information for review by the ~~program~~

reviewers in accordance with Commission processes and procedures specified in the Accreditation Handbook. When institutions/program sponsors prepare for initial program approval and continuing accreditation activities, they may consider the following options for program-specific standards.

- **Option 1. California Program Standards.** ~~The Commission relies on panels of experts from colleges, universities and schools to develop recommend to the Commission standards for specific credential programs. These panels are guided by current research findings in the field of the credential and the California K-12 academic content standards. They also consider standards developed by appropriate national and statewide professional organizations. If the national or professional standards are found to be appropriate for California, a panel may recommend that the Commission adopt them in lieu of developing new standards or revising the Commission's existing standards. After reviewing the recommendations of advisory panels and other experts,~~ The Commission adopts California Program Standards for the initial and continuing accreditation of credential preparation programs. When revised program standards are adopted, institutions/program sponsors may be required to meet the new set of California Program Standards.

- **Option 2. National or Professional Program Standards.** ~~California institutions may propose program standards that have been developed by national or state professional organizations. Such a proposal may be submitted to the Committee on Accreditation with a statement of the institution's reasons for requesting this option and the requested National or Professional Program Standards. If the Committee determines that the requested standards, taken as a whole, provide a level of professional quality comparable to the standards adopted by the Commission under Option 1 (California Program Standards), the Committee approves the proposed standards for use as Program Standards in the initial or continuing accreditation of credential program. If the Committee determines that the requested standards do not adequately address one or more aspects of California Standards (Common and/or Program), the Committee may approve the requested standards but also require the institution/program sponsor address the missing portions of the California Standards~~

  California institutions may develop and implement programs that are aligned/accredited by national or state organizations as long as the programs address any areas included in California standards but not included in the national or state organization standards. An institution would be required to submit an alignment matrix that provides any information not included in the national program standards. To the extent possible the Commission will attempt to determine if the national standards are in alignment with the California standards and what additional information would be needed or if there is no alignment of standards. If the Committee on Accreditation determines that the requested standards do not adequately address one or more aspects of California Standards (Common and/or Program), the Committee on Accreditation may approve the requested standards but also require the institution/program sponsor address the missing portions of the California Standards.

- **Option 3. Experimental Program Standards**. For initial accreditation, an institution may present an experimental, pilot, or exploratory program that meets the Experimental Program Standards adopted by the Commission pursuant to *Education Code* Section 44273. Experimental, pilot, or exploratory programs are designed to allow for the examination of focused research questions intended to contribute to the body of knowledge around key aspects of the field of education including the identification of model strategies, delivery methods, and programs that lead to improved teaching and learning. Institutions that sponsor experimental, pilot, or exploratory programs must have a research component that examines how the program contributes to the development of quality teaching and specifically, the acquisition and mastery by teacher candidates of appropriate performance expectations, such as the Teaching Performance Expectations for the Multiple and Single Subject Credentials. In addition, experimental, pilot, or exploratory programs are required to report their findings on a biennial basis to the Commission. Upon consultation with the institution and with the Committee on Accreditation, the Commission retains the authority to determine whether the findings support continuance of the experimental, pilot, or exploratory program under the experimental standards.

Section 4
Initial Accreditation Policies

This section governs the initial ~~recognition~~ institutional approval process. ~~of institutions and approval of programs.~~

A.~~ Responsibility for Two Phases of Initial Accreditation~~ Stages of Initial Institutional Approval/Program Sponsor Approval.

~~**1. Initial Institution/Program Sponsor Approval**~~ A postsecondary education institution or local education agency (LEA) or other entity that is not currently approved to prepare educators for California's public schools must submit an application to the Commission for initial eligibility to submit programs. The Commission may establish additional procedures and criteria as it deems necessary for the initial approval of institutions/program sponsors. ~~The application must indicate evidence of accreditation by either the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) or another of the regional accrediting bodies. In the case of an application from a Local Education Agency (LEA) or other entity, the governance board's approval or sponsorship of the program must be noted.~~ Applicants must successfully address each of the following stages in sequence. ~~Applicants must complete all stagesfollowing stages~~

1. Prerequisites

A. Regional Accreditation and Academic Credit: Each institution seeking initial institutional approval must provide evidence that the entity is either regionally accredited or a Local Education Agency with governing board approval to offer an educator preparation program.

B. Participation in *Accreditation 101: Expectations and Responsibilities for Commission Approved Institutions:* An institution must attend Accreditation 101 prior to beginning the Initial Institutional process.

2. Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility Requirements which are adopted by the Commission are comprised of criteria related to resources and the capacity to support educator preparation programs. A report of the institution's responses to the prerequisites and eligibility requirements will be presented to the Commission at a regularly scheduled meeting. The Commission would then determine if the institution has sufficiently met the requirements for eligibility. If so, the institution would proceed with Stage 3—-Alignment with All Applicable Standards and Preconditions.

1. Alignment with All Applicable Standards and Preconditions

An institution would be required to align its programs and operations to all Common Standards and provide evidence of its ability to comply with all relevant Preconditions. During the initial approval process, Common Standards and relevant preconditions including supporting documents are reviewed to determine alignment.

2. Determination of Provisional Approval or Denial

Following completion of the first three stages of the initial institutional approval process~~,~~ the Commission will determine at a regularly scheduled meeting if all requirements have been adequately addressed and if so, grant Provisional Approval. Provisional approval will be for 2-3 years, whichever amount of time the Commission determines is sufficient to gather data about the institution/program sponsor's new program and from the initial group of completers of that program. Once Provisional Approval is granted, the institution/program sponsor's new program proposal will be reviewed and submitted to the Committee on Accreditation for approval. During Provisional Approval, the institution will participate in all appropriate accreditation activities such as submission of annual data.

3. Granting Full Approval

Full Approval would be determined by the Commission at a regularly scheduled public meeting. A determination of full approval will be informed by data collected during the 2-3 year Provisional Approval time period and information gathered during a focused site visit at the conclusion of the Provisional Approval period.

B. ~~C.~~ Integration of Institutions/Program Sponsors into Accreditation Cycle.

The Administrator of Accreditation will determine the institution/program sponsor's cohort schedule after granting full approval. The Commission will assign an institution/program sponsor to a specific cohort within the 7-year accreditation cycle. The institution/program sponsor will then participate in accreditation activities as defined by the seven-year accreditation cycle.

C. Policies for Initial Program Approval

New credential or certificate program proposals by institutions/program sponsors that have been determined to be eligible by the Commission must complete 1) all relevant preconditions established by state law and the Commission, 2) Common Standards, and 3) the appropriate set of Program Standards for the program being proposed. Following the review of these submissions, staff makes a recommendation to the Committee on Accreditation regarding the approval of the proposed program. The Committee on Accreditation considers the recommendation and decides the initial approval of the new credential or certificate program. The specific procedures and requirements for submission of new program proposals are included in the *Accreditation Handbook.*

~~**1.Review of New Programs**. Prior to being presented to the Committee on Accreditation for action, new programs proposed by eligible program sponsors are reviewed in relation to the Common Standards in Appendix 2 and the selected Program Standards as specified in Section 3 of this *Framework*. The Committee on Accreditation considers recommendations by the staff and/or the external reviewers regarding the approval of each proposed program.~~

~~After initial approval of programs, the institution/program sponsor will be notified of its assignment to a specific cohort schedule. The institution/program sponsor will then participate in accreditation activities at the scheduled times.~~

~~a. Accreditation Activities. Institutions/program sponsors will complete Biennial Reports according to their cohort schedule. They will complete a Program Assessment eighteen months after initial program approval.~~

~~b. Technical Assistance Site Visit. Two years prior to the scheduled Site Visit, a Technical Assistance Site Visit will be made to the institution/program sponsor. The purpose of the Technical Assistance Site Visit is to prepare new institutions or program sponsors for the Committee on Accreditation Site Visit that will follow (to provide an opportunity for a limited review of all approved programs by a small team of experts in the field) and to provide feedback to the institution/program sponsor based upon that limited review.~~

Section 5
Continuing Accreditation Policies

This section outlines the Commission's policies for institutions/program sponsors that have been approved to offer educator preparation credential programs and are seeking continuing accreditation. The specific procedures and requirements for implementing these policies are included in the *Accreditation Handbook.*

A. Overview of the Accreditation Cycle

Contained in this *Framework* are the goals for the Commission's accreditation system. Under this system, accreditation is an on-going process that fosters greater public accountability, continuous attention to program improvement, adherence to standards, and high quality programs. The accreditation system and its interrelated set of activities of ~~Biennial Reports,~~annual data review, program ~~assessment~~ review, site visits, and follow up throughout the 7 year cycle is designed to support these goals.

The major components of the seven year accreditation cycle include:

1) **Years 1 through 7:** Ongoing Data Collection and annual data submission by the Institution/Program Sponsor
2) ~~Biennial program reports in years 1, 3, and 5~~ **Years 1 and 4:** Precondition submission
3) **Year 5**: Program Documents and Common Standards submission and review ~~Program Assessment in year four~~
4) **Year 6:** Institutional Site Visit ~~in year 6~~
5) **Year 7 and beyond**: Follow up on areas of concern ~~in year 7 and beyond~~ if necessary

B. Accreditation Cycle Activities

The following section describes the various activities within the accreditation cycle in general terms. Specific procedures and requirements about all aspects of the accreditation cycle are set forth in the *Accreditation Handbook.* ~~Charts illustrating the various activities in the 7 year accreditation cycle can be found in Appendix C.~~

1. Years 1 through 7 of the Accreditation Cycle: Ongoing Data Collection by the Institution/Program Sponsor and Annual Data Report

Data Collection - Each institution/program sponsor is required to collect data for each approved credential and certificate program related to candidate competence and program effectiveness on an annual basis. Further, it is an expectation that all CTC accredited institutions or program sponsors will use these data to inform programmatic decision-making**.** As specified by the Commission, data collected by an institution/program will be reported annually

and the data and its analysis will be updated annually to an institution's data warehouse. Data provided by institutions will be used to inform accreditation decisions about program quality and alignment with standards.

2. **Biennial Report** **Annual Data** - The accreditation system requires that the institution provide evidence, through submission of the Biennial Report annual data that it is collecting, analyzing, and using data for programmatic decision making. The annual data Biennial Report process will include the submission of contextual information, data and analysis of candidate assessment competency and program effectiveness, a brief statement of analysis, an action plan based on the analysis, and an institutional summary identifying trends across the programs or critical issues. The Biennial Report annual data will be reviewed, may result in further questions or review, and will be part of the documentation made available to the program and site visit reviewers. The specific activities related to the Biennial Report annual data are as follows:

Data Deficiencies: Staff will report to the Committee on Accreditation any institution/program sponsor whose annual data is found to be deficient. Based on the report, the Committee on Accreditation will determine if further monitoring and/or adjustment to the institution/program sponsor's accreditation activities is required including the possibility of an accreditation visit outside the usual schedule.

Submission, Review and Feedback

a. Submission. Each institution/program sponsor must annually collect data and submit biennial reports. The data collection and submission must be related to the Commission standards. All program reports from the institution are submitted together with an institutional summary. The institutional summary identifies trends across the programs or critical issues for the program sponsor. The specific requirements of these reports are defined in the *Accreditation Handbook*.

b. Review. Commission staff review the Biennial Report. Commission staff evaluates the Biennial Report for completeness and sufficiency. If the report is not submitted, is incomplete or is inadequate, Commission staff will contact the institution/program sponsor. If the report has been submitted but the data do not demonstrate measures of candidate competence or have deficiencies, the Committee on Accreditation and Commission staff will request additional information from the institution/program sponsor. Data review procedures are set forth in the *Accreditation Handbook*. Staff will report on the Biennial Report to the COA.

Feedback. Institutions/Program Sponsors will be notified of receipt and review of the Biennial Report. Based on review of the Biennial Report, the Committee on Accreditation may request

additional information or schedule a site visit prior to the scheduled time period for a site visit to the institution/program.

2. Years 1 and 4 of the Accreditation Cycle:- Demonstrating Compliance with the Preconditions

Precondition reports are submitted and reviewed in years 1 and 4 of the accreditation cycle. An institution/program sponsor responds to all relevant preconditions, which are grounded in statute regulations and/or Commission policy, -for each approved program.

3. Program Assessment Year –5 of the Accreditation Cycle: Demonstrating Alignment with the Program Standards Through Submission of Program Documents

In the 4th- -5th year of each cohort cycle, an institution/program sponsor prepares and submits a Program AssessmentProgram Document for each approved program that demonstrates the program is aligned to the program standards for each program an institution offers. The specific activities related to Program are Assessment as follows:

a. Submission of Program Assessment Document. An Institution/program sponsor ensures that each approved program that is offered it offers by an institution/program sponsor prepares and submits a Program Assessment Document.Standard Report submits required specific documentation including, but not limited to, the seven key categories: 1)Program Description, 2)Organizational Structure, 3) Qualifications of Faculty and Instructional Personnel, 4)Course Sequence, 5)Course Matrix, 6)Fieldwork and Clinical Practice, and. Additional documentation may be required specific to each credential area. Procedures and requirements for submission of the Program Documents are included in the *Accreditation Handbook.* The document includes the following elements: 1) the most recently approved program document which includes modifications in the program since its approval, 2) current course syllabi and faculty vitae, 3) information on assessments used at key points in the program in order to determine candidate competence.

Review of . Trained reviewers will determine whether the standards for each program area continue to be met.preliminarily aligned to CTC program standards. If there are questions, or more information is needed, Commission staff will communicate with an institution or program sponsor to request additional information. A professional dialogue will then take place between program sponsors and reviewers (facilitated through CTC staff) in order to ascertain the most complete sense of candidate competence and the ongoing program improvement efforts that are made.

~~This process allows for a more complete understanding of the program prior to determining the findings.~~

b. **Review of Program Document and** **Preliminary Report of Findings.** Trained members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers serve as readers and consider all information and ~~come to~~determine "preliminary findings" for all program standards. ~~as well as recommendations and questions for the site visit. Program standard findings are 'Standard Met', 'Met with Concerns', and 'Not Met'.~~ Documents will be reviewed once with feedback in the form of the preliminary report of findings provided to the institution. An institution may submit an addendum to the Program Document based upon the preliminary findings and make the addendum available to the site visit team prior the accreditation site visit. Document review procedures are set forth in the *Accreditation Handbook*. ~~Document review procedures are set forth in the *Accreditation Handbook*.~~

c. **Use of Results.** The Preliminary Report of Findings provides a basis for an accreditation site visit team's review of the program's implementation in Year Six. If reviewers identify issues that warrant further review or if questions remain unanswered at the conclusion of the Program review, the 6th year site visit may include a more detailed review of such programs. Findings will be used to determine the type, size and complexity of the programs to be reviewed and the structure, size and expertise of the site visit review team to be selected.

~~The report from the readers is forwarded to the Committee on Accreditation. Readers submit any outstanding questions or areas of concern to the Committee on Accreditation and the Committee will ensure that the site review team investigates the issue(s). The Committee on Accreditation reviews the program reports, preliminary findings, and questions/areas of concern to assist in determining the size and composition of the site review team.~~

~~The preliminary findings of the reviewers will influence the size, scope, and nature of the 6th year site visit. If reviewers find no issues or concerns through program assessment, it may be determined that it is unnecessary to review the program in detail at the site visit. If reviewers identify issues that warrant further review or if questions remain unanswered at the conclusion of the Program Assessment, the 6th year site visit may include a more detailed review of such programs.~~

~~Specific documentation required in the Program Assessment is set forth in the *Accreditation Handbook*.~~

4. **Year 6 of the Accreditation Cycle: Accreditation Site Visit.**

An accreditation team visits each institution/program sponsor in the sixth year of the accreditation cycle. The institution/program sponsor prepares for a site visit that ~~focuses mainly~~ leads to a determination ~~-~~on the Common Standards and all applicable program standards.~~, but may include any program areas identified in advance by the Committee on Accreditation (COA) as a result of the program assessment process.~~ The ~~Biennial Reports~~Annual Data, Program ~~Assessment~~ Documents ~~-~~and Preliminary Report of Findings will be made available to the site review team prior to the visit and will inform the accreditation decisions~~.~~

a. **Collection of Information**. The accreditation site visit team, composed of ~~3 to 7 members~~ the number of members adequate to determine accreditation recommendations ~~will consider all evidence and make a determination for all sta~~ ~~focuses its review primarily on the~~ ~~Common Standards and on any specific programs~~ standards. ~~Designated~~ ~~by the Committee on Accreditation that require additional review at the site visit.~~ The site visit team is responsible for reviewing evidence that will substantiate and confirm or contradict the preliminary findings of the Program ~~Assessment.~~ Document.

The site visit team gathers information about the quality of the education unit and credential programs at the institution/program sponsor from a variety of sources representing the full range of stakeholders, including written documents and interviews with representative samples of significant stakeholders. The site visit team will gather all relevant information related to all the Common Standards and the standards applicable to the program areas under review. During the site visit, each program in operation participates fully in the interview schedule. The Committee on Accreditation may add additional members to the team with expertise in the specific program areas(s) identified as needing additional study during the site visit. Data collection procedures are set forth in the *Accreditation Handbook.*

b. **Procedural Safeguards.** The accreditation site visit team provides ample opportunities during the site review for representatives of the institution/program sponsor to (a) be informed about areas where the standards appear not to be fully satisfied, and (b) supply additional information pertaining to those standards. These opportunities include, at a minimum, a meeting at approximately mid-visit between representatives of the team and the institution's/program sponsor's credential programs, after which additional written information or interviews are utilized by the team in reaching its conclusions.

c. **Focused Site Visit and a Specialized Credential Program Team**. It is possible that the site visit team may uncover a program concern or issue not

previously identified by the review of the Program Document. ~~by the Program Assessment.~~ When this occurs, the team may recommend a Focused Site Visit addressing the concerns or issues that have arisen if the accreditation site visit team determines that the team lacks expertise to make sound decisions for a particular program. In such a situation, the Focused Site Visit is scheduled to resolve the uncertainty before the accreditation team's final report and recommendation is submitted to the Committee on Accreditation. In this event, there would be no accreditation recommendation until after the Focused Site visit has been completed. If further review is needed of program experts not currently on the site review team, the accreditation status recommendation is not reported during the exit interview.

d. **Exit ~~Interview~~ ~~and~~ Report.** The accreditation site visit team conducts an exit ~~interview~~ meeting with representatives of the institution/program sponsor, at which time the team presents a summary of the report for the Committee on Accreditation. Such a report will include the findings on all Common Standards, all program standards, ~~-~~a rationale for all standards that are found to be met with concerns or not met and an accreditation recommendation. ~~As noted in the previous section, it is possible that the site visit team may uncover a program concern or issue not previously identified by the Program Assessment reviewers. When this occurs, the site visit team may recommend a follow- up focused program reviewsite visit of the concerns or issues that have arisen. In this event there would be no accreditation recommendation until after the focused review has been completed. If further review is needed of program experts not currently on the site review team, the accreditation status recommendation is not reported during the exit interview. The Committee on Accreditation will review the all~~

~~d.~~e. Site Visit Team Reports. Site visit team reports prior to making an accreditation decision of either *Accreditation, Accreditation with Stipulations,* or *Denial of Accreditation* are outlined in Section C

5. **Year 7 of the Accreditation Cycle and Beyond: Follow Up On Areas of Concern**
The site visit will result in an accreditation recommendation for consideration and action by the Committee on Accreditation. Follow up activities may be assigned by the Committee on Accreditation based on any areas of concern.

~~**Preparation for Site Visit**~~

~~**Preliminary Program Assessment Report of Findings.** No less than twelve months before the scheduled site visit, Program Assessment reviewers will submit the preliminary findings on program standards and any~~

~~additional questions or areas of concern to the Committee on Accreditation.~~

~~**Site visit documentation, includes preconditions, common standardsPreliminary Report.** Ten to twelve months before the scheduled site visit, institutional/program sponsors submit a Preliminary Report to the Commission. This brief report describes the institutional mission and includes information about institutional demographics, special emphasis programs, and other unique features of the institution/program sponsor. The institution/program sponsor includes its response to accreditation preconditions established by state laws and the Commission.~~

a. ~~**Determination by the Committee on Accreditation.** The Committee on Accreditation uses the Preliminary Report, along with the preliminary findings from the Program Assessment, to determine the type, size and complexity of the programs to be reviewed and the structure, size and expertise of the site visit review team to be selected. All institutions/program sponsors will be subject to a Common Standards review, and the Committee on Accreditation will make case by case determinations, based on the findings of the Program Assessment, as to which programs will be subject to a more detailed review during the site visit at an institution.~~

~~**Self Study.** No fewer than 60-90 days before the site visit, the institution/program sponsor submits its Institutional Self-Study which focuses on the Common Standards to the team and the Commission. In responding to each applicable standard, the self-study report should emphasize quality considerations, educational rationales, and thoughtful program analyses.~~

~~**On-site Activities**~~

1. ~~**Collection of Information**. The accreditation site visit team, composed of 3 to 7 members, focuses its review primarily on the Common Standards and on any specific programs designated by the Committee on Accreditation that require additional review at the site visit. In addition, the site visit team is responsible for reviewing evidence that will substantiate and confirm or contradict the preliminary findings of the Program Assessment.~~

~~The site visit team gathers information about the quality of the education unit and credential programs at the institution/program sponsor from a variety of sources representing the full range of stakeholders, including written documents and interviews with representative samples of~~

~~significant stakeholders. The site visit team will gather all relevant information related to all the Common Standards and the standards applicable to the program areas under review. During the site visit, each program in operation participates fully in the interview schedule. The Committee on Accreditation may add additional members to the team with expertise in the specific program areas(s) identified as needing additional study during the site visit. Data collection procedures are set forth in the *Accreditation Handbook.*~~

~~2. **Procedural Safeguards.** The accreditation site visit team provides ample opportunities during the site review for representatives of the institution/program sponsor to (a) be informed about areas where the standards appear not to be fully satisfied, and (b) supply additional information pertaining to those standards. These opportunities include, at a minimum, a meeting at approximately mid-visit between representatives of the team and the institution's/program sponsor's credential programs, after which additional written information or interviews are utilized by the team in reaching its conclusions.~~

~~3. **Focused Site Visit and a Specialized Credential Program Team**. It is possible that the site visit team may uncover a program concern or issue not previously identified by the Program Assessment. When this occurs, the team may recommend a Focused Site Visit addressing the concerns or issues that have arisen if the accreditation site visit team determines that the team lacks expertise to make sound decisions for a particular program. In such a situation, the Focused Site Visit is scheduled to resolve the uncertainty before the accreditation team's final report and recommendation is submitted to the Committee on Accreditation. In this event, there would be no accreditation recommendation until after the Focused Site visit has been completed.~~

1. ~~**Exit Interview and Report.** The accreditation site visit team conducts an exit interview with representatives of the institution/program sponsor, at which time the team presents its draft report for the Committee on Accreditation. Such a report will include the findings on all Common Standards, all program standards, and an accreditation recommendation. As noted in the previous section, it is possible that the site visit team may uncover a program concern or issue not previously identified by the Program Assessment reviewers. When this occurs, the site visit team may recommend a follow up focused program review of the concerns or issues that have arisen. In this event there would be no accreditation recommendation until after the focused review has been completed. If further review is needed of program experts not currently on the site review team, the accreditation status~~

~~recommendation is not reported during the exit interview. The Committee on Accreditation will review the site visit team report prior to making an accreditation decision.~~

C. Accreditation Reports, Recommendations and Decisions

~~a. Accreditation Team Reports.~~ Each accreditation site visit team makes its report and recommendations to the Committee on Accreditation. Accreditation site visit team reports indicate whether each applicable standard is met, include summary findings and a recommendation to the Committee. ~~and may include professional recommendations for consideration by the institution/program sponsor.~~

1. **Accreditation Team Recommendations.** An accreditation site visit team recommends *Accreditation, Accreditation with Stipulations,* or *Denial of Accreditation.* The team makes its recommendation based on the overall quality of the education unit and the credential programs at the institution/program sponsor. ~~The team does not recommend separate accreditation decisions for each program.~~ The team may recommend Accreditation but recommend required follow-up for the institution and/or one or more of its programs. Alternatively, a team may recommend Accreditation with Stipulations, which may ~~(if adopted by the Committee on Accreditation)~~ require the institution/program sponsor to provide evidence that the program(s) has made modifications that address the stipulation(s). Stipulations may require the discontinuation of severely deficient programs at the institution/program sponsor. ~~The Committee on Accreditation may require additional progress reports from the institution/program sponsor beyond one year even if the stipulations have been removed. The Committee on Accreditation has discretion to allow an institution/program sponsor additional time to address issues.~~ ~~Stipulations may (if adopted) require the discontinuation of severely deficient programs at the institution/program sponsor.~~

2. **Accreditation Decisions.** After reviewing the recommendation of an accreditation site visit team the Committee on Accreditation makes a decision about the accreditation of educator preparation at the institution/program sponsor. The Committee makes one of three decisions pertaining to each institution: *Accreditation, Accreditation with Stipulations,* or *Denial of Accreditation*. The Committee's Annual Accreditation Reports summarize these decisions.

3. **Required Follow-up.** The Committee on Accreditation may grant ~~full~~ accreditation to an institution/program sponsor, but require follow-up by one or more programs or the institution/program sponsor as a unit. The required follow-up will be documented in reports submitted to the Committee on Accreditation.

4. **Accreditation with Stipulations.** The Committee on Accreditation allows an institution/program sponsor one year to address ~~remove~~ all stipulations or to discontinue deficient program(s). The COA has the discretion to grant an institution

Accreditation with Stipulations that calls for closing one separate program with severe deficiencies. The COA may require additional progress reports beyond one year even if stipulations have been removed. The Committee on Accreditation has discretion to allow an institution/program sponsor additional time to address issues. An additional period to remedy severe deficiencies may be granted by the Committee on Accreditation if the Committee determines that (a) substantial progress has been made and/or (b) special circumstances described by the institution justify a delay. The Committee also determines how the institution's/program sponsor's response to adopted stipulations is to be reviewed. The Committee may require a second site visit for this purpose. Failure to ~~remove~~ address all stipulations may result in the denial of accreditation to the entire institution/program sponsor.

D. Appeals

1. **Appeals to Committee on Accreditation.** Within thirty days after an accreditation site visit, the institution/program sponsor may submit evidence to the Committee on Accreditation that the site visit team demonstrated bias or acted arbitrarily or capriciously or contrary to the policies of this *Framework* or the procedural guidelines of the Committee on Accreditation. (Information related to the quality of a program or the education unit that was not previously provided to the accreditation site visit team may not be considered by the Committee on Accreditation.) The appeal will be addressed at the next regularly scheduled Committee on Accreditation meeting. The Committee on Accreditation may use this evidence to make a different decision than was recommended by the site visit team. If the Committee on Accreditation makes such a decision, the leader of the team may file a dissent with the Commission. If the Committee on Accreditation decides that an incorrect judgment was made by a team and that the result leaves some doubt about the most appropriate decision to be made, the Committee on Accreditation may assign a new site visit team to visit the institution/program sponsor and provide a recommendation on its accreditation.

2. **Appeals to the Commission.** Pursuant to *Education Code* Section 44374-e, an institution/program sponsor has the right to appeal to the Commission a decision by the Committee on Accreditation to deny accreditation or accredit with stipulations. Such an appeal must be based on evidence that accreditation procedures by the site visit team or decisions by the Committee on Accreditation were arbitrary, capricious, unfair, or contrary to the policies in this *Framework* or the procedural guidelines of the Committee on Accreditation. Information related to the quality of a program or the education unit or LEA that was not previously provided to the accreditation site visit team may not be considered by the Commission. The Commission resolves each appeal pursuant to *Education Code* Section 44372-f.

E. Complaints about Credential Program Quality

The accreditation system shall include a mechanism for individuals to submit complaints for the purpose of consideration in accreditation decisions. When one or more complaints about a credential program indicate that the program may not be meeting Commission adopted

standards, the Executive Director of the Commission may investigate the basis for the concerns, provide technical assistance to the institution/program sponsor, or refer the concerns to the Committee on Accreditation for consideration of possible action.

Section 6
Board of Institutional Reviewers

This section governs both initial and continuing accreditation reviewers.

A. Board of Institutional Reviewers

To conduct reviews for the initial and continuing accreditation of institutions/program sponsors, the Executive Director of the Commission maintains a pool of trained reviewers consisting of California college and university faculty members, staff and administrators; elementary and secondary school teachers and other certificated professionals, pursuant to *Education Code* Section 44374(b). These reviewers may participate in the various accreditation activities discussed in this section. Individuals may serve in one of those capacities or both. The pool consists of individuals who are geographically and culturally diverse, and who represent gender equity and who have expertise across the spectrum of credential areas. The Committee on Accreditation establishes criteria for membership in the pool. ~~The Executive Director adds new members to the pool when necessary.~~At least once per year, the Professional Services Division trains new members to maintain adequate numbers of active members in the pool.

Conflict of Interest Care is exercised to avoid conflicts of interest involving accreditation team members and the institution/sponsor being reviewed, such as current, or past enrollment; programmatic collaboration; past, prospective or present employment; or spousal connections.

B. Team Structure, Size and Expertise

1. **Initial Program Approval:** Institutions seeking to sponsor a credentialing program submit a proposal that is reviewed by BIR members who provide feedback to the institution. Institutions respond to the feedback until the BIR reviewers determine that all submissions meet the requirements of the standards. New programs may also be reviewed by Commission staff members who have expertise in the credential area. Once all the standards are met, the COA approves the institution to sponsor the program. ~~If the Commission staff does not possess the necessary expertise, the program proposals may be reviewed by external experts selected by the Executive Director. New programs are reviewed by one to two reviewers.~~

2. **Continuing Program Review ~~(Program Assessment Reviewers):~~** Under the auspices of the Executive Director, Program reviewers are appointed for each program being considered for continuing accreditation, ~~the Executive Director appoints Program Assessment reviewers.~~ Reviewers are responsible for reviewing a credential program's alignment with the standards' requirements. ~~from the program sponsor~~ ~~The document reviewers~~ After reviewing the Program Document and

evidence, reviewers will prepare a report ~~to the Committee on Accreditation~~ containing preliminary findings on all standards and a recommendation regarding the site visit. The institution/program sponsor will have an opportunity to provide an addendum to address the findings and make the addendum available to the site visit team at the time of the site visit. Reviewers with appropriate experience and qualifications are responsible for professional judgments about credential programs. Reviewers should have sufficient expertise to make sound judgments about the program under review. ~~Each program document should have at least two reviewers and a team leader should be designated to serve as a contact for the Commission to ensure appropriate communication to the site visit review team.~~

3. **Continuing Institutional Accreditation (Site Visit Reviewers):** Under the auspices of the Executive Director, a site visit team and team leader is appointed for an institution/sponsor being considered for continuing accreditation~~, the Executive Director appoints a site visit team and designates a team leader.~~ The accreditation team members have responsibility for reviewing the Common Standards and program standards and either confirming or altering the findings from the Program ~~Assessment~~ review. The size of the site visit team will be determined based upon factors such as: enrollment, complexity of programs, and number of satellite locations and preliminary findings. ~~One to three members will have primary responsibility for the program findings.~~ Where issues have been identified for further review by the Program Document Reviewers about particular credential programs, and ~~agreed to by the Committee on Accreditation,~~ additional members with expertise in the specific areas will be added to the site visit team.

4. **Team Expertise.** The range of credential programs at an institution/sponsor must be reflected in the expertise of the reviewers, but there need not be a one-to-one correspondence between credential programs and reviewer specializations. Student enrollments in programs, the complexity of programs, and/or the numbers of specialized programs offered by an institution/program sponsor will all be considered when both Program ~~Assessment~~ reviewers and Site Visit teams are created. The nature of the preliminary findings will also be considered in establishing the site visit team.

C. Organization of Continuing Accreditation Activities

1. **Coordination and Communication between the Program ~~Assessment~~ Reviewers and the Site Visit Teams.** Clear and timely communication from the Program ~~Assessment~~ Reviewers to the Committee on Accreditation and from the Committee on Accreditation to the sponsor and site visit team is essential. To support a comprehensive and complete review of the program sponsor and all its programs, members of the site visit team ~~may~~ should include those that have previously served as Program ~~Assessment~~ Reviewers ~~for the institution/program sponsor.~~ for that particular institution/program sponsor.

2. **Team Lead~~er~~.** Under the auspices of the Executive Director, ~~appoints~~ an experienced reviewer is appointed as the leader of a sponsor's Site Visit team for continuing accreditation. The leader's roles are to assist the Commission's staff consultant in planning the review, participate in team size and composition decisions, and provide leadership in team training, orientation and support during the site visit and to facilitate team deliberations and decision making.~~.~~ The team lead~~er~~ and the Commission's staff consultant are jointly responsible for management of the program ~~assessment~~ standard reports and site visit.

D. Training, Orientation and Evaluation

Prior to participation in accreditation review activities, all Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR) members participate in two kinds of in-depth training and orientation. All training and orientation is evaluated by participants to guide later training and orientation.

1. **Training.** To ensure that accreditation review activities examine issues of quality in educator preparation, prospective BIR members participate in an intensive training program, which focuses on document review, data analysis, team skills, interview techniques, accreditation procedures, and the consistent application of standards. In adopting an *Accreditation Handbook*, the Committee on Accreditation will attend to appropriate differentiation in the training of new and returning team members and team leaders and training and calibration for the different types of review activities: Initial Program Approval, ~~Continuing~~ Program ~~Assessment~~ Documents~~-~~, and Site Visits. The Board of Institutional Reviewers will have members who are involved in all types of review activities but not all BIR members must be trained in all types of reviews. All reviewers must be trained in the specific activity or activities in which he or she will be participating.

2. **Orientation**.
   a. **Initial Program Approval**: As new programs are submitted by eligible institutions or new program standards are adopted, documents are submitted by eligible institutions/program sponsors. A Commission staff member will be assigned to the program area. The staff member will work to ensure calibration of reader responses to the standards and work with all reviewers to ensure that all program documents submitted for initial program approval are reviewed in an equitable manner.

   b. **Program ~~Assessment~~ ~~-~~Review:** Program ~~Assessment~~ Document reviewers may meet regionally to review program documents. At such a meeting, a Commission staff consultant will be ~~present~~ available. Reviewers of Program ~~Assessment~~ Documents ~~reviewers~~ will receive training on all standard updates and changes.

   c. **Site Visit Reviewers:** ~~On the day p~~ Prior to the beginning of an accreditation site visit, team members meet to discuss their observations about the institutional ~~self-study~~ reports, the preliminary program standard findings, and review their prior

training as site visit reviewers. They thoroughly plan the The team activities for the site visit are planned -under the -direction of the team leader.

3. **Evaluation of Training and Accreditation Activities.** To ensure that future team training and orientations are as effective as possible, all team members will be asked to evaluate training and orientation activities. The Committee on Accreditation will analyze the responses and modify the training appropriately.

4. **Evaluation of BIR Members**. To ensure that accreditation activities are as effective as possible, free of bias and in accordance with high standards of professionalism, BIR members will be evaluated by accreditation team members and institutional representatives. This feedback will be considered in determining assignment to future accreditation activities.

E. Role of Staff

Professional expertise of staff will be used in accreditation activities and staff members will be assigned to facilitate accreditation activities. Prior to participation in accreditation review activities, staff will participate in the appropriate training and orientation.

1. Initial Accreditation Activities:

a. **Initial Institution/Program Sponsor Approval** -– An institution/program must complete the five stages of the initial institutional approval process as outlined in Section 4 of the *Frameworks.* The Commission determines if an institution/program has satisfactorily met the Pre-requisites, Eligibility Requirements, Common Standards and Provisional Approval before considering the institution/program sponsor for Final Approval. Once an institution/program sponsor receives Final Approval, the Administrator of Accreditation determines which cohort within the accreditation cycle the institution/program sponsor will be placed. Staff reviews the response to the Preconditions and verifies that all the legal requirements and the requirements set by the Commission have been met by the prospective program sponsor.

b. **Initial Approval of Programs** - Staff facilitates the review of initial program documents using members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR) or if staff has the expertise required, completes the review of the initial program document.

2. Continuing Accreditation Activities:

a. **Biennial Reports** **Annual Data Reports** - Staff will review all Biennial Reports annual data reports. and prepare a summary report for the Committee on Accreditation.

b. **Program ~~Assessment~~ Reports -** Staff facilitates the review of program documents in the ~~fourth~~ fifth year of the accreditation cycle using members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR).

c. **Site Visit -** Staff is assigned to facilitate the site visit. The assignment takes place a minimum of one year prior to the site visit. ~~and begins with the 'Year-Out Pre-visit'.~~ ~~In the year of the site visit~~ Approximately two months prior to the visit, staff makes an additional pre-visit to assist in planning the site visit. The team members are members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR) and staff is responsible to ensure that the accreditation procedures as developed by the Committee are followed.

Section 7
Articulation Between National and State Accreditation

Upon the request of an institution, the accreditation of an education unit (school, college or department of education) or program by a national accrediting body shall substitute for state accreditation provided that the Committee on Accreditation certifies to the Commission that the national accrediting entity fulfills the following conditions (*Education Code* 44374 (f)):

A. National Accreditation of an Education Unit

1. The national accrediting entity agrees to use the Common Standards that have been adopted by the Commission.
2. The accreditation process of the national entity includes on-site reviews.
3. The team has two co-leaders, one appointed according to state accreditation procedures and one appointed by the national accrediting body.
4. The team members reviewing the Common Standards include members appointed by the national body and at least one California member selected according to state accreditation procedures.
5. The review of all program documentation must be completed prior to the site visit, the preliminary findings on all programs will be available to the accreditation team, and the state team members will substantiate the preliminary findings at the visit.
6. Accreditation teams represent ethnic and gender diversity, and include elementary and secondary school practitioners and postsecondary education members.
7. The period of accreditation is consistent with a seven-year cycle and is compatible with the accreditation activities established by the state.

B. National Accreditation of a Credential Program

1. The accrediting entity agrees to use the adopted California Program Standards for the specific credential under Section 3, Option 1, or the standards used by the national entity are determined by the Committee to be equivalent to those adopted by the Commission~~ under Option 1~~.
2. The accreditation team represents ethnic and gender diversity.
3. The accreditation team includes both postsecondary members and elementary and secondary school practitioners; a minimum of one voting member is from California.
4. The period of accreditation is consistent with a seven-year cycle and is compatible with the accreditation activities established by the state.

5. Nationally accredited credential programs participate in the unit accreditation process. The national accreditation of the program serves in lieu of the state's Program ~~Assessment~~ Review process.

Section 8
Evaluation and Modification of the *Framework*

This section governs the evaluation and modification of the *Accreditation Framework*.

A. Evaluation of the *Accreditation Framework*

1. **Evaluation of Accreditation System.** The Commission and the Committee on Accreditation are jointly responsible, in consultation with educational institutions/program sponsors and organizations, for establishing, maintaining, and continually refining a system of on-going evaluation of the accreditation system for educator preparation.

2. **Evaluation Report and Recommendations.** The Commission and the Committee on Accreditation shall implement a process of continual evaluation and improvement to its accreditation system.

B. Modification of the *Accreditation Framework*

1. **General Provisions Regarding Modifications.** The Commission will consult with the Committee on Accreditation and educational institutions, program sponsors, and organizations regarding any proposed modifications of the *Framework*. Modifications will occur in public meetings of the Commission, after the Commission has considered relevant information provided by the Committee on Accreditation, postsecondary institutions, accreditation team members, the Commission's professional staff, and other concerned individuals. The Commission will determine the date when a policy modification is effective.

2. **Refinements and Clarifications of the *Framework*.** The Commission may modify the *Accreditation Framework* to refine or clarify its contents, as needed. The Commission retains the authority to reconsider and modify the Program Standards for Options 1, 2 or 3 as the need arises.

3. **Significant Modifications of the *Framework*.** The Commission will maintain without significant modifications the *Framework*'s major features and options, unless there is compelling evidence that a significant modification is warranted. The determination of

compelling evidence and the warranted significant modification will be made by the Commission with the concurrence of the Committee on Accreditation and the Chancellor of the California State University, the President of the University of California, and the President of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities.

Appendix A

California Education Code Sections
As Related to Accreditation of Educator Preparation Programs

Education Code Section 44370. Legislative Purpose. 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 candidate's competence and performance.

Section 44371. Accreditation System and Framework.

(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) Replace the prior system of program approval, as established by the Teacher Preparation and Licensing Act of 1970.

(5) Be governed by an Accreditation Framework that sets forth the policies of the

Commission on Teacher Credentialing 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 on Teacher Credentialing 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.

Section 44372. Accreditation Responsibilities of the Commission.

The powers and duties of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing 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, and jointly select an external evaluator t o conduct the evaluation, in accordance with Section 8 of the Accreditation Framework that was in effect on June 30, 1993.

(i) Modify the Accreditation Framework in accordance with Section 8 of the Framework that was in effect on June 30, 1993.

(j) Inform and advise the Legislature regarding statutory issues related to accreditation, and submit legislative recommendations, after considering the advice of the Committee on Accreditation, education institutions and professional organizations.

Education Code Section 44373. Committee on Accreditation.

(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 are 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 educators' 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.

Section 44374. Accreditation Standards and Procedures.

(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.