

CTC makes headway on early childhood education initiatives

Teacher assessments and phasing out the RICA also discussed

In its first meeting of the year, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing on Feb. 10–11 took on a packed agenda that contained updates on work relating to early childhood education, rich discussions about the use of Teacher Performance Assessments (TPAs), and early steps in creating a new literacy performance assessment for teacher candidates.



Early childhood education

CTC staff gave an update on the work to build multiple key pieces of infrastructure to support the transition of the preparation and licensure of the early childhood workforce to a competency-based system similar to that of all other credentials. Participants in the **ECE Workgroup** were appointed in early December 2021 and include representatives from local educational agencies, institutes of higher education and nonprofit organizations, including CSBA Legislative Director Chris Reeve.

The workgroup will provide recommendations to the CTC regarding the requirements for the proposed PK-3 ECE Specialist Credential, and the multiple pathways and options for meeting these requirements. The first year the ECE Specialist Credential will be available is the 2023–24 school year.

Currently, four ECE pilot programs are being implemented at 59 two- and four-year institutions of higher education. The pilots are focused on implementing Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE)-aligned curriculum and working toward meeting program standards; developing, piloting and field testing a TPE-based ECE Teaching Performance Assessment; and developing a new ECE program quality review process.

Public comment included faculty from higher education partners who cited lack of support, both technical and financial, as strains on the pilots in implementation. Public comment from a Head Start representative cited a **recent transitional kindergarten study from Tennessee** that showed poorer outcomes for those that attended the state-run program than their peers who did not. “This research makes clear that California must develop an ECE credential that is based on best practices and research and the needs of our children for playful, creative and social-emotional learning,” said the caller.

Commissioner Kathryn Williams Browne agreed and referred to the quick timeline of the development. “It’s important to note that in August of 2023, it won’t be perfect yet, but we’re going to work towards making it better,” Browne said. “And it’ll take time. As long as we are both equity-advancing and justice-centered, with persistence, we’ll get there.”



Teacher Performance Assessments

CTC staff presented score results from the last three years (2018–21) of implementation of Commission-approved performance assessments — the California Teaching Performance Assessment (**CalTPA**), the **edTPA**, Fresno Assessment for Student Teachers (**FAST**) and the California Administrator Performance Assessment (**CalAPA**).

The CalTPA measures candidate competency in the California Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs), which identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities that a teacher should demonstrate at the beginning of a teaching career; edTPA is a subject-specific performance assessment; and FAST is a Commission-approved TPA model designed and used exclusively by California State University, Fresno.

CalTPA showed a declining passing rate through the three years, partly due to program standard re-evaluation and partly due to difficulties attributed to the pandemic. The 2020–21 passage rate was 89 percent. The edTPA saw similar patterns, with an 83 percent passage rate in 2020–21. The FAST program saw an increase each year, with 97.3 percent of candidates passing in 2020–21. Program representatives attributed this high rate to the complete incorporation of the TPAs into the preparation program.

The disaggregated data showed that compared to other candidate groups, African American candidates were passing the edTPA at lower rates. Commissioners questioned this data and discussed the appropriateness of the high-stakes way TPAs

are used.

“When I looked at the data and the groups of students who have low scores here — we have lessons learned here, which I think will benefit our work in the future,” said CSBA President and CTC Commissioner Dr. Susan Heredia. “When we see these scores in year one, we shouldn’t wait until year three to address it. The data from year one should be an immediate red flag. I’m especially concerned because I don’t want certain groups of students to get discouraged.

CTC staff indicated they were looking at educator preparation programs across the country and finding similar patterns. They are, however, identifying and studying outlier programs that are credentialing larger numbers of African American candidates.

Nearly 100 percent of candidates passed the newly created CalAPA, which identifies the knowledge, skills, and abilities that a school administrator should demonstrate at the beginning of an administrative services career.

In another TPA item, commissioners approved several recommended actions related to educator candidates obtaining multiple credentials. The Commission directed staff to disseminate regulations that require educators to pass only a single TPA; adopted the recommendations that teachers who hold different credential types can have their clear credential accepted in place of a TPA; and amended prior action specifying *which* TPA should be taken by candidates seeking multiple credentials. The new requirement in its place is that a candidate consult with their program to determine which is the most appropriate TPA.

Literacy assessment

Senate Bill 488 dictates that, beginning July 1, 2025, the current version of the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) will no longer be required, instead requiring that the CTC develop and implement a literacy instruction performance assessment that assesses Multiple Subject and Education Specialist credential candidates for competence in instruction in literacy.

Key deadlines

Contract Year	Overview of Scope of Work
Year One: 2022–23	Begin development of literacy instruction performance assessment (secure contract, appoint design team)
Year Two: 2023–24	Continued development of literacy instruction performance assessment – Pilot Test
Year Three: 2024–25	Continued Development of literacy instruction performance assessment – Field Test and Standard Setting Study Administration, scoring, reporting, and maintenance of the literacy instruction performance assessment
Year Four: 2025–26	Administration, scoring, reporting, and maintenance of the literacy instruction performance assessment

CTC staff presented the first draft of the [program resource guide](#), which compiles and synthesizes content and pedagogical expectations from multiple state documents including the English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework, the Common Core standards for ELA/Literacy, the California State

Literacy Plan and California Dyslexia Guidelines. Staff noted that they are working on incorporating the English Learner Roadmap and other EL resources into the document.

The guide identifies the teaching knowledge, skills and abilities needed to provide literacy instruction and is intended to inform the development of the literacy performance assessment and Commission-approved teacher preparation programs.

“The success of this performance assessment is not just about creating a robust way for candidates to demonstrate their ability to conduct literacy instruction,” said Chair Tine Sloan. “It’s an opportunity for programs to use something concrete to design their preparation around and to have the data and evidence of the way their candidates are engaging in literacy instruction that they really didn’t get to see with the RICA.”

The guide will be further refined with current feedback and then will be released for a field review.

In other CTC news:

- Commissioners considered the need for a **credential pathway for school-based occupational and physical therapists**. Support from field practitioners is high and centered on the professional inequities and lack of pathways to leadership positions currently available to OTs and PTs. CTC staff will explore different pathways to make a credential available to these professions.
- An update on the results of the first cohort of **Teacher Residency Program** candidates was provided and will be covered in a future CSBA blog
- The CTC adopted the passing score standard for the new **California Subject Examinations for Teachers in Dance and Theatre**, with a plan to revisit once additional data becomes available, since the sample size was impacted by low test participation.



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