



April 16, 2020

Dr. Tine Sloan, Commission Chair  
The Commission on Teacher Credentialing  
1900 Capitol Avenue  
Sacramento, CA 95811

**RE: April CTC Meeting Agenda Items 3A and 4A**

Dear Chair Sloan and Commission Members:

Firstly, we hope you and your families are staying healthy!

On behalf of the EdVoice Board of Directors, I write regarding the Commission's consideration of proposed actions to assist current and future California teachers impacted by COVID-19 conditions and related school and institutional closures and social distance requirements.

***Item 3A—Candidates Meeting Minimum Requirements***

All teacher candidate assessments, including the basic skills requirement, serve as consumer protection for the millions of California students and families. Nonetheless, the current COVID-19 circumstance presents challenges for each candidate to objectively demonstrate they have met a uniform minimum competency and performance requirement. Therefore, EdVoice supports the Commission moving forward with deferrals, *but not permanent waivers*, of the CBEST and other examination requirements. With respect to the CBEST, the item background material appropriately notes the authority and requirements of Education Code 44252.8 that provide “any person granted a deferral pursuant to this section shall take the state basic skills proficiency test at the next available opportunity, or the deferral shall terminate.” We believe it is reasonable for the Commission to require that all candidates pass the CBEST in an appropriate timeframe as exam modalities and COVID-19 social distancing rules permit. This is particularly important for the basic skills requirement, which serves as the only floor for minimum competency for a range of permits and waivers.

***Items 3A and 4A—Taskforce on Clear Credential Requirements***

EdVoice concurs with the Commission's consideration of COVID-19 conditions as “good cause” in offering extensions for induction and clearing credentials, particularly for preliminary credential holders. Further, we recommend the Commission take this moment to consider deeply the clear credential requirements moving forward. Evidence suggests there could be unintended and truly unnecessary structural barriers exacerbating the California teacher shortage even before the COVID-19 pandemic.

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While research shows that high-quality mentoring is critical for improving teacher effectiveness, it is not known whether the many permutations of induction programs across the state are still achieving the intended results. California data demonstrate that clear credential requirements are correlated with, if not outright creating, barriers to remaining in the teaching profession. Most beginning teachers leave the profession without clearing their credentials. According to CTC data of a single cohort that is not an outlier, only 710 early career teachers cleared their credentials in 2017-18. This represents less than five percent of the 15,669 candidates who earned preliminary credentials in 2015-16, two years earlier.

Teachers clear their credentials through an induction program provided by their district, county office of education, or as a result of obtaining a master's degree. While some induction programs are provided at low to zero cost, many districts charge more than \$2,500, and the master's degree option costs even more. Direct costs do not include the opportunity cost of time and other moonlighting income often needed for teacher candidates trying to live near the schools where they teach. Because many California districts will have fewer resources to subsidize induction in the coming years, we believe the Commission should convene a task force to reconsider the relevance and appropriateness of all clear credentialing requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. If you have any questions regarding our input on these items, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Stay well!

Respectfully,



Bill Lucia  
President

Cc: Members, Commission on Teacher Credentialing