



Martha Zaragoza-Díaz,
CABE Legislative and Advocacy Lobbyist



Hispanic Heritage Month



National Hispanic Heritage Month is a period from September 15 to October 15 in the United States for recognizing the contributions and influence of Hispanic Americans to the history, culture, and achievements of the United States. This very diverse group has roots stretching throughout North, Central, South America, as well as Africa. Governor Newsom also issued a proclamation on September 15, 2021 declaring September 15 to October 15, 2021 as Latino Heritage Month in the State of California.

Latinos remain an important part of the nation's overall demographic story. According to the 2019 U.S. Census Bureau population estimate, there are 60.5 million Hispanics living in the United States. Hispanics represent 18.4 percent of the U.S. total population. Mexicans ranked as the largest Hispanic subgroup, 61.4 percent in 2019. Latinos are the largest ethnic group in California: 15.6 million. One in four Californians is foreign-born and four in ten Californians identify as Latino.

Many events will take place throughout the nation and the state celebrating and honoring the achievements of Latinos. Television networks unveiled slates of themed content and live specials. Please check the television networks, as well as your communities, for details about specific events.

Statewide Literacy and Biliteracy Campaign

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond held a virtual press event announcing his bold vision for ensuring that every California student will learn to read by third grade by the year 2026. The effort will also include a biliteracy milestone for dual language learners.



A task force will be created to bring together practitioners, advocates, researchers, foundation partners, thought leaders, students, parents, and other experts to identify key strategies for advancing this goal. Efforts are underway in the California Department of Education (CDE) to build out a task force structure and membership, as well as establish when the task force will meet and details on the types of questions they will be tackling. Also announced was the fact that Assemblymember Mia Bonta (D-Oakland) has agreed to sponsor legislation to help advance this goal.

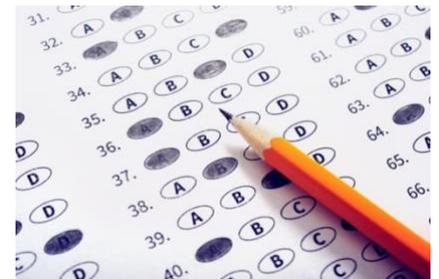
The legislation, to be formally introduced in 2022, will be informed by recommendations that come out of the task force and could include providing resources for advancing literacy and biliteracy goals through professional learning to teach reading, family engagement strategies, and methods for getting books in the hands of students and their families. It is anticipated that the legislation will lay out a multifaceted strategy that considers issues of readiness, chronic absenteeism, needs of students with disabilities and multilingual learners, early education, and socio-economic factors that impact a student's ability to learn to read.

Our own Chief Executive Officer, Jan Gustafson-Corea, participated in the virtual press event supporting the campaign.

Persons interested in participating in this new literacy effort or who wish to learn more should send an email to statewideliteracycampaign@cde.ca.gov.

Teacher Candidates No Longer Have to Take the California Basic Skills Test

This may be old news to some people, but I want to make sure our readers know about this significant change regarding tests teacher candidates have to pass. Teacher candidates no longer have to take the California Basic Skills Test (CBEST) or the California Subject Matter Exams for Teachers, referred to as the CSET, to earn a credential. The CBEST tests reading, math and writing skills and is usually taken before a student is accepted into a teacher preparation program. The CSET tests a teacher candidate's proficiency in the subject they will teach. Teacher candidates must prove subject-matter proficiency before earning a credential, but many teacher preparation programs require the test be taken before a student enters its teacher preparation program.



According to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, approximately half of California's potential teachers struggle to pass the four standardized tests required to earn a credential. The Commission's data shows that in 2019-20, nearly 66 percent of the people who took the CBEST passed it on the first try and about 67 percent passed the CSET the first time.

California's approved 2021-22 state budget allows teacher candidates to skip these tests that had been required to earn a teaching credential if they take coursework approved by the Commission. These changes are effective immediately. This is a significant shift in state policy resulting hopefully in a broader and more diverse group of people becoming teachers and making teaching their career.

For persons wishing to not take the CBEST or the CSET, the law provides various options to do so. For example, instead of taking the CBEST, the new law allows teacher candidates to prove they are proficient by earning a B or better in college coursework in reading, writing and mathematics. It is highly recommended that persons wishing to not take the CBEST and/or the CSET contact CTC for specific information on how to achieve this. Also please note, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing may have to pass some regulations to clarify the process and will need to communicate with teacher preparation programs and teacher candidates about the new legislation.

Update on California Commission on Teacher Credentialing Activities

The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing is an agency in the Executive Branch of California Government created in 1970 by the Ryan Act. The major purpose of the agency is to serve as a state standards board for educator preparation for the public schools in California, the licensing and credentialing of professional educators in the State, the enforcement of professional practices of educators, and the discipline of credential holders in California.



Current Committee Vacancy

The Commission has declared a vacancy for the Public Member position of the Committee of Credentials. For persons interested in applying for the vacancy, an application needs to be completed and submitted to the Commission by November 12, 2021. An application can be obtained by going to the CTC Site: <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-discipline/committee-of-credentials>.

Unit Requirement Issue for Demonstrating Basic Skills

Earlier this year, the Governor and Legislature approved new options for candidates to meet the Basic Skills Requirement, as included in budget trailer bill AB 130. The law as written posed a challenge to programs whose candidates took qualifying coursework at institutions that operate on a quarter system. AB 167 signed by Governor Newsom this week, revised Ed Code Section 44252 (b) (10) (c) to say, "Qualifying coursework shall be a semester-length course of at least three units or a quarter-length course of at least four units." The Commission will be updating the Basic Skills leaflet and any other materials to align with this new language in Ed Code.

Reviewers Needed for New Program Proposals



The Commission continues to have a need for reviewers for new subject matter and educator preparation program proposals. All reviews will be completed remotely and coordinated through technology. These reviews provide an opportunity to continue one's involvement in peer reviews and collaboration with colleagues. If you are interested or have any questions, please send an e-mail to jpr@ctc.ca.gov. There is a particular need for reviewers with the following expertise:

Subject Matter

- * Music
- * Biology

Educator Preparation

- * Bilingual Authorization
- * Speech Language Pathology

Golden State Teacher Grant Program

On June 30, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom signed the 2021-22 Budget Act into law. Additionally, Assembly Bill 132 (AB 132, Chapter 144, Statutes of 2021), enacted on July 27, 2021 provides the authority behind the broadening of the Golden State Teacher Grant (GSTG) program. The GSTG provides one-time funds of up to \$20,000 to eligible students in a variety of high need fields, including but not limited to, bilingual education. The GSTG program encourages students to consider earning a teaching credential to teach in a high-need field at a priority school, in California for four years, within five years of completion of a teacher preparation program.



The Commission released a Special Alert announcing updates to the Golden State Teacher Grant (GSTG) program to be administered by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC). The Special Alert provides information on the GSTG including the awarding process and next steps. Here is the link:



https://www.csac.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/gsa_2021-36.pdf?1629497211.

Teacher candidates may apply via CSAC's website: <https://gstg.csac.ca.gov>.

CTC's list of priority schools for the required teaching service may be found at: <https://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/notices/gs-teacher-list>.

