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# 2A

## Action

### *Executive Committee*

#### **Educator Preparation Student Liaison**

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**Executive Summary:** This agenda item presents possible appointees for an Educator Preparation Student Liaison to the Commission.

**Recommended Action:** That the Executive Committee select and appoint an Educator Preparation Student Liaison to the Commission.

**Presenter:** Rhonda Brown, Manager, Executive Office

#### **Strategic Plan Goal**

#### ***III. Communication and Engagement***

- a) Maintain and strengthen working relationships with the Commission's diverse stakeholder community.

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## Educator Preparation Student Liaison

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### Introduction

This agenda item provides information about the application and selection process for an Educator Preparation Student Liaison to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission). Applicants for the 2020-21 term will be presented for possible appointment by the Executive Committee.

### Background

Section 201 of the Commission’s Policy Manual allows for the appointment of a student enrolled in an educator preparation program to serve as a liaison to the Commission for one year beginning on October 1 of the year of appointment. The Educator Preparation Student Liaison will represent the views and experiences of students to the Commission.

### Application Process

The application and instructions regarding the application process were circulated to the public, stakeholders, and deans and directors of Commission-approved educator preparation programs at institutions of higher education and local education agencies through email. An announcement that applications were being accepted for the liaison position was also posted on the Commission’s website. Interested parties were instructed to submit the application, verification of current enrollment in an educator preparation program, and an essay of interest to the attention of the Executive Office. The final filing date to submit applications was July 10, 2020.

The Commission received 11 applications from individuals interested in the Educator Preparation Student Liaison appointment. Staff worked with Commissioners Kathryn Williams Browne, Jane Marks, and David Simmons to screen applications and interview finalists for consideration by the Executive Committee. Four finalists, listed below, were selected for an interview via Zoom. The essay of interest for each finalist is included in the [Appendix](#). Commissioners Browne, Marks and Simmons will recommend one candidate to the Executive Committee for appointment as Educator Preparation Student Liaison.

Applicant Name	Educator Preparation Program	Credential Goal
Allison Cheatwood	CSU Bakersfield	Education Specialist
Kori Jones	University of the Pacific	Multiple Subject and Education Specialist
Dania Molina	Biola University	Multiple Subject
Stefanie Rodriguez	Loyola Marymount University	Multiple Subject

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Executive Committee select and appoint an Educator Preparation Student Liaison to the Commission.

## **Appendix**

### **Essay of Interest from Finalists**

Allison Cheatwood

Kori Jones

Dania Molina

Stefanie Rodriguez

My mission statement for becoming an Educator Student Liaison - I present myself to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing as a "Non-Traditional" student, and as such I proudly proclaim and offer the wisdom of such a student. I re-entered college at the age of 33 and experienced all of the trials and triumphs that come with the pursuit of higher education. I graduated from California State University of Bakersfield (CSUB) in the spring of 2019 with my bachelor's degree in Psychology, gilded with the status of Magna Cum Laude. During my undergraduate experience I was inducted into the following honor societies: Alpha Chi, Psi Chi, and the National Society of Leadership & Success. Beyond the honor societies and graduate accolades, I decided to pursue a career in Special Education and am a full-time student within the Special Education Credential Program at CSUB. My time as a graduate student within the credential program has been an eye-opening experience. I have been an audience to some of the best minds within specialized education and have been inspired to represent more than my seventh grade students. The minute I became a specialized educator (in training) my entire world changed, and with those changes came a passion to represent those preparing to enter the amazing realm of education. As I prepare to finish my time as a credential student, the desire I have to represent my University and the attending credential students runs deep. I believe, at this point in my credential program, that I have a lot to offer when it comes to being a designated Educator Preparation Student Liaison.

Beyond my current 4.0 GPA and earned merit awards, I am a careful minded individual who is determined to find the path of integrity where education is concerned. While I fully endorse undergraduates to "test the waters" of education and can attest to the uncertainty of declaring a major when one is first considering their college career, I believe graduate school to be much more focused. I have found not only my focus, but my passion for education within the credential program and would become even more invested as a student should I receive this liaison appointment. I have the upmost respect for the credentialing process within the state of California and believe I can represent my university and fellow constituents concerning all the matters we are faced with in today's current educational environment.

When I first started teaching last fall I did not know how honored and humbled I would feel when it comes to advocating for my special education students. If these feelings developed concerning children, I know they will certainly be channeled into my efforts to adequately represent the credential students at CSUB. Should I be appointed as a student liaison I am confident that my time of service will be a gratifying experience, one that I can proudly declare on my curriculum vitae.

**In the heart of education, I believe it is more substantial to represent a purpose, rather than just a title.**

Thank you for your consideration to my application,

-Allison Cheatwood

Jones, Kori  
Commission on Teacher Credentialing  
Educator Preparation Student Liaison Application  
Due Date: Postmarked July 10<sup>th</sup>

### Why I Wish to Serve

As a first-generation college student, the path to becoming a teacher was not always clear. My passion for teaching sprung up during the second semester of my third year in undergrad. With this quick switch from biochemistry to education, I found myself in a whole new world. A world full of writing, group work, field-work, courses, public speaking, and state testing. I found that this major and preparation program fit mine and many of my colleagues' passion to teach. However, as I mature as a student and professional I believe our credentialing and preparation programs need to better align with the progressive movements within our society and be geared to educate the diverse populations within our communities. When I was emailed about this opportunity of being an Educator Preparation Student Liaison I wanted to serve because of my enjoyment of bridging perspectives, supporting education, and being involved.

As a Black woman, I have experienced a complex wave of disarray, helplessness, and a sense of purpose during this COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter era. These events display how much we have failed our country in education, equity, access, and agency. Due to these events, I envision how I can best utilize my skills to effectively educate our next generation. This vision compels me to seek involvement and delve for ways that aspiring educators can be better supported in our educator preparation programs at our institutions. In my journey, I have witnessed how our programs may not offer a curriculum that creates culturally humble, qualified, and prepared teachers to work with a diverse population of students (general education and special needs students), especially during times of ambiguity, difference, or controversy. Moreover, I have witnessed how the state testing overall (cost, failing, etc.) derails prospective teachers in pursuing or continuing their path in becoming a teacher. This is why I wish to serve with this Commission. As a student who has wrestled and beat the Multiple Subject CSETs and RICA I understand my peers' frustration or apathy concerning these tests and

forthcoming with insight on how we can make them more equitable and inclusive. In my time as a student, student worker, and young professional I learned that perspective makes all the difference in a conversation. I would like to include my voice, experience, and intersecting identities within each meeting in the hopes that we will bridge ideas, communities, and solutions. I have served on multiple committees, created community projects, lobbied at the capitol but never had the opportunity to serve in this way, on a Commission. I believe that being a part of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing would push me to be an advocate for myself and others state wide. In my last year as a student I want to challenge myself to make connections and use my voice in a big way and I believe that being an Educator Preparation Student Liaison is that opportunity for me. This is why I wish to serve.



Dania Molina

### **Essay for the 2020-2021 Educator Preparation Student Liaison Application**

It is with great excitement that I, Dania Molina, am applying to serve as the Educator Preparation Student Liaison for the Commission. I am committed to equipping high-quality educators as demonstrated through my student experience in an educator preparation program and through my various work experiences. In this essay, I hope to convey my strong desire to serve the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC), all educator preparation programs, and, ultimately, all diverse students in K-12 schools as the Educator Preparation Student Liaison. It is a long-term goal of mine to influence education policy. One way that I am working towards this goal is through my commitment to first becoming a highly-effective teacher. My ambition is to become a master of my craft so that I can positively influence other teachers to also strive for excellence. My mission that drives my ambition is that all students deserve exceptional teachers who can unlock the students' full potential. My mission has been affirmed through various education and work experiences. I have directly seen hundreds of children's lives positively changed due to the impact of positive adult role models. I understand that educators carry a great privilege of developing the next generation. It is an honor to help students become caring and responsible global citizens, build empathy, gain literacy skills, practice critical thinking skills, and obtain digital citizenship. Therefore, it is exceedingly important that the educator preparation programs are sending highly-equipped teachers to CA schools who understand their responsibility and who are well-trained with the strategies to serve students with excellence. Teachers need to be sent to schools with the professional dispositions that promotes cultural diversity and equity. Educator preparation programs need to develop educators who are committed to high ethical and professional standards. Furthermore, I have a strong desire to be an agent of change in CA schools through exemplary teaching and through engaging in education policy that strengthens educator preparation programs.

My interest for influencing education policy derives from various experiences. One of my experiences is that I previously served students as a supervisor of After School Education &

Safety (ASES) programs. I was responsible for leading a team of high-quality after-school program instructors to serve students in a culturally diverse community. Through that leadership position, I understood the weight of ensuring that my staff team were beyond exceptional so that we truly made a difference in the lives of underserved children. I was committed to providing trainings and resources to the staff team so that we were always growing in our understanding of child development and student engagement. I also ensured that we served children well through exceeding the Quality Standards for Expanded Learning Programs in CA.

Additionally, one of my most rewarding experiences was serving teacher candidates through my latest employment as the Administrative Assistant to the Teacher Preparation Program at Biola University. This role affirmed my desire to develop high-quality educators as I supported the directors and faculty who directly trained teacher candidates. A highlight of this work experience was that I was highly involved in our 2016 program accreditation review. I supported my dean and directors through the preparation of documents and the development of our accreditation website for the program review and the site visit. I assisted in locating evidences in our syllabi and other documents that prove that we meet the Preconditions, Program Standards, Common Standards, and the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) given by the CCTC. I am also proactive about staying informed of CCTC updates as I am subscribed to the CCTC's News Email List and I often look up commission meetings and minutes. Moreover, in this position, I also able to directly provide my views and feedback as a student to Biola's teacher preparation program at our monthly committee meetings. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity that I had to influence teacher preparation at Biola University. Now, I seek to continue influencing teacher preparation in a state-wide scale as a student liaison to the Commission.

The upcoming academic year will be my last year in the teaching credential program at Biola University. As I am nearing the end of my educator preparation program, there are many requirements that I have successfully completed, such as all of my teacher preparation coursework required prior to starting the clinical practice, the CBEST exam, the CSET exam, the

RICA exam, and the CalTPA Cycle I exam. Therefore, I believe that I have a very thorough understanding of the requirements and experiences that students need to complete in CA educator preparation programs. Additionally, I've completed an Education Policy course in my Masters of Education program; the course provided me with greater understanding about education legislation in CA. Thus, I will be able to share my student views and experiences with an understanding of legislative parameters. Moreover, I have engaged in research with educator preparation professors so I understand the importance of data-driven decision-making for educational excellence. Ongoing assessment is absolutely necessary for success in any position and organization. A student like me can be a key stakeholder who can provide an important voice to the ongoing assessment of CA educator preparation programs.

Furthermore, this upcoming year will provide a unique experience for teacher candidates as most teacher candidates will engage in hybrid/distance learning models. As I gain experiences through my clinical practice, I hope that I can inform the Commission on ways that teacher candidates can be better prepared to teach during these unprecedented times. Teacher candidates should be knowledgeable on methods to engage all students in universal design for learning through any platform, including online platforms. In addition to engaging students in hybrid/distance learning, teacher candidates will also need to be more intentional about addressing the social-emotional needs of students. I look forward to learning from new experiences on how to effectively teach students during this time. I deeply believe that this year's teacher candidates will be one of the strongest cohorts of teacher candidates as we will have a unique training experience that is beyond what any teacher candidates have experienced in the past. I hope that I can provide the Commission with invaluable insights through my experience in an educator preparation program during this unique time.

I would like to thank you in advance for your time and energy as you consider me as the Student Liaison for the Commission. I believe that public service is one of the greatest endeavors that anyone can embark on, especially in public education. Furthermore, in challenging times like today, I am affirmed of the need for deeply passionate educators who will strive for educational excellence, inclusion, equity, and social justice for all K-12 students in CA.

My hope is that we can continue to develop highly qualified educators who can ensure that these values are practiced daily in educator preparation programs and in K-12 schools.

Stephanie Rodriguez

As a student, I was always intrigued by the intricacy of teaching. I had teachers that were genuine about their job and showed this in the way they not only cared for their students but were also well-prepared in their delivery of instruction and assessments. I also had teachers that who believed it was a 8am-3pm job and had instructional practices that were cookie-cutter and failed to address the diverse learning needs of all their students. There is a difference between a well-prepared teacher and an ill-prepared teacher and as a student I noticed it. I vowed that when I began my teacher preparation program in my undergraduate studies that I would work to be the teacher that showed up everyday for her students, well-prepared not only for instruction of the curriculum, but dedicated and committed to the education of my students.

The heavy emphasis and passion I have towards to further developing a child's education comes from my own experience and love for education and the process. The importance of education has always been a prominent part of my life growing up. I am from a middle class Mexican-American and Spanish-American working family. My mother is a sixth grade teacher at an all boys military school and my father is a city worker, making maps for the different departments within the City of Long Beach. I am an only child and it is assumed that everything was handed to me but that is not the case. In being the only child, my parents taught me the value of working hard for something I wanted, fostering my passions, and never letting fear get in the way. With that being said, my parents have helped fuel my decision to return back to school and pursue my Masters degree in Urban Education and Multiple Subject teaching credential at Loyola Marymount University. They helped pushed me to give my absolute best in this program so that I can be the most prepared and effective in teaching the diverse population of California students.

As I have come to learn more about myself as an educator through my current educator preparation program, I firmly believe that difference does not meet deficit. That being said, I want to be an advocate for focusing more on a student's individuality and her own unique

identity and culture. I find it important to provide awareness and promote this concept to not only my students, but my fellow colleagues as well, educating them on the importance of culture, identity, and acceptance. My ultimate goal is to become an educational activist, advocating specifically for the well-being of students and making sure they receive a diverse and quality education. However, I believe that I need to first be in the classroom and see how students are developing relationships both with their peers and with their teachers in order to enact change within the education system.

Being a student liaison for the Executive Committee of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing will be the first step in helping me invest in the advocacy role that I wish to pursue. I believe that for students to receive a quality education, they must be taught by quality teachers who are dedicated to the field. This dedication and work-ethic can be derived from their educator preparation program. When teachers truly take their preparation program seriously, they can do wonders. I feel that I would bring honest and constructive feedback to the commission on how students are feeling in their preparation programs and what can be done to serve them and help them to provide a quality, diverse, and inclusive education to the future youth. Teaching is a valued profession that can help enact social change in our world. It is important that future educators are receiving valuable resources and educational practices to help bring about such changes by empowering future leaders of the world. I am more than ready and willingly to help make this a reality.