

**Discussion of Guidance Document on Granting Equivalency  
Guidance for the Field  
November 2018**

**Overview**

This agenda item presents the updated *Granting Equivalency* document for the Committee's review.

**Staff Recommendation**

That the Committee discuss the guidance document, suggest any modifications, and direct staff to post the document once any modifications have been made.

**Background**

In 2008, AB 2226 (Chap. 233, Stats. 2008) required the Commission to develop guidance for Commission-approved educator preparation programs preparing individuals for an Education Specialist Teaching Credential. A group of stakeholders met with staff and a report was produced: [Comparability of Coursework for Sponsors of Special Education Teacher Preparation Programs](#). The report was presented to the Commission in [January 2010](#) at which time the Commission approved the report and asked staff to develop a similar document that addresses equivalency for all types of educator preparation programs that the Commission sponsors. In [August 2010](#), staff presented an information item to the Commission with the more generalized guidance document. The general *Granting Equivalency* document was not shared with educator preparation programs at that time nor posted on the Commission's website.

**Updating the Guidance Document**

It has been a number of years since the general guidance document was developed and it is time for it to be updated before sharing it. For the past two years, staff has presented on the topic of granting equivalencies at the annual [Credential Counselors and Analysts of California](#) (CCAC) conference held here in Sacramento in October. The field has requested that the updated document be posted and available to all Commission-approved educator preparation programs. The updates that were made to the Guidance document include removing references to credential programs that no longer exist, i.e. Clear Credential programs for general education teachers and clarifying language that raised questions in the two presentations at CCAC. Staff from the Certification Division have also reviewed the document for accuracy related to credential requirements. A key objective is to make available a document that helps institutions to appropriately implement an equivalency process without being too restrictive or too flexible.

**Next Steps**

Once the Committee has reviewed the guidance document and made any necessary modifications, staff will update the document, post it on the Commission's website, and share it with all institutions approved by the Commission to offer educator preparation programs leading to a California credential.



## **Guidance on Granting Equivalency for Sponsors of Educator Preparation Programs**

*(Based on the previously adopted report, *Comparability of Coursework  
for Sponsors of Special Education Teacher Preparation Programs*)*

November 2018

# Guidance on Granting Equivalency for Sponsors of Educator Preparation Programs

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Introduction .....   | 1  |
| Methods of Providing Equivalency .....   | 2  |
| Comparability Options .....  | 2  |
| Evidence-Based Standards.....  | 3  |
| Flexible Enrollment .....  | 3  |
| Program Sponsor Agreements.....  | 4  |
| Articulation Agreements .....  | 4  |
| Comparability and Equivalency .....  | 4  |
| Prior Learning Assessment.....   | 4  |
| Prior Learning Assessment with Essay .....   | 5  |
| Prior Learning Assessment without Essay.....   | 5  |
| Performance Learning Plan.....   | 5  |
| Verification/Monitoring of Work by Program Sponsor .....                             | 6  |
| Recency of Work Requirement.....   | 6  |
| Appeals Process .....  | 6  |
| Staff Appeals .....  | 7  |
| Commission Appeals.....  | 7  |
| Resources .....  | 8  |
| <a href="#">Glossary</a> .....   | 9  |
| <a href="#">Appendix A: Education Code 44265.2</a> .....                             | 10 |
| <a href="#">Appendix B: Samples of Acceptable Documentation for Portfolios</a> ..... | 12 |
| <a href="#">Appendix C: Samples of Scenarios for Reference Use</a> .....             | 13 |

## Introduction

In response to AB 2226 (Chap. 233, Stats. 2008), the Commission convened a workgroup for the purpose of providing guidance to programs in determining the comparability of coursework and/or field experience completed in other Commission-accredited programs to requirements of special education programs. The statute specifies that the findings of the workgroup are to be reported to the Legislature, the Governor, and the Secretary of Education.

When the [Comparability of Coursework for Sponsors of Special Education Teacher Preparation Programs](#) (March 2010) report was presented to the Commission, the Commission requested the Committee on Accreditation review the report and consider how similar information could be provided to all of the Commission's educator preparation programs. Enabling law, EC §44265.2, can be found in [Appendix A](#).

In discussing possible guidelines for comparability, the original special education workgroup established by the Commission identified several key principles to facilitate the work. The key principles presented below are the same principles developed by the special education workgroup, with the language broadened to be appropriate for all types of educator preparation programs:

- Decisions regarding comparability should be at the discretion of the program sponsor. It is important to note that there are no Commission-approved policies that restrict the authority of program sponsors to make decisions about issues such as equivalence, articulation, and comparability, as these terms are defined below.
- Program sponsors have a broad range of possibilities for data in considering evidence for comparability. For example, program sponsors can consider coursework, professional development, work experience, and life experience. Program sponsors have complete discretion over the range of evidence that may be considered.
- Evaluations of the evidence for comparability do not have to be based on a course credit model. Evaluations should be evidence-based and reflect the current Commission-approved standards for the type of credential program. The Commission does not require approved program sponsors to document units completed when recommending a candidate for an earned credential; however, program sponsors must keep a record of the evidence and decisions that address the candidate's competence in relation to the standards.
- For candidates simultaneously pursuing a degree in addition to earning a credential, approved program sponsors use their own institutional processes and procedures for course credit evaluations. However, this does not preclude sponsors from also conducting non-course credit, standards-based evaluations with respect to a candidate for the purpose of earning a credential.

- The evaluation process should be guided by the principles of candidate “friendliness” and candidate responsibility. There should be written directions for candidates to apply for evaluation from the program sponsor. Those directions should include any disclaimers that might impact a candidate’s decision about ultimately completing a credential with that program sponsor; for example, requirements to complete a minimum number of course units prior to being recommended for a credential should be clearly explained.
- The burden of retrieving, organizing, and reflecting on the evidence provided for evaluation lies with the candidate.
- The comparability evaluation process should be rigorous and documentation needs to be retained demonstrating the evaluation findings.
- Program sponsors may use their established institutional processes to recover appropriate costs to conduct evaluations.

## **Methods of Determining Equivalency**

The guidance provided in this document on determining equivalency is focused on equivalency of prior experience and education related to California credential requirements, not academic units. For institutions of higher education, please consult the [WASC Accreditation Handbook](#).

### **Comparability Options**

The following are non-restrictive examples of options which may be used to verify competency met by the candidate:

- Examination results inclusive of the specialty area that verify the competency of the candidate.
- A portfolio containing specified types of entries that demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities reflective of the specific credential sought by the candidate.
- A Performance Narrative addressing three components to include: Personal background information; academic background specific to the credential sought; and, classroom experience and performance including evaluative information, parent interactions, and collaborative skills and experiences with teaching peers and administrators.
- Field experience documentation reflecting a variety of observational reports, such as, addressing the spectrum of the disability area of the credential sought including the candidate’s ability to modify or accommodate the state curriculum standards to meet student needs and the ability and skills to meet the social-emotional needs of the specific student.

- A video (submitted with appropriate permissions) which includes representations of classroom methodologies, management, scope and sequencing of curriculum and social interactions with students.
- A transcript that provides sufficient information regarding course content, catalog descriptions, course syllabi, or a matrix identifying variations of course offerings across content areas.
- A Prior Learning Assessment which contains a descriptive narrative of the candidate's personal involvement in one or more of the following: 1) Life Experiences; 2) Work Experiences; 3) Paraprofessional Experience; 4) Parenting.
- A Review Board Process, which may be used by the Program Sponsor to examine the background of the candidate knowledge presented, along with its application in the specific classroom.

Options for verification may include all or part of the above categories as a written record to verify and monitor the completion of program requirements. [Appendix B](#) provides a summary of documentation that would be acceptable in this process.

### **Evidence-based Standards**

If a candidate directly presents evidence to the program sponsor for comparability in meeting specific credential requirements, the following guidelines should prevail:

- The candidate should present information based on current, adopted California credential standards as appropriate to the specific credential sought.
- As written agreements are formulated between the candidate and the Program Sponsor, such agreements must be evidence-based as appropriate to the specific credential standard requested for equivalence. Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) and other Commission requirements should be used as evidence-based criteria in the verification option of fieldwork experiences for teaching credentials.
- Evaluative information presented by the candidate must be in line with the TPEs and the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession*.

### **Flexible Enrollment**

Flexible enrollment should be considered for candidates who need minimal work to complete a credential program. Program sponsors should explore alternatives for candidate enrollment in the program. These alternatives include but are not limited to visitor status, concurrent

enrollment, open university, county/district programs or through university extension programs, and professional development activities.

Flexible enrollment may be used to assist individuals who need prerequisite work to enter a credential program, may need one or two classes to complete a program, or may have relocated and need work to complete their program at the recommending program sponsor. In some cases, the only option for the candidate may be use of the Commission's CL-666 Form - [Institution's Evaluation for Staff Appeal \(RGA-16\)](#), (only available in the CIG) used by institutions.

### **Program Sponsor Agreements**

Program sponsors may take advantage of their frequent collaborations to formalize broad or limited written agreements concerning comparability of coursework and/or fieldwork. Such agreements may be created to meet the needs of individual programs or individual candidates. In some cases, program sponsors may agree to accept work completed at another program as comparable. In this case a formal agreement might not be necessary.

#### *Articulation Agreements*

Articulation agreements indicate that the courses taken at one institution or through a given program sponsor are transferable to another institution or program sponsor as indicated in the agreement. Articulation agreements may include: community college and four year institutions, or four year institutions and/or local program sponsors and institutions of higher education. Articulation agreements may involve the components of the preliminary and/or clear credentials. These agreements may be created at the system level or at the local level.

#### *Comparability and Equivalency*

Program sponsors may unilaterally decide to accept coursework and/or fieldwork from other program sponsors. A program may evaluate the content of a candidate's course of study and fieldwork from another program, plus other life experiences of the candidate and determine the candidate's knowledge, skills and abilities in the area of the credential being sought to be comparable or equivalent to those required by the recommending sponsor. The candidate's program and/or experiences may have been completed within California, in another state, or at an institution from another country. Coursework completed outside the country must be evaluated by a Commission-approved agency as described in the [Foreign Transcript Evaluation leaflet](#).

### **Prior Learning Assessment**

Prospective candidates may be able to gain recognition and credit for their life and learning experiences through a process called "Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)." As adult learners, these prospective candidates may have acquired knowledge through "experiential learning" that is equivalent to what is taught in a college classroom. This experiential learning may have been attained from a variety of sources such as a job/career, volunteer work, self-study, or

courses taken in a non-traditional college setting. Granting of equivalencies that meet credential or authorization standards and/or fieldwork requirements through PLA involves the candidate's developing a portfolio or other verification options that organize the candidate's learning experiences in a manner that can be evaluated for comparability.

Prior to beginning to develop a portfolio, the candidate would meet with a program advisor to discuss ideas for participating in the Prior Learning Assessment process. The advisor would review the candidate's pre-evaluation of experiential learning activities/experiences. Once approved for proceeding to the Prior Learning Assessment process, the Program Advisor will document the approval of pre-experiential learning activities in a **Performance Learning Plan**.

Through the Prior Learning Assessment process, the candidates have an opportunity to demonstrate how their experiences and learning are comparable to what is required by the standards. Two distinct methods are available to demonstrate their learning: submission of a portfolio with an essay or submission of a portfolio without an essay. The following provides an overview of the differences between the two and illustrates which PLA process is appropriate for the candidate's knowledge and experience.

#### *Prior Learning Assessment with Essay*

The portfolio is developed based on required standards for the credential. The portfolio will include an essay demonstrating evidence-based learning activities that meet the required Commission standards through the experiential learning. Portfolios are evaluated to determine whether the candidate's experiential learning (knowledge) is equivalent to the standard being submitted with the portfolio.

Note: Meeting the equivalent course requirements for knowledge gained is not given for seat time or for having had the experience itself. For example, attending a four-week training program does not guarantee that the candidate has learned what was taught in the program. Instead, the candidate needs to provide evidence that he/she has the knowledge.

#### *Prior Learning Assessment without Essay:*

The portfolio is developed based on required standards that the candidate completed outside of a traditional, college classroom. The experiential learning activity being submitted should have the following characteristics:

- Required learning outcomes are stated and assessment of performance is provided.
- The experiential learning content is demonstrably equivalent to the Commission standards.
- Printed documentation is provided of the learning objectives, delivery method, and information about the instructor or instructional methods.
- Sponsorship is documented to be by a qualified provider.



## **Verification/Monitoring of Work by Program Sponsor**

This section outlines the process for the Program Sponsor to verify and monitor completion of program requirements, including any attempts by the candidate to meet requirements through an articulation agreement, equivalency, and comparability.

There should be an overall program completion form to document all requirements and their completion, which will be signed by the candidate, the advisor, and the program coordinator (or designee).

Upon evaluating a credential candidate's prior course work and experiences a Candidate Completion Plan (CCP) could be prepared. This plan would delineate the course work and/or fieldwork the candidate must complete in order to be recommended for the credential. The plan would be filed with the Program Sponsor and a copy kept by the candidate. The plan should include a timeline for completion. This information should be transmitted to the Credential Analyst/authorized signatory for inclusion in the candidate's file.

The authorization process is up to the discretion of the program sponsor, but in order to have reliability, the process should be outlined on a CCP that has more than one designated signature. The written record is ultimately submitted to the credential analyst. Program sponsors are responsible for the ongoing reliability and validity of the process.

## **Recency of Work Requirement**

When applying to the Commission for program approval, a program sponsor will describe its process for determining how recency of work will be considered when determining a candidate's "challenge" to meeting a Commission required standard.

The program sponsor needs to have policies and guidelines in place to determine if recency of work is relevant and if the work is sufficiently up to date to verify knowledge of the current statutes, research, practices and state standards.

The program sponsor will provide the candidate with a process form for demonstrating how recency of work relates to required standards for credential completion. The record of the process shall become part of the candidate's portfolio.

Program sponsors are encouraged to create a database of comparable coursework and fieldwork to facilitate the completion of credential programs. [Appendix C](#) provides a number of scenarios for reference.

## Appeals Process

Each program sponsor approved to offer one or more educator preparation programs must have an appeals or grievance process in place ([General Precondition # 8](#)). The appeals policy should address granting equivalencies and be provided in writing within admission forms and in the college catalog or advising materials. Candidates must complete the institutional appeal process before submitting an appeal to the Commission.

### Individual Appeals Submitted to the Commission

Upon appeal, the Commission may issue a teaching or service credential or an extension to a credential to individuals who meet specific criteria. There are two types of appeals:

#### Staff Appeals

Commission staff may issue an extension or renew a credential or permit when an applicant verifies good cause for not completing renewal requirements. An appeal may be issued only once, except in cases where the extenuating circumstances continue to exist and the applicant has made sufficient progress toward completion of the requirements. All appeal extension applications are reviewed on an individual basis. Appeals are not granted if an applicant cannot show good cause or substantial reasons for the request. Financial hardship cannot be considered a valid reason for appeal.

#### *Examples of staff appeals*

- **New Requirement Added by Statute or Regulation:** The candidate was not informed of a new requirement and has completed all other requirements for the renewal of the credential.
- **Medical Appeal:** The candidate did not complete renewal requirements due to medical or health reasons affecting the applicant, family, or household member.
- **Failure to Complete Renewal Requirement(s):** The candidate did not have the time to complete all renewal requirements.
- **Program Sponsor Unable to Recommend for a Credential:** The candidate has completed all the requirements for a credential but the program sponsor is unable to recommend for the credential due to specific policies such as recency of coursework or residency coursework not completed.

#### Commission Appeals

The Commission has the authority to review actual teaching experience to seek equivalency to the student teaching component. Title 5, California Code of Regulations, sections 80505 through 80522 allow an applicant to appeal to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing for the purpose of finding “equivalency” of an individual’s teaching experience in lieu of the

student teaching component. There are no provisions in Title 5 Regulations allowing the Commission to grant equivalency to coursework. All pertinent coursework such as methods, curriculum, and subject matter must be completed prior to filing for an appeal. As with Staff Appeals, financial hardship cannot be considered a valid reason for appeal.

- The program sponsor must state it is unwilling or unable to supervise the candidate in a current paid teaching position. A full explanation from the program sponsor is required.
- If the program sponsor is able to supervise the candidate in a current teaching position, the application will be denied by Commission staff as there shall be no basis for appeal.
- A minimum of three years of satisfactory teaching experience submitted in lieu of the student teaching component must be:
  - a. after completion of a baccalaureate degree;
  - b. concurrent with or after a professional teacher preparation program;
  - c. at the level and scope of the credential being sought; and
  - d. in the subject to be listed on the credential.

**Resources:**

Extension by Appeal for Teaching Credentials and Permits Information Leaflet:

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/al3.pdf>

Options to Expanding Employability Webpage:

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/default-current.html>

Commission Appeals for Education Specialist Instruction Credentials:

<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/cl760sm.pdf>

**Contact Information:**

Commission's Information Services Section

By email: [info@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:info@ctc.ca.gov) By telephone: 1-888-921-2682

## Glossary

- *Articulation agreement*: written agreement between one sponsor/preparer and another to accept the coursework and/or fieldwork of the offering agency. An example of an articulation agreement is the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between an educator preparation institution and one or more local community colleges
- *Comparability*: the determination that a candidate has demonstrated the essence of the set of knowledge, skills or abilities required by a particular Commission program standard through another route.
- *Concurrent Enrollment*: Enrollment in more than one institution at the same time. Please see each institution's catalog for concurrent enrollment policies.
- *Equivalence*: the determination that a given set of knowledge, skills, and abilities as reflected in standards have been met through coursework/fieldwork/prior learning experiences as determined by an evaluation process.
- *Prior Learning Assessment*: a process through which a person develops a portfolio of life experiences and/or training/preparation experiences that establish the basis for meeting the appropriate standard(s). For institutions of higher education, please consult WASC's [credit for prior learning policy](#). The WASC policy governs university units and degrees but not completion of requirements for credential purposes.
- *Program sponsor*: Any university-based or local education agency-based educator preparation program approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
- *Reciprocity*: a mutual agreement among sponsors/preparers/authorities to accept unconditionally each other's coursework/fieldwork/professional learning experiences. An example of reciprocity is the agreement between the different institutions within the CSU system that have partnered to form the Asian BCLAD program.
- *Waiver*: a document issued by the Commission on request from an employing agency when a candidate lacks a credential requirement, for example, basic skills. **Note**: The term "waiver" is not an appropriate term with reference to evaluating candidates for equivalence/comparability.

## **Appendix A**

### **Education Code section 44265.2**

#### **Programs Offering Comparability and Equivalency to a Special Education Credential Holder Adding an Additional Authorization**

*(a) A program sponsor may offer comparability and equivalency to a special education credential holder seeking to add a special education authorization to his or her credential. The following are guidelines for offering comparability and equivalency, subject to criteria and guidelines issued by the commission:*

- (1) Decisions regarding comparability are at the discretion of the program sponsor.*
- (2) A program sponsor has a broad range of possible data that may be considered as evidence for comparability.*
- (3) For a candidate simultaneously pursuing a degree in addition to earning a credential, a program sponsor may use its own institutional process and procedure for course credit evaluations.*

*(b) Evidence used to verify competency may include the following, subject to criteria and guidelines issued by the commission:*

- (1) Examination results.*
- (2) A portfolio.*
- (3) A performance narrative.*
- (4) Field experience.*
- (5) Video.*
- (6) Transcripts.*
- (7) Prior learning assessment.*
- (8) A review board process.*

*(c) A program sponsor may use the following to evaluate evidence for comparability presented by a candidate, subject to criteria and guidelines issued by the commission:*

- (1) Whether the information is based on current, adopted California credential standards, as appropriate to the authorization sought.*
- (2) Whether a written agreement between the candidate and program sponsor is evidence based, as appropriate to the authorization sought.*
- (3) Whether the information is aligned with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession.*

*(d) Flexible enrollment may be considered for a candidate who needs minimal work to complete a credential program. A program sponsor may explore alternatives for candidate enrollment in the program, including, but not limited to, visitor status, concurrent enrollment, open university,*

county or district programs, university extension programs, and professional development activities.

(e) A program sponsor may take advantage of frequent collaborations to formalize a written agreement concerning comparability of coursework or fieldwork. The agreement may be created to meet the needs of the individual program or the individual candidate.

(f) A candidate may be granted recognition and credit for his or her life and learning experience through a prior learning assessment in which the candidate has the opportunity to demonstrate how his or her experience and learning are comparable to the commission program standard.

(g) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Equivalency" means the determination, through an evaluation process, that a set of knowledge, skills, and abilities required by a commission program standard has been met through coursework, fieldwork, or prior learning experience.

(2) "Comparability" means the determination that a candidate has demonstrated the essence of a set of knowledge, skills, and abilities required by a commission program standard through another route.

(3) "Prior learning assessment" means a process through which a person develops a portfolio of life experiences, training, or preparation experience that establishes the basis for meeting the commission program standard.

(4) "Program sponsor" means a university-based or local educational agency-based program approved by the commission.

(Added by Stats. 2013, Ch. 717, Sec. 1. (SB 368) Effective January 1, 2014.)

## Appendix B

### Samples of Acceptable Documentation for Portfolios

#### Acceptable Types of Documentation

Portfolios must include documentation that supports the activities and learning experiences described in written essays. This would include letters from employers verifying job responsibilities and certificates of completion of any training or coursework. The following provides more information on acceptable types of documentation.

| Type of Activity                 | Acceptable Documentation   |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Work Experience                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job descriptions</li> <li>• Awards</li> <li>• Letters of collaboration from superiors, peers, clients</li> <li>• Performance standards for acquiring certifications</li> <li>• Samples of work produced</li> </ul>  |
| Community Service Activities     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commendations and awards</li> <li>• Newspaper and magazine clippings</li> <li>• Letters of collaboration from co-volunteers, clients served, supervisors</li> </ul>   |
| Non-college Courses and Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter attesting student completed the course</li> <li>• Learning outcomes or objectives of course</li> <li>• Evidence of completion</li> <li>• Course description(s) outline(s)</li> <li>• Number of didactic hours</li> <li>• Number of clinical or practicum hours</li> <li>• Diplomas/Certifications</li> </ul> |
| Special Accomplishments          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Books or articles published</li> <li>• Programs designed</li> <li>• Speeches given</li> <li>• Written samples</li> <li>• Audiovisual presentations</li> <li>• Proposals written</li> </ul>  |

# **Appendix C**

## **Samples of Scenarios for Reference Use**

### **Introduction**

To help understand how these guidelines might be applied, fictitious scenarios have been prepared to illustrate situations in which the Guidelines could be used.

### **Scenario 1: School Counselor Wants to Earn an Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate Disabilities Teaching Credential**

James is a school counselor who is interested in becoming an education specialist for Mild/Moderate Disabilities (MMD). He has contacted the institution where he earned his pupil personnel services school counseling credential and inquired as to the process for making such a career change.

Rather than completing the process via phone and e-mail contacts, it was suggested that he contact the program coordinator for the Education Specialist: MMD credential to schedule an appointment and to determine a course of action.

In preparation for the appointment, James obtains copies of his transcripts and letters of support from his professional colleagues. He also drafts a personal statement and obtains letters verifying activities carried out in his role as a school counselor. He downloads and prints the course sequence for the Education Specialist: MMD Credential as well as the courses he completed for his school counselor credential.

James meets with the Education Specialist: MMD Credential program coordinator, Dr. Julia Duenas. James expresses his interest in changing professions and states that he hopes some of his coursework from his school counseling program as well as his work in the schools may be applied to his credential program.

Julia explains that there are several options open to him to demonstrate competency with respect to meeting the standards for the credential. She also explains that there are some requirements that are set by the state and are not negotiable.

Together Julia and James prepare an equivalency chart that represents the program requirements, prior coursework and experiences that may be applied towards meeting the standards for the credential. At the end of the review, they will create a Program Completion Plan for James. Should James choose to attend this institution, he would be responsible for the completion of the requirements as indicated on the plan. The institution will honor the commitments made to James as indicated on the plan.

At the end of the review of transcripts, letters of support, personal statement and response to interview questions the Personal Completion Plan was drafted. It requires that James supply additional information that further describes how his preparation for being a school counselor and his work as a school counselor enable him to meet the standards for the Education Specialist Mild/Moderate Disabilities Credential. James must also provide a thorough description of his duties as a school counselor in order to obtain credit for fieldwork in Mild/Moderate disabilities.



### Sample Program Completion Plan

| Requirements                                | Previously Met | Equivalency      | Need to Complete |
|---|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>State</b>                                |                |                  |                  |
| CSET  |                |                  | √                |
| Basic Skills Requirement (CBEST)            | √              |                  |                  |
| US Constitution                             | √              |                  |                  |
| Certificate of Clearance                    | √              |                  |                  |
| RICA  |                |                  | √                |
| <b>Program – Mild/Moderate Disabilities</b> |                |                  |                  |
| Introduction to M/M Disabilities            |                | √ <sup>1</sup>   |                  |
| Instructional Strategies                    |                |                  | √                |
| Assessment                                  |                |                  | √                |
| Positive Behavior Support                   |                | √ <sup>2</sup>   |                  |
| Collaboration/Consultation                  |                | √ <sup>2</sup>   |                  |
| M/M Field Work (2 experiences)              |                | √ <sup>1,2</sup> |                  |
| Law/SST/IEP Process                         |                | √ <sup>1,2</sup> |                  |
| <b>General Education</b>                    |                |                  |                  |
| Curriculum                                  |                |                  | √                |
| Assessment                                  |                |                  | √                |
| Reading                                     |                |                  | √                |
| English Learners                            |                |                  | √                |
| Educational Psychology                      |                | √ <sup>1</sup>   |                  |
| Diversity                                   |                | √ <sup>1,2</sup> |                  |
| Fieldwork                                   |                | √ <sup>2</sup>   |                  |

<sup>1</sup> Through previous coursework

<sup>2</sup> Through previous employment

An area of discussion between James and Julia was that of meeting the standards for knowledge and skills in general education, including English learners. James felt that his five years as a counselor for students at the elementary level should be ‘worth something’. Julia stated that if James could present sufficient evidence to demonstrate that he had met the specific standards, he could be able to obtain equivalencies. Julia reiterated that the candidate must demonstrate that he has met the standards on which courses are based.

James and Julia agreed to meet in three weeks. In three weeks James will present his evidence to demonstrate that he had met the content of the standards as indicated in the areas above where equivalencies are granted on the basis of employment. He will also present additional evidence in order to convince Julia that some of the elements in the need to complete column should be moved to equivalencies column.

### **Scenario 2: Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate Needs an Added Authorization for Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Mrs. Johnson holds a Mild/Moderate credential and currently has a teaching assignment as a resource specialist in an elementary school. She wants to add an autism authorization to her current credential. After meeting with her county office of education (COE) credential analyst and determining that they can act as her program sponsor, Mrs. Johnson and the program sponsor representative review the standards required to complete the authorization. During this discussion, Mrs. Johnson states that for the past five years she has been the case manager for several students with autism who are fully included in general education classes at her site. Her assignment requires her to evaluate their academic, social/emotional, motor, and self help skills, determine areas of need, and develop appropriate goals for each of the students. She provides direct services through push-in and pull-out programs and indirect services by offering and providing training to general education teachers and support personnel who work with the identified students. Mrs. Johnson has worked with parents and the school psychologist to develop behavior support plans (BSP) and has developed and implemented a social skills program for a number of her students.

The program sponsor agrees that these responsibilities meet many of the standards needed for the authorization. Mrs. Johnson collects samples of the Individualized Education Programs and BSPs she has developed, sample lesson plans and lesson evaluations from her social skills classes and letters from her principal as well as the school psychologist specifically addressing the standards Mrs. Johnson and the COE representative feel she has met. After reviewing the collected information, they determine that she has completed all but one of the required standards and can meet that final standard by taking one class offered by the COE's Commission-approved Autism Spectrum Disorder program.

### **Scenario 3: General Education Teacher Wants Credit Towards an Education Specialist Teaching Credential**

Jane Doe has been a successful 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher for ten years. Jane has developed a visual impairment that is easily accommodated with large print materials and technology and has no negative impact on her job. This impairment, however, has caused her to become interested in special education, so she makes an appointment with John Buck, a professor at the local university, to discuss getting a special education (SPED) credential. She walks into the meeting with transcripts in hand.

After discussing the program requirements with John, Jane asks if some of the coursework and fieldwork in the SPED program can be "waived," since she has another credential and has so much teaching experience. John explains that the term "waiver" is used only by the Commission; but if some equivalencies can be found between what she has done and the program requirements, and if Jane's prior work or life experience matches some of the program's coursework or fieldwork standards, John may be able to eliminate the requirement from her course of study.

Specifically, Jane felt she did not need to take the literacy course, the math course, the science course and the health course. They studied her transcripts together and saw that she took courses for literacy, math, and science but she took them over ten years ago. John asked her to supply the course syllabi in order to make a competency comparison between her past courses

and our courses, but she was unable to do so. She had an undergrad major in health science, but that was over 16 years ago and, again, she was unable to provide any syllabi or coursework. Consequently, they agreed that Jane could develop a portfolio of her teaching experiences involving literacy, math, science and health. The portfolio would include classroom photos, lesson plans, student work and a letter from her principal verifying its contents. She understood that John and the program coordinator would analyze the portfolio according to the course standards to determine comparability and document the process. In the end they filled and out and signed an advising form documenting what courses she would take, what courses she might not have to take if her portfolio supports it and she is given a timeline for completion.

#### **Scenario 4: Out-of-State High School Teacher with a Masters Degree in Special Education Wants California Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate Authorization**

Jack moved to California from another state and wants to resume his teaching career, where he taught math to high school students with learning disabilities for five years. He worries that this is a complicated situation because he knows that, while his current state will allow him to teach in a special education program only requiring a Masters Degree in Special Education, California requires an Education Specialist Credential. He researches colleges on the internet and chooses XYZ University.

At the university, Jack meets with Dr. Jill to determine how to go about obtaining a California credential. During the process of reviewing Jack's transcripts, the first thing Dr. Jill discovers is that, unlike California, his state did not require that he pass assessments in order to demonstrate competence in basic skills, subject matter, reading, and cultural/linguistic diversity. She also realizes that he began his teaching with no fieldwork experience and did not take several courses that California requires. In addition, although he took a law course, he has no knowledge of the regulations that California has implemented in order to comply with Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. Dr. Jill then says to Jack, "Which do you want first—the good news or the bad news?"

The bad news is that the university cannot grant equivalencies for requirements beyond their approved program. In other words, according to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, all California teachers must meet the Basic Skills Requirement (BSR) and reading requirement (such as the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment - RICA). Thus, Jack will need to meet the BSR before entering into any California program. Jack may pass the RICA examination while in the program.

The good news is that Jack has an undergraduate degree in math, so he can likely meet the subject matter requirement through coursework or examination. If he had been an elementary teacher, he would have needed to pass the Multiple Subject CSET examination. Also, since Jack has all of his master's degree course syllabi and a portfolio of his teaching experiences, it will be possible to do a comparability assessment to match Jack's knowledge, skills and abilities related to the required California standards for the credential courses and fieldwork. This assessment will also look for cultural/linguistic diversity competence. If the syllabi and portfolio do not provide enough detail, she will ask Jack to write a narrative to demonstrate in-depth knowledge.

Jack and Dr. Jill will meet again after she reviews his documents in order to develop a program completion plan to determine what courses and experiences he will need to complete. Jack goes home a happy man.

**Scenario 5: Preliminary Multiple Subject Teacher has Completed One Year of Induction and Wants to Complete the Requirements for the Multiple Subject Clear Teaching Credential through a different Induction Program**

Inez completed one year of the Induction program offered by her local school district. Due to a reduction in the teaching force in her district, Inez has accepted a job with a different school district. The new employing school district does not offer an approved Induction Program and therefore the Inez must find a new Teacher Induction program.

Inez has taken her materials from the Induction program to meet with the coordinator of the induction program at a local university. The program coordinator and Inez reviewed the Induction program standards and the university's approved induction program requirements. Inez was able to provide evidence of work completed in her first year of the Induction program. Together Inez and the Induction program coordinator developed a Candidate Completion Plan (CCP) or an individual induction plan for Inez that will allow her to finish the requirements for her Clear Teaching Credential by completing a subset of the work that the university program requires—an equivalency is granted for the other parts of the program. Inez makes plans to apply to and enroll in the university's Induction program.

**Scenario 6: A prospective candidate completed a degree at one university and would like to have his coursework and experience satisfy the subject matter requirement for a preliminary single subject teaching credential**

The response to this scenario depends on the institution to which Edward applied for his preliminary single subject teacher preparation, the match or mismatch between the candidate's bachelor's degree and the content area for which the single subject credential is sought and if the institution where Edward will complete his professional preparation has an approved single subject matter program in the content area. The Title 5 regulations (§80094) require that an evaluation for single subject matter equivalency involve the candidate completing all or a portion of the coursework for either the degree or the professional preparation at the institution evaluating the subject matter coursework, or that the coursework being evaluated be in the content area in which the bachelor's degree was earned.

Edward's bachelor's degree in Biology is from a regionally accredited university in California but the university does not have any approved subject matter programs. Edward has applied to a different university to complete his preliminary single subject teaching credential in Chemistry. Edward is requesting that his coursework and experiences be evaluated and an equivalency be granted for the approved single subject matter program, thereby not requiring him to take and pass the CSET examination.

Option A: If the university that Edward has applied to for his preliminary single subject teacher preparation program has an approved single subject matter program in the specified

content area, the program **may** evaluate the coursework and experience Edward has completed and if equivalent, verify that Edward has completed the equivalent of the approved subject matter program. See table on the next page.

Option B: If neither the university where Edward completed his undergraduate degree nor the university where Edward has been accepted for his professional preparation has an approved single subject preparation program in the specified content area **and** the specified content area is Edward's major, then a third university which has an approved subject matter preparation program in that specified content **may** evaluate the coursework and experience Edward has completed and if equivalent, verify that Edward has completed the equivalent of the approved subject matter program. If Edward had earned a degree in Chemistry, and was seeking a Single Subject Science: Chemistry teaching credential then the third party university could review and if appropriate, verify subject matter for Edward. See table on the next page.

Option C: If the university that Edward has applied to for his preliminary single subject teacher preparation program does not have an approved single subject matter program in the specified content area, a third institution may not evaluate his coursework and experience because Edward's bachelor's degree is in Biology, not Chemistry. See table on the next page.

Provided below is a summary table with the information on Subject Matter Equivalencies as defined in Title 5 §80094

| Degree in the Same Subject?  |     | Where the Candidate Completed the Content Preparation |    |                                 |    | Recommending Entity  |
|--|-----|---|----|---------------------------------|----|--|
|  |     | Undergraduate Institution                             |    | Teacher Preparation Institution |    |  |
|  |     | Sponsors a Commission-approved SMPP?                  |    |                                 |    |  |
|  |     | Yes   | No | Yes                             | No |  |
| Is <u>BA</u> in same subject as the one for which equivalency is sought? | Yes | X   |    |                                 |    | Undergraduate Institution with SMPP*   |
|  |     |   | X  | X                               |    | Teacher Preparation Institution with SMPP  |
|  |     |   | X  |                                 | X  | Third Party Institution with SMPP evaluates and if equivalent, writes letter verifying |
|  | No  | X   |    |                                 |    | Undergraduate Institution with SMPP  |
|  |     |   | X  | X                               |    | Teacher Preparation Institution with SMPP  |
|  |     |   | X  |                                 | X  | No Institution may grant equivalency   |

\*Commission-approved Subject Matter Preparation Program