



PROGRAM SPONSOR ALERT

DATE:
April 29, 2022

NUMBER:
22-04

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON SUBJECT MATTER COMPETENCE AND STUDENT TEACHING

Summary:

This PSA provides clarification related to the determination of subject matter competence (SMC) and the requirement that SMC be demonstrated before a candidate is allowed to student teach.

Key Provisions:

At its December 2021 meeting, the Commission voted to [extend specific flexibilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic](#). One of the extended flexibilities allowed teacher preparation programs (not including Intern programs) to use their discretion in allowing teacher candidates to begin whole class instruction (student teaching) before they had demonstrated SMC. The Commission explicitly clarified that this extension **also applies to candidates who are admitted to a program before the end of 2021-22 academic year and that the flexibility would follow the candidate through the end of their program**. For Intern programs, demonstration of subject matter competence will be required prior to issuance of the intern credential beginning July 1, 2022. This is a statutory requirement set forth in California Education Code and, as such, the Commission does not have authority to suspend this requirement for interns beyond June 30, 2022; only an act of the Governor or the legislature may suspend this requirement

Commission staff have been advised by preparation program leadership and faculty that many candidates are not taking the appropriate CSET because they believe that they qualify for SMC through the coursework option created last year by [AB 130](#). Programs also report that they do not have the capacity to complete coursework evaluations fast enough for all of the potential applicants and past candidates who were not able to pass the CSET.

To help ensure that all of next year's candidates are able to start student teaching on time, Commission staff will ask the Commission at their June 2022 meeting to consider extending this flexibility for the entirety of the 2022-23 academic year.

Commission staff will also bring to the June Commission meeting an item to consider making a permanent rule change to identify additional majors that, on their face, would meet the SMC requirement.

Until those regulations go into effect, all approved preparation programs are authorized to accept only the majors listed in [PSA 20-10](#). In addition, all approved preparation programs are authorized to review candidates' transcripts for courses that meet all of the domains of the subject matter requirements for the credential or use a combination of CSET subtests and coursework to meet SMC. Details on implementing coursework evaluation are outlined in sections 2 and 3 of [PSA 20-11](#).

References:

[Covid Flexibility Table \(ca.gov\)](#)

[2E: Consideration of the Need to Extend Specific Flexibilities Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

[AB 130](#)

[PSA 20-10](#)

[PSA 20-11](#)

Contact Information:

Contact Information for the Professional Services Division is available at the [Professional Services Contact webpage](#).