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# 3E

## Information/Action

### *Educator Preparation Committee*

### **Further Discussion of Candidate Assessment Options for the Teaching of Reading and Developing Literacy**

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**Executive Summary:** This agenda item continues the discussion of candidate assessment options for the teaching of reading and developing literacy, based on the direction provided by the Commission at the September 2019 meeting.

**Recommended Action:** Staff asks that the Commission review the assessment options presented in this agenda item, and provide direction to staff regarding these assessment options.

**Presenters:** Phyllis Jacobson, Administrator, and Teri Clark, Director, Professional Services Division

#### **Strategic Plan Goal**

#### ***II. Program Quality and Accountability***

- a) Develop and maintain rigorous, meaningful, and relevant standards that drive program quality and effectiveness for the preparation of the education workforce and are responsive to the needs of California's diverse student population.

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## Further Discussion of Candidate Assessment Options for the Teaching of Reading and Developing Literacy

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### Introduction

During the [September 2019 meeting](#), the Commission reviewed draft teaching performance expectations pertaining to literacy, and discussed their implications for the future assessment of prospective teachers in the area of reading instruction and literacy development. During the November 2019 meeting, the Commission will review [Agenda Item 3D](#) and consider adopting the proposed literacy TPEs. This agenda item continues the discussion of candidate assessment options for the teaching of reading and developing literacy, based on direction provided by the Commission at the September 2019 meeting. Part A of the item reviews current assessment practices related to the teaching of reading and the development of literacy, including issues raised by stakeholders; Part B presents possible options for Commission discussion regarding how best to assess teacher candidate knowledge and skills in the future.

A further contextual factor informing the Commission’s discussion of assessment options is legislation introduced earlier this year, SB 614 (Rubio). The current draft of this bill would modify the current statutory language under the “RICA statute” described below, and instead, require the Commission “... by July 1, 2020 to ensure that all approved preparation programs instruct and reliably assess candidates to ensure individual competence to deliver comprehensive and research-based reading instruction and to adopt, modify, and administer a reading instruction assessment aligned with the state’s current adopted curriculum framework for specified teacher candidates. The bill would require, beginning July 1, 2020, the requirements for the issuance of the preliminary multiple subject, single subject, or education specialist teaching credential to include either the approved preparation program requirements or the specified reading instruction assessment.” The bill is expected to be amended and taken up again in the 2020 legislative session and if passed and signed by the Governor, would likely affect the allowable range of the potential assessment options presented in this agenda item.

### **Part A: Review of Current Assessment Practices Related to the Teaching of Reading and the Development of Literacy**

#### Background

The Commission’s current approaches to measuring candidate knowledge, skills, and abilities to teach reading and develop literacy for K-12 students are grounded in three main sources: (1) state statute under [Education Code §44283](#) (otherwise known as the “RICA Statute”); (2) locally developed, course-embedded assessments that respond to Commission-adopted program standards and TPEs; and (3) Teaching Performance Assessments developed and approved for use in California.

**1. Assessment Based in State Statute.** The RICA statute was enacted in 1996 and required the Commission to develop an assessment focused on the foundational skills of reading instruction and further required that all prospective Multiple Subject and Education Specialist teachers pass this test before earning a credential. Single Subject teachers are not currently required to take the RICA or to be assessed external to their program on the knowledge and skills to teach reading or develop literacy.

Statute requires that the RICA be provided in two different formats, and that candidates successfully **complete one of these two options:**

- (1) A **comprehensive examination of the knowledge and skill** pertaining to effective reading instruction of the credential applicant.
- (2) An **authentic assessment of teaching skills and classroom abilities** of the credential applicant pertaining to the provision of effective reading instruction.

The [RICA Written Examination](#) meets the requirement for a “comprehensive examination of the knowledge and skill pertaining to effective reading instruction of the credential applicant” and the [RICA Video-Performance Assessment](#) addresses the “authentic assessment of teaching skills and classroom abilities pertaining to the provision of effective reading instruction” of the credential applicant. The written assessment version includes multiple choice and constructed response questions as well as a required case study analysis. The video performance assessment version requires submission of three video clips of the candidate teaching reading with a single student, a small group, and engaged in whole class instruction, and the candidate’s reflection and analysis. Both instruments assess the current RICA content specifications and have undergone content validity and reliability review. The cost of this assessment to candidates for either version of the assessment is \$171. Candidates have largely chosen over time to take the written version rather than the video performance assessment version.

The RICA statute also requires the Commission to:

- (1) Initially and periodically analyze the validity and reliability of the content of the assessment.
- (2) Establish and implement appropriate passing scores on the assessment.
- (3) Analyze possible sources of bias on the assessment.
- (4) Collect and analyze background information provided by first-time credential applicants who are not credentialed in any state who participate in the assessment.
- (5) Report and interpret individual and aggregated assessment results.
- (6) Convene a task force to advise the commission on the design, content, and administration of the assessment. Not less than one-third of the members of the task force shall be classroom teachers with recent experience in teaching reading in the early elementary grades.
- (7) Prior to requiring successful passage of the assessment for the preliminary multiple subject teaching credential, certify that all of the teacher education programs approved by the commission pursuant to Section 44227 offer instruction in the knowledge, skills, and abilities required by the assessment.

To meet these requirements of statute, both the RICA Written and the RICA Video assessments were developed to be standardized, validated, criterion-referenced examinations that provide reliable, statewide candidate outcomes data based on a passing score standard adopted by the Commission. In addition, with each new adoption of an English Language Arts Framework by the State Board of Education, the RICA has been reviewed and updated to maintain alignment with state expectations for the K-12 curriculum. The most recent complete revision of the RICA examination was done in 2009 to align with the then-current English Language Arts/ELD standards and framework.

In 2014, the State Board of Education adopted a new English Language Arts/English Language Development (ELA/ELD) Framework that reflects an integrated approach to literacy development. The framework incorporates five broad, overarching literacy themes, which, taken together, are intended to provide a comprehensive road map for helping students develop literacy across the curriculum. The five broad and interrelated themes are:

- Meaning Making
- Language Development
- Effective Expression
- Content Knowledge
- Foundational Skills

Within the new organizational structure and content of the Framework, the foundational skills of teaching reading now represent one of five integrated domains that guide literacy development across the curriculum and K-12 grade span. The current ELA/ELD Framework also promotes the responsibility of all teachers for fostering the development of literacy as applicable to each teacher's specific credential area.

Since the implementation of the 2014 ELA/ELD Framework, some stakeholders have questioned the continued use of the RICA assessment for the purposes of determining candidate competency in the teaching of reading. These stakeholders cite concerns regarding:

- Candidates who are not successful on their first attempt and have to retake the assessment multiple times;
- The predominant focus of the RICA on the foundational reading skills;
- The cost to candidates for the assessment;
- The number of credentialing assessments candidates must take; and
- The need for a standardized assessment for all candidates.

In contrast to this viewpoint, however, other stakeholders cite the continuing need for an external verification that multiple subject and education specialist candidates have learned how to teach reading effectively, the concern that candidates be demonstrably well-trained to work with struggling readers, the effectiveness of the RICA content specifications in driving coursework content, and the unique and critical nature of the RICA assessment in focusing specifically on the foundational reading skills. The discussions that follow in Part B of this item address elements of both of these viewpoints.

**2. Assessment Based in Commission-Approved Teacher Preparation Programs.** The Commission's teacher preparation standards require approved programs to provide opportunities for candidates to learn, practice, and be assessed on all of the adopted TPEs. In 2016, the Commission's Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) were revised and updated. As a result of these revisions and updates, several current TPEs now overlap with portions of the RICA content specifications, specifically *TPE 3: Understanding and Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning*, *TPE 4: Planning Instruction and Designing Learning Experiences for All Students* and *TPE 5: Assessing Student Learning*. These TPEs largely focus on issues of learning about students, planning instruction, assessing students, and using assessment results to further inform instruction. Although the TPEs are stated in general terms applicable to all content areas, candidates are expected to demonstrate competency in these TPEs as applied to the content areas of their credential.

Program-level assessments relative to the TPEs are developed by faculty and embedded in coursework and clinical practice as part of the teacher preparation curriculum, and are not standardized across programs. These program-level assessments are reviewed through the accreditation process, as programs report where in the program the TPE is introduced, practiced, and assessed. The proposed Literacy TPEs would require all approved teacher preparation programs to provide candidates with opportunities to learn, practice, and be assessed on them, as is the case with the rest of the adopted TPEs. Program-level assessments developed by faculty do not meet the reliability and validity standards that external, standardized assessments must meet.

**3. Teaching Performance Assessments.** The Teaching Performance Assessment is currently the only validated and reliable metric taken in common by all preliminary Multiple and Single Subject candidates. The Commission's [Assessment Design Standards](#) require Multiple Subject candidates to address literacy and academic language development as one of the tasks within the assessment. The treatment of literacy in TPAs, however, is not linked specifically to foundational reading, nor does it currently reflect a comprehensive treatment of the five themes of literacy development prescribed by the ELA/ELD Framework. Rather, literacy instruction is one context in which all Multiple Subject candidates demonstrate their abilities to plan instruction, teach, assess student learning, reflect on the impact of their teaching and apply their own learning to their next cycle of instruction. The literacy component of the TPA enables Multiple Subject candidates to draw from a wide range of literacy related classroom experiences, as applicable to the particular grade level, students, and instructional context in which they are completing their clinical practice. The [Assessment Design Standards require](#) Multiple Subject candidates to also demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities in the context of mathematics instruction.

Single subject credential candidates focus on literacy in TPAs by indicating how they will support their students as they navigate challenging text and develop academic language within the specific discipline. In short, TPAs require candidates to synthesize their knowledge and ability within the broad range of all TPEs in the context of literacy and mathematics instruction

for Multiple Subject teachers and in the context of academic language and language development in their discipline for single subject teachers.

### **Summary**

The RICA is aligned with the foundational skills identified in the current ELA/ELD Framework but does not comprehensively focus on all five themes of the Framework. The TPEs and TPAs align at a high level with and support the goals of the ELA/ELD Framework for an integrated approach to developing literacy across grade levels and content areas. Commission adoption of new Literacy TPEs will strengthen this alignment in both program level coursework and assessment and in TPAs over time.

Currently there are differing views among stakeholders concerning what the assessment, or determination, of candidate competency relative to the teaching of reading should consist of and look like; new legislation is now formulating a direction for future assessment of the teaching of reading, as discussed above; and new brain and neuroscience research is providing new insight into the ways students learn to read. The ELA/ELD Framework proposes a broadly integrative set of knowledge and skills that includes the mechanics of phonics as well as strategies for meaning making, language development, effective expression and developing content knowledge. Within this complex context, the question before the Commission now is how best to proceed with regard to ensuring and verifying that candidates are fully prepared to effectively teach reading and develop literacy.

## **Part B: Possible Options for Future Assessment**

### **Section I: Introduction and Background Information**

Part B of this agenda item presents the Commission with several different approaches to the assessment of candidate competence. Each of these approaches has its own unique characteristics and implications for implementation. Several general assessment considerations also come into play. These include assessment validity, reliability, cost (to candidates, programs and the state), consistency across and within programs, public accountability, and ensuring sufficient statewide data.

During the September 2019 meeting, the Commission's discussion was framed around three essential questions, which are reexamined here in light of recent stakeholder input and potential legislation.

#### **a) Who should be assessed?**

Currently only multiple subject teachers and education specialists are required to demonstrate their ability to teach reading prior to earning a preliminary teaching credential. Commissioners and stakeholders expressed concern during the September 2019 Commission meeting about gaps in single subject teacher preparation particularly with respect to identifying and supporting struggling readers. The ELA/ELD Framework makes a strong case that all teachers have a role to play and a responsibility to attend to

literacy in the context of their credential. The draft Literacy TPE for all teacher candidates, if adopted by the Commission, would significantly increase expectations for single subject candidates to engage in literacy development in their teaching practice by:

- *understanding and demonstrating the ability to address the literacy, linguistic and cognitive demands of their content area;*
- *demonstrating foundational knowledge of identifying, assessing and supporting struggling readers, including students with dyslexia, with research based effective reading strategies; and*
- *identifying challenges posed by complex texts in their discipline(s) and helping students learn how to navigate increasingly complex text of a variety of forms and organizational patterns as appropriate to the content area...*(excerpted from the Draft Literacy TPE for All Teacher Candidates, reprinted in [Appendix A](#)).

The proposed Literacy TPEs, if adopted, will set the stage to significantly improve preparation of all teachers in this area.

Single subject credential candidates have not been required to demonstrate competence in this area the way multiple subject and education specialist candidates have, either through the RICA, the existing TPEs or the TPA. During the September meeting several stakeholders recommended that single subject teachers be included in any future assessment process that addresses candidate competency to teach reading and develop student literacy skills. Moving in this direction would have significant implications for any future assessment in the area of reading and literacy.

It may be the case that any proposed assessment approaches for single subject credential candidates should be different than those for multiple subject and education specialist candidates, since these teachers are more focused on reading and literacy within their disciplines, and therefore less likely to focus extensively on developing early reading skills.

**Summary and staff recommendation:** Staff recommends that the Commission carefully weigh the benefits of adding single subject candidates to the roster of teachers who would be required to pass some form of assessment in reading and literacy. If the problem that needs to be solved with single subject candidates is better preparation to work with their students on reading, language, and literacy development, the proposed Literacy TPEs are intended to address these needs. If including single subject teachers in future assessment of reading and literacy seems like a prudent direction, staff recommends that assessments be tailored appropriately for each group of candidates (multiple subject/education specialist, and single subject).

**b) What should be assessed?**

The current content specifications for the teaching of reading adopted by the Commission are focused on the five pillars of reading framed by the National Reading

Panel (2000), which include: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary/language development, and comprehension. These pillars align with the ELA/ELD Framework and are primarily addressed in the theme of foundational skills. Should a state level assessment, regardless of its future format and approach continue to focus primarily on the theme of the foundational reading skills, or should the focus be expanded to include all five literacy themes of the ELA/ELD Framework? An excerpt from the ELA/ELD Framework sheds light on this question:

*Attention to each of the program components, including Meaning Making, Language Development, Effective Expression, and Content Knowledge, is essential at every grade level, and the Foundational Skills are critical contributors to their development. In other words, development of the foundational skills is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for students to appreciate and use the written system – to make meaning with it, continue to acquire rich language from interactions with it, express themselves effectively in writing, and gain knowledge from text sources. It is crucial that educators understand the importance of the foundational skills and act on that knowledge by closely monitoring students’ skill development and providing excellent, differentiated instruction. The placement of discussions of foundational skills in this framework and of the listing of the standards themselves...should by no means suggest that they are a lower priority than other aspects of the curriculum. Indeed, achievement of the foundational skills is given high priority in ELA/literacy instruction in the early years and sufficient priority in later years to meet, as appropriate, the needs of older children and adolescents. (ELA/ELD Framework, Chapter 2, p.89)*

During the September 2019 meeting, several Commissioners and stakeholders expressed concern with the lack of consistency between how reading and literacy are being taught in the schools and how teachers are currently being prepared and assessed in this area. Commission adoption of the proposed Literacy TPEs will bring the TPEs, and thus teacher preparation programs, into much more direct alignment with the framework. An important factor for consideration here is that the Teaching Performance Assessments do not directly assess teacher knowledge and skill about reading instruction specifically but do include a focus on literacy that aligns at a high level with the goals of the framework for comprehensive literacy instruction.

If the Commission adopts the proposed Literacy TPEs, programs will be responsible for addressing the full scope of the TPEs in their coursework, clinical practice, and local course-embedded assessments. Should any future statewide assessment address all of the content in in the proposed Literacy TPEs? Or should a statewide assessment of reading instruction and literacy development complement what programs are doing with a deeper focus on the foundational skills that support reading and developing literacy? This may actually not be an either/or question, but rather a question that should be explored through the lens of research, best practice and the ELA/ELD Framework.

The focus on foundational reading skills for RICA was driven in part by the [1998 National Research Council Report on Reading](#), commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to examine the prevention of reading difficulties, and the [2000 Report of the National Reading Panel](#), a group commissioned by Congress to review and report on research-proven best practices for the teaching of reading. Despite a two-decade long campaign to improve K-12 student reading and literacy, state and national assessment data show that reading is still a challenge for many students.

***Brain and Neuroscience Research Evidence:*** Current neuroscience research relating to learning to read could be helpful for teachers and teacher educators in developing effective teaching practices. For example, a 2015 study co-authored by Bruce McCandliss, Professor in the Graduate School of Education and the Stanford Neuroscience Institute<sup>1</sup> investigated how the brain responds to different types of reading instruction. A [summary](#) of the findings was included in the Stanford News, May 2015. Their findings indicate that instruction in letter-sound relationships showed neural activity in the left side of the brain, which includes the visual and language regions, while instruction based on a whole-words approach showed activity in the right hemisphere processing center of the brain. The authors claim that this study provides some of the first evidence that different teaching strategies for reading have direct neural impact.

While this research provides some evidence regarding the impact of different approaches to the teaching of reading, its focus is limited to what is effective in the development of foundational reading skills, and does not take into account other aspects of literacy development. Other research, including the findings of the National Reading Panel, the [National Early Literacy Panel](#), and the [Reading First Study](#) indicate that phonics shows an advantage if it is taught systematically (well-organized and implemented) within the context of a program that also emphasizes a lot of other code and meaning oriented facets, and that its effects are more prominent for first graders than for older remedial readers, and much more robust and stable on measures of reading nonsense words than on measures of fluency or comprehension.

What should teachers know about this kind of research and how should it inform teacher preparation and teaching practice? It seems reasonable to expect that teachers learn about all credible methods of teaching reading, and learn it well enough to effectively teach students to read and develop literacy. The question of what to assess on a state required assessment of reading instruction, whether statewide or local, will require a deeper look into the research literature in order to inform the question of

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<sup>1</sup> Yoncheva, Y.N., Wise, J., & McCandliss, B. (2015). [Hemispheric specialization for visual words is shaped by attention to sublexical units during initial learning](#). *Brain and Language*, v. 145-146, pp 23-33.

what should be assessed. This is not a question that is easily or quickly answered at this point in time.

**Summary and staff recommendation:** Staff suggests that, consistent with the five-theme literacy approach promoted by the current ELA/ELD Framework, all five literacy themes should be considered and appropriately assessed at the program level and in any statewide assessments developed in the future. However, it is likely that different themes should have different degrees of emphasis within the candidate assessment process, depending on the level/type of the credential sought as well as where and how the theme is assessed.

Staff also suggests that this deep inquiry into what should be assessed should be informed by the work of a broadly representative expert design team. The charge to this team would be to (a) review pertinent brain and other neuroscience, synthesize and report the findings from the research; (b) develop content specifications aligned with the draft Literacy TPEs if adopted by the Commission and informed by current research and best practice to guide future assessments of reading and literacy; (c) identify the appropriate degree of emphasis for each of the five Framework themes for each credential type; and (d) recommend design features of any future statewide or common-use assessment as may be revised, developed, selected, and/or implemented by the Commission.

**c) How should candidates be assessed?**

The Commission discussed a number of options for assessing each candidate's knowledge and skills related to teaching reading and literacy at the September 2019 meeting, some of which could be implemented under current statute, while others would require statutory change. The Commission at that time expressed interest in further exploring options including updating the RICA written and performance assessments; allowing coursework and/or other local alternatives to waive or augment the assessment; developing or adopting a performance assessment to replace the RICA; relying on program-embedded assessments such as case studies; and enhancing the TPA to accommodate this type of assessment.

Presented below for the Commission's consideration are several approaches to assessment with options that could serve to document candidate competency in the teaching of reading and development of literacy. All options are intended to provide accountability for assuring that all candidates can effectively teach reading and develop literacy consistent with the subject of their credential. All options would require a change in statute to implement. The options discussed below include:

- a) A statewide external to the preparation program assessment option;
- b) A coursework and program-embedded assessment option; and
- c) An enhanced TPA-embedded option.

Each of the options include preliminary analysis of the following:

- Need for change in statute
- Availability of statewide outcomes data
- Assurance of candidate competence
- Validity and reliability
- Impact on candidates
- Impact on programs
- Impact on the Commission
- Timeframe for development and implementation

## **Section II: A Closer Look at the Three Proposed Potential Assessment Options for the Future**

### ***Option A: Replace the RICA with a new statewide external-to-program assessment for reading and literacy***

This approach could maintain the availability of a written examination designed to assess the full scope of the ELA/ELD Framework and provide variations for the multiple subject, single subject and special education credentials should the Commission decide single subject credential candidates should also be assessed.

***Impact analysis:*** This assessment option would provide statewide valid, reliable, and comparable outcomes data. This option would not reduce candidate testing requirements or costs, but it would provide a new and refreshed approach to assessing teaching reading and developing literacy. The impact for preparation programs would be limited to any costs incurred to revise preparatory program coursework to align with the new examination. There would be a cost to the Commission that would be reflected in a contract for development of the new assessment. This option would not require a change in statute if both a written and performance assessment were required.

### ***Option A-1: Allow for candidates who are not successful on one or more components of the examination to complete approved coursework in lieu of requiring candidates to retake the component(s).***

This variation of Option A would provide an avenue for programs and candidates to use the results of the statewide assessment as diagnostic information for candidates who are not successful on their initial attempt, and to provide targeted remediation through coursework. If a candidate were to not pass a portion of the new assessment, the program would provide remediation coursework and then assess the candidate on the specific content.

***Impact analysis:*** This approach would broaden candidate and program options, could reduce the testing burden and costs for candidates not successful on their initial attempt at the statewide assessment, and could still provide a credible assurance that candidates were fully prepared to teach reading and developing literacy. Use of the standardized assessment diagnostically would maintain the availability of statewide data for reporting purposes. There would be workload and possible cost implications for the Commission with this option related

to reviewing and approving coursework equivalents to the test option. This option would require a change in statute.

To develop either Option A or Option A-1, would require the following of actions:

- 1) Work with a broadly representative expert design team to develop, validate, and adopt new Content Specifications for the future assessment that are framed by the proposed Literacy TPEs and consistent with both current research and the ELA/ELD Framework.
- 2) Assure that the structure of the assessment provides for the possibility that candidates who fail one test component would only have to retake that component rather than retake the entire assessment.
- 3) Develop, validate, pilot and field test the assessment, and conduct a standard setting study in order for the Commission to set a passing score standard.

***Option B: Develop and implement a program coursework option with embedded candidate assessment(s) such as a fieldwork embedded case study approach.***

This option would allow candidate completion of Commission-reviewed and approved coursework with embedded program assessments that address proposed Literacy TPEs and revised content expectations. Case study methods are often used as course embedded assessments and provide opportunities for candidates to study an area of inquiry deeply in context. Under this option, programs could be required to submit their coursework and embedded assessment for review and approval and ongoing monitoring by reading experts as part of the accreditation process. The Commission could develop guidelines for courses and embedded assessments, with a set of common rubrics that would strengthen coursework and assessment practices at the program level and ensure that all candidates who complete accredited preparation programs have met state expectations related to teaching reading and developing literacy. This model could be more readily adjusted for single subject teachers, should the Commission decide to move in this direction, because it would allow them to be assessed in the context of their credential and clinical placement.

***Impact analysis:*** This option would reduce the overall number and cost of formal licensure assessments candidates would be required to take and provide a credible basis for candidates to demonstrate they meet the reading competency requirement.

This option would provide statewide data, although these data would be locally-obtained. Development of a set of common rubrics and guidelines for the embedded assessment would lead to the production of more reliable data collected through the accreditation data system.

Programs are already offering reading methods classes with some form of embedded assessment, so the impact on programs could be minimal, depending on the complexity, depth and breadth of their current course embedded assessments. Programs would need to update their coursework and embedded assessments to align with the proposed Literacy TPEs and submit them for Commission review and approval. Programs would also be responsible for

administering and scoring the embedded assessments, supporting candidates as they complete coursework and assessments, and for reporting rubric-level outcomes to the Commission.

There would also be an increased cost and workload for Commission staff to review, verify and monitor the scope and quality of the program coursework relative to the teaching of reading, develop guidelines and common rubrics; develop training for faculty in the use of common rubrics; and review, analyze, and report on program outcomes based on the embedded assessments. An additional factor for this option is that the Commission must rely on content reviewers of program coursework who are volunteers, and prior experience with review and approval of other programs using volunteer reviewers have shown that it can take considerable time and effort to get all programs' coursework reviewed and approved in a timely manner. To reduce the identified challenges of reviewing program coursework, the bill that allows this type of approach could authorize the Commission to complete a different type of review using reading experts who are compensated for the review process that would be implemented.

Allowing candidates to meet the reading and literacy requirement through a coursework and embedded assessment option could be implemented as early as January 2021 based on Legislative action. Development of common rubrics and guidelines would take 1-2 years to fully develop and field test.

This option would require the Commission to appoint an expert design team to:

- (1) Develop, validate, and adopt new content specifications consistent with current research and the ELA/ELD Framework;
- (2) Develop guidelines and directions for embedded assessments to be completed by all candidates as appropriate to their intended credential;
- (3) Develop appropriate scoring rubrics for program-embedded assessments; and
- (4) Provide technical assistance to programs for approval of coursework submitted for review and for implementing an embedded common assessment, and for scoring the common rubrics for the embedded common assessment.

**Option C: *Modify the Teaching Performance Assessments (TPAs) to include the teaching of reading and literacy.***

There are currently three Commission-approved TPAs (the CalTPA, the edTPA, and the Fresno Assessment of Student Teachers, or FAST) approved for use in California. Each model has a unique design and has been recently updated, revalidated, and reapproved by the Commission to meet the Commission's updated Assessment Design Standards. For the purposes of describing and analyzing this option, staff will focus on the CalTPA system, the Commission's model. All other models would need to complete parallel work.

**Impact analysis:** The current CalTPA includes two instructional cycles, the first focused on *Learning About Students and Planning Instruction* and the second focused on *Assessment Driven Instruction*. There is some overlap in the scope of these cycles with the ELA/ELD Framework themes of *Meaning Making* and *Language Development*, but to address these

themes in a manner that assesses teacher competency in the area of reading and literacy would likely require adding specific tasks within the cycles as well as additional rubrics. Currently Cycle 1 has eight rubrics, and Cycle 2 has seven. All TPAs are focused on the theme of *Academic Content*, but again, taking this focus to the deeper level of teaching reading and developing literacy would likely require the addition of specific tasks and rubrics. The theme of *Foundational Skills* reflects a very different type of knowledge and skill than is currently assessed on the TPA. Bringing the full scope of the draft Literacy TPEs into the TPA would require the addition of a third instructional cycle.

For the CalTPA model, addressing foundational skills in a third cycle would have implications for candidate placement, since candidates would need to be in a classroom assignment where teaching the foundational skills of reading would be part of the curriculum at the time the TPA was being completed. Adding a third cycle, and potentially adding new rubrics to the existing cycles, would also have cost implications for candidates, as the cost for scoring CalTPA submissions would likely increase to pay for the additional assessor workload. The current fee for CalTPA is \$300. Adding a third cycle and increasing the number of rubrics assessed in the current cycles would increase the cost of the assessment by at least \$150. For multiple subject and education specialist candidates, this increase in cost would not be impactful, as it would replace the current fees they are paying to take the RICA. This would increase costs for single subject candidates.

Adapting the CalTPA, by expanding the scope of Cycles 1 and 2 and adding a third cycle would have an impact on preparation programs as well. All teacher education programs have undergone redesign to accommodate updated standards, TPEs and TPAs. Accommodating all of the current standards and TPA expectations in a one year program is increasingly challenging. As reported in the Commission's Title 2 report, approximately two-thirds of candidates are already taking longer than one year to complete a one year program. Adding a third cycle would impact the ability and timing of programs to remediate and provide additional opportunities for candidates who are not successful on the assessment to retake the assessment before the end of the school year.

Development of a new performance assessment would have cost implications for the state as well as other TPA model sponsors. The most recent update to the CalTPA cost the state \$3 million and required three years of development and field testing. Adapting and redesigning the TPAs to address reading and literacy would require a change in statute. This option would provide statewide validated candidate outcomes data.

To rely on the CalTPA as a vehicle for assessing teacher ability to teach reading and develop literacy with all students would require at least the following steps and analyses:

- 1) As with the other options under consideration, the first step would be to work with a broadly representative expert design team to develop, validate, and adopt new Content Specifications that are framed by the proposed Literacy TPEs and consistent with both current research and the ELA/ELD Framework.

- 2) Evaluate the current CalTPA model to determine the extent to which the themes of the ELA/ELD Framework are assessed.
- 3) If the CalTPA would need to be fundamentally redesigned to incorporate this new focus on reading and literacy, then a design team would need to be convened and a new design developed, validated through piloting and field testing, and a passing standard set following a standard setting study.
- 4) New assessors would need to be recruited, or current assessors would need to be retrained and calibrated to score the new reading/literacy enhanced performance assessment cycles using revised or new analytic rubrics.
- 5) Preparation programs implementing the CalTPA would need to redesign their programs to accommodate the revised CalTPA.
- 6) TPA model sponsors would need to engage in these steps to enhance their current approved models to allow for the assessment of the new Literacy TPEs.

### Summary

The options presented and analyzed above reflect different approaches to assessing reading and literacy instruction. The Commission may want to consider aspects of more than one of the identified approaches.

The table below provides a summary overview and analysis of the three assessment options discussed above.

**Possible Options for Future Assessment and Implications**

	<b>External, Statewide Assessment</b>	<b>Program Embedded Coursework and Assessment</b>	<b>Enhanced Teaching Performance Assessment</b>
<b>Requires a Statute Change?</b>	Maybe	Yes	Yes
<b>Provides Statewide Outcomes Data</b>	Yes	Maybe	Yes
<b>Requires Validity and Reliability Work?</b>	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Reduces Candidate Testing?</b>	No	Maybe	Maybe
<b>Cost to Candidates?</b>	Yes	No	Likely
<b>Cost to Programs?</b>	No	Yes	Likely
<b>Cost to Develop Content Expectations?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Cost to the Commission?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Impact on TPA Model Owners?</b>	No	No	Yes
<b>Time Frame to Full Implementation?</b>	2 years*	2-3 years*	3-4 years*

\**post-statute change*

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Commission:

1. Direct staff to continue to review the research literature and engage with credible researchers and reading experts regarding best practice in the teaching of reading;
2. Identify specific topics that would be helpful for future study sessions to aid the Commission's deliberations.

**Next Steps**

Staff will move this work forward in accordance with any potential Commission direction, and will continue to report on this work at future Commission meetings.

## Appendix A

### Draft Literacy TPE for All Teachers

#### **Literacy Practices in Relation to Subject-Specific Pedagogy**

All multiple and single subject and education specialist beginning teachers understand that all teachers have a critical role in literacy development for all TK-12 students. They understand and demonstrate the ability to address the literacy, linguistic, and cognitive demands of different content areas (multiple subject/education specialist) or the discipline(s) of their credential (single subject/education specialist). They demonstrate foundational knowledge of identifying, assessing, and supporting struggling readers, including students with dyslexia, with research based effective reading strategies. They provide integrated instruction incorporating the five themes of literacy identified in the *ELA/ELD Framework*. They plan and implement lessons that support students' *meaning making* and subject-specific *language development* as students read, write, and converse in each content area. They support students' ability to *effectively express* themselves in each content area as well as their ability to analyze the effectiveness of text, presentations, visual representations, and other forms of communication specific to each content area. They plan and implement literacy-based lessons and discipline-specific literacy practices that contribute to building students' *content knowledge* ([Framework, Chapters 2, 6 and 7](#)). They plan and implement lessons that address the *foundational skills* of literacy (e.g., decoding and word recognition) in the context of the content area(s) of instruction, as appropriate based on students' needs and students' literacy levels. Beginning teachers understand and plan lessons that build on students' increasing level of literacy skills across the grade levels and content area(s) to promote both continuity of literacy skills development and subject-specific learning in accordance with the applicable student content standards and framework. Beginning teachers observe and practice different approaches to literacy teaching and learning, including but not limited to inquiry-based learning, collaborating learning, and direct instruction.

All beginning teachers identify challenges posed by complex texts in their discipline(s) and help students learn how to navigate increasingly complex text of a variety of forms and organizational patterns as appropriate to the content area, including but not limited to traditional texts, music, maps, graphica<sup>2</sup>, graphics, charts, timelines, images, artworks, and multimodal text such as podcasts and videos, to help students read strategically, analytically, critically, and with a critical lens across the curriculum, and to monitor their understanding. They use teaching strategies across the instructional cycle that promote meaning making as students engage with text as readers and writers, and they integrate the use of language arts skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking across the curriculum.

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<sup>2</sup> Graphica refers to graphic novels, books, branding, logos, emojis, and other materials that use images to convey meaning