

Discussion Related to Review of Commission Accreditation Policies

Professional Services Division

January 14, 2004

TASK

Develop work plan options to review the Commission's accreditation system.

COMMISSION DIRECTION

That the COA begin a review of the accreditation system with all interested stakeholders.

That this review process be public, open, and inclusive.

That the proposal presented at the January 8, 2004 Commission meeting by representatives of the three segments of higher education be transmitted to the COA.

STATUTORY AND POLICY OVERVIEW

The Commission adopted the current *Accreditation Framework* in 1995. The *Framework* sets forth the Commission's policies and procedures for the accreditation of educator preparation. Both the *Framework* and Education Code Section provide for the periodic evaluation and modification of the system. Section 44372(h) of the Education Code specifies that the Commission and the Committee on Accreditation shall jointly "design an evaluation of accreditation policies and their implementation." As part of that process, an external evaluation of the Framework was completed in 2003 by the American Institutes for Research (AIR).

The law vests the Commission with the authority to modify the accreditation framework in accordance with Section 8 of the *Accreditation Framework* and gives the Committee on Accreditation responsibility for adopting guidelines for accreditation reviews. Since the adoption of the *Framework* nearly a decade ago, certain contextual influences such as federal reporting requirements and a stronger policy focus on data and outcomes have changed the way policy makers think about accountability. The review that the Commission has directed is therefore both appropriate and timely.

The Committee on Accreditation (COA) is the designated body for implementing the Commission's accreditation system. Section 8 of the *Framework* specifies that the Commission will consult with the COA regarding any proposed modifications of the *Framework*. It further specifies that modifications will occur in public meetings of the Commission after the Commission has considered relevant information provided by the

COA, postsecondary institutions, accreditation team members, Commission staff, and other concerned individuals. .

INPUT RECEIVED TO DATE

At the January 8, 2004 Commission meeting, representatives from the University of California, the California State University and the Association Independent California Colleges and Universities delivered a joint statement outlining a proposal for reviewing the current accreditation process. This proposal (attached) will be transmitted to the COA.

QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED:

What issues or policy questions are driving the need for review?

How can the process assure broad stakeholder involvement and representation (including a discussion of proposal by Higher Education Segments)?

What is the role of special issue groups in the review process?

How should accreditation reviews be handled while the accreditation system is reviewed?

What is the timeframe for the review?

Other

ATTACHMENTS:

Accreditation Framework

Education Code, Article 10, Sections 44370-44374 *Accreditation in Educator Preparation*

Proposed work plan submitted by Higher Education Segments

Stakeholder Invitation Letter

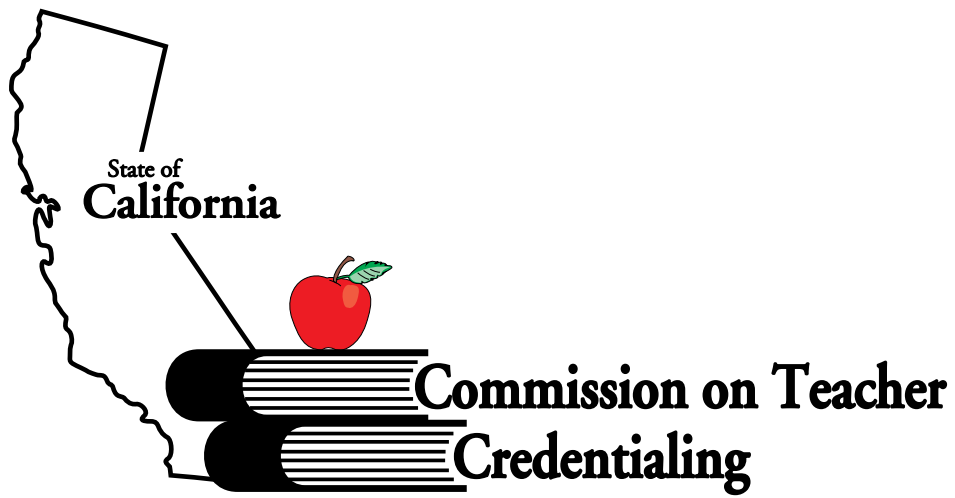
**Educator Preparation for California 2000:
The Accreditation Framework**



Commission on Teacher Credentialing

State of California

1995



**Educator Preparation for California 2000:
The Accreditation Framework**

Created by:

**The
Accreditation
Advisory
Council**

**The
Professional
Services
Division**

**Commission on Teacher Credentialing
1812 Ninth Street
Sacramento, California 95814-7000**

*The mission of the
Commission on Teacher Credentialing is
to maintain and enhance quality
while encouraging innovation and creativity
in the preparation . . . of
professional educators for
California's public schools.*



Commission on
Teacher Credentialing

The Commission on Teacher Credentialing

State of California
Pete Wilson, Governor
April 1995



Commission Membership



Verna B. Dauterive, Chair	Elementary School Principal
Scott Harvey, Vice Chair	Public Representative
Phillip Barker	Middle School Teacher
Pamela Davis	Department of Education
Carolyn Ellner	University Faculty Member
Jerilyn Harris	Secondary School Teacher
Juanita Haugen	School Board Member
Elizabeth Heidig	Public Representative
Torrie Norton	Elementary School Teacher
Edmund Sutro	Secondary School Teacher
Darryl Yagi	High School Counselor
Nancy Zarenda	Secondary School Teacher



Ex-Officio Membership



Edward DeRoche	Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
Barbara Merino	University of California
Erwin Seibel	California Postsecondary Education Commission
Henrietta Schwartz	California State University



Executive Staff



Philip Fitch	Executive Director
David Wright	Professional Services Director

The Accreditation Advisory Council



Council Membership: 1991-93



Margaret Bonanno, Chair	Elementary School Principal	Oak Grove School District
David Wampler, Vice Chair	Teacher Education Faculty	University of California, Davis
Barbara Carrillo	Executive Director	Calif. Assn. for Bilingual Education
Carolyn Cogan	Teacher Education Faculty	Univ. of California, Santa Barbara
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Robert Ediger	Professor of Biology	California State University, Chico
June Elia	Teacher Education Faculty	Holy Names College
Patsy Estrellas	Elementary School Teacher	Norwalk-La Mirada School District
Ruben Ingram	District Superintendent	Fountain Valley School District
Sylvia Jones	Program Coordinator	California Foreign Language Project
Mary Kay Kamath	School Board Member	Santa Monica-Malibu School District
George Mehaffy	Director of Teacher Education	San Diego State University
Douglas Mercer	High School Counselor	Hemet Unified School District
William Rohwer	Dean, School of Education	University of California, Berkeley
Henrietta Schwartz	Dean, School of Education	San Francisco State University
JoAnn Taylor	Teacher Education Coordinator	Pepperdine University
Mary Lee Templeton	Secondary School Teacher (Ret.)	Palo Alto School District
Christina Wallace	Elementary School Teacher	Evergreen School District



Council Membership: 1989-91



Irving Hendrick, Chair	Dean, School of Education	University of California, Riverside
Rosa Nagaishi, Vice Chair	High School Teacher	Los Angeles Unified School District
Dave Baker	Personnel Administrator	Azusa Unified School District
Carol Barnes	Professor of Education	Calif. State University, Fullerton
Leslie Campbell	School Board Member	Del Paso Heights School District
David Cohen	Professor of Psychology	Calif. State University, Bakersfield
David Johnson	Reading Specialist	Mt. Diablo Unified School District
Ken Lane	Lecturer in English Education	University of California, Berkeley
Bill Mansfield	High School Teacher	Fremont High School District
Elizabeth McDermott	Personnel Administrator	San Bernardino County Office
Diana Ramirez	Bilingual Teacher	ABC Unified School District

The Committee on Accreditation

In 1994 a Nominating Panel of six distinguished professional educators assisted the Commission on Teacher Credentialing in selecting, from 137 nominated professionals, the twelve initial members of the Committee on Accreditation for the education profession in the State of California.



Committee Membership: 1995-97



Carol Barnes	Professor, Elementary Education	California State University, Fullerton
Barbara Burch	Dean, School of Education	California State University, Fresno
Joya Chatterjee	Elementary School Principal	Santa Clara Unified School District
Anita "Chris" Chavez	Assistant Superintendent	Chula Vista Elementary School District
Ann Chlebicki	Superintendent	Palos Verdes Peninsula School District
Dolores Escobar	Dean, College of Education	San Jose State University
Fay Haisley	Dean, School of Education	University of the Pacific
Robert Hathaway	Teacher of Mathematics	Anaheim Union High School District
Irving Hendrick	Dean, School of Education	University of California, Riverside
Olivia Palacio	Assistant Superintendent	Fresno County Office of Education
Shirley Rosenkranz	Teacher of English	Temple City Unified School District
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Professional Staff



David Wright	Director, Professional Services Division
Dennis Tierney	Consultant, Program Evaluation and Research
Larry Birch	Consultant, Program Evaluation and Research
Melissa Palmer	Office Technician

Acknowledgments

For her visionary leadership in a pioneering effort, the California State Commission on Teacher Credentialing salutes State Senator Marian Bergeson, whose strong support and thoughtful guidance enabled the Commission to adopt this policy framework as well as other important reforms in California teacher education.

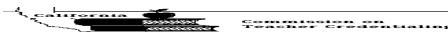
The Commission thanks the Accreditation Advisory Council for creative ideas and significant insights that formed the basis of this *Accreditation Framework*. As advisors to the Commission, members of the Council provided outstanding service to the education profession and the people of California.

The Accreditation Advisory Council had the benefit of excellent leadership by its elected Chairs and Vice-Chairs. The Chair and Vice-Chair from 1991 through 1993, Margaret Bonanno of the Oak Grove School District and David Wampler of the University of California, Davis, skillfully led the Council to a consensus of support for this *Accreditation Framework*.

The Commission is also grateful to the many professional educators who reviewed successive drafts of the *Framework*. Significant assistance was provided by Jan Mendelsohn of the Chancellor's Office, California State University, and Ami Zusman of the President's Office, University of California.

Finally, the Commission is grateful to three members of its professional staff for significant contributions to the *Accreditation Framework*: David Wright, Director of Professional Services; Bob Salley, Administrator of Program Evaluation; and John McLevie, Consultant in Program Evaluation and Research. Additional consultants in the Professional Services Division who made important contributions were Carol Bartell, Larry Birch, Joe Dear, Michael McKibbin, Marie Schrup and Priscilla Walton.

The Commission accepts full responsibility for the *Framework*, and looks forward to its successful implementation with the assistance of many professional educators.



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Educator Preparation for California 2000: The Accreditation Framework

1995

This *Accreditation Framework* was prepared by the Accreditation Advisory Council and the Professional Services Division of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing pursuant to Senate Bill 148 by Senator Marian Bergeson (Chapter 1455, Statutes of 1988). On May 7, 1993, the Commission adopted the *Accreditation Framework* for subsequent implementation under Senate Bill 655 (Bergeson, Chapter 426, Statutes of 1993), which became effective on January 1, 1994. The text of Senate Bill 655 is in Appendix 1.

Introduction to the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

This *Framework* addresses the accreditation of colleges and universities that prepare teachers and other educators for professional state certification in California. Accreditation is an assurance of quality in the preparation of professional educators, and is therefore important to the Commission, the education profession, the general public, and the accredited institutions. This Introduction to the *Framework* describes the context for accreditation of educator preparation in California, and articulates several principles for a new accreditation system in the field of educator preparation. Consistent with these principles, specific accreditation policies are in Sections One through Eight and Appendices One through Three of the *Framework*.

California Students in the 21st Century



In the next century, California citizens will confront new challenges and opportunities. An increasingly complex and competitive economy will demand that individuals, institutions and corporations respond productively to new technologies and resources for obtaining and interpreting information, making sound decisions, and using ideas effectively. Mastering specific job skills and learning traditional information will not suffice because the "half-life" of skills and information is becoming increasingly short.

Californians must also be prepared to succeed in an increasingly diverse culture. Soon the adult population of the state will reflect that of the schools -- no cultural group will constitute a majority. Ethnic, language and gender groups are establishing new economic roles and productive relationships in California. Learning to see the world through diverse perspectives and to communicate in multiple languages will be increasingly important for the personal and financial success of future students.

In the schools, studies of language, literature and the arts, history and the social sciences, mathematics and the natural sciences must respond to contemporary realities to keep pace with social and technological changes. Future writers, scientists, artists, historians and other leaders must invent and use new paradigms that will enable all Californians to prosper in a changing environment. These and other future challenges confront the students who attend California schools. To enable all students to meet these challenges and attend excellent schools, California must ensure the qualifications of professional educators who serve in the schools.

California Schools in the 21st Century



To become productive, active, healthy citizens, students need to interact with competent and caring educators in every school. In the early years, learners' motivations and interests must be encouraged and fulfilled by dynamic, responsive teachers who are well prepared in the broad curriculum of early education, and who present that curriculum in developmentally appropriate ways. Young students' needs will become more diverse in the future, so their teachers must be assisted by effective school leaders and specialists who are specifically prepared to develop the children's educational, linguistic and personal capabilities before their early needs become critical problems.

As students enter middle childhood and early adolescence, their physical and emotional needs demand active, hands-on instruction in school environments that emphasize social responsibility and personal accountability. As youngsters advance in their studies, their teachers must have increasing depth of knowledge and competence in the subjects of their basic education. To make sense of contemporary life, students need the support of integrated teams of teachers, counselors, psychologists, social workers and other specialists. Learning to find and use information and ideas requires assistance by professional librarians in the schools. Successful passage through the critical middle years also requires the firm, thoughtful guidance of school leaders who understand the growth and education of early adolescents.

Whether they proceed to postsecondary education or immediately to the world of work, high school students must become thoughtful learners of the full range of academic subjects: English, other languages, history, the arts and humanities, mathematics, the sciences and physical education. These advanced learners must have access to subject matter specialists who are effective at teaching the core disciplines. They must be assisted effectively by qualified health specialists, guidance counselors, information technologists, school psychologists, and attendance officers. The managers of complex high schools must be particularly effective as planners, communicators, and leaders.

When the new century begins, professional educators will continue to be the primary catalysts for student learning. The complex needs of individual learners cannot be met fully if educators function individually. Increasingly, the success of education will depend on the preparation and ability of individual educators to serve as productive members of professional teams that will be responsible for the educational and personal progress of groups of students.

Educator Preparation for the 21st Century



The future needs of students and schools have important implications for educator preparation. Professional educators need to bring many important qualities into school learning environments. They should be well educated in the core curriculum and the essential skills of writing, reading and reasoning. Educators should also be persons who embrace core values such as honesty, respect for diversity, commitment to social justice, and openness to change.

Core values and knowledge will be essential *but not sufficient* in the increasingly diverse and complex schools of the future. With increasing student variability, changing social conditions in our communities, and new developments in many disciplines of knowledge, it is no longer possible for generalists in education to serve all the legitimate purposes of education effectively. Individual educators should have increasingly specialized abilities along with the talent and commitment to serve collaboratively with other professionals.

Prospective educators therefore need basic general education followed by specialized professional studies, supervised practica and preparation to serve in diverse settings. Future classroom teachers need an integrated curriculum of content studies; analyses of teaching, learning and human development; and increasing responsibilities for the instruction of students. Other prospective educators need specialized studies and practica in school administration, career counseling, language development, psychological assessment, information science, school health and several related fields.

These essential components of educator preparation cannot simply be *included* in each professional's education; each element should be characterized by excellent teaching, disciplined research, productive dialogue and a spirit of inquiry and investigation. Preprofessional experiences in the schools should be carefully planned, supervised and assessed by qualified institutional personnel in relation to realistic expectations related to the competence of entry-level professionals. As prospective educators acquire their own postsecondary education, they must interact with competent, caring role models as well as committed students with diverse professional goals. Both the curriculum and the institutional environment of educator preparation should be *educative* in the highest sense.

Professional Accreditation and Certification



Professional accreditation is the process of ascertaining and verifying that, at each college and university that prepares individuals for state certification, sufficient quality characterizes that preparation. State certification is the process of ascertaining and verifying the qualifications of each future member of a profession like education. These two processes -- professional accreditation and state certification -- have distinct objectives but they serve a common set of overarching purposes. It is critical, therefore, that accreditation and certification function as *an integrated system* for the purposes that are outlined below.

In education, the first purpose of a professional accreditation and certification system is to assure the public, the students and the profession that future educators have access to excellence in content education, specialized preparation and professional practica in education, and that these components of educator preparation are oriented to the educational needs of future elementary and secondary students. Assuring excellence in educator preparation is the distinctive objective of *accreditation* in this system. Ensuring that each licensed educator has completed accredited preparation is the distinctive function of *certification*. By integrating accreditation with certification, policymakers can also ensure that educator preparation will be responsive to the critical dynamic needs of elementary and secondary schools.

A second essential function of an accreditation-certification system is to ensure that future educators have actually acquired abilities and perspectives that are essential for fulfilling specified professional responsibilities such as teaching or other services in schools. To ensure that professional credentials provide such assurances, *certification* decisions should be based on valid assessments of accepted standards of competence for entry-level service as professional educators. *Accreditation* also contributes to these assurances by ascertaining and verifying that each candidate's growing competence is assessed and confirmed by an accredited institution. An integrated accreditation-certification system provides the strongest possible assurance that professional credentials are awarded to individuals who have earned them on the basis of their competence.

A third critical purpose of accreditation and certification is to verify that each educator's specialized preparation and attainments are appropriate for the assignment of particular responsibilities in schools, and that these responsibilities are related to his or her preparation and expertise in the profession. Assuring the appropriateness of specialized preparation for future responsibilities is a distinctive objective of *accreditation* in the system. Verifying that each educator's responsibilities are based on actual preparation and expertise is a function of *certification*. An integrated system of accreditation and certification maximizes the prospect that assigned duties will be consistent with prior preparation and competence as an educator.

Finally, the fourth goal of an accreditation-certification system is to contribute to broader efforts to enhance the personal stature and professional standing of teachers and other educators as members of a profession that has a strong base of specialized knowledge and a demonstrated record of accomplishment in elementary and secondary schools. Related to this important goal, an objective of *accreditation* in education is to foster improvements in the design, content and delivery of professional curricula and practica, and in the selection, guidance, supervision and assessment of candidates. A related objective of *certification* is to provide reliable information about the collective knowledge, competence and accomplishments of professional educators. Functioning together, accreditation and certification have greater capacity to enhance the stature of education as a profession in the eyes of students, parents and other citizens.

The overall effectiveness of education in California depends, in part, on the systemic cohesiveness of educator preparation, accreditation, assessment and certification. Attempts to disassemble the components of this system may serve the interests of some of its participants, but the effective education of elementary and secondary students requires that they be integrally linked. This linkage with the certification system is one of seven essential attributes of an accreditation system for educator preparation institutions in California.

Key Attributes of Accreditation in a Certification System ●●●

Prior to reviewing accreditation policies originally proposed by the Advisory Council, the Commission decided that an accreditation system in education should have seven essential attributes, which were published in a preliminary report entitled *Educator Preparation for California 2000: Background Information for a New Accreditation Framework* (November, 1991). The seven essential attributes of an accreditation system are summarized below. In drafting the accreditation policies in this *Framework*, the Accreditation Advisory Council and the Commission's professional staff sought to incorporate these attributes in a new accreditation system for California educators.

First Attribute of Accreditation: Orientation to Educational Quality. Accreditation policy should focus primarily on the educational *quality* of educator preparation in colleges and universities. Accreditation *standards* should describe levels of quality that are deemed to be acceptable by the body that has statutory responsibility for accreditation standards, which is the Commission. Standards should not focus on purely technical or operational aspects of educator preparation, but should enable trained reviewers with professional expertise to find out whether educator preparation in an institution is characterized by acceptable levels of quality.¹

Accreditation *reviews* should also be oriented to issues of quality. During a review, the judges need to obtain evidence that relates to the educational quality of preparation programs and policies within the institution. Through experience, expertise and training, the reviewers must be skilled at discerning the important from the unimportant in educator preparation.

The *results* of accreditation reviews should also bear on issues of quality in the education of educators. The findings and recommendations of accreditation reviewers should focus on important matters of quality. Accreditation decisions should hinge on findings that are educationally significant and clearly related to quality-oriented standards.

Second Attribute: The Professional Character of Accreditation. Professional educators should hold themselves and their peers accountable for the quality of professional education. Professionals should be involved intensively in the entire accreditation process. They should create accreditation standards, conduct accreditation reviews, and make accreditation decisions. Participants in these aspects of accreditation should have experience, expertise and training that are appropriate for their specific roles in accreditation. In each step of accreditation, decisions should emerge from consultative procedures, and should reflect the consensus of the professional participants.

The general public has a compelling interest in accreditation decisions that are part of the public education system in California. So do professionals whose work is judged *by* the accreditation system, or whose future success depends *on* its results and effectiveness. The expertise and experience of the accreditors should be credible to the general public *and* the education profession in California.

¹ In addition to quality standards, accreditation systems often include requirements for compliance, which are usually more technically focused than the standards. Often called "preconditions," these compliance requirements are appropriate secondary elements of an accreditation system.

Third Attribute: Breadth and Flexibility. For institutions to be effective in a dynamic state like California, they must be creative and responsive to the changing needs of prospective educators. In a society as diverse as California, universities and colleges must also be highly varied in their missions and philosophies. Accreditation should not force institutions to conform to prescribed patterns unless these conventions have a firm basis in principles of educational quality and equity.

Accreditation standards should be drawn so different institutions can meet them in a variety of acceptable ways. There *are* acceptable and unacceptable forms of educator preparation; accreditation should differentiate between them. There are also *multiple ways* of educating prospective educators acceptably; accreditation should not favor any of these over the others.

Accreditation standards should relate to broad domains of educator preparation, not to specific practices or procedures. They should describe *levels of quality* without stipulating *how* institutions are to comply. Explanations of the standards should clarify their meaning without making the standards restrictive. The expertise and training of accreditation reviewers should, moreover, emphasize the importance of preserving institutional diversity and creativity.

Fourth Attribute: Intensity in Accreditation. Accreditation should focus with *intensity* on key aspects of educational quality. The process should allow and encourage divergence among programs and institutions, and should also be exacting in assembling key information about critical aspects of educational quality. The *scope* of accreditation should be comprehensive, and the information generated by the review process should be sufficient to yield *reliable judgments and conclusions* by the reviewers.

Accreditation standards should encompass the critical dimensions of educator preparation. In order to recommend an institution for accreditation, experienced professional reviewers should be satisfied that the institution provides a comprehensive array of excellent learning opportunities for future educators. The reviewers should not have a gnawing concern that 'something is missing here.'

Accreditation decisions should be based on information that is sufficient in breadth and depth for the results to be credible and dependable. Regarding each broad standard, accreditation reviewers need to fully understand the educationally important aspects of educator preparation at the institution. If an accreditation system relies on information that is too superficial or incomplete to serve as a basis for sound decisions, its lack of reliability will foster mistrust in the institutions and contempt in the profession.

Intensity in accreditation (Attribute 4) is consistent with a focus on quality (Attribute 1), involvement of professionals (Attribute 2), and breadth and flexibility (Attribute 3). To find out if broad, quality-oriented standards are met, and to make reliable judgments and sound recommendations, reviewers need to assemble a considerable body of data that is *collectively* significant. It is not necessary that each item of compiled information be critically important *on its own*.

Fifth Attribute: Integration with the Certification System. As noted earlier, accreditation and certification should function in ways that are systemically coherent, in order to ensure the appropriateness of specialized preparation for the future responsibilities of professional educators.

There would be no reason to require future educators to earn credentials, or to pursue excellent preparation, if their subsequent professional responsibilities in schools were 'out-of-sync' with their preparation. There would also be little reason to include an accreditation process in the certification system if the preparation and expertise that accreditation verifies were not directly linked to the authorizations of credentials.

For these reasons, accreditation decisions about postsecondary institutions should parallel the kinds of decisions to be made about individual educators in the certification system. Accreditation decisions should be as specialized and specific as the authorizations of credentials because the latter are based, in part, on specialized preparation in accredited institutions. To the extent that the credential structure differentiates among distinct professional roles and responsibilities, these distinctions must be based, in part, on an accreditation system that has a parallel structure.

Sixth Attribute: Contributions of Accreditation to Improved Preparation. Accreditation standards, reviews and decisions should contribute to improvements in the preparation of educators. The quality of an institution's policies, practices and outcomes should improve as its faculty, administrators and students strive to meet accreditation standards. The institution's offerings should also benefit from the quality orientation of an accreditation review. When these effects of accreditation fall short, however, specific accreditation decisions should also provoke needed improvements in educator preparation institutions.

For improvements to occur, accreditation reviews must identify and describe weaknesses in the quality of an institution's offerings. Rather than viewing accreditation reviews as troublesome or intimidating forms of interference, institutions should expect substantive benefits from an intensive, professional, quality-oriented process. Over time, the Commission should reexamine its accreditation policies to ascertain whether substantive improvements are actual bi-products of those policies.

Seventh Attribute: Efficiency and Cost-Effectiveness. An accreditation system should fulfill its purposes efficiently and cost-effectively. Review procedures, decision processes and reporting relationships should be streamlined and economical. Participants' roles should be clearly defined, and communications should be efficient.

There are costs associated with establishing standards, training reviewers, assembling information, preparing reports, conducting meetings and checking the accuracy of data and the fairness of decisions. Containing these costs is an essential attribute of accreditation, but efficiency must not undermine the capacity of accreditors to fulfill their responsibilities to the public and the profession. Accreditation costs, which are borne by institutions, individual accreditors and the accrediting body, should be reviewed periodically by the Commission in relation to the key purposes of accreditation.

A New Structure for Professional Accreditation



This policy framework by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing emphasizes the *professional character* of accreditation in education. Professionals have a responsibility to hold their peers accountable for established standards. Before adopting this *Framework*, the Commission relied on practitioners and other experts to create the standards for evaluating educator preparation in each teaching and specialty area. For several years, professional educators also engaged in local program reviews on behalf of the Commission. The most far-reaching change created by this *Framework* is the empowerment of professionals to make accreditation decisions.

Consistent with the need for professionalism at all levels of accreditation, the Commission is implementing this *Framework* by creating a small body of leading educators who bring extensive professional expertise to bear on accreditation decisions. The Committee on Accreditation consists of experienced, highly-respected professionals who can determine the accreditation of postsecondary institutions without reference to organizational perspectives because they do *not* represent specific organizations, institutions or constituencies.

As defined in Section 2 of this *Framework* (pp. 11-13), the Committee on Accreditation is expected to bring its extensive expertise to bear on professional judgments regarding quality issues and concerns in the field of educator preparation. The Committee makes accreditation decisions consistent with the Commission's accreditation standards and other policies. The Committee also informs and advises the Commission on policy issues that relate to academic content and purposes, and on the maintenance of excellent college and university programs for prospective educators throughout the State. Delegation of these significant professional responsibilities to the Committee on Accreditation effectively establishes a new organizational structure for the accreditation of educator preparation in California.

Accreditation Policies

Sections 1 through 8 of the *Framework* are based on California Education Code Sections 44370 through 44374, which are in Appendix 1.

Section 1 Authority and Responsibilities of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Pertaining to the accreditation of educator preparation, the authority and responsibilities of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing include the following.

A. Responsibilities Related to Accreditation Policies ▲▲▲

- 1. Adopt and Modify the Accreditation Framework.** The Commission has the authority and responsibility to adopt an *Accreditation Framework*, “which sets forth the policies of the Commission regarding the accreditation of educator preparation in California” (Education Code Section 44372-a). The present document is the adopted *Accreditation Framework*. The Commission may modify the *Framework* in accordance with Section 8 of the *Framework*. Modifications occur in public meetings after the Commission considers relevant information provided by the Committee on Accreditation, institutions, accreditation team members, the Commission’s staff, and other concerned individuals. The Commission determines when a policy modification takes effect.
- 2. Establish and Modify Standards for Educator Preparation.** Pursuant to Education Code Section 44372-b, the Commission has the authority and responsibility to establish and modify standards for educator preparation in California.

B. Responsibilities Related to Accreditation Decisions ▲▲▲

- 1. Initial Accreditation of Institutions.** In accordance with Education Code Sections 44227-a and 44372-c and Section 4 of this *Framework*, the Commission determines the eligibility of an institution that applies for initial accreditation and that has not previously prepared educators for state certification in California. The Commission accredits institutions that meet the criteria that have been adopted for that purpose by the Commission. Institutional accreditation by the Commission establishes the eligibility of an institution to submit specific program proposals to the Committee on Accreditation.

- 2. Hear and Resolve Accreditation Appeals.** The Commission hears appeals of accreditation decisions, which must be based on evidence that accreditation procedures or decisions were “arbitrary, capricious, unfair, or contrary to the policies of the Commission or the procedural guidelines of the Committee on Accreditation” (Education Code Section 44374-e). The Commission resolves each appeal, and the Executive Director communicates the Commission’s decision to the Committee on Accreditation, the accreditation team, and the affected institution.

C. Responsibilities Related to the Committee on Accreditation ▲▲▲

- 1. Establish a Nominating Panel.** In collaboration with the Accreditation Advisory Council and subsequently with the Committee on Accreditation, the Commission establishes a Nominating Panel to solicit and screen nominations and recommend educators to serve on the Committee on Accreditation.
- 2. Appoint the Committee on Accreditation.** Pursuant to Education Code 44372-d and Section 2 of this *Framework*, the Commission appoints members and alternate members of the Committee on Accreditation for specific terms. The Commission selects the Committee members and alternate members from nominees submitted by the Nominating Panel. The Commission ensures that the Committee on Accreditation is professionally distinguished and balanced in its composition, but does not appoint members to represent particular institutions, organizations or constituencies.
- 3. Address Issues and Refer Concerns Related to Accreditation.** The Commission considers issues and concerns related to accreditation that it identifies, as well as those brought to the Commission’s attention by the Committee on Accreditation, postsecondary institutions, the Commission’s staff, or other concerned individuals or organizations. At its discretion, the Commission may refer accreditation issues and concerns to the Committee on Accreditation for examination and response.
- 4. Review Annual Reports by the Committee on Accreditation.** The Commission reviews *Annual Accreditation Reports* submitted by the Committee on Accreditation. *Annual Reports* include standard information about the dimensions and results of the accreditation process. *Annual Reports* may also identify the Committee’s issues and concerns, but these may be presented to the Commission separately from the *Annual Reports*.

D. Responsibilities Related to the Accreditation System ▲▲▲

- 1. Allocate Resources Annually for Accreditation Operations.** The Commission annually allocates resources for accreditation operations to implement this *Accreditation Framework*. Consistent with the Commission’s general practice, staff assignments to accreditation operations are made by the Executive Director, in accordance with state budgets, laws and regulations.

2. **Jointly Sponsor an External Evaluation of Accreditation Policies and Practices.** The Commission shares responsibility with the Committee on Accreditation for the design and implementation of a comprehensive evaluation of accreditation policies and the selection of an external evaluator to conduct the evaluation, pursuant to Section 8 of this *Accreditation Framework*.
3. **Review and Sponsor Legislation Related to Accreditation.** The Commission reviews legislative proposals to amend the Education Code related to the accreditation of educator preparation institutions. As the need arises, the Commission sponsors legislation related to accreditation, after considering the advice of the Commission's professional staff, the Committee on Accreditation, educational institutions and professional organizations.

Section 2

Functions and Appointment of the Committee on Accreditation

The functions, membership and appointment of the Committee on Accreditation are set forth in Education Code Section 44373 and this section.

A. Functions of the Committee on Accreditation



1. **Comparability of Standards.** In accordance with Section 3 of this *Framework*, the Committee determines whether standards submitted by institutions under Option 2 (National or Professional Program Standards) or Option 5 (Alternative Program Standards), taken as a whole, provide a level of program quality comparable to standards adopted by the Commission under Option 1 (California Program Standards). If the Committee determines that the proposed standards are collectively comparable in breadth and depth, when taken as a whole, to the Commission-adopted standards, the Committee on Accreditation may approve the proposed standards as Program Standards in California.
2. **Initial Accreditation of Programs.** The Committee reviews proposals for the initial accreditation of programs submitted by institutions that have been determined eligible by the Commission. New programs of educator preparation may be submitted under Options One, Two, Four or Five in Section 3. If the Committee determines that a program meets all applicable standards, the Committee grants initial accreditation to the program.
3. **Continuing Accreditation Decisions.** After reviewing the recommendations of accreditation teams and the responses of institutions, the Committee makes decisions about the continuing accreditation of educator preparation institutions and programs, consistent with Section 6 of this *Framework*. Pertaining to each institution, the Committee makes one of three decisions: Accreditation, Accreditation with Stipulations, or Denial of Accreditation.

4. **Accreditation Procedures.** Consistent with the terms of Section 6, the Committee recommends appropriate guidelines for self-study reports and other accreditation materials and exhibits to be prepared by institutions. The Committee also adopts guidelines for accreditation team reports, which emphasize the use of narrative, qualitative explanations of team recommendations. The Committee may provide additional guidance to institutions, teams and the Executive Director regarding accreditation visit procedures. The procedural guidelines of the Committee are published by the Commission as an *Accreditation Handbook*.
5. **Monitor the Accreditation System.** The Committee monitors the performance of accreditation teams and oversees other activities associated with the accreditation system.
6. **Annual Reports, Recommendations and Responses.** The Committee presents *Annual Accreditation Reports* to the Commission. *Annual Reports* include standard information about the dimensions and results of the accreditation process. The Committee also advises the Commission about policy changes to improve the quality and integrity of the accreditation process.
7. **Meet in Public Sessions.** The Committee conducts its business and makes its decisions in meetings that are open to the public, except as provided by statute.
8. **Jointly Sponsor an External Evaluation of Accreditation Policies and Practices.** The Committee shares responsibility with the Commission for the design and implementation of a comprehensive evaluation of accreditation policies and the selection of an external evaluator to conduct the evaluation, pursuant to Section 8 of the *Framework*.

B. Membership of the Committee on Accreditation



1. **Membership Composition.** The Committee consists of twelve members. Six members are from postsecondary education institutions, and six are certificated professionals in public schools, school districts, or county offices of education in California. Selection of members is based on the breadth of their experience, the diversity of their perspectives, and "their distinguished records of accomplishment in education" (Education Code Section 44373-a). All members serve as members-at-large. No member serves on the Committee as a representative of any organization, institution, or constituency. To the maximum extent possible, Committee membership is balanced according to ethnicity, gender, and geographic regions. The Committee includes members from elementary and secondary schools, and from public and private postsecondary institutions. The elementary and secondary school members include at least one certificated administrator, one teacher, and one role specialist. The postsecondary members include at least one administrator and one faculty member, both of whom must be involved in professional teacher education programs.

2. **Membership Criteria.** The criteria for membership on the Committee are: evidence of achievement in the education profession; recognized professional or scholarly contributions in the field of education; recognition of excellence by peers; experience with and sensitivity to issues of human diversity; distinguished service in the field of educator preparation; knowledge of issues related to the preparation and licensing of education professionals; length of professional service; and possession of appropriate educational degrees and professional credentials.

C. Appointment of the Committee on Accreditation



1. **Nominating Panel.** A Nominating Panel of six distinguished members of the education profession in California identifies and nominates individuals to serve on the Committee on Accreditation. The Nominating Panel is comprised of three college and university members and three elementary and secondary school members. The Commission and the Accreditation Advisory Council must reach consensus on the members of the initial Nominating Panel. Subsequently, the Commission and the Committee on Accreditation will reach consensus on new members of the Nominating Panel. The terms of Nominating Panel members are four years long. Members of the Panel may not serve more than one term.
2. **Nomination of Committee Members.** To select members for the Committee on Accreditation, the Nominating Panel solicits nominations from professional organizations, agencies, institutions, and individuals in education. Each nomination must be submitted with the consent of the individual and the nominee's professional resume. Self-nominations are not accepted.
3. **Selection of Initial Committee Members.** Based on the membership criteria and the principles of balanced composition set forth in this section, the Nominating Panel recommends for initial appointment twenty-four highly qualified nominees who are drawn equally from colleges and universities (twelve nominees) and elementary and secondary schools (twelve nominees). The Commission appoints the twelve members and six alternate members of the Committee by selecting from the nominations submitted by the Panel.
4. **Terms of Appointment.** The Commission appoints members of the Committee on Accreditation to three-year terms. However, the initial appointees include six members with two-year appointments and six with three-year appointments. A member may be renominated and reappointed to a second term of three years. A member may serve a maximum of two terms on the Committee.
5. **Selection of Subsequent Committee Members.** Prior to the conclusion of the Committee members' terms, the Nominating Panel again submits nominations to the Commission, which must be drawn from individuals who have been nominated and reviewed. The Panel submits twice as many nominees as the number of pending vacancies on the Committee. The Commission fills each Committee seat and alternate position by selecting from the nominations.
6. **Committee Vacancies.** When a seat on the Committee becomes vacant prior to the conclusion of the member's term, the Executive Director fills the seat for the remainder of the term by appointing a replacement from the list of alternate members.

Section 3 Accreditation Standards

There are two categories of accreditation standards for institutions that prepare professional educators in California. An accredited institution is expected to satisfy the standards in both categories.

Category I. Common Standards relate to aspects of program quality that are the same for all credential programs. This category includes standards regarding the overall leadership and climate for educator preparation at an institution, as well as standards pertaining to quality features that are common to all programs such as resources, coordination, admissions and advisement. An institution responds to each Common Standard by providing pertinent information, including information about individual programs. The Common Standards are in Appendix 2 of this *Framework*.

Category II. Program Standards address the quality of program features that are specific to a credential, such as curriculum, field experiences, and knowledge and skills to be demonstrated by candidates in the specific credential area. When institutions prepare for continuing accreditation reviews, they may consider the following options for program-specific standards. Different options may be exercised by different credential programs at an institution. Options that are selected will be the basis for the review of specific programs by accreditation teams, and will guide the selection and orientation of team members. Pertaining to each program, the institution responds to each standard in the selected option by providing program-specific information for review by the accreditation team.

- **Option 1. California Program Standards.** The Commission continues to rely on panels of experts from colleges, universities and schools to develop standards for specific credential programs. These panels are guided by current research findings in the field of the credential. They also consider standards developed by appropriate national and statewide professional organizations. If the national or professional standards are found to be appropriate for California, a panel may recommend that the Commission adopt them in lieu of developing new standards or revising the Commission's existing standards. After reviewing the recommendations of advisory panels and other experts, the Commission adopts California Program Standards for the initial and continuing accreditation of credential preparation programs. The Commission may require that a new set of California Program Standards be met by each institution that prepares candidates for a credential.
- **Option 2. National or Professional Program Standards.** California institutions may propose program standards that have been developed by national or state professional organizations. Such a proposal may be submitted to the Committee on Accreditation with a statement of the institution's reasons for selecting this option and recommending the proposed standards. If the Committee determines that the recommended standards, taken as a whole, provide a level of professional quality comparable to the standards adopted by the Commission under Option 1 (California Program Standards), the Committee approves the proposed standards for use as Program Standards in the initial or continuing accreditation of credential programs.

- **Option 3. General Program Standards.** General Program Standards have been adopted by the Commission to constitute Option 3. These standards are in Appendix 3 of this *Framework*. An institution that elects to use this option may ask that the General Program Standards be used for the continuing accreditation of one or more credential preparation programs at the institution.
- **Option 4. Experimental Program Standards.** For initial accreditation, an institution may present a program that meets the Experimental Program Standards adopted by the Commission pursuant to Education Code Section 44273. Experimental programs are designed to examine professional issues or policy questions related to the preparation of credential candidates. For continuing accreditation, institutions that sponsor experimental programs are required to report their findings to the Commission, which disseminates the results to other institutions in California.
- **Option 5. Alternative Program Standards.** Pursuant to Education Code Section 44273, an institution may develop Alternative Standards for initial and continuing accreditation of a credential program. If the Committee on Accreditation determines that the proposed standards, taken as a whole, provide a level of program quality comparable to the standards adopted by the Commission under Option 1 (California Program Standards), the Committee approves the Alternative Standards for use as Program Standards by the institution that proposed them. A program that is subsequently accredited on the basis of Alternative Program Standards may legally depart from several statutory requirements that govern teacher education programs.

Section 4

Initial Accreditation Policies

This section governs the initial accreditation of institutions and programs.

A. Responsibility for Two Types of Initial Accreditation ■■■

1. **Initial Accreditation of Institutions.** A postsecondary education institution that has not previously been declared eligible to offer credential preparation programs must submit an application to the Commission for initial professional accreditation. Institutional accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) is required for initial professional accreditation by the Commission. The Commission may establish additional procedures and criteria for the initial professional accreditation of institutions to prepare and recommend candidates for state credentials in education.
2. **Initial Accreditation of Programs.** New credential program proposals by institutions that have been determined to be eligible by the Commission must fulfill preconditions established by state law and the Commission, the Common Standards, and a set of Program Standards. Descriptions of new programs include evidence of involvement in program design and planning by elementary and secondary school practitioners and members of diverse local communities. The Committee on Accreditation decides the initial accreditation of new credential programs at an eligible institution.

B. Policies for Initial Accreditation of Programs ■■■

- 1. Review of New Programs.** Prior to being presented to the Committee for action, new programs proposed by eligible institutions are reviewed by Commission staff members who have expertise in the credential area. If the Commission staff does not possess the necessary expertise, the program proposals are reviewed by external experts selected by the Executive Director. New programs are reviewed in relation to the Common Standards in Appendix 2 and the selected Program Standards as specified in Section 3 of this *Framework*. The Committee considers recommendations by the staff and the external reviewers regarding the accreditation of each proposed program.
- 2. Institutional Standards.** An institution that selects National or Professional Program Standards (Option 2) or develops Alternative Program Standards (Option 5) submits the standards to the Committee on Accreditation for initial approval prior to developing a program proposal. The acceptability of the standards is assured before the institution prepares a program proposal.
- 3. Experimental Programs.** The Committee on Accreditation accredits experimental programs by applying standards adopted by the Commission relating to:

 - submission of research questions, hypotheses or objectives related to the selection, preparation or assessment of prospective professional educators;
 - submission of a research design applicable to the research questions, hypotheses or objectives being investigated; and
 - demonstration of the potential effectiveness of the proposed program in generally improving the quality of service authorized by the credential.
- 4. Alternative Programs.** The Committee on Accreditation accredits alternative programs by applying standards adopted by the Commission relating to:

 - the overall quality of alternative standards developed by the institution, which must have educational merit generally equivalent or superior to standards set by the Commission as Option 1;
 - the requirement that extended alternative programs adhere to standards of professional competence that exceed those set by the Commission for conventional teacher education programs; and
 - a recommendation that alternative programs that lead to Multiple or Single Subject Teaching credentials be designed to integrate the delivery of subject matter preparation and pedagogical preparation over the entire period of each candidate's initial preparation as a teacher.

Section 5 Continuing Accreditation Teams

This section governs the continuing accreditation of institutions in California.

A. Structure and Size of Accreditation Teams ●●●

- 1. Pool of Trained Reviewers.** To conduct reviews for the continuing accreditation of educator preparation institutions, the Executive Director of the Commission maintains a pool of trained reviewers consisting of California college and university faculty members and administrators, elementary and secondary school teachers and other certificated professionals, and local school board members, pursuant to Education Code Section 44374-b. The pool consists of approximately 200 persons who are geographically and culturally diverse, and who represent gender equity. The Committee on Accreditation establishes criteria for membership in the pool. The Executive Director adds new members to the pool from time to time.
- 2. Team Structure.** For an institution being considered for continuing accreditation, the Executive Director appoints an accreditation team and designates the team's leader. To ensure appropriate attention to specific programs at the institution, the team leader and the Commission's staff establish clusters of reviewers in a team with more than three members. One cluster of team members has primary responsibility for reviewing the Common Standards. Other clusters are responsible for reviewing groups of credential programs, and may provide information to the cluster that reviews the Common Standards. The size of clusters ranges from one to five members, depending on the level of effort required for each set of assignments.
- 3. Team Size and Expertise.** Normally, an accreditation team has from two to fifteen members. Programs are clustered together, where appropriate, to keep team size manageable, but needed expertise is included on each team. The range of credential programs at an institution is reflected in the expertise of the reviewers, but there need not be a one-to-one correspondence between credential programs and reviewer specializations. Student enrollments in programs, the complexity of programs, and/or the numbers of specialized programs offered by an institution may lead to a team with more than fifteen members.¹ At least one member of each institution's team has a depth of expertise in the multicultural, diversity and language acquisition needs of California classrooms. The size of a team and the clustering of programs are determined jointly by the dean or director of each unit that is responsible for credential programs; the Commission's staff consultant; and the team leader appointed for the review; all of whom sign a team size agreement.

¹ Student enrollment is a factor because the team must complete a sufficient sample of interviews in order to make valid, reliable judgments about issues of quality. Complexity may be a factor if an institution operates diverse programs, or if programs are offered at geographically dispersed locations or in colleges outside the education unit.

B. Organization and Expertise of Accreditation Teams



- 1. Team Leader.** The Executive Director appoints an experienced reviewer as the leader of an institution's review team for continuing accreditation. The leader's roles are to assist the Commission's staff consultant in planning the review, participate in team size and composition decisions, and provide leadership in team training, orientation and support during the accreditation review. The team leader and the Commission's staff consultant are jointly responsible for management of the review.
- 2. Cluster Leaders.** The team leader and staff consultant select a member of each cluster to serve as cluster leader, whose role is to help in organizing and managing the cluster's activities during the review.
- 3. Common Standards Cluster.** The Common Standards are reviewed by a cluster of reviewers, including members who are able to make judgments about the education unit. This cluster may include a dean, associate dean, university unit director (when a smaller institution has a department rather than a school of education) and/or a superintendent of a school district or county office of education.
- 4. Program Clusters.** Team members with appropriate experience and qualifications are responsible for professional judgments about credential programs. Reviewers assigned to a cluster should have sufficient expertise to make sound judgments about programs in the cluster.
- 5. Team Assignments.** Team members are trained in reviewing the Common Standards and/or the selected Program Standards. A single cluster of reviewers is not normally given primary responsibility for reviewing the Common Standards and Program Standards in the same review.
- 6. Team Continuity.** When possible and when appropriate to the programs at one or more institutions to be visited, members of previously successful teams are kept together for the purpose of reviewing more than one institution.
- 7. New Reviewers.** For the most part, an accreditation team consists of experienced reviewers. A team need not include an inexperienced member, but new reviewers are appointed to accreditation teams after their training, when appropriate.
- 8. Conflict of Interest.** Care is exercised to avoid conflicts of interest involving accreditation team members and the institution being reviewed. No member of a team shall have ties to the institution, such as current or past enrollment there, programmatic collaboration, past or present employment, or spousal connections.

C. Training and Orientation of Accreditation Teams ●●●

Prior to participation in an accreditation review, team members, cluster leaders and team leaders participate in two kinds of in-depth training and orientation.

- 1. Team Training.** To ensure that accreditation reviews examine issues of quality in preparation, team members participate in an intensive three-day training program, which focuses on team skills, interview techniques, accreditation procedures, and the consistent application of standards. In adopting an *Accreditation Handbook*, the Committee on Accreditation will attend to appropriate differentiation in the training of new and returning team members, cluster leaders and team leaders.
- 2. Team Orientation.** On the day prior to the beginning of an accreditation site visit, team members meet to discuss their observations about the institutional self-study report, review their prior training as team members, and thoroughly plan the team activities for the accreditation review under the team leader and cluster leaders.

Section 6 Continuing Accreditation Policies

The policies in this section govern the Committee's procedural guidelines regarding the continuing accreditation of educator preparation institutions.

A. Accreditation Handbook ●●●

- 1. Standards and Related Questions.** The *Accreditation Handbook* will include the Common Standards in Appendix 2 and the Program Standards for Options 1 through 5, as well as questions related to each standard. These questions will correspond to the Commission's adopted Factors to Consider, and will be designed to assist institutions in preparing self-study reports as well as team members during training and reviews.
- 2. Guidelines for Institutional Self-Study Reports.** The Committee on Accreditation will recommend a format for the institutional self-study report and other materials such as faculty vitae and course syllabi to be submitted by each institution. The Committee will also provide guidelines for organizing exhibits and ways of facilitating the preparation, organization, and presentation of materials that relate to the Common and Program Standards.

B. Preparation for Continuing Accreditation Reviews ●●●

1. **Preliminary Report.** No less than twelve months before the scheduled visit, institutional officials prepare a *Preliminary Report* to be submitted to the team leader and the Commission staff consultant. This brief report describes the institutional mission and includes information about institutional demographics, special emphasis programs, and other unique features of the institution. The *Preliminary Report* is designed to help the Commission consultant and the team leader (in discussion with the dean or director) determine the type, size and complexity of the programs to be reviewed and the structure, size and expertise of the review team to be selected. The *Preliminary Report* includes, among other things, the following two components.
 - **Response to Preconditions.** In the *Preliminary Report*, the institution includes its response to accreditation preconditions established by state laws and the Commission.
 - **Indication of Selected Options.** In its *Preliminary Report*, the institution indicates the options it has selected for each credential program in the accreditation review.
2. **Institutional Self-Study Report.** No less than 60 weekdays before the visit, the institution mails sufficient copies of its *Institutional Self-Study Report* to the team leader and the Commission staff consultant, who distributes copies of the report to each accreditation team member. In responding to each applicable standard, the self-study report should emphasize quality considerations, educational rationales, and thoughtful program analyses.

C. Conduct of Continuing Accreditation Reviews ●●●

1. **Accreditation Cycle.** The interval of time between accreditation reviews at an institution normally is five to seven years.
2. **Collection of Information.** The accreditation team gathers information about the quality of the education unit and credential programs at the institution from a variety of sources, including written documents and interviews with institutional administrators, program faculty, enrolled candidates, field supervisors, recent graduates, employers of graduates, and program advisors. Data collection procedures are governed by the *Accreditation Handbook*.
3. **Procedural Safeguards.** The accreditation team provides ample opportunities during the review for representatives of the institution (a) to be informed about areas where the standards appear not to be fully satisfied, and (b) to supply additional information pertaining to those standards. These opportunities include, at a minimum, a meeting at approximately mid-visit between representatives of the team and the institution's credential programs, after which additional written information or interviews are utilized by the team in reaching its conclusions.

4. **Specialized Credential Program Team.** If the accreditation team determines that the team lacks sufficient time and/or expertise to make sound recommendations for a particular program, the leader may call for a specialized credential program team to be named to resolve the uncertainty before the accreditation team's final report and recommendation is submitted to the Committee on Accreditation.
5. **Exit Interview and Report.** The accreditation team conducts an exit interview with representatives of the institution, at which time the team presents its findings and recommendations in the form of a draft report to the Committee on Accreditation. If a specialized credential program team has been called for, the accreditation status recommendation is not reported during the exit interview.

D. Accreditation Reports, Recommendations and Decisions ●●●

1. **Accreditation Team Reports.** Accreditation teams make their reports and recommendations to the Committee on Accreditation. Accreditation team reports indicate whether each applicable standard is met, include summary findings and a recommendation to the Committee, and may include educational recommendations for consideration by the institution.
2. **Accreditation Team Recommendations.** An accreditation team recommends Accreditation, or Accreditation with Stipulations, or Denial of Accreditation. The team makes its recommendation based on the overall quality of the education unit and the credential programs at the institution. The team does not recommend separate accreditation decisions for each program. The team may recommend Accreditation even though the unit failed to meet one or two standards in Appendix 2. Alternatively, a team may recommend Accreditation with Stipulations, which may (if adopted by the Committee) require the institution to fulfill all standards within a specified time not to exceed one year. Stipulations may (if adopted) require the discontinuation of severely deficient programs at the institution.
3. **Accreditation Decisions.** After reviewing the recommendation of an accreditation team and an appropriate response from the institution (see below), the Committee on Accreditation makes a decision about the accreditation of educator preparation at the institution, including a decision about the status of each credential program. The Committee makes one of three decisions pertaining to each institution: Accreditation, Accreditation with Stipulations, or Denial of Accreditation. The Committee's *Annual Accreditation Reports* summarize these decisions.
4. **Accreditation with Stipulations.** The Committee on Accreditation allows an institution up to one calendar year to fulfill all standards or to discontinue deficient program(s). The Committee also determines how the institution's response to adopted stipulations is to be reviewed. The Committee may require a second visit for this purpose. Failure to satisfy all stipulations results in the denial of accreditation to the entire institution. Upon the request of an institution, an additional period to remedy severe deficiencies may be granted by the Committee on Accreditation if the Committee determines that (a) substantial progress has been made and/or (b) special circumstances described by the institution justify a delay.

E. Institutional Responses and Appeals



- 1. Response to Committee on Accreditation.** Within twenty weekdays after an accreditation visit, the institution may submit evidence to the Committee on Accreditation that the team demonstrated bias or acted arbitrarily or capriciously or contrary to the policies of this *Framework* or the procedural guidelines of the Committee. (Information related to the quality of a program or the education unit that was not previously provided to the accreditation team may not be considered by the Committee.) The Committee may use this evidence to make a different decision than was recommended by the team. If the Committee makes such a decision, the leader of the team may file a dissent with the Commission. If the Committee decides that an incorrect judgment was made by a team or cluster, and that the result leaves some doubt about the most appropriate decision to be made, the Committee may assign a new team to visit the institution and provide a recommendation on its accreditation.
- 2. Appeal to the Commission.** Pursuant to Education Code Section 44374-e, an institution has the right to appeal to the Commission a decision by the Committee on Accreditation to deny accreditation or accredit with stipulations. Such an appeal must be based on evidence that accreditation procedures by the team or decisions by the Committee were arbitrary, capricious, unfair, or contrary to the policies in this *Framework* or the procedural guidelines of the Committee. Information related to the quality of a program or the education unit that was not previously provided to the accreditation team may not be considered by the Commission. The Commission resolves each appeal pursuant to Education Code Section 44372-f.

F. Concerns about Credential Program Quality



When one or more complaints about a credential program indicate that the quality of the program may be in serious jeopardy, the Executive Director of the Commission may investigate the basis for the concerns, provide technical assistance to the institution, or refer the concerns to the Committee on Accreditation for consideration of possible action.

Section 7 National Accreditation

This section governs articulation between national and state accreditation.

A. National Accreditation of an Education Unit



Upon the request of an institution, the accreditation of an education unit (school, college or department of education) by a national accrediting body will substitute for state accreditation under the Common Standards provided that the Committee on Accreditation certifies to the Commission that the national accrediting entity fulfills the following conditions.

1. The national accrediting entity agrees to use the Common Standards that have been adopted by the Commission.
2. The accreditation process of the national entity includes on-site reviews.
3. Accreditation teams represent ethnic and gender diversity, and include elementary and secondary school practitioners and postsecondary education members; a minimum of one voting member of each team is from California.
4. For continuing national and state accreditation in California, the national entity agrees to appoint a team that is equivalent in size and structure to an initial accreditation review team.
5. The period of accreditation is consistent with a five-year to seven-year cycle, or is compatible with the accreditation cycle established by the state.

B. Merged State-National Accreditation Teams and Reviews



When the above conditions are met for accreditation of an education unit by a national accreditation body, an institution may apply for a merged team and visit for state and national accreditation under the Common Standards and the applicable Program Standards. In a merged visit, a single accreditation team serves the state and national accrediting bodies. The following policies apply.

1. The team has two co-leaders, one appointed according to state accreditation procedures and one appointed by the national accrediting body.
2. The Common Standards and groups of programs are reviewed by appropriate clusters of reviewers selected by the team co-leaders and the Commission's staff consultant. The cluster of members to review the Common Standards includes members appointed by the national body and at least one California member selected according to state accreditation procedures. Clusters of members to review the applicable Program Standards are selected according to Section 5 of this *Framework*.

3. The merged team for state and national accreditation represents ethnic and gender diversity.
4. The team submits a single report regarding all Common Standards and Program Standards to the Committee on Accreditation and the national accrediting body.

C. National Accreditation of a Credential Program



Upon the request of an institution, the accreditation of a credential program by a national accrediting entity will substitute for state review of the program provided that the Committee on Accreditation certifies to the Commission that the national accreditation entity satisfies the following conditions.

1. The accrediting entity agrees to use the adopted California Program Standards for the specific credential under Option 1, or the standards used by the national entity are determined by the Committee to be equivalent to those adopted by the Commission under Option 1.
2. The accreditation process of the national entity includes an on-site review of the credential program.
3. The accreditation team represents ethnic and gender diversity.
4. The accreditation team includes both postsecondary members and elementary and secondary school practitioners; a minimum of one voting member is from California.
5. The period of accreditation is consistent with a five-year to seven-year cycle, or is compatible with the accreditation cycle established by the state.

Section 8

Evaluation and Modification of the Framework

This section governs the evaluation and modification of the *Accreditation Framework*.

A. Evaluation of the Accreditation Framework



1. **Evaluation Design.** The Commission and the Committee on Accreditation are jointly responsible, in consultation with educational institutions and organizations, for the design of a comprehensive evaluation of accreditation policies and their implementation, and for the selection of an independent evaluator to conduct the evaluation.

2. **Formative and Summative Evaluation.** The evaluation design will include formative components to produce early and ongoing information and suggestions about the *Accreditation Framework* and its implementation. The design will also include summative components. The evaluation will include an appropriate sample of institutions and accreditation options, and will be based on comprehensive information collected over a period of time that assures that the major features of the accreditation process have been well tested. It is expected that the formative and summative evaluation will be conducted over a four-year time span, beginning when the first institution is reviewed in accordance with this *Framework*.
3. **Evaluation Report and Recommendations.** A comprehensive evaluation report and recommendations will be presented to the Commission and the Committee on Accreditation for their consideration. Among other policy issues, the evaluator will recommend whether Option 3 (General Program Standards) should serve, in addition to Option 1 (California Program Standards), as a basis for determining the comparability of standards under Options 2 or 5.

B. Modification of the Accreditation Framework



1. **General Provisions Regarding Modifications.** The Commission will consult with the Committee on Accreditation and educational institutions and organizations regarding any proposed modifications of the *Framework*. Modifications will occur in public meetings of the Commission, after the Commission has considered relevant information provided by the Committee on Accreditation, postsecondary institutions, accreditation team members, the Commission's professional staff, and other concerned individuals. The Commission will determine the date when a policy modification is effective.
2. **Refinements and Clarifications of the Framework.** The Commission may modify the *Accreditation Framework* to refine or clarify its contents, as needed. The Commission retains its authority to reconsider and modify the Program Standards for Options 1, 4 and 5 as the need arises.
3. **Significant Modifications of the Framework.** The Commission will maintain without significant modifications the *Framework's* major features and options, including the Common Standards, and Option 3 (General Program Standards), until the summative evaluation is completed or until there is compelling evidence that a significant modification is warranted. The determination of compelling evidence and the warranted significant modification will be made by the Commission with the concurrence of the Committee on Accreditation and the Chancellor of the California State University, the President of the University of California, and the President of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities.

Appendix 1

California Laws on Accreditation of Educator Preparation

Text of Senate Bill 655
Senator Marian Bergeson
Chapter 426 of Statutes of 1993
Effective January 1, 1994

Article 10

Accreditation in Educator Preparation

Education Code Section 44370. Legislative Purpose. The Legislature finds and declares that the competence and performance of professional educators depends in part on the quality of their academic and professional preparation. The Legislature recognizes that standards of quality in collegiate preparation complement standards of candidate competence and performance, and that general standards and criteria regarding the overall quality of a candidate's preparation are as essential as the assessment of the candidate's competence and performance.

Section 44371. Accreditation System and Framework. ◆◆◆

(a) The system for accreditation of educator preparation shall do all of the following:

- (1) Concentrate on the overall quality of educator preparation in credential programs.
- (2) Hold professional elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educators responsible for quality in the preparation of professional practitioners.
- (3) Contribute to improvements in educator preparation and recognize excellence in preparation programs and institutions.
- (4) Replace the prior system of program approval, as established by the Teacher Preparation and Licensing Act of 1970.
- (5) Be governed by an Accreditation Framework that sets forth the policies of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing regarding the accreditation of educator preparation.

(b) The Accreditation Framework shall do all of the following:

- (1) Establish broad, flexible policies and standards for accreditation of educator preparation.
- (2) Define the accreditation responsibilities, authority, and roles of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the Committee on Accreditation.
- (3) Establish an accreditation system that is efficient and cost-effective.
- (4) Require that accreditation decisions be based on sufficient reliable evidence about the quality of educator preparation.

Section 44372. Accreditation Responsibilities of the Commission. ◆◆◆

The powers and duties of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing regarding the accreditation system shall include the following:

- (a) Adopt and implement an Accreditation Framework, which sets forth the policies of the Commission regarding the accreditation of educator preparation in California.
- (b) Establish and modify credential-specific standards, experimental program standards, and alternative program standards, as defined in the adopted Accreditation Framework.
- (c) Rule on the eligibility of an applicant for accreditation when the applying institution has not previously prepared educators for state certification in California, pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 44227.
- (d) Appoint and reappoint the members of the Committee on Accreditation, in accordance with Section 44373, by selecting among nominees submitted by a panel of distinguished educators.
- (e) Review periodic accreditation reports by the Committee on Accreditation, and refer accreditation issues and concerns to the Committee for its examination and response.
- (f) Hear and resolve appeals of accreditation decisions, pursuant to subdivision (e) of Section 44374.
- (g) Allocate resources annually for implementation of the accreditation system.
- (h) With the Committee on Accreditation, jointly design an evaluation of accreditation policies and their implementation, and jointly select an external evaluator to conduct the evaluation, in accordance with Section 8 of the Accreditation Framework that was in effect on June 30, 1993.
- (i) Modify the Accreditation Framework in accordance with Section 8 of the Framework that was in effect on June 30, 1993.
- (j) Inform and advise the Legislature regarding statutory issues related to accreditation, and submit legislative recommendations, after considering the advice of the Committee on Accreditation, education institutions and professional organizations.

Education Code Section 44373. Committee on Accreditation.



- (a) There is hereby established the Committee on Accreditation consisting of 12 members selected for their distinguished records of accomplishment in education. Six members shall be from postsecondary education institutions, and six shall be certificated professionals in public schools, school districts, or county offices of education in California. No member shall serve on the Committee as a representative of any organization or institution. Membership shall be, to the maximum extent possible, balanced in terms of ethnicity, gender, and geographic regions. The Committee shall include members from elementary and secondary schools, and members from public and private institutions of postsecondary education.
- (b) The terms of Committee members shall be in accordance with the Accreditation Framework. Appointment of the initial Committee members shall be from nominees submitted by a panel of distinguished educators, who are named by a consensus of the Commission and the Accreditation Advisory Council, pursuant to Section 44371, as that section read on December 31, 1993. Appointment of subsequent Committee members shall be from nominees submitted by a distinguished panel named by a consensus of the Commission and the Committee on Accreditation. For each Committee position to be filled by the Commission, the panel shall submit two highly qualified nominees.
- (c) The Committee shall do, but shall not be limited to doing, all of the following:
 - (1) Make decisions about the accreditation of educators preparation. The Committee's decision making process shall be in accordance with the Accreditation Framework.
 - (2) Make decisions about the initial accreditation of new programs of educator preparation in accordance with procedures established by the Committee.
 - (3) Determine the comparability of standards submitted by applicants with those adopted by the Commission, in accordance with the Accreditation Framework.
 - (4) Adopt guidelines for accreditation reviews, and monitor the performance of accreditation teams and other aspects of the accreditation system.
 - (5) Present an annual accreditation report to the Commission and respond to accreditation issues and concerns referred to the Committee by the Commission.

Section 44374. Accreditation Standards and Procedures. ◆◆◆

- (a) The Accreditation Framework shall include common standards that relate to aspects of program quality that are the same for all credential programs. The Framework shall also include multiple options for program standards.
- (b) The Accreditation Framework shall include provisions regarding well-trained accreditation teams whose members shall be drawn from a pool of California college and university faculty members and administrators, elementary and secondary school teachers and other certificated professionals, and local school board members. For each accreditation visit there shall be one team, whose size, composition, and expertise shall be constituted according to the Accreditation Framework.
- (c) An accreditation team shall present its report and recommendations to the Committee on Accreditation in accordance with the Accreditation Framework. The Committee shall consider the accreditation team report and recommendations, and shall also consider evidence, which may be submitted by the institution, that the team demonstrated bias or acted arbitrarily or capriciously or contrary to the policies of the Accreditation Framework or the procedural guidelines of the Committee.
- (d) The Committee on Accreditation shall make a single decision to accredit, to accredit with stipulations, or to deny accreditation to an institution's credential programs, pursuant to Section 44373 and the Accreditation Framework.
- (e) An institution has the right to appeal to the Commission if the procedures or decisions of an accreditation team or the Committee on Accreditation are arbitrary, capricious, unfair, or contrary to the policies of the Commission or the procedural guidelines of the Committee. An institution also has the right to recommend changes in the accreditation policies of the Commission, which shall be considered by the Commission in consultation with the Executive Director and the Committee on Accreditation.
- (f) At the request of an institution, the accreditation of an education unit or a specific program by a national accrediting body shall substitute for state accreditation provided that the national accrediting body has satisfied the applicable conditions set forth in the Accreditation Framework.

Appendix 2

Common Standards¹

- (1) **Education Leadership.** The education unit has effective leadership that articulates a vision for the preparation of professional educators, fosters cohesiveness in unit management; delegates responsibility and authority appropriately; resolves each credential program's administrative needs as promptly as feasible; consults with credential program faculty; and represents their interests in the institution, the education profession, and the school community.
- (2) **Resources.** Sufficient resources are consistently allocated for the effective operation of each credential preparation program, to enable it to be effective in coordination, admission, advising, curriculum, instruction, and field experiences. Library and media resources, computer facilities, and support personnel, among others, are adequate.
- (3) **Faculty.** Qualified persons are hired and assigned to teach all courses and supervise all field experiences in each credential preparation program. Faculty reflect and are knowledgeable about cultural, ethnic, and gender diversity. The institution provides support for faculty development, and recognizes and rewards outstanding teaching. The institution regularly evaluates the performance of course instructors and field supervisors, and retains in credential programs only those individuals who are consistently effective.
- (4) **Evaluation.** The institution regularly involves program participants, graduates, and local practitioners in a comprehensive evaluation of the quality of courses and field experiences, which leads to substantive improvements in each credential preparation program, as needed. Meaningful opportunities are provided for professional practitioners and diverse community members to become involved in program design, development and evaluation activities.
- (5) **Admissions.** In each credential preparation program, qualified candidates are admitted on the basis of well-defined admission criteria and procedures that utilize multiple measures and encourage the admission of students from under-represented groups through alternative criteria and procedures. The institution determines that each admitted candidate has appropriate personal characteristics, including sensitivity to California's diverse population, effective communication skills and other basic skills, and prior experiences that suggest a strong potential for professional effectiveness. Each candidate admitted to basic teaching credential programs (including emphasis credentials) has attained an undergraduate grade point average (GPA) that is above the median GPA for a comparable population of students at the institution. Each candidate admitted to advanced credential programs meets institutional standards for graduate study.

¹ Once the Committee on Accreditation completes the *Accreditation Handbook*, the Common Standards will be included in it. Modification of the Common Standards will continue to be subject to the provisions of Section 8 of the *Accreditation Framework*.

- (6) **Advice and Assistance.** Qualified members of the institution's staff are assigned and available to advise candidates about their academic, professional and personal development, as the need arises, and to assist in their professional placement. Adequate information is readily available to guide each candidate's attainment of all program and credential requirements. The institution assists candidates who need special assistance, and retains in each program only those candidates who are suited for entry or advancement in the education profession.
- (7) **School Collaboration.** For each credential preparation program, the institution collaborates with local school personnel in selecting suitable school sites and effective clinical personnel for guiding candidates through a planned sequence of fieldwork/clinical experiences that is based on a well developed rationale.
- (8) **Field Supervisors.** Each field experience supervisor is carefully selected, trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, and certified and experienced in either teaching the subject(s) of the class or performing the services authorized by the credential. Supervisors and supervisory activities are appropriately evaluated, recognized and rewarded by the institution.

◆◆◆ Appendix 3 ◆◆◆

General Program Standards for Option 3¹

For each program that is reviewed on the basis of the following General Program Standards, the Commission expects the accreditation team and the Committee on Accreditation to judge, in relation to each standard, whether the program is sufficiently responsive to the contemporary needs of the diverse students in California schools.

- (1) **Knowledge Base for the Curriculum.** Each credential program offers a cohesive curriculum that is based on a coherent rationale and derived from current and established research findings, exemplary professional practice, and recognized national or state professional guidelines. A knowledge base is explicated and accompanied by a rationale that demonstrates the academic foundations of the program curriculum and its responsiveness to the needs of California's diverse students. The program faculty articulates clear expectations for the professional competence and performance of program graduates.
- (2) **Professional Practices.** Each credential program provides adequate opportunities for candidates to learn knowledge of a variety of professional methodologies and skill at exemplary professional practices prior to assuming daily teaching responsibilities or other supervised field activities in the program.

¹ Once the Committee on Accreditation completes the *Accreditation Handbook*, the General Program Standards will be included in it. Modification of the General Program Standards will continue to be subject to the provisions of Section 8 of the *Accreditation Framework*.

- (3) **Principles of Equity.** In each credential program, candidates learn principles of educational equity and analyze the implementation of those principles in curriculum content and educational practices.
- (4) **Preparation for Diversity.** Each credential program engages candidates in studies of diverse cultures and intensive cross-cultural experiences. In each program, candidates examine successful approaches to the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students, and principles of first and second language acquisition and development. Candidates for basic teaching credentials learn and implement effective strategies to foster the development of English language skills, including reading, among all students, including speakers of primary languages other than English.
- (5) **Studies of Development.** In each credential program, candidates are oriented to common traits and individual differences that characterize several periods of child and adolescent development.
- (6) **Professional Perspective.** In each credential program, candidates develop professional perspectives by examining essential knowledge bases, including concepts drawn from the historical, philosophical, social, cultural and psychological traditions of education, as well as research findings and best practices appropriate to the credential specialization.
- (7) **Early Field Experiences.** Each credential preparation program provides, prior to advancing a candidate to the intensive fieldwork or clinical phase of the program, one or more supervised field-based experience(s) that, (a) provide opportunities to interrelate theory and practice, (b) prepare the candidate for daily teaching or other appropriate professional responsibilities, and (c) enable the clinical faculty to determine when the candidate is ready for daily supervised professional responsibilities.
- (8) **Daily Professional Responsibilities.** Each credential program advances to training in daily supervised professional responsibilities only those candidates who are deemed ready for such experiences and who have demonstrated sufficient proficiency at basic academic skills and mastery of subject matter content.
- (9) **Field Assistance.** In each credential program, candidates in the field receive timely guidance, assistance and feedback from field supervisors and faculty in relation to each professional competence expectation of the program.
- (10) **Diverse Students and Responsibilities.** Each credential program ensures that each candidate (a) is effective in teaching or providing appropriate services to students of diverse ages, abilities, cultures and ethnicities, and (b) assumes other responsibilities of full-time educators. Each candidate must have at least one substantive public school professional experience that includes direct interaction with diverse students.
- (11) **Verification of Competence.** In each program the institution recommends each candidate for a credential only after verifying validly and reliably the candidate's demonstrated competence in relation to each professional expectation of the program. The institution retains thorough documentation to verify each candidate's attainment of the program's stated expectations.

**A PROPOSED WORK PLAN FOR
REVISING THE CCTC PROGRAM ACCREDITATION SYSTEM**

Presented Jointly by the Higher Education Segments

**Jonathan Brown, DPA
President, Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities**

**Robert Polkinghorn
Assistant Vice President
University of California
Office of the President**

**David Spence
Executive Vice Chancellor
California State University
Office of the Chancellor**

We want to express our appreciation to the Commission for last month's action regarding the process for revision of the accreditation system. We agree periodic evaluation of activities like program accreditation is timely and appropriate. When the Commission developed the program accreditation process, it was considered a groundbreaking policy change. As times have changed and as public policies have increasingly looked to standards, in such statutes as No Child Left Behind, the Higher Education Act, and Ready to Teach, the wisdom of having the Commission develop and operate the three related but separate functions of licensure, discipline, and program accreditation seems increasingly prescient. Thus, it is increasingly important to build this review as a collaborative process that directly engages Commission staff, the higher education and K-12 community in analyzing the best methods to accomplish program accreditation. As higher education institutions we are committed to quality assurance in preparation of education professionals to serve the children of California and we believe strongly that a strong program review function will operate in concert with the functions of licensure and discipline and will thus result in better policy, improved operations and higher levels of accountability for personnel preparation.

As a follow-up to the December Commission meeting, we have met as an inter-segmental work group to discuss process issues and bring a recommendation for action to the Commission. We suggest the following procedural steps, resulting in a system redesign that meets the expectations of all stakeholders and is ready for Commission action within the next six to nine months. We ask that the Commission receive this action plan, refer it to staff, and instruct staff to return with an action item at the February meeting to implement a process that includes the ideas presented in this proposal. We are eager to start the redesign process.

Step #1: Working through the leadership of the COA, form a working group of 12-15 individuals to develop the redesign plan over the next six to nine months. We recommend that the working group consist of: a) two representatives from each of the higher education segments, chosen by the segments; b) two representatives from K-12 school districts or county offices of education that have CCTC-approved teacher education programs; c) two representatives of the K-12 education community, including teachers and administrators; and d) the Committee on Accreditation and e) two CCTC staff.

Step #2: Ask each of the segments that are represented on the working group, higher education and K-12 alike, to commit to supporting the costs of their segmental participation in the redesign process. Segmental participation should be contingent on self-funding for meetings and other costs.

Step #3: Charge the working group to review the existing accreditation framework, consider the AIR evaluation and other contextual factors, and recommend to the Commission within two months: a) the goals of the redesign process; b) the work plan for completing the redesign within the six-to-nine month timeframe; and c) the process for involving all stakeholders in the redesign.

Step #4: Receive regular reports from the working group at Commission meetings, and move the final proposal through formal review and adoption processes in a timely manner.

We offer this plan as a means of ensuring that the redesign process is started and finished expeditiously. We look forward to working with you to improve the program accreditation process and ensure accountability for the preparation of professional educators in California.

COMMISSION ON TEACHER CREDENTIALING

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Professional Services Division

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 13, 2003

TO: Members of the Higher Education and K-12 Communities
and Interested Parties

FROM: Beth Graybill, Interim Director
Professional Services Committee

I would like to invite you to participate the January 22 meeting of the Committee on Accreditation to discuss the development of a plan to review the existing system for accreditation of educator preparation in California.

In the coming year, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) will be considering whether modifications to the existing accreditation system for educator preparation should be made, and if so, what specific modifications will result in an improved system. The Commission's existing *Accreditation Framework* was adopted by the Commission in 1993 and sets forth the policies and procedures for the accreditation of educator preparation. Since the adoption of the *Framework* a decade ago, certain contextual influences such as federal reporting requirements and a stronger policy focus on data and outcomes have changed policy makers' expectations about accountability. The review that the Commission has directed is, therefore, both appropriate and timely.

Both the *Framework* and Education Code Section 44372 (i) provide for the periodic evaluation and modification of the system. An external evaluation of the *Framework* was completed in 2003 by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and can be viewed on the Commission website at www.ctc.ca.gov. The *Framework* specifies that the Commission will consult with the COA, postsecondary institutions, accreditation team members, the Commission's professional staff, and other concerned individuals regarding any proposed modification of the *Framework*. To that end, the Commission has directed the Committee on Accreditation to facilitate discussions with stakeholders on this matter. To ensure that modifications to the *Accreditation Framework* result in a meaningful accreditation system, the Commission is committed to a review process that is inclusive and provides for broad stakeholder input.

In light of the Commission's directive to the Committee, one of the primary objectives of the January 22 meeting is to engage key stakeholders and those interested in accreditation of educator preparation in the development of the plan to review the Commission's system of accreditation. Over the past few months, the Committee has discussed the findings and recommendations of the AIR report and has begun to consider issues related to a revised system of accreditation. At the meeting, the Committee would also like to engage stakeholders in the identification of some general policy issues that will need to be considered during this process.

We invite you or your designee to join the Committee for the next few months for these important discussions about the future of accreditation. We ask that if you designate an individual to attend in your place, that it be an individual with the authority to speak on behalf of your system, institution, or organization.

The meeting will take place in the Commission meeting room, 1900 Capitol Avenue, in Sacramento. It will begin at 9:00 a.m., however, we anticipate discussion about the accreditation review of the existing system will begin around 10:00 a.m. and continue for the rest of the meeting. A COA meeting agenda is attached to this invitation. Additional materials (agenda item, proposed workplan from higher education, and Accreditation Framework) for the meeting will be available on the Commission's website under the Committee on Accreditation.

Thank you for your participation in this critical endeavor.