



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH
College of Education

CalTPA Policy Handbook

Academic Year 2025–2026

Preliminary Teaching Credentials:

PK-3 Early Childhood, Multiple Subject,
Urban Dual, Education Specialist,
and Single Subject

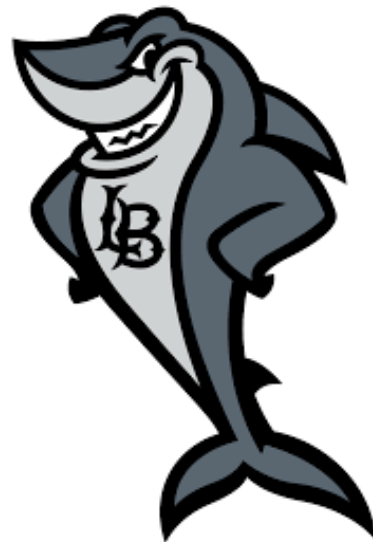
A Guide for:

Teacher Candidates, Interns, Cooperating Teachers,
Intern Mentors, School Administrators, Faculty,
and University Mentors

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Overview

This CalTPA Handbook has been developed to serve as a comprehensive guide for all individuals involved in the preparation of future educators at California State University, Long Beach. It is intended for credential candidates, cooperating teachers, university mentors, school administrators, district partners, and CSULB faculty and staff. The purpose of this handbook is to provide:

1. An overview of the history and purpose of the California Teaching Performance Assessment (CalTPA),
2. Insight into its critical role in the credentialing process for California teachers,
3. A clear explanation of the requirements and steps for successful CalTPA completion by credential candidates, and
4. Practical guidance for university and district personnel to effectively support candidates during their semester of student teaching clinical practice experience as they work toward earning their preliminary teaching credential.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact:

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CalTPA: An Introduction

The **California Teacher Performance Assessment (CalTPA)** is a state-required evaluation designed to assess the instructional readiness of teacher candidates in **Multiple Subject, Single Subject, Education Specialist**, and now **PK–3 Early Childhood Education** credential programs.

Originally established under Senate Bill 2042 (SB 2042) in 1998, the CalTPA ensures that all candidates—regardless of their credentialing pathway (e.g., student teaching, district internship, university internship)—demonstrate competency in a uniform set of standards before earning a preliminary teaching credential. This performance-based assessment complements coursework, clinical practice, and University Mentor evaluations by requiring candidates to show evidence of effective teaching practices in real classroom settings.

In 2008, Senate Bill 1209 (SB 1209) called for a more standardized approach to teacher performance assessments across California institutions. In response, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) conducted a comprehensive job analysis and developed the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) as a framework outlining the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities expected of beginning teachers.

To support implementation, the CTC also developed Assessment Design Standards to ensure that TPAs are valid, reliable, and aligned with authentic teaching practices.

All CSULB teacher candidates in the following programs must successfully complete the CalTPA:

- Multiple Subject
- Education Specialist
- PK–3 Early Childhood Education
- Single Subject

Key Features of the Revised CalTPA (Effective July 1, 2025)

Each cycle follows four structured steps: **Plan, Teach and Assess, Reflect, and Apply.**

Candidates must demonstrate responsiveness to student diversity, including cultural, linguistic, and learning needs.

The **Literacy Cycle** is now required for MS, PK–3 Early Education Specialist, and Education Specialist candidates to meet the literacy assessment requirement and directly aligned to Literacy Standard TPE 7 as mandated by **Senate Bill 488**. This cycle has also replaced the Reading Instruction Competency Assessment (RICA) as of July 1, 2025.

Credential Program Specific Expectations

Multiple Subject Candidates - MSCP

Multiple Subject candidates must complete two CalTPA cycles:

- **Math Performance Assessment:** Focuses on development of a math content and practice lesson built upon student assets and appropriate adaptations for support infusing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies as responsive to funds of knowledge and supporting a positive and safe learning environment.
- **Literacy Performance Assessment:** Emphasizes assessment-driven literacy instruction, requiring candidates to plan and teach a literacy segment focused on foundational literacy skills that includes informal, formal, and student self-assessment.

Candidates in all MSCP pathways (Traditional ITEP or Post-bac, UTEACH) complete the same requirements.

Urban Dual Candidates - UDCP

Urban Dual Credential Program candidates must complete two CalTPA cycles:

- **Math Performance Assessment:** Focuses on learning about students—including those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)—and planning a standards-based math lesson that is responsive to both their assets and appropriate adaptations to support positive outcomes.
- **Literacy Performance Assessment:** Requires candidates to plan and teach a literacy segment that includes informal, formal, and student self-assessment, focused on foundational literacy skills.

Candidates must pass both cycles in their credential area (MMSN or ESN).

Education Specialist Candidates - ESCP (Mild to Moderate Support Needs & Extensive Support Needs)

Education Specialist candidates must complete two CalTPA cycles:

- **Math Performance Assessment:** Focuses on learning about students—including those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)—and planning a standards-based math lesson that is responsive to both their assets and appropriate adaptations to support positive outcomes.
- **Literacy Performance Assessment:** Requires candidates to plan and teach a literacy segment that includes informal, formal, and student self-assessment, focused on foundational literacy skills.

Candidates must pass both cycles in their credential area (MMSN or ESN).

PK–3 Early Childhood Education Candidates – PK3CP

PK–3 Early Childhood Education candidates must complete two CalTPA cycles specifically designed for early childhood education.

The PK–3 CalTPA includes both a **Math Performance Assessment** and a **Literacy Performance Assessment**, tailored to the developmental and instructional needs of children from preschool through third grade.

These cycles are aligned with the PK–3 Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs), which emphasize developmentally appropriate practices, early literacy and math instruction, and family engagement.

Single Subject Candidates - SSCP

Single Subject candidates must complete two CalTPA cycles:

- **Cycle 1:** Learning about students and planning instruction in the candidate’s content area based on culturally and sustaining practices and asset-based instruction.
- **Cycle 2:** Assessment-driven instruction in the same content area, including a multi-day lesson segment with embedded assessments.

Unlike MS, Ed Specialist, and PK-3 candidates, SS candidates complete both cycles in their **specific content area** (e.g., science, history, math).

*All CalTPA cycles are aligned with the updated Literacy Standards (TPE 7) to ensure consistency across credential areas.

CalTPA Integration Within Credential Program Coursework

From the beginning of the program through its completion, elements of the California Teacher Performance Assessment (CalTPA) are intentionally embedded throughout the curriculum. This ensures that candidates are consistently engaging with the assessment’s expectations, structure, and reflective practices as they develop their teaching skills. Throughout these courses, the CalTPA is introduced and reinforced as a tool for professional growth, emphasizing reflective teaching and learning.

All teacher candidates are enrolled in credential-specific coursework that directly supports their final clinical practice experiences in student teaching. Within these courses, the California Teacher Performance Assessment (CalTPA) is emphasized as a key tool for professional growth and credentialing success.

Candidates engage with the CalTPA not only as a requirement for licensure, but as a reflective framework that deepens their understanding of effective teaching. Instructional time is dedicated to both the art and science of teaching, with a strong focus on culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy. Candidates learn to incorporate students' funds of knowledge, including their lived experiences and assets, to inform instructional decisions and improve learning outcomes.

Through this lens, candidates explore strategic, equity-driven approaches to teaching that prepare them to make a meaningful impact in diverse classroom settings. The program supports timely and successful CalTPA submission by aligning coursework with the assessment's structure and expectations.

All candidates, regardless of credential program, are expected to complete, submit, and pass the CalTPA by the conclusion of their student teaching experience in order to be recommended for a preliminary teaching credential.

CalTPA Submission Requirements

All teacher candidates completing the CalTPA must adhere to specific submission guidelines to ensure consistency, confidentiality, and compliance with California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) standards.

Written Templates

Candidates are required to use the official CalTPA written response templates provided by Pearson. These templates are accessible through each candidate's Pearson online platform account and must be used for all written components of the CalTPA submission. Submissions that do not follow the designated format may be considered incomplete or invalid.

Supporting Artifacts

In addition to written responses, candidates must submit:

- Student work samples that demonstrate instructional impact.
- Video recordings of their teaching practice during the designated instructional segment.

These artifacts provide evidence of the candidate's ability to plan, instruct, assess, and reflect in alignment with the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs).

Consent and Confidentiality

Candidates must obtain **signed consent forms** from students' parents/guardians and school administrators before recording any classroom video. These consent forms must be retained by the candidate for recordkeeping purposes and are not submitted with the CalTPA.

All video recordings must comply with the **CTC's confidentiality policy**, which includes:

- Protecting student identities.
- Avoiding the use of full names or personal identifiers.
- Ensuring recordings are securely stored and used solely for CalTPA submission.

Non-compliance with confidentiality guidelines may result in serious consequences, including the withholding or denial of the preliminary teaching credential.

Guidance on Authorship and Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in CalTPA Submissions

This guidance is provided for candidates, faculty, cooperating teachers, and university mentors at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). It outlines expectations for ethical authorship and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in CalTPA submissions, in alignment with CSULB policies and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) Rules of Participation.

Sole Authorship Requirement

Candidates must be the sole authors of all written narratives, reflections, and instructional materials submitted as part of the CalTPA. All content must reflect the candidate's own instructional decisions, teaching practices, and professional judgment.

Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence

CSULB supports the responsible and transparent use of AI tools to enhance learning and productivity. However, AI must not be used in ways that compromise authorship, misrepresent teaching practices, or violate academic integrity. Specifically:

- AI tools may be used for editing, grammar support, or idea organization, but not for generating full responses or instructional plans.
- Candidates must review, revise, and take ownership of any content influenced by AI tools.
- Confidential student information must never be entered into public AI platforms.
- All sources, including AI-generated content, must be appropriately cited if used.

Academic Integrity and Institutional Compliance

Use of AI must comply with CSULB's Academic Integrity Policy and any program-specific guidelines established by the College of Education. Misuse of AI including submitting AI-generated content as original work may be considered a violation of academic integrity and subject to disciplinary action.

University Mentor, Cooperating Teacher, and Faculty Support

University mentors, faculty, and cooperating teachers are encouraged to discuss ethical AI use with candidates and provide guidance on maintaining authorship and integrity. Support should focus on helping candidates reflect on their own teaching practices and articulate their instructional decisions authentically.

CalTPA Submission Integrity

All CalTPA submissions must meet the following criteria:

- The candidate must be the individual who planned, taught, assessed, and reflected on the learning segment.

Support Guidelines

Locate the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing policy on acceptable support at:

[CCTC Acceptable Support](#)

Summarized below:

Required Support Activities for CalTPA Candidates

Teacher preparation programs must provide the following forms of support to all candidates completing the CalTPA:

- **Access to CalTPA Materials**
Ensure candidates can access official CalTPA preparation materials and understand performance expectations.
- **Orientation to CalTPA Cycles and Rubrics**
Offer sessions that explain the structure of each instructional cycle and how scoring rubrics are applied.
- **Formative Learning Experiences**
Engage candidates in activities aligned with CalTPA tasks, such as:
 - Planning, teaching, assessing, reflecting, and applying instruction.
 - Practicing informal assessment and use of educational technology.
 - Getting to know students and incorporating self-assessment.

- **Clinical Placement and Permissions**

Ensure candidates complete CalTPA tasks during their clinical experience in a cooperating school or district, and verify that all necessary permissions (e.g., video consent forms) are obtained and retained.

- **Remediation for Unsuccessful Attempts**

Provide targeted support for candidates who do not pass, focusing on:

- Understanding the cycle(s) and rubric(s) where performance fell short.
- Clarifying what needs to be resubmitted and how to do so.

Acceptable Support Activities for CalTPA Candidates

Programs may also offer the following types of support, provided they do not compromise the integrity of the candidate's original work:

- **Clarifying Terms and Concepts**

Discuss definitions from the CalTPA Glossary and explain key terms.

- **Modeling Effective Teaching**

Review sample lesson plans, feedback, and classroom observations using CalTPA rubrics.

- **Writing Support**

Refer candidates to writing centers for help with professional writing (excluding direct editing of CalTPA responses).

- **Skill Development**

Aid in areas needing improvement, such as reflective writing, differentiation, and planning based on student data.

- **Rubric Practice**

Use CalTPA rubrics in formative exercises unrelated to the actual submission.

- **Connecting Coursework to TPEs**

Link program content to the Teaching Performance Expectations measured by CalTPA.

- **Timeline and Check-ins**

Share a schedule for CalTPA completion and hold regular meetings to monitor progress.

- **Collaborative Planning**

Allow co-planning with peers or cooperating teachers, ensuring submitted work is the candidate's own.

- **Translation Support**

Provide access to translated instructional materials when needed.

- **General Guidance**
Answer questions about CalTPA cycles, rubrics, templates, and support documents.
- **Self-Assessment Encouragement**
Encourage candidates to evaluate their draft responses or videos using rubrics—without giving direct edits or answers.
- **Group Discussions**
Facilitate peer support groups that maintain the integrity of individual submissions.
- **Resource Referrals**
Direct candidates to research-based practices and experts in relevant content areas.
- **Technical Support**
Help candidates navigate the online platform and arrange assistance for video recording.
- **Policy Awareness**
Share and review documents like the CalTPA Rules of Participation and guidelines for acceptable support.

Unacceptable Support Activities for CalTPA Candidates

To maintain the integrity of the CalTPA and ensure that each candidate’s submission reflects their own independent work, the following types of support are **not permitted**:

- **Providing Direct Answers or Content**
Giving candidates specific responses to CalTPA prompts or tasks, such as:
 - Selecting focus students.
 - Analyzing student work.
 - Determining instructional next steps.
- **Editing Candidate Responses**
Making changes to a candidate’s written work prior to submission, including grammar, phrasing, or content.
- **Speculating on Performance Standards**
Offering unofficial interpretations or guesses about what constitutes sufficient evidence or what scorers are looking for.
- **Substituting Institutional Terminology**
Using program-specific terms or definitions in place of those provided in official CalTPA materials.
- **Critiquing Drafts with Specific Alternatives**
Reviewing candidate drafts and suggesting specific edits or alternative responses to prompts.

- **Selecting Submission Materials**
Telling candidates which video clips, work samples, or annotated sections to submit.
- **Using Hypothetical or Benchmark Examples**
Describing fictional scenarios or using examples from other performance assessments to approximate CalTPA standards.
- **Sharing Candidate Work Publicly**
Uploading any part of a candidate's CalTPA submission (written or video) to public websites or social media platforms.

CalTPA Score Reporting and Secondary Passing Standard

Score Reporting

Upon completion of the CalTPA, candidates will receive a detailed score report through their **Pearson online platform account**. This report includes:

- **Rubric scores** for each component of the assessment.
- A summary indicating whether the candidate has met the **Adopted Passing Standard**.
- These scores reflect the candidate's performance across the structured steps of the CalTPA: **Plan, Teach and Assess, Reflect, and Apply**.

Secondary Passing Standard (Effective February 2024)

In recognition of the complexity of teacher preparation and assessment, the **California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC)** implemented a **Secondary Passing Standard**. This policy allows candidates who narrowly miss the adopted passing score to still fulfill the CalTPA requirement under specific conditions.

To qualify under the Secondary Passing Standard, the following criteria must be met: [excerpt from [PSA 24-02](#), pages 2-3]

- **Enrollment Status:**
The candidate must be currently enrolled in a Commission-approved teacher preparation program based on college definition of enrollment.
- **Credential Requirements:**
The candidate must have met all other credential requirements, including:
 - Completion of required coursework and clinical practice.
- **Score Range:**
The candidate must have scored within -1.0 Standard Error of Measurement (SEM) of

the adopted passing standard on the appropriate, currently approved version of the CalTPA or edTPA.

- **Evidence of Competency:**

The program must provide documented evidence that the candidate has demonstrated competency in all domains of the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs). Acceptable evidence may include:

- Observations of teaching performance.
- Feedback and documentation from Cooperating or Mentor Teachers.
- Completed coursework and assignments.
- Results from formative and summative program-level assessments.
- CalTPA rubric scores of 3 or higher on specific components.

This policy ensures that candidates who demonstrate overall readiness and competence, even if slightly below the passing threshold, can still move forward in the credentialing process provided their program validates their preparedness through multiple measures.

Notification of qualification for Secondary Passing Standards is sent directly to the candidate from the CSULB College of Education Student Assessment Support Coordinator after scores are released by Pearson. Completion of the Individual Support and Success Plan (ISSP), in conjunction with the completed Individual Development Plan (IDP), must be submitted for consideration of recommendation for passing status.

Support for Candidates Who Do Not Meet the CalTPA Passing Standard

Candidates who do not meet the **Adopted Passing Standard** or the **Secondary Passing Standard** on one or both CalTPA cycles are eligible to receive targeted support from their teacher preparation program. If the candidate has somehow already earned a preliminary credential but still needs to meet the CalTPA requirement, support may also be provided through an induction program.

Guided Support and Retake Opportunities

Candidates who do not pass a CalTPA cycle may:

- Receive guided support focused on the specific areas of need identified in their score report through an assigned CSULB CalTPA Faculty Success Coach.
- Retake the appropriate CalTPA cycle(s) in accordance with the official CalTPA Retake Policy.

The role of the CalTPA Faculty Success Coach:

- Review rubric scores with the candidate to identify areas for growth.
- Use multiple sources of evidence (e.g., coursework, observations, mentor feedback) to guide further development in consideration of feedback received.
- Incorporate Socratic questioning, reflection, and inquiry through allowable guidance.
- Ensure candidates are fully prepared before attempting a retake.

The Role of the Cooperating Teacher

As a Cooperating Teacher, your mentorship is essential in helping candidates prepare for this rigorous assessment. By modeling effective instructional strategies, supporting reflective practice, and providing constructive feedback, you help candidates build the competencies needed to meet California's high standards for credentialing.

Your role directly contributes to the success of future educators and the quality of education across the state. Thank you for your continued partnership and dedication.

The Role of the Cooperating Teacher in Supporting CalTPA Completion

As a Cooperating Teacher, you play a pivotal role in the professional development and credentialing success of CSULB teacher candidates. Your mentorship not only shapes their instructional practice but also directly influences their ability to meet the rigorous expectations of the California Teaching Performance Assessment (CalTPA).

Key Responsibilities

1. Model Effective Teaching Practices

- Demonstrate high-quality instruction aligned with California's Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs).
- Use culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy that reflects asset-based approaches to student learning.
- Incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies and differentiated instruction.

2. Facilitate CalTPA Task Completion

- Provide opportunities for candidates to plan, teach, assess, and reflect within your classroom.

- Support candidates in gathering necessary artifacts (e.g., student work samples, video recordings) while maintaining confidentiality and securing required permissions.
- Ensure candidates have access to a safe, inclusive, and instructionally rich environment to complete both CalTPA cycles.

3. Encourage Reflective Practice

- Engage candidates in professional dialogue about instructional decisions, student engagement, and assessment outcomes.
- Prompt candidates to consider how their teaching impacts diverse learners and how they can improve through reflection.

4. Provide Constructive Feedback

- Offer timely, specific, and actionable feedback on lesson planning, instructional delivery, and classroom management.
- Use CalTPA rubrics and language to guide feedback without editing or directing candidate responses.

5. Maintain Ethical Boundaries

- Avoid giving direct answers to CalTPA prompts or editing candidate submissions.
- Do not select video clips or student work for submission—these decisions must be made independently by the candidate.
- Refrain from speculating on scoring criteria or sharing examples from other candidates.

6. Support Professional Growth

- Encourage candidates to engage in self-assessment and peer collaboration.
- Help candidates connect theory to practice by linking coursework to classroom experiences.
- Promote a growth mindset and resilience, especially during challenging moments in the assessment process.

Best Practices for Cooperating Teachers

- Schedule regular check-ins with the candidate to discuss progress and challenges.
- Coordinate with the University Mentor to ensure consistent support and alignment with program expectations.

- Review the CalTPA Acceptable Support Guidelines provided by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).
- Maintain open communication with CSULB faculty and staff regarding candidate needs or concerns.

Timeline and Checkpoints for Supporting CalTPA Completion

To ensure successful completion of the California Teaching Performance Assessment (CalTPA), it is essential that each teacher candidate follows a **program-specific timeline** aligned with their credential area. Cooperating Teachers play a vital role in helping candidates stay on track by providing structured support and monitoring progress throughout the semester.

General Timeline Overview

While each credential program (Multiple Subject, Single Subject, Education Specialist, PK–3 Early Childhood Education) has unique instructional and assessment requirements, all candidates must complete two CalTPA cycles—typically one focused on **planning and instruction** and the other on **assessment and reflection**. These cycles are embedded within the student teaching experience and should be completed by the end of the final clinical practice semester.

Recommended Checkpoints for Cooperating Teachers

To support candidates effectively, Cooperating Teachers are encouraged to follow these suggested checkpoints:

1. **Week 1–3: Orientation and Planning** (Math or Single Subject specific)
 - Review the CalTPA structure and expectations with the candidate.
 - Confirm access to Pearson’s CalTPA written templates.
 - Discuss classroom logistics, student demographics, and instructional goals.
 - Support the determining specific elements needed related to focus students, curriculum considerations, etc.
 - Support candidate in planning lessons aligned with first assessment requirements.
2. **Week 4: Cycle 1 Implementation and Assessment**
 - Support candidate in lesson implementation (teaching) as practice for assessment.

- Ensure candidate understands consent and confidentiality protocols for video recording.
- Provide timely opportunity for successful video recording of planned lesson.
- Assist with logistics for video recording and student work collection.

3. Week 5-6: Cycle 1 Reflection

- Provide feedback on lesson delivery and classroom management.
- Encourage reflective conversations about instructional decisions.

4. Week 7: Cycle 1 Submission

- Confirm candidate has completed all required components.
- Offer encouragement and reassurance during the submission process.
- Begin looking ahead by reviewing Cycle 2 expectations and rubrics.

5. Week 8-9: Cycle 2 Preparation (Literacy or Single Subject specific*)

- Support planning of a multi-day instructional segment with embedded assessments.
- Discuss strategies for differentiation and student engagement highlighting culturally relevant instructional strategies focused on the assets of the classroom student population.
- Observe and provide feedback on instructional delivery and assessment practices to inform and guide Cycle 2 success.
- Provide feedback on lesson delivery and classroom management.

*Single Subject may transition to Cycle 2 earlier during placement process.

6. Week 10-11: Cycle 2 Implementation and Assessment

- Provide timely opportunity for successful video recording of planned lesson sequence.
- Assist with logistics for video recording and student work collection.
- Observe and provide feedback on instructional delivery and assessment practices.
- Ensure candidate collects necessary artifacts and reflects on student outcomes.

7. Week 12-13: Cycle 1 Reflection

- Encourage reflective conversations about instructional decisions.
- Review instructional outcomes and support thoughts on further application of lesson adjustments and guided support to reengage, reteach, or extend learning.
- Provide opportunity for further extension of lesson sequence as necessary to include video recording.

8. Week 14-16: Cycle 2 Submission and Wrap-Up

- Confirm completion of all CalTPA components.
- Celebrate the candidate's progress and offer final reflections on their growth.

Program-Specific Calendars

Each credential program at CSULB provides a detailed CalTPA timeline tailored to its coursework and clinical practice structure. Cooperating Teachers are encouraged to request and review this timeline with their candidate and University Mentor to ensure alignment and timely completion. While most candidates are expected to complete the CalTPA within a single semester, UTEACH and UDCP candidates engage in a yearlong student teaching experience, allowing them to submit their CalTPA over the course of the full academic year. This extended timeline incorporates curriculum/methods integration with the completion of the CalTPA process.

Support Matters

By helping candidates stay organized, focused, and reflective throughout the CalTPA process, Cooperating Teachers contribute significantly to their success. Mentorship ensures that candidates not only meet credentialing requirements but also grow into thoughtful, equity-minded educators.

More Questions and Answers

For additional information from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing please see the following website:

[California Commission on Teacher Credentialing](#)

For Credential Program specific questions please reach out to:

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