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Information

Educator Preparation Committee

Supporting 2020-21 Program Completers Move into Practice

Executive Summary: This agenda item provides information on the flexibilities that have been provided to educator preparation programs, program applicants, and program completers for the 2020-21 year. The item also opens a discussion on the appropriate supports for these program completers as they become in-service educators.

Recommended Action: For information only

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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.

Supporting 2020-21 Program Completers Move into Practice

Introduction

This agenda item provides information on the flexibilities that have been provided to educator preparation programs, program applicants, and program completers for the 2020-21 year. The item also opens a discussion on the appropriate supports for these program completers as they become in-service educators.

Background

The Commission acted in [April 2020](#) to provide flexibilities for credential holders, applicants, candidates, and program completers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic for academic year 2019-20. An [Executive Order](#), May 2020, moved the requirements for candidates to pass a performance assessment and the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) from the Preliminary credential to the Clear credential for both teachers and administrators completing programs at the end of the 2019-20 academic year.

With the pandemic still in place, there have been a number of actions taken by a variety of authorities to provide flexibility and options for applicants and candidates in the 2020-21 year. The [Appendix](#) provides a comprehensive summary of these options.

- The Budget Trailer bill (AB 77 and SB 98, Section 37), signed by Governor Newsom, provides additional flexibilities by extending the validity period for examinations from ten to 11 years for individuals applying for credentials between March 2020 and June 30, 2021. In addition, Pupil Personnel Services program completers may complete clinical practice in a single school setting through June 30, 2021.
- [SB 820](#) extended the provisions of the Executive Order through the 2020-21 academic year. These flexibilities are now in effect through August 31, 2021.
- At its [August 2020 meeting](#), the Commission acted to authorize flexibilities for preliminary teacher preparation, teacher and leader Induction, and the Child Development Permit for the 2020-21 academic year.
- At the [October 2020 meeting](#), the Commission approved the continued issuance of CBEST Deferrals through January 31, 2021.
- The Program Sponsor Variable Term Waiver remains an option for candidates who need more time to complete one or more credential requirements beyond the performance assessment or RICA.

The purpose of these flexibilities was to provide current candidates ways to complete their preparation programs and seek employment despite the diminished availability of testing centers due to COVID-19 restrictions. As the pandemic continued through the summer, Commission staff gathered a group of program leaders to start a discussion about the landscape of teacher preparation and the impact on teacher candidates. Initially, it was the hope of the group that virus numbers would decrease and that schools would be opening for

in-classroom instruction either later in the fall or in early 2021. However, California’s pandemic numbers are not decreasing at this time. California has a four-tier monitoring system, and each county is placed in one of the tiers based on a) the seven day average of cases per 100,000 people and b) the seven day positivity rate. As of Tuesday, November 17, 2020 a total of 41 of California’s 58 counties with over 94 percent of California’s population remain in the Purple tier.

With the current trend in virus numbers, it seems possible that there will be candidates in educator preparation programs who began their clinical practice this year in a distance learning model and through technology who might not have the opportunity to do any supervised clinical practice in a face-to-face setting within a classroom or school. Programs are reporting that even if schools do open for face-to-face instruction in the 2020-21 academic year, complex issues like liability and limitations on the number of individuals in each classroom will continue to exist. These challenges present a need to address:

1. Whether candidates who have no physical in person or in classroom experience should be required to augment their preparation in some way; and
2. What kinds of support systems will need to be implemented to assist these candidates as they enter professional practice.

Preliminary teacher preparation programs made significant adjustments and modifications to ensure that the 2020-21 candidates have opportunities to demonstrate that they meet the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) despite the distance learning context. The group reported that all the usual candidate monitoring and evaluation processes have been fully implemented such that programs are able to identify candidates who are and are not on track to meet the TPEs. Another important consideration is that across the state, even though schools may not be open, teaching and learning still occurs. The landscape of education looks different due to the pandemic. As experienced educators in the field have adjusted their teaching to meet the needs of learners through remote instruction, candidates in teacher preparation programs are being trained to teach in this new environment.

Staff began working with program leaders who assisted in thinking through the flexibilities during the summer and augmented the group with employers and induction providers for continued discussion this fall. These discussions have allowed staff to gather information for agenda items moving forward to the Commission to gather information about potential needs this year’s candidates may have once they have completed their preparation program. The list of program leaders who have been participating include the following:

Segment	Member	Role and Institution
Teacher Induction	Constance Best	Executive Director, Yolo/Solano Center for Teacher Credentialing (Davis Joint Unified)
CSU	Ernest Black	Statewide Director, Cal State TEACH
Employer	Paul Deal	Manager, Solano County Office of Education
AICCU	Deborah Erickson	Dean, Point Loma Nazarene University

Segment	Member	Role and Institution
Teacher Induction	Melissa Meetze-Hall	Administrator, Center for Teacher Innovation (Riverside County Office of Education)
AICCU	Michael Hillis	Dean, California Lutheran University
Employer	Bryan Johnson	Director, Certificated Workforce Management, Los Angeles Unified School District
AICCU	Ira Lit	Associate Professor, Stanford University
LEA	Linda Liebert	Director, Sacramento County Office of Education
UC	Virginia Panish	Director of Teacher Education, UC Irvine
Employer	Denise Payne	Manager, Human Resources, San Bernardino Superintendent of Schools
LEA	Patricia Pernin	Administrative Coordinator, Los Angeles Unified School District
UC	Elisa Salasin	Director, UC Berkeley
CSU	Pia Wong	Associate Dean, CSU Sacramento

Staff: *Teri Clark, Cheryl Hickey, and Sarah Solari*

The 2020-21 Candidate Experience

There is widespread concern that, due to current circumstances, this year’s teacher preparation candidates may not be afforded sufficiently rich experiences to develop their skills in some areas that are foundational for good teaching such as strong in-person classroom management skills and a large toolbox to ensure positive student engagement for in-person instruction. It is clear that many of these candidates will need additional assistance once they are in a physical classroom to ensure these skills are developed appropriately.

Initially staff questioned whether this year’s candidates might need additional supervised clinical practice that could best be provided by the preliminary preparation programs. Staff asked the group to consider whether the candidate who has not had any in-person clinical practice should be put on an Intern credential, a Variable Term Waiver, or some other document specifically designed for these candidates, while the candidate completed the in-person supervised clinical practice. The group of preliminary program leaders responded that this approach does not recognize the knowledge, skills, and abilities that candidates are currently engaged in developing through remote or hybrid instruction. The program leaders shared that this year’s preparation should not be discounted because it is different and underscored that the Commission’s standards always allow a program to tailor the experiences for its candidates.

The current pandemic highlights that this approach is one that works for a variety of situations and allows the state to maintain standards of teacher preparation that reflect quality preparation. Just as the 2020 program completers had to rise to the challenge of moving to remote instruction after being prepared in primarily a face-to-face setting, the current candidates will have to make the shift from remote instruction to face-to-face or a hybrid model of instruction when school campuses reopen.

In discussing this year's challenges with the program leader group, it was pointed out that there are numerous ways in which the candidates currently enrolled in teacher preparation will be very well prepared, perhaps more so than in previous years. Use of technology to provide instruction and distance learning strategies are obvious areas in which this year's candidates are being well prepared and will have had deep and rich experiences according to the program leaders. The group also noted that lesson planning and student assessments are also important areas where these candidates are getting extensive experience as both current teachers and candidates are rethinking how to teach lessons and assess for learning in the current environment. The group also pointed out that this year's candidates have extensive experience in engaging students in learning since the instruction has taken place through technology. Other areas identified by the group where candidates in this year's cohort are getting more intense preparation include differentiation of instruction and more opportunities for closer connection with and better communication with parents and families.

The preliminary program leaders report that in many respects, the kind of teaching skills needed in this current environment are much more complex and although these candidates, so far, are not consistently able to complete in-person experiences in a physical classroom with their TK-12 students, they are engaged in deep and reflective work that will prepare them well in many areas to be future educators. This is not to minimize the role and importance of in-person interactions for the development of classroom management skills and the need to support and develop these skills. However, it does highlight that candidates are prepared to meet the adopted Teaching Performance Expectations, and as expected within California's learning to teach system, will continue to grow and develop as professional educators as they enter into their first years of teaching through their participation in induction. The program leaders identify induction as the most appropriate and well suited place for preliminary credential holders to continue to expand their knowledge, skills and abilities through job-embedded professional development, aligned to the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) and tailored to the candidate's individual needs depending upon that candidate's context for teaching.

Moving Forward: Supervised Clinical Practice Versus Support and Coaching

Preliminary teacher preparation programs have always supervised candidates. The program supervisor and the district-employed supervisor both supervise the candidate through observation, collection of data, and the provision of evaluative feedback to guide the candidate's development. While the preliminary program by nature is somewhat directive with candidates, induction programs provide less directive coaching to new teachers based on their areas of need. When the Induction Standards were revised in 2016, induction programs were charged with providing an individualized program of support and coaching for each of their new teachers, taking the new teacher from where he or she is and supporting the individual to grow as a teacher. Induction programs are not directive or evaluative with their candidates.

Acknowledging the assets the 2020-21 cohort brings to teaching led to discussion about whether a candidate should be either required to or have the opportunity to work with TK-12 students beyond distance learning once schools are open, presuming the schools will open in

the late spring, summer or fall of 2021. Program leaders expressed a desire for the Commission to focus on the kinds of supports that the current candidates will need once they enter the workforce as in-service teachers rather than requiring additional clinical experience. A distinction was made that these candidates will have, in fact, completed a substantive and significant supervised clinical practice experience. Rather than requiring additional clinical practice, the group believes that these candidates would benefit from the intense support and assistance they receive through induction as they enter the profession. The group acknowledges that this support could be provided by their preliminary program, their employer, and/or through their induction program and that the support should focus particularly in the areas of the TPEs specific to each candidate's need which may align with the current limitations of an entirely virtual clinical practice experience.

What Kinds of Supports and Who will Provide the Support?

The program leaders were unanimous in their assessment that program completers from this academic year will need additional support and opportunities to develop their teaching skill as would any candidate completing a preparation program and assuming responsibility for his/her own classroom. The difference will be in the areas of TPEs in which the candidates will focus. In addition to classroom management and fostering positive student engagement, the program leaders were concerned with the unique needs of TK-12 students who will not have been in a physical school environment for some time. All teachers will need knowledge and skill in the areas of trauma informed practice and social-emotional learning. While candidates may have navigated this experience remotely with students, a face-to-face experience of trauma informed practice or classroom management will look different. Some program leaders discussed summer school opportunities for summer 2021 that would enable the preliminary program to work with candidates as they navigate their first in-person experience as a classroom teacher. Others suggested that an intense period of support be provided in the first three (3) months or so of a new teacher's first year of teaching. Some preliminary program leaders suggested that they plan to assist with that support, while others noted institutional barriers to doing so and suggested that induction was best equipped to address these needs. However, the traditional induction experience would need to be adapted to ensure that the focus in these first few months was solely on providing whatever support that candidate needed (the concept of "just in time" support).

The program leader and employer group raised a number of issues during meetings with Commission staff held in November 2020. Provided below is a synopsis of these issues and their thinking at this time:

1. *What Document should the 2020-21 completers be recommended for?* Candidates who are meeting the TPEs within their preliminary program during 2020-21 should be eligible for a Preliminary credential, with a TPA or RICA renewal code if appropriate, even if they have not completed in-person clinical practice during their preliminary program.
2. *Preliminary Programs should take advantage of any prospects for their candidates to receive face-to-face in-person experiences if the opportunity for such allows and if it is safe to do so*

in the spring and summer of 2021. Encouraging opportunities for preliminary preparation faculty to observe candidates in tutoring or summer school environments for instance that would provide candidates with some additional support in those TPE areas where they lacked extensive opportunities because of the pandemic may be useful before these candidates assume their own classrooms in the fall of 2021.

3. *Limitation of Resources.* The group noted the economic toll placed on the state as a result of COVID-19 and the unlikely scenario in which additional resources would be made available, whether they be directly to the candidates, preliminary programs, or to LEAs and induction programs for the purposes of assisting these new teachers. The group acknowledged that there will be additional work to support this year's candidates to be effective teachers in fall 2021. The group strongly suggests that if there is any additional funding in 2021-22, supporting this year's completers and the 2020 completers be considered a priority.
4. *Consideration of Costs to New Educators.* Current candidates have paid tuition and fees for their preparation program. They have worked diligently to learn the skills identified in the TPEs. The group pointed out that it is important to honor the work that candidates have completed and not require them to complete additional work if possible. If additional work does need to be completed, finding ways to mitigate the financial impact of the additional work should be considered.
5. *The Critical Role of Induction.* California has long recognized the importance of a two-tiered credential system to ensure that candidates have ample support to refine the skills and knowledge learned in their preliminary program once in their own classrooms and to be able to access the "just in time" support all new teachers need. The focus of Induction is on coaching, providing support, and individualizing the coaching and support to the new educator's needs. Induction can provide new teachers with support and coaching, including a focus on teaching in a classroom. It will be important to continue to have conversations to clarify the roles that employers/site administrators, mentors, preliminary programs, and induction programs each play. The group believes that Induction is the appropriate place to support the new teachers as they transition from candidates to in-service teachers.
6. *Importance of the Individual Development Plan (IDP).* The group underscored the fact that these documents have taken on increased importance in the current environment and yet the design of some of these has not been as informative as they could be for the induction programs as they work with candidates to develop their Individual Development Plan. The group suggested that the Commission identify specific components that must be included in an IDP to provide guidance to both preliminary preparation programs and teacher induction programs. The group also discussed the importance of the candidate understanding the need to provide the IDP to the induction program.
7. *Identification of Key TPEs for Focused Support.* The group suggests that an analysis of the TPEs could identify the specific TPEs where these candidates in particular will likely need additional support once in a face-to-face classroom setting. This information could be beneficial to preliminary programs as they develop IDPs with their completers, as well as to teacher induction programs and employers as they plan how best to support the new teachers in fall 2021.

8. *The Importance of Recognizing the Need for Support for both 2019-20 and 2020-21 Candidates* The program leaders and employers noted that the issues identified are not unique to this year's candidates but also apply to the 2019-20 candidates who likely experienced some clinical practice in a physical school environment but have also been working remotely since then and will need additional support once students are able to return to campus. The group suggests that the need to support new educators should be a multi-agency effort including not only the Commission, but the California Department of Education (CDE), and employing agencies as well.
9. *Communication from California's Educational Leaders* The program leader group noted that another letter from State Superintendent Tony Thurmond, State Board of Education President Linda Darling-Hammond, and Commission Chair Tine Sloan would help to shed important light on these issues. The [October 5, 2020 letter](#) addressed the benefits of partnerships between the entities that prepare educators (preliminary preparation programs as well as induction programs) and the local education agencies that employ the program completers and provide settings for candidates to practice the skills they are learning in their preparation programs. A second letter released in spring 2021 could address the needs of the candidates completing their preparation programs during the COVID-19 pandemic, encourage equitable hiring practices, provide suggestions for onboarding new employees in fall 2021, and continue to support the building of a community that includes both preparers and employers of educators. The group also suggests that the significant learning that this year's candidates have done should also be addressed. Employers will need to support the new teachers but can also draw upon the unique assets candidates are bringing to the schools.
10. *Role of Collaborative Regional Efforts that Include the Entire Educator Preparation Pipeline.* It was suggested that regional conversations among employers, including human resources professionals and site administrators, preliminary preparation programs, and teacher induction programs are crucial in addressing this need to ensure that all new teachers are able to succeed. Routine scheduled meetings increase communication across those that prepare educators, employ educators, and provide induction for new educators. It was reported that San Bernardino County, Riverside County, and Los Angeles Unified School District are currently holding monthly meetings and find the meetings to be essential in effectively supporting teachers and TK-12 students. The group suggests that the Commission and CDE should work together to support these types of regional convenings.
11. *Role of District On-Boarding Processes.* The group identified that it will be important for employers to tailor their on-boarding process for new educators in fall 2021. The group believes that they could identify some key things for employers to consider as they plan for on-boarding new hires and encouraged employers to consider the unique needs of these new teachers and establishing ways to address these needs will be critical to ensuring their success.
12. *Role of Site Administrators.* The group identified the important role that site administrators will play to ensure that these new teachers are provided the necessary support to be successful. Administrators will need to understand that new teachers (and second year

teachers who taught through distance in 2020-21) in fall 2021 will need different and likely more intensive supports, particularly in the first few months of in-person instruction. Support from administrators for the local induction programs and building a site level support system around these new teachers will be essential.

The program leaders and employers noted that the current situation impacting teacher preparation candidates is beyond anyone's control, but that California's community of educators are working hard to ensure that all candidates are well prepared to enter the workforce. They note that in order to address these critical needs brought on by the pandemic, it will take all stakeholders, preliminary programs, induction programs, employers, site administrators, human resource personnel, mentor and other veteran teachers, and the Commission to ensure that these new teachers are supported and successful. The issue of partnerships and collaboration have become even more essential.

Commission Discussion

If the Commission could discuss the items identified by the stakeholder group and provide some initial feedback, it would assist staff as they continue to work with the stakeholders to develop recommendations for the Commission to consider at its February 2021 meeting.

Next Steps

Based on Commission discussion, staff will continue to work with the educators identified in this agenda item as well as other stakeholders to develop recommendations to bring to the Commission at its February 2021 meeting.

Appendix
COVID Flexibilities

	Summary of Flexibility	Eligible for Use	Authority and Conditions
TPA/APA	Move performance assessment requirement (TPA/APA) to the Clear Credential if impacted by COVID. The performance assessment must be passed prior to recommendation for the clear credential.	March 19, 2020-August 31, 2021	Authority: EO and SB 820 Conditions: Enrolled in program, met all requirements other than the performance assessment, COVID prevents completion
RICA	Move RICA requirement to the Clear Credential if impacted by COVID. The assessment must be passed prior to recommendation for the clear credential.	March 19, 2020-August 31, 2021	Authority: EO and SB 820 Conditions: Unable to take RICA due to COVID
CBEST	Waive requirement of CBEST for Program Entry and the requirements for programs to use the CBEST data to support candidates. Basic Skills must be met prior to recommendation for the credential.	March 19, 2020-August 31, 2021	Authority: EO and SB 820 Conditions: For prospective candidates unable to take the exam
Subject Matter - Interns	Waive Subject Matter Requirement for Interns to enter the Intern program. The subject matter requirement must meet be met prior to recommendation for the Preliminary credential.	March 19, 2020-August 31, 2021	Authority: EO and SB 820 Conditions: Unable to take CSET due to COVID
Subject Matter – Student teaching	Waive Subject Matter Requirement prior to Daily Whole Class Instruction All candidates must satisfy the subject matter requirement prior to recommendation for the Preliminary Credential.	2020-21 School Year	Authority: Commission action, April 2020, Agenda item 4A Conditions: Unable to take CSET due to COVID
PS-VTW	Program Sponsor Variable Term Waiver (PS-VTW) allows candidates who were on track to complete an educator preparation program to have an additional year to complete the credential requirements.	March 19, 2020-January 31, 2021	Authority: Commission Action, April 2020 and October 2020 Conditions: All requirements but one met and impacted by COVID

	Summary of Flexibility	Eligible for Use	Authority and Conditions
PPS -2nd Placement	Waives the Requirement for 2 Placements for Pupil Personnel Credentials. The Title 5 regulations require candidates to complete placements in at least two grade level bands for a minimum of 100 hours in each placement. This requirement is waived. Candidates are still subject to the minimum number of total required clinical practice hours.	March 19, 2020-June 30, 2021	Authority: AB 77 and SB 98 Conditions: Impacted by COVID
CBEST	Defer CBEST for one year if the candidate who has not previously failed the assessment (used most often by out of state candidates).	March 19, 2020-January 31, 2021	Authority: Commission Action, April 2020 and October 2020 Conditions: Not previously failed CBEST
Length of Validity of Scores	Examination Scores are Valid for eleven (11) years rather than the ten years in Regulations due to the COVID pandemic.	March 19, 2020-June 30, 2021	Authority: AB 77 and SB 98 Conditions: Impacted by COVID
Extension of Credentials	COVID has been defined as a Good Cause for a one-year extension to a credential or permit. (PIPS and STSPs do not qualify for this extension).	Through the 2020-21 School Year	Authority: Commission, April 2020 Agenda Item 3A Conditions: Impacted by COVID
PIP/STSP	Individuals who have served on a PIP or STSP can downgrade to an employer requested Variable Term Waiver (VTW).	Through the 2020-21 School Year	Authority: Commission Action, April 2020 Condition: Impacted by COVID
VTW	Individuals serving on a VTW may, through an employer, request an additional issuance of the waiver even if the criteria for renewing the waiver has not been met.	Through the 2020-21 School Year	Authority: Commission Action, April 2020 Condition: Impacted by COVID