



Commission on Teacher Credentialing

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Office of the Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 29, 2011
TO: Commission Stakeholders
FROM: Patty Wohl and Teri Clark, Acting Executive Directors
RE: Teacher Discipline Improvement Initiative Update

In the effort to continue to update you on the progress of the steps we are taking to address the findings of the State Auditor, below is our progress since the last update on June 16, 2011. You can count on us to do everything in our power to restore the trust the public has placed in us. To that end, these updates are a step towards making our work more accessible to our stakeholders and the public.

We have organized the 11 overlapping recommendations in the Bureau of state Audit (BSA) audit report into four overarching issues:

1. Legality of the Committee of Credentials (COC) delegating its discretionary authority to staff.
2. Individuals for whom the Commission needs updated misconduct reports.
3. Division of Professional Practices.
4. Office of Human Resources.

In this update, we want to report on the steps taken to address the audit report's concerns regarding the first issue: 1. *Legality of the Committee of Credentials (COC) delegating its discretionary authority to staff*. In the next weeks, we will provide detailed information about the other three issues (issues 2 – 4).

Following the recommendation in the BSA audit report to seek a legal opinion from the Attorney General (AG) to determine the legal authority and extent to which the COC may delegate the discretionary authority to close investigations of alleged misconduct, the Commission's legal staff formally requested an AG opinion on May 2, 2011. We hope to receive an AG opinion in the next 4-6 months. Once an opinion is received from the AG, we will take the steps necessary to comply with the advice and undertake procedural and statutory changes needed to comply.

Potential disciplinary cases are no longer closed based on staff action without COC review. In the interim, effective May 1, 2011, a consent calendar is prepared by staff for COC review and action.

Beginning at its June 22-23, 2011 meeting, the COC also considered an additional calendar of cases that legal staff identified as the types of case that the COC might close at the initial review such as, in the case of a first time applicant with multiple misdemeanor convictions that occurred over ten years ago and no additional incidents in the intervening years. (An Initial Review is required on all cases reviewed by the COC to determine which cases will move forward for a Formal Review and which cases should be closed or granted without further review.) Use of this additional consent calendar could result in the completion of approximately 100-150 additional cases per year.

We look forward to the upcoming Commission meeting on August 4-5, 2011, when Commissioners will discuss bringing policymakers, stakeholders and other interested parties together to talk about potential procedural and statutory solutions to increase the number of cases reviewed each month by the COC.

Webinar Reminder

California's Educator Discipline Process—Laws and Current Commission Procedures:

- Date: July 12, 2011
- Time: 10:00 A.M.
- Location: You may attend in person at the Commission offices (1900 Capitol Avenue in Sacramento) or watch online at: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/live.html>

A PowerPoint version of the presentation will be available online and an archive of the session will be available after the Webinar. The link to register for the webinar (and to submit a question about the discipline process) is <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/EducatorDiscipline>.

Update on Other Commission Activities

Other important work recently completed by our staff and our many, and much appreciated, expert volunteers from the field is detailed below:

- The Committee on Accreditation (COA) held its final meeting of the 2010-11 year on June 23-24, 2011. This completes a demanding year that included 36 site visits by volunteer members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers. Following each site visit, the COA made final accreditation decisions for each of the institutions visited.
- Also at its final meeting the COA elected new co-chairs to lead the 2011-12 accreditation year. Congratulations to **Nancy Watkins**, a Teacher at Valencia High School in the Placentia-Yorba Linda School District, and to **Anne Jones**, Director of Teacher Education Programs at the University of California, Riverside.

In Closing

It is our goal to get back on track because the work we do is so important to the students of California. With your continued support and participation we are confident that we will make the improvements necessary to keep the Commission moving forward to ensure that California educators are well-prepared and that the safety of students remains our foremost concern.

If you have any questions or feedback, please do not hesitate to contact us.