Discussion of the Refinements to Stages II, III, and IV of the
Initial Institutional Approval Process
October 2022

Overview

This agenda item provides information on the refinements to Stages II, III, and IV of the Initial Institutional Approval (IIA) process adopted by the Commission at its October 2022 meeting.

Staff Recommendation

This is an information item.

Background

California Education Code §44372(c) gives the Commission the authority to accredit institutions that seek to offer programs that lead to a credential to serve as an educator in California public schools. As such, the Commission devised and formally adopted a five-stage IIA process in 2016. The intention for this process was to create a more rigorous system for approving institutions that have not previously been approved by the Commission to operate educator preparation licensure programs in California.

As staff continues to implement the Commission's IIA process and work with institutions moving through it, it continually seeks to identify areas for improvement and further refinement. After the presentation of numerous IIA items to the Commission, staff noted that Commissioners have often expressed an interest in how a prospective program sponsor both explains the need for the proposed program(s) and identifies the partnerships it expects to establish. This led staff to consider if the Initial Program Preconditions, which are currently in Stage III, would be more appropriately placed in Stage II, which would allow an institution to address Commissioners' areas of interest at the onset of the IIA process rather than in a subsequent stage. Additionally, since the Eligibility Requirements and the General Preconditions correspond closely, staff proposed moving General Precondition #9 from Stage III to Stage II with the Eligibility Requirements. Staff also proposed moving the program-specific preconditions to Stage IV because this would provide an opportunity for the institution to give their full consideration to the proposed program(s) as they create programmatic documentation.

At the October 2022 meeting, the Commission was presented with these proposed refinements to Stages II, III, and IV of the IIA process (Appendix A). These refinements were adopted by the Commission and are illustrated on the following page and in the updated Five Stages of the IIA Process chart on page 3:

IIA Stage	Current Requirements that institutions in IIA respond to:	Requirements institutions would respond to as proposed in this item:
Stage II	• 12 Eligibility Criteria	• 12 Eligibility Criteria • Initial Program Preconditions • General Precondition #9, as applicable
Stage III	• Initial Program Preconditions • Program-Specific Preconditions • General Precondition #9, as applicable • Common Standards	• Common Standards
Stage IV	• Program Standards	• Program-Specific Preconditions • Program Standards

Next Steps

No further action needed at this time.

Updated Initial Institutional Approval: Five Stages Chart

(Additions to stages are highlighted and italicized. Strikethroughs denote relocation of submission requirements to another stage)

*At conclusion of stage   **Institutionally approved but cannot offer programs   ***May begin offering approved program

IIA Process	Stage I - Prerequisites	Stage II – Eligibility Requirements	Stage III – Common Standards	Stage IV – Initial Program Approval	Stage V – Provisional Site Visit
Purpose	Ensures legal eligibility of institution in California

Ensures institution understands requirements of Commission's accreditation system | Ensures that institution has capacity to sponsor effective programs | ~~Ensures institution meets all relevant preconditions~~ Ensures institution meets all Common Standards | Ensures all proposed programs meet all relevant program standards *and program-specific preconditions* | Program operates for 2-4 years and hosts a provisional accreditation site visit |
Institutional Requirements	Must: • Have legal eligibility • Attend Accreditation 101 with institutional team	Submit responses to: • 12 Eligibility Criteria • *Initial Program Preconditions* • *General Precondition #9*	Submit responses to: • ~~Preconditions~~ • Common Standards	Submit responses to: • *Program-Specific Preconditions* • Program Standards	Must: • Collect data • Host provisional site visit
Reviewed By	Staff	Staff	BIR	**Preconditions:** Staff **Program Standards:** BIR	Site Visit Team & COA
Authority	Staff	Commission	Commission	COA	Commission
Decision	Determine Eligibility for Stage II	Eligibility: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Provisional Approval: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Program(s): 1. Approve 2. Deny	1. Grant Full Approval 2. Grant Full Approval & Remand to COA to Address Stipulations 3. Continue Provisional Status for 1 Year to Address Stipulations 4. Deny Approval
IIA Status*	Not Approved	Not Approved	Provisional Approval**	Provisional Approval***	Full Approval

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Action

Educator Preparation Committee

Refinements to Stages II, III, and IV of the Initial Institutional Approval Process

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents for Commission consideration and approval refinements to the Initial Institutional Approval Process for possible adoption.

Recommended Action: That the Commission adopt the proposed changes to the Initial Institutional Approval process as presented in this item.

Presenters: Poonam Bedi and Hart Boyd, Consultants, Professional Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal

II. Program Quality and Accountability
   b) Effectively and efficiently monitor program implementation and outcomes and hold all approved educator preparation programs to high standards and continuous improvement through the accreditation process.

Refinements to Stage II, III, and IV of the
Initial Institutional Approval Process

Introduction
This agenda item presents for Commission consideration and approval refinements to Stages II, III, and IV of the Initial Institutional Approval (IIA) process.

Background
California Education Code §44372(c) gives the Commission the authority to accredit institutions that seek to offer programs that lead to a credential to serve as an educator in California public schools. As such, the Commission devised and formally adopted a five-stage IIA process in 2016. The intention for this process was to create a more rigorous system for approving institutions that have not previously been approved by the Commission to operate educator preparation licensure programs in California. Since that time, eight institutions have moved through all five stages, including hosting a provisional site visit, and have been granted full institutional approval by the Commission. There are currently 30 institutions in the IIA process.

The five stages of the IIA process are illustrated by the chart on page three of this item. Currently, institutions in Stage II submit responses to the 12 Eligibility Requirements. These requirements closely follow the general preconditions, which are requirements that all Commission-approved institutions and educator preparation programs must be in continuous compliance with. The purpose of Stage II is for the Commission to determine an institution's eligibility in moving forward towards Provisional Approval and that the institution has the capacity to sponsor effective programs. In Stage III, an institution submits responses to the Initial Program Preconditions, General Precondition #9 (if applicable), program-specific preconditions, and the Common Standards. The Common Standards deal with aspects of program quality at the institutional level that cross all approved credential preparation programs. The purpose of Stage III is to ensure sufficient institutional infrastructure, support, and oversight is in place for the proposed programs. In Stage IV, an institution submits responses to the program standards for every program it proposes to offer. Responses to program standards contain statements describing how the institution will align its proposed program(s) to each standard. The purpose of Stage IV is for institutions in IIA to address aspects of program quality and effectiveness that apply to each type of program being proposed.

As staff continues to implement the Commission's IIA process and work with institutions moving through it, areas for improvement and further refinement have been identified. For example, the Commission adopted refinements to Stage V at the April 2022 Commission meeting. The item presented modifications to the decision point process at the conclusion of Stage V that allow for the Committee on Accreditation (COA) – the Commission's appointed accrediting body – to maintain oversight of an institution with stipulations during the Provisional Site Visit. The Commission adopted the modifications, and now institutions with an

Initial Institutional Approval: Five Stages Chart

IIA Process	Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV	Stage V
Action	**Prerequisites**	**Eligibility Requirements**	**Preconditions & Common Standards**	**Program Standards**	**Provisional Site Visit**
Purpose	Ensures legal eligibility of institution in California Ensures institution understands requirements of Commission's accreditation system	Ensures that institution has capacity to sponsor effective programs	Ensures institution meets all relevant preconditions Ensures institution meets all Common Standards	Ensures all proposed programs meet all relevant program standards	Program operates for 2-4 years and hosts a provisional accreditation site visit
Requirements	Institution must: • Have legal eligibility • Attend Accreditation 101 with institutional team	Submit responses to: • 12 Eligibility Criteria	Submit responses to: • Preconditions • Common Standards	Submit responses to: • Program Standards	Institution must: • Collect data • Host provisional site visit
Reviewed By	Staff	Staff	**Preconditions:** Staff **Common Standards:** BIR	BIR	Site Visit Team & COA
Authority	Staff	Commission	Commission	COA	Commission
Decision	Determine Eligibility for Stage II	Eligibility: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Provisional Approval: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Program(s): 1. Approve 2. Deny	1. Grant Full Approval 2. Grant Full Approval & Remand to COA to Address Stipulations 3. Continue Provisional Status for 1 Year to Address Stipulations 4. Deny Approval
IIA Status*	Not Approved	Not Approved	Provisional Approval**	Provisional Approval***	Full Approval

*At conclusion of stage   **Institutionally approved but cannot offer programs   ***May begin offering approved program

accreditation recommendation of Accreditation or Denial will appear before the Commission at their next scheduled meeting while institutions in IIA with an accreditation status less than Accreditation will remain under the purview of the COA for no longer than one year; at that time, the institution will appear before the Commission for their consideration regardless of the status of any remaining stipulations.

Proposed Refinements to the Initial Institutional Approval (IIA) Process
In reviewing the Stage II and Stage III agenda items that have gone before the Commission in the past few years, Commissioners have often expressed an interest in how a prospective program sponsor both explains the need for the proposed program(s) and identifies the partnerships it expects to establish. This led staff to consider if the Initial Program Preconditions, which are currently in Stage III, would be more appropriately placed in Stage II, which would allow an institution to address Commissioners' areas of interest at the onset of the IIA process rather than in a subsequent stage. Staff also believes that review of an institution's response to General Precondition #9 should also be moved to Stage II as the Eligibility Requirements are similar to the General Preconditions. General Precondition #9 is applicable only to institutions of higher education (IHEs). This precondition ensures that all faculty and instructional personnel employed by IHEs, who regularly teach one or more courses in an educator preparation program, actively participate in the public school system at least once every three years.

Currently, in Stage III, responses to the program-specific preconditions are submitted along with responses to the Common Standards. Including review of preconditions responses in Stage IV at the same time an institution is providing responses to program standards for the program(s) they are proposing would provide greater context regarding the way in which the proposed program(s) will operate. IIA institutions in Stage IV will benefit from being able to continue to increasingly narrow their focus on how they plan to offer their proposed program(s). By ensuring the structures are in place through their responses to the requirements of Stages II and III, the Commission can confidently pass an institution onto Stage IV where the institution will have the opportunity to give their proposed program(s) their full consideration as they create program documentation. Additionally, the COA benefits from having the opportunity to review all requirements – preconditions and standards – related to the proposed program(s).

In Stage III, the Commission determines whether an institution should be granted Provisional Approval to subsequently offer educator preparation programs. Moving the Initial Program Preconditions, General Precondition #9, and the program-specific preconditions will allow Commissioners to make a determination in Stage III on the institution's infrastructure, support, and oversight for the proposed programs.

The following table illustrates proposed changes:

IIA Stage	Current Requirements that institutions in IIA respond to:	Requirements institutions would respond to as proposed in this item:
Stage II	• 12 Eligibility Criteria	• 12 Eligibility Criteria • Initial Program Preconditions • General Precondition #9, as applicable
Stage III	• Initial Program Preconditions • Program-Specific Preconditions • General Precondition #9, as applicable • Common Standards	• Common Standards
Stage IV	• Program Standards	• Program-Specific Preconditions • Program Standards

Staff Recommendation
Staff recommends that the Commission adopt the proposed refinements to Stages II, III, and IV of the Initial Institutional Approval process. If adopted, the proposed refinements will be illustrated on the updated IIA Five Stages Chart, as noted in Appendix A.

Next Steps
If adopted by the Commission, staff will update the Committee on Accreditation's Procedures Manual, the Accreditation Handbook, and inform the COA at its next meeting.

Appendix A: Updated Initial Institutional Approval: Five Stages Chart
(Additions to stages are highlighted and italicized. Strikethroughs denote relocation of submission requirements to another stage)

IIA Process	Stage I - Prerequisites	Stage II – Eligibility Requirements	Stage III – Common Standards	Stage IV – Initial Program Approval	Stage V – Provisional Site Visit
Purpose	Ensures legal eligibility of institution in California Ensures institution understands requirements of Commission's accreditation system	Ensures that institution has capacity to sponsor effective programs	~~Ensures institution meets all relevant preconditions~~ Ensures institution meets all Common Standards	Ensures all proposed programs meet all relevant program standards *and program-specific preconditions*	Program operates for 2-4 years and hosts a provisional accreditation site visit
Institutional Requirements	Must: • Have legal eligibility • Attend Accreditation 101 with institutional team	Submit responses to: • 12 Eligibility Criteria • *Initial Program Preconditions* • *General Precondition #9*	Submit responses to: • ~~Preconditions~~ • Common Standards	Submit responses to: • *Program-Specific Preconditions* • Program Standards	Must: • Collect data • Host provisional site visit
Reviewed By	Staff	Staff	BIR	**Preconditions:** Staff **Program Standards:** BIR	Site Visit Team & COA
Authority	Staff	Commission	Commission	COA	Commission
Decision	Determine Eligibility for Stage II	Eligibility: 3. Grant 4. Deny	Provisional Approval: 3. Grant 4. Deny	Program(s): 3. Approve 4. Deny	5. Grant Full Approval 6. Grant Full Approval & Remand to COA to Address Stipulations 7. Continue Provisional Status for 1 Year to Address Stipulations 8. Deny Approval
IIA Status*	Not Approved	Not Approved	Provisional Approval**	Provisional Approval***	Full Approval

At conclusion of stage   **Institutionally approved but cannot offer programs*   ***May begin offering approved program*