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# 2B

## Action

### *Professional Services Committee*

#### Options for Administrative Services Credential Examinations

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**Executive Summary:** This agenda item presents options for the Commission's consideration relative to examinations for the Administrative Services Credential.

**Recommended Action:** That the Commission direct staff to proceed with one of the options presented.

**Presenters:** Phyllis Jacobson, Ed.D., Administrator and Yvonne Novelli, Consultant, Professional Services Division

#### Strategic Plan Goal: 1

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

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation and performance of professional educators and for the accreditation of credential programs

October 2008



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# Options for Administrative Services Credential Examinations

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## **Introduction**

In 2002, the Commission adopted the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA) developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) pursuant to Education Code §44270.5. This code section specifies that the Commission may issue a preliminary services credential with a specialization in administration to a candidate who, among other requirements, “successfully passes a test adopted by the commission, upon a finding by the commission that the test is aligned to state administrator preparation standards.” At the August 2008 Commission meeting staff presented an information item indicating that since the SLLA is presently being revised by ETS, the Commission might wish not only to reconsider continuing to use the SLLA for the purposes of meeting Education Code §44270.5, but might also wish to consider the development of a new, Commission-owned examination for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential. Staff was directed to develop options for the Commission’s consideration. This agenda item presents those options.

## **Background**

During 2000-01, concerns about the effectiveness of administrator preparation led the Commission to direct staff to conduct a review of the Administrative Services Credential. The review process included meetings of the Administrative Services Credential Task Force and a series of public forums. Part of the work of the Task Force was to consider both national and state standards for leadership preparation.

## **The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards**

The ISLLC Standards for School Leaders were developed between 1994 and 1996 under the auspices of the Council of Chief State School Officers and in cooperation with the National Policy Board for Educational Administration. The standards were drafted by personnel from 24 state education agencies, including the Commission, and representatives from various professional associations. The six ISLLC standards presented a common core of knowledge, dispositions, and performances that were intended to link leadership more closely to productive schools and improved education outcomes.

During that same time frame, the Commission completed a review of its administrator preparation standards and adopted new preparation standards in 1995. Commission staff compared the six ISLLC standards and the ten Commission Candidate Competence standards and found them to be compatible. In addition to the commonalities with the ISLLC standards, the Commission’s program standards had six Program Design and Curriculum standards and two Field Experience standards.

In the time since the ISLLC standards were originally adopted, 43 states have used the ISLLC standards in their entirety or as a template for developing their own state standards. In 1998, the

ISLLC standards were used by ETS to develop the School Leadership Licensure Assessment (SLLA).

### **The California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CPSELs)**

In 2000, a representative group that included the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), the California School Leadership Academy (CSLA), the California Department of Education (CDE), the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), and the California Association of Professors of Educational Administration (CAPEA) began working together to create a set of “Standards of Practice” for school leadership in California. The group’s purpose was to develop standards that would be applicable to the various administrative levels of the education system, from preparation and induction to professional development and performance evaluation. The group’s work resulted in the development of the CPSELs in 2001. The six CPSEL standards are based on the ISLLC standards and are almost exactly the same in the language of the standards. The differences between the two sets of standards lie in the indicators developed for each set of standards. The CPSELs broadened and customized the ISLLC standards to be more applicable to the California context.

### **Revision of Program Standards**

At its February 2002 meeting, the Commission directed staff to revise the Administrative Services Credential program standards. The Commission adopted the revised standards in 2003 and used the six CPSELs as the basis for the Candidate Competence and Performance standards, and also modified the six Program Design, Coordination, and Curriculum standards and two Field Experience standards.

### **Adoption and Use of the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA)**

The Commission also wished to provide greater flexibility to districts in employing individuals for administrative positions, as well as implement a process to allow capable, experienced individuals to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities, consistent with credential requirements, through a combination of written and performance-based measures. To implement this objective, the Commission sponsored SB 1655 (Chap. 225, Stats. 2002), which added Education Code §44270.5, noted above, giving the Commission the option to provide an examination alternative to completing a preparation program. Numerous school administration groups, such as ACSA and the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA), supported this bill and there was no formal opposition. SB 1655 contained an urgency clause, making it law on August 16, 2002.

In December 2002, the Commission decided not to develop its own examination, but to adopt the SLLA, the only “off-the-shelf” examination available, as the examination alternative to the Administrative Services Credential professional preparation program. This national assessment measures whether entry-level principals and other school leaders have the ISLLC standards-based knowledge necessary for competent professional practice. The exam’s content specifications are aligned with the ISLLC national standards but not specifically with the California focus found within the CPSELs and the California program standards.

Although many states including California continue to use the SLLA, several states such as New York, Illinois, Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Florida, Oregon, Colorado, and Georgia have developed their own Administrative Services Credential examinations.

### **Decision Context**

As previously noted, California has a set of administrator preparation program standards that were adopted in 2003, subsequent to the selection of the SLLA examination in 2002. California's administrator preparation program standards are in alignment not only with ISLLC standards, to which the SLLA is also aligned, but also with the CPSELs. The key difference between these three sets of standards (ISLLC, CPSELs, and California's Administrative Services Credential program standards) is that both sets of California standards go beyond the ISLLC standards to focus specifically on California issues including English learners, California law and finance, and California school organization.

The SLLA has recently been updated and has changed format, although the content and the alignment with ISLLC standards has not changed. The revised SLLA is scheduled to be implemented in fall 2009. The Commission could continue to use the SLLA in its revised format or, it could decide to develop its own administrator examination for the purposes of Education Code §44270.5. The discussion below explores each of these options more fully.

### **Option A: Continue to Use the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA)**

The SLLA is currently the Commission's adopted examination for candidates choosing the examination option for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential, and the Commission has also adopted a passing score standard for the SLLA. The Commission does not own the SLLA and does not have a contract with ETS regarding this examination. In all other states except for California the SLLA serves as an exit assessment after a candidate has completed a preparation program. In California, however, the SLLA serves in lieu of the preparation program, and candidates passing the SLLA are not required to complete a preparation program.

The current version of the SLLA is comprised entirely of constructed response items and is six hours long. The revised examination will be shortened to four hours and will contain both multiple choice questions and fewer constructed response questions. The content covered by the examination will remain the same. The revised format will contain 100 multiple choice questions comprising 70% of the total score, and 7 constructed responses questions comprising 30% of the total score. Additional information about the test blueprint for the revised SLLA examination is provided in Appendix A.

In 2006-07, a total of 1,317 California examinees took the SLLA, with 1,036 passing (79% pass rate). The SLLA is given three times per year, in January, June, and September, and the current cost of the SLLA for candidates is \$480.

If the Commission continues to use the SLLA for purposes of Education Code §44270.5, the Commission will need to adopt a new passing score standard for the revised SLLA in order to begin using the revised examination in Fall 2009, consonant with ETS' announced implementation schedule.

**Option B: Develop the Commission’s own Administrative Services Credential Examination**

The SLLA and the Teaching Foundations Examination, used as part of the Early Completion Intern program option, are the only two examinations used within California’s credentialing structure that are not developed and owned by the Commission. If the Commission were to decide to develop its own Administrative Services Credential examination, this examination could be developed specifically in alignment with California’s Administrative Services Credential program standards, including the CPSELS. The Commission could also determine the type of examination questions to be used (i.e., multiple choice, constructed response, or a combination of the two formats).

Developing the Commission’s own examination would entail a competitive bid process to secure a contractor. Although the actual timeline is not currently available, once a contractor is selected the development process could take up to a year. In the interim, while the examination was under development, the Commission would need either to continue using the SLLA or not offer the examination option for the preliminary Administrative Services Credential until such time as the new Commission-owned examination became available.

**Summary Comparison of the Two Options**

The chart below summarizes key factors for consideration in making a decision.

<b>Option</b>	<b>Aligned with Standards</b>	<b>Time to Implementation</b>	<b>Content Coverage</b>	<b>Cost/Benefit</b>
Continue to use SLLA	Aligned with ISLLC directly; with CPSELS by inference; not aligned specifically with CA program standards	Fall 2009	Does not address emphasis on English learners, or California-specific laws and finance, or CA school organization	Off the shelf examination, has performed well in the past, no cost to Commission, but exam not owned by CTC. Current cost to candidates is \$480
Develop the Commission’s own Administrative Services Credential examination	Aligned with ISLLC, CPSELS, and CA administrator preparation program standards	2009-10	To be determined by CTC design team	Development and candidate costs not known, but customized examination would be owned by CTC

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Commission consider the following options and provide staff direction to proceed with the option selected.

**Option A: Continue to Use the SLLA after Format Revision is Complete**

If the Commission chooses this option, it may direct staff to participate in a standard-setting process with ETS to reset a passing score standard for the revised SLLA. The revised recommended passing score standard would be brought to the Commission for action at the appropriate time, and the revised SLLA would be operational in 2009-10.

**Option B: Develop the Commission's own Administrative Services Credential Examination**

If the Commission chooses this option, a related decision would also need to be made regarding the timing of implementation of the newly developed examination. Since examination development may take longer than one year from the Commission's action in October 2008, would the Commission want to continue the use of the SLLA during the interim, or should there be a temporary hiatus in the availability of an examination option for the preliminary Administrative Services Credential? It is estimated that if the Commission should decide in October 2008 to proceed with development of its own Administrative Services Credential examination, an examination could be ready for a first administration and passing score standard setting in 2009-10.

If the Commission should decide to continue the use of the SLLA in the interim, staff could be directed to participate in a standard setting study with ETS and to bring a recommended passing score standard for the SLLA to the Commission for action at the appropriate time. If the Commission should decide that there would be a short hiatus in the availability of an examination option for the preliminary Administrative Services Credential until the Commission's own examination is ready, then staff would not participate in the revised SLLA standard setting study.

Regardless of how the Commission chooses to address the gap in time before a new Commission developed examination would be ready for its first administration, under Option B, the Commission would direct staff to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) for examination development in order to secure a qualified development contractor.

# Appendix A

## Draft Test Summary

### New School Leaders Licensure Assessment

**Time:** 4 hours  
**Number of Questions:** 100 multiple choice questions (MC)  
 7 constructed-response questions (CR)  
**Format:** Two separately timed sections

**Section I** (140 minutes)

- 100 multiple choice questions
- Percentage of total score: 70%

**Section II** (100 minutes)

- 7 constructed-response questions
- Percentage of total score: 30%

Vision and Goals (percentage of total score: 8%)

Question 1 (estimated time: 10 minutes)

- developing shared commitments and responsibilities to select and carry out effective strategies for the vision and goals
- communicating the vision and goals to key stakeholders

Question 2 (estimated time: 20 minutes)

- using data planning processes for achieving continuous improvement toward vision and goals

Teaching and Learning (percentage of total score: 12%)

Question 3 (estimated time: 15 minutes)

- building a professional culture

Question 4 (estimated time: 15 minutes)

- rigorous curriculum and instruction

Question 5 (estimated time: 15 minutes)

- assessment and accountability

Education System (percentage of total score: 10%)

Question 6 (estimated time: 12.5 minutes)

- advocating for education within the school community

Question 7 (estimated time: 12.5 minutes)

- advocating for education in the larger policy environment

<b>Score Report: <u>Categories for score report</u></b>	<b><u>% of Total Score</u></b>
I. Vision and Goals-MC	12%
II. Vision and Goals-CR	8%
III. Teaching and Learning-MC	18%
IV. Teaching and Learning-CR	12%
V. Managing Organizational Systems and Safety	10%
VI. Collaborating with Key Stakeholders	15%
VII. Ethics and Integrity	15%
VIII. The Education System	10%