

Discussion of Responsibilities of Approved Institutions

January 2011

Overview of this Report

Prior to 2008-09, California's budget allocated funds for district intern programs and BTSA Induction programs on a per participant basis. With the flexible funding that began with the 2009-10 budget year, each local education agency (LEA)¹ is now able to use the funding previously restricted to an approved educator preparation program for "any educational purpose." At this time, the flexible funding is scheduled to continue through the 2012-13 fiscal year.

In conjunction with the change in funding policies, a few local education agencies have elected to no longer offer their Commission approved educator preparation programs and instead to use the allotted funds for other educational purposes. Discussions have taken place with approved LEAs about "withdrawing" a program or moving a program to "inactive" status. Early in January 2011 a letter (Appendix A) was sent to all LEAs that sponsor one or more Commission approved educator preparation programs addressing responsibilities of approved entities. To date a few BTSA Induction programs have considered withdrawing or have withdrawn and the importance of supporting candidates to complete a partially completed program may not have been clearly understood by the LEA.

Staff Recommendation

This is an information item.

Background

The Commission's Preconditions and Common Standards outline what an approved entity must do to offer one or more educator preparation programs in California. For institutions of higher education (IHEs) regional accreditation addresses the large institution-wide issues such as catalog rights and the closing of programs. WASC confirms that all programs at WASC-accredited institutions are expected to teach-out all students when a program is going to close voluntarily. In addition, WASC mentioned that this is in keeping with the federal policy on candidate rights and closing a program at an institution of higher education.

Staff believes that the current General Preconditions (Appendix B) may not address these issues adequately for entities that are not regionally accredited. General Preconditions are those that apply to all educator preparation programs.

When the General Preconditions were first developed there were very few sponsors of educator preparation programs that were not institutions of higher education. Now there are many more as is shown in Table 1 below:

¹ LEAs include school districts, county offices of education and independent charter schools

Table 1. Program Sponsors by Type of Institution

Type of Institution	Number of Institutions *
University of California	8
California State University	23
Private Colleges and Universities	56
Local Education Agencies	165
Other Sponsors	3
Alternative STEM Sponsors	0
Total Institutions	255

*November 2010

In addition to there being more institutions that are not IHEs and regionally accredited than ever before, the newer institutions are sponsoring a wider array of educator preparation programs. LEAs and other sponsors are approved to offer general education Induction programs, Special Education Clear Induction programs, Preliminary and Professional Administrative Services programs, Special Education Added Authorization programs, and District Intern programs for multiple subject, single subject and special education. In addition, there has been interest by some county offices related to the updated Reading and Literacy Certificate programs and the Mathematics Instructional Certificate programs.

Because of the recent increase in the number of non-IHE sponsors of educator preparation programs and the change toward flexible funding, staff suggests that the COA may wish to review the Commission's adopted Preconditions for language that should be updated related to LEAs and other non IHEs sponsoring educator preparation programs. If the COA agrees that additional language in the Preconditions is warranted, then the COA could propose to the Commission additional language related to the responsibility of an institution to support a candidate who has begun an approved educator preparation program.

Next Steps

Based on the COA's discussion, staff will prepare an agenda item for a future COA meeting. If the COA agrees additional language should be added, staff could prepare draft language for COA discussion that would then be forwarded to the Commission for its consideration and possible adoption.

Appendix A

January 4, 2011

To: Superintendents of Local Education Agencies which sponsor Educator Preparation Programs Approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing

From: Teri Clark, Acting Director
Professional Services Division
Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Local education agencies (LEA) (school districts, county offices of education and independent charter schools) that elect to sponsor one or more California Commission on Teacher Credentialing educator preparation programs (i.e., BTSA Induction, District Intern and Career Technical Education programs) must at all times meet Preconditions, Common Standards and the appropriate Program Standards. If a sponsor discontinues an approved program while candidates are enrolled and the candidates have not had the opportunity to complete the program, the program sponsor would be open to legal action by the candidates.

Many school districts partner with local universities that prepare educators but are not the actual sponsor of the preparation program. This letter is directed at those LEAs that actually are the identified sponsor of the educator preparation program and participate in the Commission's accreditation system.

Preconditions

Preconditions are requirements that must be met in order for an accrediting association or licensing agency to consider accrediting a program sponsor or approving its programs. [Preconditions](#) are based on state law or are established by Commission policy. Sponsorship of a California educator preparation program involves meeting the Preconditions and all applicable standards through ongoing activities in the Commission's [accreditation system](#). The Preconditions include the following requirements:

- The Superintendent of the district shall submit to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing verification of the governing board's approval to sponsor the educator preparation program(s). Once a candidate is accepted and enrolls in an educator preparation program, the sponsor must provide the approved program, meeting the adopted standards, until the candidate:
 - i) completes the program,
 - ii) withdraws from the program,
 - iii) is dropped from the program based on established criteria, or

- iv) is assisted in enrolling in another approved program to complete the requirements for the authorization in the event the program closes.

Common Standards

The Common Standards address issues of institutional infrastructure, stability and processes that are designed to ensure that the implementation of all approved programs meet all [standards](#) including the following:

- Leadership, communication, collaboration, and appropriate authority
- Unit and program assessment and improvement system
- Adequate resources to provide a program that meets all standards
- Qualified instructors, faculty, and staff
- Process to admit candidates and provide advice and assistance to candidates until program completion
- Design, implement and evaluate field-based experiences, providing supervision and support as required
- Ensure that candidates who are recommended for an authorization demonstrate the knowledge and skills specified in the appropriate program standards for the authorization prior to recommendation for the authorization

Appropriate Program Standards

The Program Standards address issues directly related to the credential program being proposed or offered. These issues address the specifics of program design, curriculum, fieldwork, and candidate assessment. Program Standards are reviewed through the [Initial Program Review](#) process for initial program approval and then reviewed for ongoing alignment with program standards during Year 4 of the accreditation cycle through [Program Assessment](#). In the sixth year of the accreditation cycle the [accreditation site visit](#) team reviews the implementation of each approved program and determines if the program is meeting the [adopted standards](#).

In summary, it is essential that each LEA that elects to offer one or more educator preparation programs that result in the recommendation of a teaching credential, services credential, or other educator preparation authorization, fully understand and is prepared to meet these requirements. Once a candidate is accepted into an approved educator preparation program, the program sponsor is expected to offer the approved program including ongoing advisement and support until the candidate completes the program, within a reasonable timeframe.

If you have any questions, please contact Cheryl Hickey, Acting Administrator of Accreditation at chickey@ctc.ca.gov.

Appendix B: General Preconditions Established by the Commission

Pursuant to Education Code Section 44227(a), each program of professional preparation shall adhere to the following requirements of the Commission.

- (1) **Accreditation and Academic Credit.** To be granted initial institutional accreditation by the Commission to become eligible to submit programs or to be granted initial program accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program(s) must be proposed and operated by an institution that (a) is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or another of the six regional accrediting associations, and (b) grants baccalaureate academic credit or post baccalaureate academic credit, or both. (This provision does not apply to professional preparation programs offered by school districts.)

For school districts wishing to offer a professional preparation program, the Superintendent of the district shall submit verification of the governing board's approval of sponsorship of the program.

- (2) **Responsibility and Authority.** To be granted initial institutional/district accreditation by the Commission or initial program accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the institution/district shall provide the following information.
 - (a) Identify the position within the organizational structure that is responsible for ongoing oversight of all credential preparation programs offered by the institution/district (including credential programs offered by the extension division, if any).
 - (b) Provide a description of the reporting relationship between the position described in (a) and the individuals who coordinate each credential program offered by the institution/district. If a reporting relationship is indirect, describe the levels of authority and responsibility for each credential program.
- (3) **Personnel Decisions.** To be granted initial program accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, a program of professional preparation must be proposed and operated by an institution/district that makes all personnel decisions without considering differences due to gender or other constitutionally or legally prohibited considerations. These decisions include decisions regarding the admission, retention or graduation of students, and decisions regarding the employment, retention or promotion of employees.

- (4) **Demonstration of Need.** To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must include a demonstration of the need for the program in the region in which it will be operated. Such a demonstration must include, but need not be limited to, assurance by a sample of school administrators that one or more school districts will, during the foreseeable future, hire or assign additional personnel to serve in the credential category.
- (5) **Practitioners' Participation in Program Design.** To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must include verification that practitioners in the credential category have participated actively in the design and development of the program's philosophical orientation, educational goals, and content emphases.
- (6) **Commission Assurances.** To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must (a) demonstrate that the program will fulfill all of the applicable standards of program quality and effectiveness that have been adopted by the Commission; (b) assure that the institution/district will cooperate in an evaluation of the program by an external team or a monitoring of the program by a Commission staff member within four years of the initial enrollment of candidates in the program; and (c) assure that the institution/district will participate in focused reviews of one or more aspects of the program when designated by the Commission.
- (7) **Requests for Data.** To be granted initial or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the institution/district must identify a qualified officer responsible for reporting and respond to all requests from the Commission for data including, but not limited to, program enrollments, program completers, examination results, and state and federal reporting within the time limits specified by the Commission.

General Preconditions Established by State Law

- (8) **Faculty Participation.** Each postsecondary faculty member who regularly teaches one or more courses relating to instructional methods in a college or university program of professional preparation for teaching credentials, including Specialist Credentials, or one or more courses in administrative methods in an Administrative Services Credential program, shall actively participate in public elementary or secondary schools and classrooms at least once every three academic years. *Reference: Education Code Section 44227.5 (a) and (b)*
- (9) **California Basic Educational Skills Test.** In each program of professional preparation, applicants for program admission shall be required to take the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST). The institution shall use the test results to ensure that, upon admission, each candidate receives appropriate academic assistance necessary to pass the examination. *Reference: Education Code Sections 44252 (f) and 44225 (n)*

For Internship Programs: In each internship program of professional preparation, candidates who are admitted shall be required to pass the California Basic Educational Skills Test prior to assuming intern teaching responsibilities. *Reference: Education Code Section 44252 (b)*

Clarification of General Precondition 9

Legislative Intent. General Precondition 9 does not require passage of the CBEST for admission, only that the examination be taken. It is the intent of the Legislature that admission to a program not be denied solely on the basis of having failed to pass the CBEST. Further, it is expected that institutions will make provisions for assisting candidates in passing the exam.

Applicants Residing Out of State When They Apply for Admission. Persons residing outside of California when they apply for admission must take the CBEST no later than the second available administration of the test after enrolling in the program.

Candidate Qualifications. The standard requires that Multiple and Single Subject Credential (Program Standard 17) candidates must pass the CBEST prior to daily student teaching.

- (10) **Certificate of Clearance.** A college or university that operates a program of professional preparation shall not allow a candidate to assume daily student teaching responsibilities until the candidate obtains a Certificate of Clearance from the Commission that verifies the candidate's personal identification, unless the individual has already completed the fingerprint and character identification process and has been issued a valid document by the Commission. *Reference: Education Code Section 44320 (d)*

For Internship Programs: A Certificate of Clearance must be obtained prior to assuming intern teaching responsibilities, intern counseling or psychologist responsibilities.