

Discussion of Program Flexibilities due to COVID-19 and the 2020-2021 Academic Year October 2020

Overview

This agenda item presents information on the flexibilities that have been put in place for educator preparation to address the health and safety restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. The item also details the guidance that has been developed for the educator preparation field about the flexibilities.

Recommendation

This is an Information item.

Background

A number of flexibilities have been put in place for credential holders, applicants, candidates, and program completers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic for both academic year 2019-20 and 2020-21:

- At the April 2020 meeting, the Commission acted, in two distinct agenda items, to identify modifications and options for credential candidates to support completion of preparation during school closures. These actions were summarized in a document posted to the Commission’s website on May 5, 2020 titled [“Flexibilities Approved by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing at the April 2020 Commission Meeting in Response to COVID-19 Related School Closures”](#).
- On May 29, 2020 an Executive Order, N-66-20, was released that provided [additional pathways](#) for completing candidates and applicants for the 2020-21 year.
- The Budget Trailer bill (AB77 and SB 98, Section 37), signed by Governor Newsom, provides additional flexibilities by extending the validity period for examinations from ten to 11 years between for individuals applying to credential programs 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 the 2020-21 academic year.
- At the [October 2020 meeting](#), the Commission approved the continued issuance of CBEST Deferrals and Variable Term Waivers requested by Program Sponsors through January 31, 2021.

A summary of the flexibilities is provided in the [Appendix](#) of this item.

Communicating with Educator Preparation Programs

A number of [Program Sponsor Alerts](#) were developed, posted, and shared with educator preparation programs to identify the flexibilities and provide guidance on the flexibilities that are available to applicants, candidates, and programs. A list of these are in the table below.

Number	Subject	Date
20-17	Preliminary Teacher Preparation Program Support for Candidates who are Accepted Prior to Meeting the Basic Skills and/or the Subject Matter Competency Requirement	9/29/2020
20-16	Senate Bill 820 Signed by Governor Newsom Extends COVID Flexibilities for Academic Year 2020-21	9/29/2020
20-14	Guidance to Administrative Services Induction Programs Regarding the Support of Candidates Impacted by COVID-19	9/10/2020
20-13	Guidance to Teacher Induction Programs About Supporting New Candidates Impacted by COVID-19	9/9/2020
20-12	Out-of-State Candidates, Fingerprint Cards, and the Certificate of Clearance	8/26/2020
20-11	Commission-approved Flexibilities and Specificities for Preliminary Education Specialist Candidates in the 2020-21 Academic Year	8/14/2020
20-10	Commission-approved Flexibilities and Specificities for Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject Candidates in the 2020-21 Academic Year	8/14/2020
20-09	Deferral of the Transition Date for Pupil Personnel Services Credential Programs to Transition to the 2019 Program Standards to Academic Year 2022-23	8/14/2020
20-06	Program Modification Document	7/2/2020

These PSAs and additional guidance have been posted on the [COVID Guidance webpage](#). The best advice for accessing accurate and current information is to begin with the most recent guidance and then work back through earlier guidance, if needed. The most recent guidance has the information that is applicable going forward through the 2020-21 academic year. A [Summary Table](#) was developed and posted on the web. This Summary Table has been updated as each action that provides flexibilities has been taken.

Program Specific Office Hours

During the summer, staff met weekly with program leaders across the segments that sponsor teacher preparation programs to gather information for the 2020-21 year. Based on the value that both staff and the program leaders found in the meetings, the decision was made to offer program specific office hours during 2020-21. The office hours are also times when program leaders can ask questions of other program leaders and share best practices and strategies related to a topic. These office hours are listed below.

Program Support Office Hours

Program	Days	Times
Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject	1 st and 3 rd Tuesdays	10 am- 11 am
Teacher Intern	1 st and 3 rd Tuesdays	11 am- noon
Preliminary Education Specialist	2 nd and 4 th Mondays	10 am – 11:30 pm
Teacher Induction with Performance Assessment staff	Thursdays	9 am- 9:50 am

The Program Support office hours are facilitated by staff with expertise in that program area. Staff are noting the number of institutions that are participating in the office hours as well as the general topics that are being discussed. Specific questions that are challenging are being then discussed later by staff, researched, and resolutions sought when possible.

The Performance Assessment staff are holding office hours to support Preliminary program leaders as they did in prior years, but additional office hours have been added in Fall 2020 to support Induction program leaders, mentors/coaches, and candidates. As the table below shows, the office hours for new teachers and new administrators have been scheduled outside the TK-12 school day.

Performance Assessment Office Hours

Focus of Office Hours	Day	Time
CalTPA: Preliminary Programs	Thursdays	10:00 - 10:30 am
CalTPA: Induction Programs	Thursdays	9:00 - 9:50 am
CalTPA: Candidates in Induction	Wednesdays	4:15 - 5:00 pm
Ed Sp CalTPA: Preliminary Programs	Fridays	10:00 – 10:50 am
CalAPA: Preliminary Programs	Thursdays	11:00 - 11:30 am
CalAPA: CASC Programs	Thursdays	8:00 - 8:50 am
CalAPA: Candidates in CASC Programs	Wednesdays	5:00 - 5:45 pm

Preliminary Teacher Preparation Programs and Supporting Candidates Who Still need to Meet the Basic Skills Requirement and/or the Subject Matter Requirement

With the flexibilities in place, preliminary teacher preparation programs have enrolled candidates who have not met the Basic Skills Requirement (BSR) or the subject matter requirement. [Program Sponsor Alert 20-17](#) was developed to ensure that all preliminary programs understand that they are responsible to support and guide the candidates who have these additional assessment requirements. Staff will continue to provide technical assistance to

preliminary teacher preparation programs and encourage programs to share best practices as to how to support teacher candidates who still need to meet the BSR or the subject matter requirement.

Induction Programs and New Educators who still need to Complete Assessments

Due to the COVID-19 flexibilities, there are candidates entering teacher and administrator induction programs who still have requirements from the Preliminary program to meet. PSAs 20-13 and 20-14 address this topic and in particular the kind of support that the induction program, in collaboration with the preliminary program, needs to provide to these candidates to ensure that they can complete their requirements. In particular, the IDP or transition plan should be enhanced to include a focus on completing these requirements such that when the candidate enters induction, the induction program can provide that support in addition to individualized mentoring. Staff in both the Professional Services Division and the Performance Assessment Development and Policy Division continue to meet with and listen to program leaders, develop support documents and webinars, and look for avenues to meet with induction leaders, coaches, mentors, and candidates to provide support for these candidates.

Impact of these Flexibilities on Accreditation

Accreditation visits taking place in 20-21 will be completed through technology. The additional flexibilities complicate the site visits in that not all candidates are completing the preparation programs as the programs were designed. Staff is working with both the institutions and the teams to make sense of the flexibilities, understand how they can be implemented, and to determine if there is a nexus between the flexibilities and the team's work to make decisions on standards and develop an accreditation recommendation.

Committee Discussion

The Committee should discuss these flexibilities to ensure it understands the allowable flexibilities for this unusual time and how it may impact programs for this academic year.

Next Steps

Staff will continue to monitor program implementation of the flexibilities and bring additional items to the Committee or the Commission as needed.

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
PSVTW	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 requires candidates to complete placements at least two grade level bands for a minimum of 100 hours in each placement. This requirement is waived for the 2020-21 year. 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 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