

**Annual Accreditation Report**  
**Section III:**  
**Proposed Work Plan for the Committee on Accreditation in 2014-15**

The Commission and COA work plan as it relates to accreditation in 2014-15 is significant. Not only will efforts continue to implement the current system of biennial reports, program assessment, and site visits for the over 260 approved institutions, but the Commission, accreditation staff, and the COA will be also be focusing on efforts to strength and streamline the accreditation system.

This effort includes the Commission convening several task groups identified in the adopted Work Plan. In August 2014 the Commission requested applications from educators interested in serving on these task groups. The six identified task groups will each focus on specific aspects of the work as follows:

- Preliminary Teacher Preparation Standards: recommend revisions to the preliminary multiple and single subject standards.
- Induction Standards, Policies and Regulations: review recent policy changes and recommend revisions to induction standards and regulations governing the General Education (Multiple Subject and Single Subject) Clear Credential.
- Performance Assessments: provide guidance regarding teacher and administrator performance assessments, including standards governing the development and implementation of performance assessments.
- Outcomes and Data: review and redesign surveys based on changes in standards, make recommendations regarding useful reporting practices and formats, and standardize the use of this information in accreditation.
- Accreditation Policy Procedures: recommend needed changes in accreditation policy and procedures based on new standards, assessments, and outcomes data.
- Public Access and Data Dashboards: recommend ways to improve public access to information about preparation programs and institutions.

In addition, the plan calls for an Accreditation Advisory Panel to serve as a sounding board and provide feedback to the groups. Key stakeholder groups have been invited to identify a designee to serve on the Accreditation Advisory Panel, which will also include the chairs of each of the six task groups. It is expected that the first Accreditation Advisory Panel meeting will take place before the end of 2014.

The COA anticipates serving to assist the Commission in this critically important work over the next year.

For 2014-15, the COA identifies the following priorities.

**Purpose 1. Ensure Accountability to the Public and to the Profession**

*Maintain public access to the Committee on Accreditation.* All Committee meetings will continue to be held in public and all meeting agendas posted in accordance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. In addition, meetings will be transmitted via audio broadcast to allow any individual with access to the Internet the ability to hear live or recorded broadcasts of all Committee meetings. The Commission's website will continue to be utilized fully to provide agenda items, notification of meetings, as well as broad-based access to critical accreditation materials for institutions and others interested in accreditation. Meetings are scheduled for the following dates:

- August 4-5, 2013
- October 3, 2013
- February 19, 2015
- April, 2015
- June, 2015

The Committee's schedule has been adjusted to reflect the workload of a full schedule of site visits this upcoming spring.

Continuing in 2013-14, the *PSD ENews*, Program Sponsor Alerts, and press releases will be routinely used to ensure a transparent accreditation process. Additionally, frequent technical assistance workshops on the various aspects of the accreditation process and procedures will also be provided to ensure broad understanding of accreditation requirements and expectations.

*Preparation and presentation of COA reports to the Commission.* The Committee on Accreditation will present its annual report to the Commission in December 2014. Additional updates and reports to the Commission will be provided as necessary and appropriate throughout the year.

*Commission liaison.* Maintaining a liaison from the Commission to the COA continues to be a critical aspect of the current process. The Commission's liaison will continue to provide an important perspective to COA discussions and serve as an effective means of communication between the COA and the Commission.

*Implementation of a fee recovery system for certain accreditation activities and an annual accreditation fee system (pending approval by the Office of Administrative Law)* The Commission adopted a cost recovery plan, and regulations, for the review of new programs and for accreditation activities outside the typical accreditation cycle. Particular attention will

continue to be paid to effective implementation of a fiscal process to invoice institutions, refining processes to ensure timeliness of reviews, and to maintaining a procedure to keep track of reviewer assignments to credit institutions for in-kind assistance in order to waive fees for initial program review.

In addition, in 2014, the Commission implemented an annual accreditation fee. The Commission's efforts in 2014-15 will be implementation of the annual accreditation fee, ensuring accurate information for institutions and maintaining a system of invoicing and processing revenue that is received for the purposes of supporting the accreditation system.

## **Purpose 2. Ensure Program Quality**

*Professional accreditation of institutions and their credential preparation programs.* This is one of the principal ongoing tasks of the Committee on Accreditation. The COA has been given full responsibility for making the legal decisions regarding the continuing professional education accreditation of institutions and their credential programs. Accreditation site visits continue as scheduled with the Indigo Cohort in 2014-2015, with the vast majority of site visit reviews taking place in the spring of 2015.

Despite additional resources from annual accreditation fees and cost recovery fees, ensuring cost effectiveness continues to be of paramount concern. In particular, the number of team members will be limited to only those essential to complete the task. In addition, all site visits with one or two similar programs (such as General Education Induction and Clear Education Specialist Induction) will continue to generally be conducted in three days, two nights instead of four days, three nights as in past years. Experience over the past couple of years with accreditation illustrate that this length of time is sufficient for institutions with a small number of programs, all of which have been found in program assessment to be preliminarily aligned. This action will continue to contain costs involved in the review while still ensuring a sufficient length of time for a thorough review.

In addition, beginning with the spring 2015 visits, the Commission no longer has the assistance of Induction Cluster Regional Directors to assist, as consultants, in site visits. Because the Commission's staff is not able to travel to be present for all accreditation visits, the decision was made to assign three consultants to support all programs undergoing accreditation site visits for institutions that offer only one or two Tier II (induction) programs. Staff consultants will assist in the preparations for the visit as with all other institutions, and be available for consultation by the team throughout during the visit, but will not attend the visit in person. Administrators in the PSD division will monitor the effectiveness of this approach this year to see if continues to be a viable approach for institutions that offer only one or two Tier II programs.

*Review and revise the Accreditation Handbook.* The *Accreditation Handbook* explicates the processes and procedures of the various components of the accreditation system. The COA completed a comprehensive review and update of the *Accreditation Handbook* in 2012. The

Commission staff does not anticipate a wholesale review and revision of the *Handbook* during the 2014-15 year, however, revisions and additions may occur as necessary.

*Receive regular updates on Commission activities related to accreditation and provide Commission with advice on issues related to accreditation as requested by the Commission.* Staff will continue to prepare agenda items for the COA on issues related to the Commission's work as directed by the Commission or as appropriate. The COA will continue to discuss issues referred to it by the Commission and provide guidance as appropriate. It is anticipated with the work of Accreditation work groups (see Purpose 3) that this function will be critically important in 2014-15.

*Continue efforts to implement surveys for use in accreditation.* The Commission staff worked with stakeholders to develop and pilot the first of these surveys in the spring of 2013 and to conduct a second pilot in 2014. Additional effort will be made during the 2014-15 year to examine the use of the data collected during the pilot, determine how it might be brought to scale, and used for accreditation purposes in the future. In addition, the Commission plans to further develop additional surveys to be completed by candidates completing induction programs, master and mentor teachers, and employers.

*Discuss which standards provide the most leverage in terms of program analysis and quality improvements based on data.* The Commission's adopted activities for 2012-13 included a recommendation that the COA discuss with the Commission which standards provide the most leverage in terms of program analysis and quality improvements based on data. The COA began this discussion at its August 2012 meeting. It was noted that this recommendation is particularly challenging due to the view that all of the standards are important to quality programs. In 2014-15, the discussion of leaner and higher standards will undoubtedly be a source of deliberation by the accreditation work groups focused on standards. The COA will serve to assist in this effort as needed in 2014-15.

### **Purpose 3. Ensure Adherence to Standards**

*Review and take action to grant initial approval of new credential programs.* This is also one of the major ongoing tasks of the Committee on Accreditation. The COA has developed procedures for handling the submission of proposed credential programs. Programs will only be given initial approval when the reviewers have determined that all of the Commission's standards are met. This review process will continue in 2014-15. Additional resources available as the result of cost recovery and annual accreditation fees should assist in ensuring greater timeliness of reviews by allowing the Commission to bring reviewers together for some dedicated review time, as well as encouraging the participation of additional reviewers from the in-kind contribution option.

*Conduct and review program assessment activities.* In 2013-14, institutions in the Green cohort will begin the program assessment process. The Blue cohort submitted program assessment

documents in fall of 2013 and reviewers are completing these reviews. (A cohort list is provided in Appendix B.)

*Conduct technical assistance visits to institutions new to accreditation.* The COA typically considers the issues identified by technical assistance review teams in their review of institutions new to the accreditation process in California. Review teams provide technical assistance to these institutions in preparation for a full accreditation site visit. This activity was halted for two years because of the significant budget challenges experienced by the Commission. It is unclear at this time whether technical assistance site visits will be scheduled for 2015. With over 40 visits and several revisits already scheduled, existing staff is already at capacity. Because site visits are a higher priority than technical assistance visits, the administrators in the Professional Services Division will make this determination later in the fiscal year.

*Disseminate information related to the Commission's Common Standards and Program Standards.* At this time, efforts to assist institutions and programs to understand the expectations around Commission standards will take place through routine efforts such as existing webinars, conferences, and by working with individual institutions that need additional assistance.

*Continue the discussion of how Subject Matter Programs can be included in the accreditation system.* With the Commission's action in fall 2006 that all programs leading to an authorization to teach or provide services in California's public schools need to be reviewed through the Commission's accreditation system, the subject matter programs are the only programs that have not been integrated into the accreditation system. Revised subject matter requirements for Mathematics and English to align with the Common Core necessitate that approved subject matter programs in these disciplines revise their coursework. The Commission required all approved subject matter programs in Mathematics and English Language Arts to resubmit their alignment matrices by June 2014 to demonstrate alignment with the newly adopted SMRs. The Commission is currently in the process of reviewing these documents.

*Determine and enact effective strategies for reviewing those standards related to the implementation of the Teaching Performance Assessment.* The issue of ensuring that reviewers with particular expertise in performance assessment implementation review the standards related to performance assessment continues to be a challenge for the Commission. The current approach of inviting selected individuals with specific expertise in this area to review these standards exclusively has been relatively successful. However, additional strategies are necessary to recruit individuals with expertise in the teaching performance assessment models to assist in related accreditation activities. Further training will be considered to better prepare site visit team members reviewing the implementation of the teaching performance assessment.

*Work with stakeholders and the Committee on Accreditation to develop a more streamlined and targeted site visit model that is cost effective, rigorous, and focused on the essential attributes of high quality educator preparation.* In 2014, the Commission discussed this topic at length and adopted a framework for this work. The COA remains committed to working with the Commission appointed Advisory committee and the six workgroups to provide any assistance to ensure a successful achievement of commission objectives in this area. It is anticipated that this will be a major focus for 2014-15.

#### **Purpose 4. Foster Program Improvement**

*Collect, analyze, and report on the biennial reports submitted in fall 2013.* The 2014-2015 academic year will be the seventh full year of implementation of the biennial report component of the revised accreditation system. All institutions in the Indigo, Red, and Yellow cohorts are required to submit candidate competence and performance data in Fall 2014.

Among the recommendations adopted by the Commission in June 2012 was a recommendation to increase the consistency and comprehensiveness of the data collected, analyzed and reported on for each type of educator preparation program. The recommendation noted that the initial focus for technical assistance efforts in this area would be on the development, analysis, and use of teaching performance assessment data within the biennial reports followed by data provided for the site visit. COA worked on revising the biennial report template and a new template was released as a pilot in summer 2014. The COA and the Commission staff will work with institutions to evaluate the effectiveness of the revised template in improving the consistency and quality of the data submitted.

*Continued development of the evaluation system for the accreditation system.* The COA will continue to refine the evaluation tool that is used by site visit reviewers, team leads, and institutions to evaluate the accreditation system. This data will be collected over the course of the year, with a review of the data taking place in the summer of 2015. Improvements to the system based upon those data can then be considered by the COA in summer 2015. Additional work will be undertaken to improve the information the Commission has about the efficacy of program assessment and biennial reporting.

*Continue partnership with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (formerly the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council) and efforts to collaborate with other national accrediting bodies, where appropriate.* The Partnership Agreement with NCATE was renewed in 2007 and is effective through 2014. In 2014, the COA and the Commission worked to develop a new partnership agreement with CAEP. After adoption by the COA, the document was submitted to CAEP for its approval. At the time of the writing of this report, the Commission awaiting a response. If accepted by CAEP, this new agreement will be in place beginning in January 2015. If CAEP does not approve upon initial review, Commission staff will work with the Commission, COA, and institutions to attempt to address these concerns and arrive at a mutually agreeable partnership agreement.

*Explore ways to align and streamline the accreditation of other national and professional organizations with that of the state processes. At this point in time the focus of aligning and streamlining the accreditation of other national and state organizations will be focused on completing the discussions about, and completing, the partnership agreement, with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).*

### **General Operations**

In addition to the above-mentioned items, the COA will engage in routine matters necessary for general operations of the Committee. This includes the election of Co-Chairs, the adoption of a meeting schedule, and orientation of new members.