

One way to Clear Credential – induction

Karen Kearney, director of leadership initiatives and senior program associate at WestEd, wrote the following article for EdCal.

As researcher John Hattie notes in his book “Visible Learning”: “It is school leaders who promote challenging goals, and then establish safe environments for teachers to critique, question and support other teachers to reach these goals together that have the most effect on student outcomes.”

There can be no doubt that developing excellent education leaders takes time and focus – beginning with teacher leadership and following through with administrator preparation, new leader induction and ongoing professional learning toward highly accomplished practice. While each stage is important, perhaps the most underserved area of administrator development has been induction – extending and supporting leadership performance of beginning site, district and program administrators.

To address this gap, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing targeted administrator preparation, focusing on Tier 2 program expectations and outcomes. CTC convened a stakeholder panel, featuring ACSA members and staff participation, to recommend how best to prepare and support new leaders who were completing credential requirements and beginning new administrative jobs.

In April 2014, after soliciting and hearing public comment, commissioners approved new regulations for programs dedicated to preparing candidates for a Clear Administrative Services Credential. The revised regulations are presented in the Clear Administrative Services Credential Program Standards, available at <http://goo.gl/HqdQHF>.

In general, the new Clear Credential induction program provides a bridge between knowing the research, skills and policies behind effective educational administration and leadership performance in an education community focused on continuous growth and

student achievement. The new program standards are explicit in describing requirements for the induction experience, including individualized coaching, while still allowing room for providers and candidates to shape unique programs that fit their contexts and resources.

A few of the program changes are highlighted below. However, program providers, candidates, employers and others need to review the Clear ASC Program Standards to fully understand the requirements and act upon the shifts from the old Tier 2 to the new Clear Credential programs.

Pathway to Clear

There is a single pathway to the Clear Credential – induction. Options previously available, such as the standards-based or guidelines-based pathways, no longer exist under the revised program standards. The CTC believes that the new program standards require significant programmatic changes for current standards-based programs and lesser, but still significant changes for current guidelines-based programs that are already based on a mentoring relationship, with coaching, professional learning, and a written plan of growth.

Administrator induction

Induction programs that lead to a Clear Credential now must include individualized coaching, professional learning opportunities, and assessment based upon the identified needs of each candidate. A candidate’s program is chronicled in an Individual Induction Plan that maps out a two-year program for a minimum of 60 clock hours and a maximum of 90 clock hours annually.

Eligibility and enrollment

As in the past, the Clear Credential induction period begins when the candidate has a valid Preliminary Credential and is employed in an administrative position that requires an administrative credential. However, now the candidate must enroll in an induction program

within 120 days of the start of their initial administrative position. And the candidate must begin coaching within 30 days of the program start.

CPSELs required

The updated California Professional Standards for Education Leaders are a part of all induction programs, as they are required under ASC Program Standard 5. These CPSELs are leadership criteria that guide the candidate’s IIP, individualized coaching, professional learning opportunities and assessment of skills components for the Clear Credential.

The updated CPSELs are fully aligned with and extend the new California Administrator Performance Expectations required for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential. The updated CPSELs are available at <http://goo.gl/9ofdNY>.

Individualized coaching

Coaching must begin within 30 days of the candidate’s enrollment in a CTC-approved induction program. The program identifies and assigns one of its trained coaches to each candidate, matching the coach and candidate according to defined criteria.

Induction coaches support the development of the candidate’s leadership competences relative to his or her administrative position, experience, background and IIP goals. They focus consistently upon developing CPSEL-based leadership outcomes that positively impact teaching practices and learning.

The coaching experience is a minimum of 40 hours of job-embedded coaching activities. However, to provide each candidate with the coaching service needed to attain program outcomes, additional coaching may be provided.

Professional development

The program provides a variety of professional development offerings for a minimum of 20-30 clock hours annu-

ally. These address needs common to all beginning educational administrators, while also providing differentiated learning opportunities identified in an individual candidate's IIP.

All professional development is designed to support the candidate's ability to demonstrate program outcomes through the application of updated CPSEL competencies and the attainment of his or her IIP goals.

Assessment of skills

The induction experience is informed by ongoing assessments comprising an initial assessment, goal setting, an IIP, ongoing formative assessments and reflection that prompt goal or plan revisions, benchmark and summative assessments.

Assessments, using multiple measures, are collaborative and based on data gathered by the candidate, coach and program. The initial induction assessment is designed to measure a candidate's entry-level competence in each of the CPSEL outcomes as baseline information that can be compared in future assessments to determine the candidate's growth over time and overall competency. For recommendation for the Clear Credential, documentation of at least one element of each standard, for a minimum of six areas of competency, is required.

Induction plan

An annual Individual Induction Plan is required for all candidates enrolled in Clear Credential induction programs. It is a working document in which the induction candidate and program sponsor, ideally with the coach, collaboratively develop professional performance goals. These are based upon identified individual needs, the candidate's assignment and prior professional experiences, and include the assessment that occurs at the end of the preliminary program, if available.

The IIP grounds the required professional learning and coaching components in the CPSEL outcomes. In developing and reviewing the IIP, the program sponsor also considers the candidate's individual job responsibilities and his or her employer's priorities.

These highlights demonstrate some of the extensive changes now enacted to better prepare and support new site, district and program administrators. There are additional shifts in expectations and requirements for Administrative Services Clear Credential Programs not included in this summary. The CTC provides the full set of requirements for program providers, candidates, employers and coaches and offers additional rationale, examples, comparison charts, and a glossary in its publication, Clear Administrator Services Credential Program Standards, available at: <http://goo.gl/HqdQHF>.

In it, the commission announces: "With the implementation of the 2013-14 Administrative Services Credential Program Standards, the (CTC) embarks upon a new era in the preparation of California's educational leaders. The primary focus of the Preliminary Administrative Services program will be to prepare future leaders for their initial administrative position, with special emphasis on preparation for the position of site administrator, or principal, for a specific school site, while the Clear Credential program will be focused on job-embedded, real-life experiences of educational leaders.

"The heart of the Clear Credential program is a coaching-based professional induction process contextualized for whatever job the administrator currently holds, while continuing to develop candidates for future leadership positions. This new structure is designed to provide the best career preparation and experiences for effective leadership in California's 21st century schools."

Please note that a panel of practitioners, including ACSA representation, convened by CTC and the California Department of Education, and facilitated by the Comprehensive Center at WestEd, is currently developing resources for program providers, candidates, coaches and employers looking for additional information, examples and tools about administrator induction. These resources are scheduled to be available online in the summer.

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ACSA program to meet criteria

Over the past 20 years, new school leaders in California have been clearing their administrative credential through a variety of state programs.

From attendance at a university, completing additional coursework, AB 430 training, to online courses, all have been approved pathways. However, the new generation of Clear Administrative Services Credential programs that begin July 1 will look significantly different than those of the past.

ACSA has been there every step of the way as the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing has worked on the new standards. Educational Services Executive Margaret Arthofer is working on ACSA's new ASC induction program, which will reflect the best practices that can be offered. In fact, the Clear Credential coaching elements of ACSA's current program, in conjunction with the New Teacher Center, became a role model within the new ASC standards.

EdCal will bring readers more information on ACSA's Clear Credential program in the coming weeks leading to the start-date for the new standards.

ASC Credentialing Changes

From 

To

- Standards of Program Quality and Effectiveness for Administrative Services Credentials-Professional Clear Standards and Guidelines (2004)

- Administrative Services Credential Program Standards – Clear Induction (2014)

- Program Pathway Options, e.g. standards-based or guidelines-based programs

- Induction, with coaching, is the only pathway

- CA Professional Standards for Education Leaders (2001)

- CA Professional Standards for Education Leaders (2014)

- At the time an administrator receives the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential, a five-year “time clock” begins for the completion of the Clear Administrative Services Credential requirements

- Candidate must enroll in a Clear Credential program within 120 days of start of employment and must begin coaching component within 30 days of program start

- Mentoring may be part of the program

- Individualized coaching required

- Organized around courses; may include non-university offerings

- 20-30 clock hours of professional learning required each year (over and above coaching requirement)
