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Action

Professional Practices Committee

Committee of Credentials: Expiration of Terms and Declaration of Vacancies

Executive Summary: The Professional Practices Committee will review the availability of incumbents for appointment/re-appointment to the Committee of Credentials and make its determinations as to which, if any, of the positions with expiring terms shall be declared vacant as of June 30, 2005. The Committee will direct staff as to how to proceed to assist the Commission, as necessary, with the selection of new Committee of Credentials members.

Recommended Action: Staff recommends that the Commission make appropriate declarations as to which of the positions whose terms are set to expire in June 2005 shall be filled by reappointment and which, if any, shall be declared vacant.

Presenter: Mary Armstrong, Director,
Division of Professional Practices

Strategic Plan Goal(s): 1

Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators.

- ◆ Evaluate and monitor the moral fitness of credential applicants and holders and take appropriate action.

Committee of Credentials: Expiration of Terms and Declaration of Vacancies

Summary

The obligations of the Professional Practices Committee and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing relative to the Committee of Credentials are set forth in the Commission's Policy Manual. [Please see CTC Policy Manual sections 500.] These items summarize those obligations and presents information concerning the vacancy, application and selection process utilized in prior years.

Fiscal Impact

The vacancy, application and selection process for the Committee of Credentials will result in no appreciable increase in divisional expenditures. The costs associated with this recurring procedure are included annually in the Division's budget. These costs include printing and postage relative to the distribution of applications and travel and lodging expenses for individuals invited to interview.

Recommendations

Staff recommends that the Commission make appropriate declarations as to which, if any, of the positions whose terms are set to expire in June 2005 shall be filled by reappointment and which shall be declared vacant.

The Process

The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the Committee of Credentials review individuals for fitness to receive and/or retain credentials. In addition, the Commission distributes information regarding the actions taken by it to all public and private schools and school districts in California and every other state in the nation.

The Committee of Credentials is required by law to investigate all allegations of misconduct against credential applicants and holders. It is comprised of seven members, appointed by the Commission and consists of one elementary teacher, one secondary teacher, one school board member, one school administrator, and three public representatives.

The Committee of Credentials meets three days each month at the offices of the Division of Professional Practices in Sacramento. Members review more than 600 cases at various stages of review each month.

The Commission's Professional Practices Committee is responsible for informing "the Commission when vacancies occur or may be expected to occur on the Committee of Credentials." [CTC Policy Manual, section 500] ***The terms of four (4) of the members of the Committee of Credentials expire on June 30, 2004. These include one (1) school board member, one (1) secondary teacher, and two (2) public representatives.*** The current incumbents in these positions are Dr. Wesley Apker (public representative), Jonathan Coleman (secondary teacher), Sharon Gray (school board member) and Dr. Sylvia Whitlock (public representative). The schedule set forth below outlines the actions necessary in order to meet the appointment responsibility in a timely manner:

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| December | Vacancies are announced and applications are sent to the state printer. Applications and press releases are distributed throughout the state. Nominations are solicited. |
| March | Set March 1, 2005 deadline date for receipt of applications. Paper-screening by the Professional Practices Committee. |
| May | Interviews are conducted and appointments are made by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. |

The Commission's Policy Manual states that "Prior to publicly announcing a vacancy, the Committee shall inquire, in writing, as to the availability of incumbents to serve an additional term" [CTC Policy Manual, section 500(a)]. The Policy Manual also provides that no member shall serve more than two successive two-year terms, [CTC Policy Manual 503(a)]. Pursuant to this provision, unless it is waived by the Commission, Dr. Wesley Apker and Dr. Sylvia Whitlock are ineligible to serve an additional term since they have both served two successive two-year terms. In recent years the Committee has experienced a great deal of turnover due to resignations by members during their terms. Currently, Dr. Apker and Dr. Whitlock are the most experienced members serving on the Committee. This experience has proved essential to the effectiveness of the Committee as the new members become familiar with the process. In addition, there is a possibility that Jonathan Coleman (secondary teacher) and Mark Rickabaugh (school administrator) may not finish their terms because of anticipated changes in their job assignments. For these reasons, staff recommends that the Commission temporarily suspend section 503(a) of the Policy Manual and allow Dr. Apker and Dr. Whitlock to serve an additional two-year term. An inquiry regarding the availability of all the incumbent members was sent in October 2004. All expressed an interest and desire to serve another term.

Staff respectfully requests direction from the Commission as to which, if any, membership categories will be declared vacant as of June 2005. Staff also requests that the Commission direct that in the event an unanticipated vacancy occurs prior to June 2005 that the recruitment process be initiated to include any newly vacant position(s).