Commission on Teacher Credentialing

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Professional Services Division

July 21, 2011

To: Deans and Directors of recently transitioned Education Specialist programs in the Yellow, Orange, Red, and Violet cohorts:

Our records indicate that you have transitioned your Education Specialist program(s) and are a part of either the yellow, orange, red, or violet cohorts. Programs in these cohorts were not initially required to submit a program assessment document due to the transitioning of the standards; however a document will be due in the near future. For more information on when your program assessment is due see PSA 11-10 .

This letter outlines the purpose and process of Program Assessment as well as provides valuable best practices for preparing your documents. These best practices should help you to complete Program Assessment in a timely manner in order to meet the responsibilities of a program sponsor. Taking the time to thoroughly read this letter and explore all of the related linked information will be highly beneficial as your institution moves towards the final step of transitioning your Education Specialist program. It is the program sponsor's responsibility to comply with this last step of the process and staff will be available for questions throughout the process. Staff will be communicating the status of the final step of this transition process to the Committee on Accreditation (COA) at future meetings.

This letter provides detailed information and underlined links about Program Assessment:

- Purpose and Description of Program Assessment
- Schedules for Submission of Program Assessment Documents and Preliminary Report of Findings
    - Schedule for Submission of Documents
    - Extension Requests
    - Resubmission and Review timelines
- Technical Assistance and Document Reading
- Preparation of Documents
- Procedures for Reviewing and Providing Feedback on Program Assessment Documents
- Biennial Reports
- Submission Information Required by **September 1, 2011**.

Purpose and Description of Program Assessment: Program Assessment, which would typically take place in Year 4 of the accreditation cycle, is the feature of the accreditation system that asks program sponsors to demonstrate that each program is aligned with the adopted program standards. This special transitional Program Assessment examines each program individually, provides feedback to the program sponsor and informs Commission staff and the COA on how newly transitioned program has been able to fully integrate into the accreditation process. *Description of Program Assessment Documents*

A program assessment document is electronically submitted by each approved preparation program offered by the program sponsor. There are three parts to the program assessment documents:

Part I is the response to the current Program Standards. The narrative should describe *how* the program is meeting each component of the adopted program standards, including *where* and *when* these activities occur. (This can be demonstrated by hyperlinking within the narrative to the specific example within the documentation provided in Part II.) The response may include charts or diagrams to help the readers understand the program. In *Part I* it is important to make sure that the response is precise and clear enough that a reader who has no knowledge of your institution or the program can understand how your program aligns with each part of each program standard. In addition, you will want to ensure that each response meets the level indicated in the standard. For example, if the standards call for "multiple, systematic opportunities to…" the narrative must specify how candidates are provided more than one opportunity. If the standard indicates that "candidates are required to demonstrate," then the response will need to explain how that demonstration occurs, including a link to the appropriate document in Part II.

Program Summary: **Each** program, even if it is not completing the Program Assessment process, must develop a Program Summary, no longer than four pages in length, which serves as an "executive" summary of the full program narrative. The Program Summary provides a brief overview of the structure, courses, and sequence of the credential program. The Program Summary should be submitted as a separate document at the time the program assessment documents are submitted.

Part II includes current course syllabi, including course assignments and clinical practice opportunities for the most recent year. The course syllabi provide the documentation to support *Part I.* For example, if a program indicates that the standard is covered by a lecture or reading in a certain course, the readers will turn to (or click on a hyperlink to) the location in the syllabus that references the relevant lecture or reading. If there is no reference in that syllabus, or the readers are unable to find the syllabus due to a lack of clear linkages, readers will indicate that *More Information is Needed*. To ensure each component of the standard is discernible (or evident), link each component to the specific parts of the syllabi that demonstrates how that component is addressed. Otherwise, readers will indicate that *More Information is Needed*.

Part III is the documentation that supports the program's Biennial Reports. Part III discusses assessments that are used to determine candidate competence, including rubrics, training information and calibration activities that ensure the assessments are being administered and scored in a uniform and objective way. Do not include additional assessments in this section; only the 4-6 assessments reported in the Biennial Report should be discussed.

Reviewers will be reading to answer these kinds of questions: If observation forms are used to measure candidate competence, upon what standards or rationale are these based? How does the program ensure that all assessors are using them in the same way? What types of training and practice is provided to ensure a common scoring technique?

Schedules for Submission of Program Assessment Documents and Preliminary Report of Findings

Schedule for Submission of Documents

Program documents are due on the 15th of the month in the selected submission month and year. Please refer to PSA 11-10 for the exact submission timeline for your program.

Extension Requests

Extensions may be requested and will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Extensions must be requested via email (programassessment@ctc.ca.gov) and must include the institution name, specific program requesting an extension (multiple subject, administrative credential, etc.), reason for extension, and proposed date of submission. Emails should come from the program coordinator and include a cc: to the dean, director of teacher education, or superintendent at the institution. (Please do not cc: additional CTC staff/administrators.)

Review and Resubmission Timelines

Documents are reviewed on a first-submitted first-read basis pending availability of readers at Program Assessment reading sessions. The Preliminary Report of Findings is sent out after reading sessions. Initial reader feedback and status of the standard is shown in blue on the form and resubmission feedback, if necessary, is indicated in a different color. If a re-submission, is required, it must be sent in within one month of receipt of the readers' feedback. (*Extensions are granted on a case-by-case basis. Follow the same extension request instructions as listed above.*) Timely resubmission is important for keeping information fresh in the readers' minds.

Technical Assistance and Document Reading

As you prepare your document, please know that CTC staff is available to answer questions. A technical assistance webcast was held on September 16, 2010. The audio archive and materials can be accessed through the webcast page. (Please keep in mind some things have changed, such as the requirement of having a linked document – it was not a requirement at the time of the webcast, however it is now. This letter supersedes any conflicting direction given in the webcast. Please email Program Assessment staff for questions). Program directors responsible for developing program assessment documents have found it highly beneficial to attend a program assessment reading session prior to submitting their own documents. Participating in a reading session provides the opportunity to receive calibration training to review another document and provide feedback, as well as to gain a better understanding of what a program assessment document should contain and how it can be formatted for ease of reading and understanding. Reading sessions are open to members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR). Additionally, we are offering the opportunity to Deans and Directors of Educator Preparation Programs. If you are interested in participating in a Program Assessment reading session or you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to email staff at ProgramAssessment@ctc.ca.gov. It is also recommended that you review the Program Assessment page on the Commission Website.

Preparation of Documents

Program Assessment is a 100% electronic submission. Submit all documents in Word or PDF format with a hyperlinked table of contents as well as hyperlinks to supporting documentation. The most successful documents seem to be contained within one file; however any well-organized document with working links to supporting documentation is acceptable. Remember that the CTC cannot accept zipped documents or submissions larger than 10MB. Flash drives are a preferred option for large submissions. It is **strongly** recommended that those preparing documents attend a reading session to learn how a well-organized electronic document functions. *Documents with inadequate electronic organization will be returned to the program for further editing and resubmission.*

An excellent example of a well prepared electronic submission can be found on the program assessment webpage under the Templates, Samples and Forms section.

Narrative templates are available on the standards webpage. Programs are encouraged to review these templates and use the template to organize the program narrative and supporting documentation.

Additionally, resubmissions must follow the guidelines set out in PSA 10-12. For resubmissions, additional information must be embedded within the program narrative and indicated with a new color font or a highlight to indicate what information has been added.

Procedures for Reviewing and Providing Feedback of Program Assessment Documents

The program assessment document will be reviewed by trained members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR) who have expertise in the program area. The reviewers will also have access to the Biennial Reports that have been submitted as well as CTC feedback on those reports. Reviewers will be looking for the following:

- Does the document clearly and comprehensively describe how the program is aligned with each program standard?
- Does the response align with the standard? For example, if the standard states that candidates will have multiple, ongoing opportunities to demonstrate skills in a particular area, does the response describe multiple, ongoing opportunities or just one?
- Does the documentation provided in the syllabi and the assessment information provide support for the document? For example, if the program states that a standard is met by having candidates complete an assignment in a particular course, is that assignment noted in the course syllabus?

At the end of the first reading of the document, readers will determine one of two things. Either the standard is determined to be preliminarily aligned, or more information is needed. If more information is needed, readers will provide detailed information that describes what is needed to bring the standard to preliminary alignment. Once the readers are finished, Commission Program Assessment staff will send a copy of the feedback form to the institution/program sponsor for its response. A professional dialogue will then take place between program sponsors and reviewers (facilitated through the Commission staff) in order to get the most complete sense of whether the program is aligned to standards. This dialogue will help provide clarity and assist the reviewers in coming to preliminary findings. The dialogue does not go on without end. There will be a deadline at which time the Preliminary Report of Findings will be finalized. The format of the feedback will provide information regarding each program standard, using this form.

Biennial Reports

Please be aware that the Year 3 biennial report is due near the time that 4th Year program assessment documents are due. This happens only one time in the 7-year cycle and it is important that you know this in advance so that you can prepare and plan accordingly. Please consult the Indigo cohort map for additional information.

Submission Information Required by September 1, 2011

In order to help in the planning for timely readings of the program assessment documents, please complete the Proposed Submission Dates for All Programs form indicating which submission date you believe will best meet your needs for **each of your approved** educator preparation programs. (Please note that when documents are submitted *at the end of the year* they must include a Program Assessment Checklist with each individual program submission.)

Please feel free to contact program assessment staff with questions at programassessment@ctc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Hickey

Cheryl Hickey
Administrator of Accreditation