



Adult Education Credentialing Proposal

In California under the Adult Education Program (AEP), adult education is offered by both K12 adult schools and community colleges. While the two sectors are collaborative, they have distinctly different requirements for educators who deliver classroom instruction within their respective systems. In K12 adult schools, teachers are required to hold the appropriate credential issued by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). Instructors in the community college system, however, are not required to hold a teaching credential issued by the CTC and instead, in most cases, requirements are based on academic degrees.

Currently, K12 adult school teachers must apply for the CTC Preliminary Designated Subjects Adult Education (DSAE) teaching credential followed by completion of a CTC-approved preparation program within three years to obtain the Clear DSAE credential. The preparation programs are typically offered through local education agencies and consist of 9 semester units or 135 hours of preparation. As specified by the Commission's Adult Education Program Standards, the program of individualized preparation must include adult learning theory, curriculum and instructional planning, using technology in the classroom, instructional practices, assessing student learning, school and community resources, and an early orientation in the first month of teaching. Such requirements help to provide a level of professionalism, teaching strategies to ensure achievement of beneficial student outcomes, and assurance that a teacher is prepared to work with the adult student population K12 adult schools serve – many of whom have low levels of literacy and are in need of basic skills and ESL support.

In contrast, community college instructors are not required to obtain a credential but instead must meet minimum qualifications such as having a master's degree, a bachelor's degree, or an associate's degree depending on the discipline of study. Each of the current minimum qualifications has been established by the California Community College's Board of Governors based on the recommendation of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC). Instructors in noncredit programs, in particular, are typically required to have a specific bachelor's degree in the discipline where instruction will occur, but are not required to have a teaching credential or any specific pedagogical and androgogical training in teaching adults. In comparison, all teachers working in an approved K12 adult school are required to have an approved adult education credential.

SB 173 (Liu, 2014)

As you may recall, in 2013 CCAE and CAEAA approached Senator Carol Liu (D) about carrying SB 173 to support adult education and tackle some key structural issues that the field had been challenged by over the years. Among those issues was teacher qualifications and reciprocity with the community college system. CCAE and CAEAA supported SB 173 as a means to begin the long road of rebuilding adult education after many years of categorical flexibility that left K12 adult education decimated.

As passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor, SB 173 (Liu, 2014) required the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) and the Academic Senate for the CCC to meet

to review their current requirements for noncredit adult education and adult education instructors, and develop and submit recommendations to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature for modifying or establishing reciprocity standards for instructors of adult education courses, as defined in statute.

Ultimately, the CTC and Academic Senate suggested consideration of hours of experience and/or performance evaluations and an early completion option. That said, neither entity formalized any specific recommendation to move forward.

Legislative Analyst's Office Recommendation – Eliminate the Credential

The nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) believes that adult education instructors should be able to teach in either system, arguing the K12 teaching credential limits a community college instructor's ability to teach in K12 adult schools. In this regard, the LAO has recommended over the past few years eliminating the requirement for adult school teachers to have a teaching credential.

CCAIE and CAEAA do **not** agree with the LAO's position. Rather, we believe the K12 credential provides value to K12 adult school teachers in terms of professionalism, educational support, teaching valuable pedagogical and androgical strategies, and is a principle component of what makes K12 adult schools and their teachers important, valuable and successful. More specifically, the credential is focused on helping prepare a K12 teacher for practices in teaching that are geared towards little to no educational background giving teachers the tools necessary to help them grow a student's literacy skills from the ground up. These skills are not taught as part of a prospectus via college education, it is separate and apart from those skills. Further, K12 adult school teachers are often working with adult students who have a lower current academic skill level than those students attending community college who are often working from some base skill set that doesn't require as much in the way of teaching tools and style.

In this regard, CCAIE and CAEAA strongly propose retaining the K12 teaching credential requirement.

Proposed 2019 Legislation – Streamlining the Credential Process

While CCAIE and CAEAA strongly support maintaining the K12 teaching credential requirement, we do believe there may be value in the development of another pathway by which a teacher can obtain the Clear DSAE Credential. Some community college instructors may be well versed and have experience such that they may already be prepared to teach in a K12 adult school, but are hindered by what is currently a lengthy and costly process to obtain a credential.

In this regard, CCAIE and CAEAA propose the development of a streamlined pathway to obtain a credential that would be streamlined for those who are able to pass a competency-based test developed by the CTC with input from the Department of Education that demonstrates familiarity and competency in the andragogy that is subsumed in the credential process and obtainment. This pathway would not replace the current pathway, but merely be an alternative, streamlined approach for obtaining a credential for those who can pass the relevant test to be developed by the CTC.

The CTC would leverage the provider(s) (CALPRO, OTAN, TAP) of the Instructor Competencies Self-Assessment and the follow-up professional development to address competency deficiencies. If a teacher applicant demonstrates proficiency in all areas via the assessment then they would receive a clear credential. If a credential applicant does not pass the assessment, the applicant would need to utilize the new pathway to obtain a credential by taking professional development to address competencies in which they do not score proficient. This would result in an individualized plan for professional development.

This streamlined approach will also help address the challenges some K12 adult schools have identified with hiring teachers who find the credential process overly costly and time consuming. This would streamline that process, giving prospective K12 adult school teachers options to obtaining the requisite credential. The bill would also allow credential costs through the current pathway or the streamlined one proposed to be covered by regional consortia funding under the Adult Education Program, as approved by each regional consortium.

Reciprocity

While the proposed legislation would focus on streamlining the K12 aspects of minimum teaching requirements, it would also help to provide a pathway option for competent community college instructors to obtain a credential in a less-costly, expedited process, to the extent they are able to pass the CTC-approved test in line with the credential tenets. This would help address the concerns outlined by the LAO regarding reciprocity for community college instructors desiring to teach in K12 adult schools. In terms of the converse reciprocity approach, community colleges already have the flexibility to evaluate instructors that are currently teaching at a K12 adult school and deem that they are eligible to teach in a community college noncredit program, even if they do not possess the specific bachelor's degree listed in the minimum qualifications. As a matter of fact, the California Community College Handbook on Minimum Qualifications for Faculty and Administrators provides that teachers in the preK-12 system with a full-time, clear California Designated Subjects Adult Education Teaching Credential meet the minimum qualifications for teaching in the community college system.¹ Further, colleges may also consider years of teaching experience, courses taken to complete a degree, pedagogical and adrogological training obtained while completing an adult education credential, and industry experience related to the courses being taught. The ability to grant equivalency does not guarantee that each instructor currently teaching in an adult education center would be eligible to teach in a noncredit program, but the flexibility already exists for each community college district to evaluate each instructor's qualifications individually and determine that the instructor's experience and training is sufficient to be hired for noncredit instruction, as highlighted by the Academic Senate in their joint report with the CTC on reciprocity in 2016.

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¹ <https://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/Reports/2017-Minimum-Qualifications-Handbook-r1-ADA.pdf>

Candidate meets requirements for Adult Ed Designated Subjects Credential and receives preliminary credential

Take personalized preparation program approved by commission as per EC 44260.3 (c)-(f)

Complete program and receive clear credential after meeting EC 44260.3(a)(b)

Take AE Teacher Competency Assessment

Pass: Receive Clear Credential after meeting EC 44260.3(a)(b)

Does not pass assessment:
Participates in workshops, online courses, and professional development activities through CDE approved providers – CALPRO, OTAN, CASAS
Only required to take PD in domains in which they did not demonstrate mastery.
Completion of these courses would satisfy 44260.3 (c) – (f)

Teacher Competency Domains:
Monitors and manages student learning and performance through data
Plans and delivers high-quality, evidence based instruction
Effectively communicates to motivate and engage learners
Pursues professionalism and continually builds knowledge and skills