

PRESIDENT'S POINTS 1/9/06

STAKEHOLDER MEETING

On January 9, 2006 California Secretary of Education Alan Bersin called a stakeholder meeting at the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing office in Sacramento. The meeting was regarding the future of teacher education, teacher certification and licensing and the role of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Your CCAC representatives requested release time from their employers to participate in this meeting. Below is a summary of information your representatives took from the meeting:

Secretary Bersin started the session by stressing the need for consultation with stakeholders in revitalizing the SB 2042 process and in resolving the other issues facing teacher preparation and credentialing. He shared with the group that his thinking on these matters was not yet finalized, though there were some basic principles he felt were important.

One of these principles was that subject matter and pedagogy were of at least equal importance in teaching and that before becoming fully credentialed new teachers need to show basic proficiency in both areas. Another principle was that while teachers may come to the profession by different routes, each route should be held to the same uniform standards and that proof that those uniform standards were met in each case should be based as much as possible upon actual outcomes.

Subject Matter Competence

In an effort to streamline the credentialing process, Secretary Bersin proposed that ALL teachers be required to take a CSET-like exam (only Multiple Subject teachers are required to do so now). Literacy elements would be included in all CSET exams so that the CBEST could be consolidated into the CSET –like exam, removing a step in the testing process.

Subject matter programs could continue, but those who completed them would still need to take an exam to prove subject matter competence. Secretary Bersin suggested a streamlined approval process for subject matter programs and that their evaluation would depend largely upon how their completers did on the exams, an example of an outcomes-based evaluation process.

Credential Process:

His plan: A 3 tier credentialing process with multiple entry points:

Level I- called a “Basic” or “Restricted” would require the Bachelor’s Degree and passage of a CSET-like exam with CBEST components included that would allow the holder to serve as teacher of record while participating in an internship program that was either IHE or district-based.

Level II- “Associate” or “Preliminary” document issued when the candidate has passed a CCTC-approved Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) exam either as part of a blended, traditional, fifth year or internship program. The TPA exam would be one of the key uniform standards to which all routes to the credential would be held and is also an example of an outcomes based evaluation. This credential would allow service as teacher of record in the classroom for five years.

Stakeholders raised the TPA funding issue, since it has been the cost of the TPA that has prevented its statewide implementation to date. Secretary Bersin responded that he did not have a solution to this problem but felt that the TPA was so important that one had to be found. In addition to the funding question, the CTA raised the issue that high stakes testing often leads to legal challenges of the test.

Level III- “Professional”: – issued to those who hold the Level II and have successfully completed at least 2 years of Induction/BTSA. This would be a permanent document that would be renewed under conditions of professional growth requirements.

Stakeholders at the meeting expressed some concern that the many BTSA programs in the state were not always performing as intended that that new teachers were sometimes frustrated when they perceived that their BTSA program either repeated material from their preparation programs and/or delayed their progress on the pay scale by preventing them from the time to pursue an advanced degree.

Secretary Bersin indicated the Governor’s support for BTSA and that the budget would propose a 3rd year of BTSA/Induction for new teachers in low performing schools (decile 1-3). Stakeholders noted that this might make recruiting teachers to these schools more difficult.

Out of state trained teachers with a certain amount of experience would come in at Level II, and complete an induction program that would support their transition into a California setting.

When asked by a stakeholder, Secretary Bersin stated that he had not yet determined how Education Specialists would be integrated into this system.

IHE Program Accreditation:

Secretary Bersin stressed the importance of reestablishing the accreditation system as soon as possible. He proposed that the new system be outcomes-based and that it combine regular data reporting with a periodic site-visit component. In addition to the TPA and other testing, outcomes could include tracking the performance of program completers in the K-12 system, as well as documenting program completer retention rates in the field.

It was brought to the Secretary's attention that SB 63 has impacted the CCTC's ability to conduct independent reviews of the recommendations made by IHE programs throughout the state and that the accreditation system could provide a means to reestablish that necessary oversight function, but only if credential analysts are included in the site-visit process.

Secretary Bersin is strongly interested in exploring the use of one or more of the available national accreditation systems in California. Though stakeholders repeatedly asked Secretary Bersin to endorse the findings of the recent evaluation of the accreditation system and the proposals of the stakeholder study sessions, he declined to reveal his position.

NOTE: The Accreditation survey is still available on the CCTC website. All CCAC members are encouraged to take the survey: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov>

Summary Remarks: Throughout the meeting, Secretary Bersin stressed the importance of stakeholder input into his thinking on these issues, which in his mind have not yet been fully resolved. He indicated that he would continue to seek input from the field as his consideration of these matters continues.

Secretary Bersin also noted that he regretted the current subpoena-like atmosphere that has surrounded the approval of subject matter programs and he hoped that it would not continue to be a feature of the Commission approval process.

Secretary Bersin will address the meeting of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing on February 1. Your CCAC representatives including the "Highlights" reporter will be in attendance. Watch for "Highlights of the Commission" covering the January/February Commission meeting on the CCAC list serve!

Highlights are also posted on the CCAC web page:

<http://www.teamccac.net/highlights.html>

Note that certification in California is governed by the laws in the Education Code and by the regulations of Title V. To change these laws and regulations would require legislation. CCAC will continue to keep you informed about any proposed legislation that may effect certification and employment in California.

Thank you to our volunteers and their employers for this important participation on behalf of CCAC.

Tedi Kostka
President