



CODED CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: January 21, 2010	NUMBER: 10-05
TO: All Individuals and Groups Interested in the Activities of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing	FROM: Dale A. Janssen Executive Director Commission on Teacher Credentialing
SUBJECT: American Indian Languages Credential	

Summary:

Assembly Bill (AB) 544 (Chap. 324, Stats. 2009) was signed by the Governor on October 11, 2009. The bill allows for the issuance of a credential authorizing fluent speakers of American Indian languages to teach the languages in California's public schools. The provisions of the bill became effective January 1, 2010.

Key Provisions:

Federally recognized Indian tribes located in California may recommend an individual for the American Indian Languages Credential if the individual has demonstrated fluency in the tribe's language based on an oral and written assessment developed and administered by the tribal government. A link to the Bureau of Indian Affairs website listing the federally recognized Indian tribes located in California is available in the References section.

In accordance with AB 544, each tribe should consider the following factors in the development of the oral and written assessment:

- 1) The dialects of the tribal language that will be included in the assessment;
- 2) Whether the tribe will standardize its writing system;
- 3) The standard of knowledge and fluency required to qualify for an American Indian Languages Credential; and
- 4) Standards for effective teaching methods to be evaluated in the classroom.

Assessment design and administration decisions are to be made by the tribe and will not be reviewed or approved by the Commission.

Tribes that choose to recommend individuals for the American Indian Languages Credential must also develop and administer a technical assistance program guided by the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP). To the extent feasible, the program shall be offered by teachers credentialed in an American Indian language with three or more years of teaching experience and may consist of direct classroom observation and consultation, assistance in instructional planning and preparation, support in implementation and delivery of classroom instruction, and other assistance intended to enhance the performance and development of the American Indian language teacher. A link to the CSTP is available in the References section.

An individual seeking a clear American Indian Languages Credential will be required to first hold two preliminary credentials: a two-year preliminary followed by a three-year preliminary. The requirements for each document are explained below.

Two-Year Preliminary Credential

Issuance of a two-year preliminary American Indian Languages Credential requires passage of the assessment in the language of the recommending tribe, submission of an Application for Credential Authorizing Public School Service form (41-4), the appropriate processing fees, and fingerprint clearance via submission of a Request for Livescan Service form (41-LS). Completion of the American Indian Languages Credential Recommendation Form (CL-894 link available in the References section) by a tribal official verifies the applicant's fluency in the American Indian language indicated. Links to the 41-4, 41-LS, and Fee Schedule (CL-659) forms are also available in the References section. Possession of a bachelor's or higher degree and passage of a basic skills examination are not required for the issuance of an American Indian Languages Credential.

Three-Year Preliminary Credential

A three-year preliminary American Indian Languages Credential may be issued to an individual who previously held the two-year preliminary credential and obtains a recommendation from the tribal government (CL-894 link available in the References section), submission of an application form (41-4 link available in the References section), and the appropriate processing fees.

Five-Year Clear Credential

An individual is eligible for a five-year clear American Indian Languages Credential at the end of the three-year preliminary period with the recommendation of the tribal government (in consultation with the applicant's public school employer), submission of an application form (41-4 link available in the References section), and the appropriate processing fees.

California Public School Employers

Public school personnel responsible for evaluating teachers shall provide individuals employed to teach on the basis of a preliminary American Indian Languages Credential

with information pertaining to the evaluation process and the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. Individuals responsible for administering the tribe's technical assistance program are encouraged to consult with the public school personnel responsible for evaluating teachers to ensure the American Indian Languages Credential holder receives the mentoring and support he or she needs to become an effective teacher.

Authorization

The American Indian Languages Credential authorizes the holder to teach the specific American Indian language listed on the document in departmentalized classrooms in preschool, grades K through 12, and in classes organized primarily for adults.

The American Indian Languages Credential does not authorize instruction in any other subject or setting unless the individual holds an additional valid teaching credential or permit that authorizes the assignment. In addition, the American Indian Languages Credential is not an appropriate prerequisite credential for any other permit, credential or certificate and may not be used in conjunction with the local teaching assignment options that require possession of a teaching credential.

Important Date:

January 1, 2010 – Implementation date for provisions of AB 544.

Background:

The federal Native American Languages Act of 1990 provides for exceptions to state teacher certification requirements for instruction in American Indian languages when the certification requirements hinder the employment of qualified teachers. Furthermore, individuals fluent in American Indian languages are becoming increasingly rare each year. The American Indian Languages Credential will make it possible to re-establish the number of fluent speakers of these languages by authorizing classroom instruction in California's public schools.

Source:

Education Code §44262.5

References:

American Indian Languages Credential Leaflet:

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/cl893.pdf>

American Indian Languages Credential Recommendation form:

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/cl894.pdf>

Application for Credential Authorizing Public School Services (41-4):

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/414.pdf>

Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Directory:

<http://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/BIA/OIS/TribalGovernmentServices/TribalDirectory/index.htm>

California Standards for the Teaching Profession:

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/standards/CSTP-2009.pdf>

Fee Schedule (CL-659): <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/cl659.pdf>

Request for Livescan Service (41-LS):

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/41-LS.pdf>

Contact Information:

Commission on Teacher Credentialing's Information Services Unit by telephone at 1-888-921-2682, Monday through Friday between 12:00 pm to 4:45 pm, or by email at credentials@ctc.ca.gov.

