4B

Information/Action

Certification Committee

Proposed Additional Requirements for the Issuance of an Eminence Credential

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents proposed additions to the current requirements for the issuance of both the preliminary and clear Eminence Credentials for the Commission's consideration and potential adoption.

Recommended Action: That the Commission consider and potentially adopt one or more additional requirements for the Eminence Credential as presented in this item, and/or provide further staff direction.

Presenter: Katherine Wright, Analyst, Certification Division

Strategic Plan Goal

I. Educator Quality

c) Ensure that credential processing and assignment monitoring activities accurately, effectively, and efficiently identify educators who have met high and rigorous certification standards and who are appropriately assigned.

Proposed Additional Requirements for the Issuance of an Eminence Credential

Introduction
This agenda item presents proposed additions to the current requirements for the issuance of both the preliminary and clear Eminence Credentials for the Commission's consideration and potential adoption.

Background
Education Code section 44262 (Appendix A) enacted in 1976, authorizes the Commission to issue an Eminence Credential to any person who has achieved eminence in a field or endeavor commonly taught, or in a service practiced in the public schools of California. Eminence Credentials are issued in the specific content or service area requested. At the time of its inception, the Eminence Credential was referred to as "the concept that would enable Einstein to teach in a California public school."[1]

Title 5 section 80043(a) (Appendix B) defines an eminent individual as one who is recognized as such beyond the boundaries of his or her community, has demonstrably advanced his or her field, and has been acknowledged by his or her peers as beyond the norm for others in the specific endeavor.

At the June 2019 Commission meeting, staff presented a detailed overview of the Eminence Credential's history and current requirements. Some Commission members and stakeholder groups raised concerns regarding the lack of professional teacher preparation requirements for Eminence Credential holders during the item. As a result, Commission staff has developed possible additional requirements that could help to ensure that Eminence Credential candidates are adequately prepared to deliver curriculum that is accessible to all students using the current best practices expected of members of the teaching profession.

Current Eminence Credential Requirements
Each Eminence Credential approved by the Commission is issued initially for a two-year preliminary period and may be renewed for a subsequent three-year preliminary period. Currently, the first renewal for the remainder of the preliminary five-year term requires only a formal recommendation from the governing board of the employing agency. These two- and subsequent three-year preliminary credentials are restricted to the recommending employer. Issuance of the clear Eminence Credential currently requires only a formal recommendation from the governing board of the employing agency and completion of five years of service on the preliminary Eminence Credential. Once issued, the clear Eminence Credential is no longer restricted to the recommending employer and is valid throughout the entire state, a scenario

[1] *A History of Policies and Forces Shaping California Teacher Credentialing*, 2011, page 151

which has raised concerns from both Commission members and stakeholders. At its June 2019 meeting, the Commission agreed that additional oversight and amendments should be made to ensure that Eminence Credential holders are not only eminent in their field, but are also meeting the standards held for all teachers to effectively teach children in California public schools.

Comparison to Traditional Teacher Preparation Requirements

While the criteria for an individual to earn an Eminence Credential are focused on the scope of the applicant's esteemed expertise in his/her field, the requirements do not align with the criteria to earn the preliminary and clear California teaching credentials through traditional routes. Traditional preliminary and clear credential requirements that are currently waived for those applying for the Eminence Credential include:

- Basic Skills Requirement
- Minimum of Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited university
- Subject Matter Competency
- Commission-approved preparation program completion
- Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA)
- English learner preparation and authorization
- Induction program completion

Possible Requirements to Add to the Eminence Credential

Staff has analyzed the history of the Eminence credential since its inception in 1976, as well as the history of the additional requirements that have been added to the preliminary Teacher Preparation programs since 1970. Throughout this analysis, the guiding question was, "How can the Commission create greater parity between the intent of creation of the Eminence Credential with the current preliminary credentialing requirements, thus ensuring that all credential holders have the necessary preparation to make the curriculum accessible to all students?"

To strengthen Eminence Credential holders' pedagogical knowledge, skills and abilities, staff proposes the consideration and possible adoption of one or more of the following requirements:

1) Bachelor's or Higher Degree
2) Coursework in the following areas:
    a) Developing English Language Skills, including Reading (3 semester units or equivalent)
    b) Content-Area Pedagogy (3 semester units or equivalent)
    c) Educating Students with Special Needs (3 semester units or equivalent)
    d) Educating English Learners (3 semester units or equivalent)
3) Passage of a Commission-approved Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA)
4) Verification of Induction program enrollment
5) Completion of Induction program

In addition to the above suggested list, the Commission might also consider if the Teaching Performance Assessment requirement might potentially provide an alternative means for Eminence Credential candidates to demonstrate they have met the content area pedagogy requirement. If the TPA is adopted as a requirement for Eminence Credential candidates, two critical factors would need to be addressed:

1. The TPA is currently available to educators actively enrolled in a Commission-approved teacher preparation program, as the assessment is designed to be embedded within coursework and completed primarily during the student teaching or similar phase of a preparation program. It is not designed to be a stand-alone assessment outside the context of preparation and support for the assessment, and remediation support if the candidate is not successful on the TPA is provided in the program context.

2. The preliminary Eminence Credential holder is in a different phase of the credentialing process, and would need to affiliate with a Commission-approved teacher preparation program to complete needed coursework and gain access to the assessment preparation support given to program candidates.

The TPA represents a snapshot of the educator's skill set at the time of initial credentialing. Thus, it might also be reasonable to assume that as another potential option instead of requiring the TPA, the observations, feedback and self-assessment that the educator would complete during the Induction program could instead provide adequate documentation of the educator's teaching skills prior to being recommended for the clear Eminence Credential.

The table below suggests a general timeline of when each potential requirement option might be completed during the certification process:

Potential Requirement Option	Suggested Timeline of Requirement Completion
• Bachelor's or Higher Degree • Basic Skills Requirement	Pre-service/ Pre-recommendation
• Developing English Language Skills, including Reading Course (3 semester units or equivalent) • Coursework in Content-Area Pedagogy (3 semester units or equivalent) • Coursework in Educating Students with Special Needs (3 semester units or equivalent) • Coursework in Educating English Learners (3 semester units or equivalent) • Enrollment in Induction • Passage of a Commission-approved Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA)	Two-Year Preliminary Credential
• Completion of Induction • Completion of English Learner Authorization	Three-Year Preliminary Credential
• No additional requirements	Clear Eminence Credential

The above requirements and possible completion deadlines would help to ensure that candidates granted the preliminary Eminence Credential enter the classroom with a broad set of professional teaching skills that are reasonably comparable to those of traditionally prepared California educators holding a preliminary credential. Similarly, the requirement options suggested during the two and three-year preliminary terms create parity with the requirements that must be met by other preliminary credential holders before qualifying for a clear credential.

Rationale for These Requirements

As the current requirements to apply for an Eminence Credential already require the candidate to demonstrate eminence and exceptional communication skills in their specific content area, the proposed additional requirements were identified as potential ways to strengthen the educator's ability to address individual students' instructional and other learning needs in the following ways:

- The Bachelor's Degree requirement would place the Eminence Credential holder at the minimum academic level required of California K-12 classroom teachers.

- Requiring that the Eminence Credential holder complete a course in developing English language skills for beginning readers would help to ensure that the candidate will have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to assist all students who may need additional support in learning and applying these critical skills. Accessing TK-12 academic content is significantly dependent upon students having the ability to decode and comprehend written text.

- Requiring a content area pedagogy course would ensure that the Eminence Credential candidate has the ability to effectively provide content-based instruction within the content area to meet the needs of all students.

- The Educating Students with Special Needs course would ensure that the Eminence Credential holder has training regarding the legal and instructional requirements with respect to students with Individual Educational Plans, special accommodation plans (504), and other special needs that require accommodations in the classroom.

- Verification of enrollment in a Commission-approved Induction program would assure the Commission that the Eminence Credential holder is completing requirements on a timeline comparable to all California-prepared preliminary credential holders.

- The English Learner Authorization coursework would ensure that the Eminence Credential holder has acquired the knowledge, skills, and abilities to adapt content area instruction for English learners (EL), which provides EL students with equal access to the curriculum. Current law requires that all educators serving one or more English learners hold the appropriate authorization to teach English learners.

- Completion of an Induction program, recommended for the issuance of the clear Eminence Credential, would provide a robust system of job-embedded mentoring support

and an individualized learning plan based in the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP). The support and guidance provided through an Induction program would be necessary for Eminence candidates to progress toward mastery in the professional teaching standards expected of clear Eminence Credential holders.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission determine which, if any, of the proposed requirements should be added to the Eminence Credential, and if requirements are added, when credential candidates should be required to complete the additional requirements.

Next Steps

If any additional requirements for the Eminence Credential are adopted by the Commission, upon Commission direction, staff would move forward to begin the process of sponsoring legislation to obtain the authority for the Commission to enact such requirements.

Appendix A

Education Code Section 44262

ARTICLE 4. Credential Types [44250 - 44277] (Article 4 enacted by Stats. 1976, Ch. 1010.)

44262. Upon the recommendation of the governing board of a school district, the commission may issue an eminence credential to any person who has achieved eminence in a field of endeavor taught or service practiced in the public schools of California. This credential shall authorize teaching or the performance of services in the public schools in the subject or subject area or service and at the level or levels approved by the commission as designated on the credential.

Each credential so issued shall be issued initially for a two-year period and may be renewed for a three-year period by the commission upon the request of the governing board of the school district. Upon completion of the three-year renewal period, the holder of an eminence credential shall be eligible upon application for a professional clear teaching credential.

(Amended by Stats. 1996, Ch. 1067, Sec. 7. Effective January 1, 1997.)

Appendix B

Title 5 Regulations

Section 80043. Statement of Employment and Verification of Qualifications
(a) When considering an application for an Eminence Credential, the Commission shall be guided by the following definition of an eminent individual: The eminent individual is recognized as such beyond the boundaries of his or her community, has demonstrably advanced his or her field and has been acknowledged by his or her peers beyond the norm for others in the specific endeavor. The employing school district shall demonstrate how the eminent individual will enrich the educational quality of the school district and not how he or she will fill an employment need.

(b) Pursuant to Section 44262 of the Education Code, issuance of an Eminence Credential shall be based upon a recommendation from the governing board of the school district, a statement of employment, submission of the fee(s) established in Section 80487 and a verification of the applicant's eminence qualifications.

(1) The Statement of Employment in the district shall include the proposed assignment of the credential applicant, and a certification of the intention of the district to employ the applicant if granted an Eminence Credential.

(2) The verification of eminence qualifications of an applicant for an Eminence Credential shall include: (A) Recommendations, which may be from, but need not be limited to, the following: professional associations; former employers; professional colleagues; any other individuals or groups whose evaluations would support eminence; and (B) Documentation of achievement, which may include, but need not be limited to, the following: advanced degrees earned; distinguished employment; evidence of related study or experience; publications; professional achievement; and recognition attained for contributions to his or her field of endeavor.

(3) The Commission shall provide notice to the public of those individuals for whom it is considering issuing Eminence Credentials. Any association, group, or individual may provide the Commission with a written statement regarding the qualifications of an individual under consideration for an Eminence Credential.

(c) The Commission may assign certification staff the authority to review eminence applications to determine if an individual meets the definition of eminence pursuant to Section 44262 of the Education Code and (a) above.

(1)If staff concludes an applicant meets the definition, staff shall forward the application to the Commission for review and action at the next available meeting.

(2) If staff concludes an applicant does not meet the definition, staff shall deny the application.

(A) If the staff denies an application for eminence, the employing school district requesting the Eminence Credential may request that staff reconsider its determination upon submission of new evidentiary material relevant to the reason(s) for denial that was not available at the time the application was initially submitted to the Commission.

(B) If staff determines that, based on the new supporting information, the applicant now meets the definition of eminence, staff shall forward the application to the Commission for review and action at the next available Commission meeting.

(C) If upon review of the new supporting information, staff determines that there is no new evidence that provides additional support of the applicant's eminence, the district's eminence application will be placed on the Commission's consent calendar with a staff recommendation for denial.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 44225 and 44253.9, Education Code. Reference: Section 44262, Education Code.

Section 80044. Scope of Eminence
A person may obtain an Eminence Credential if the subject or service in which the work is determined to exhibit eminence is one which a school board wishes to have taught or practiced in its district.
Note: Authority cited: Section 44225, Education Code.

Section 80045. Renewal of Eminence Credential.
(a) The Commission staff shall renew an Eminence Credential for three years upon receipt of an application for renewal with a written statement of support from the governing board of the school district adopted in a public meeting and submission of the fee(s) established in Section 80487.

(b) The Commission staff shall issue a Professional Clear Eminence Teaching Credential at the end of five years of possession of the Eminence Credential with a written statement of support from the governing board of the school district adopted in a public meeting, submission of an application and the fee established in Section 80487.

Note: Authority cited: Section 44225, Education Code. Reference: Section 44262, Education Code.