
2B

Action

Educator Preparation Committee

Initial Institutional Approval – Stage III: Consideration of Provisional Approval for The Chicago School

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents, as part of the Initial Institutional Approval process, The Chicago School’s responses to the Common Standards for consideration and possible Provisional Approval by the Commission.

Recommended Action: That the Commission grant Provisional Approval to The Chicago School and set the Provisional Approval period to be four years.

Presenter: Hart Boyd, Consultant, Professional Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal

Educator Preparation and Advancement

- **Goal 1.** Education preparation programs hold candidates to high standards and adequately prepare them to support all students by using culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining practices in equitable, inclusive, and safe environments.
 - A. Set and uphold rigorous standards for educator preparation programs
 - C. Enact a rigorous accreditation process that ensures programs meet standards and are effective in preparing educators for public schools

Initial Institutional Approval – Stage III: Consideration of Provisional Approval for The Chicago School

Introduction

This agenda item presents, as a part of Stage III of the Initial Institutional Approval (IIA) process, The Chicago School responses to the Common Standards for consideration of Provisional Approval by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission). All Common Standards responses have been reviewed by a team of Board of Institutional Review (BIR) members and have been determined to be aligned. If granted Provisional Approval, the next step in the process would be the review of The Chicago School's responses to the Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology Program Standards by a BIR team. When these reviewers determine that the Program Standards are aligned, the proposed program will be considered for Initial Program Approval by the Committee on Accreditation (COA). Then, at that time, if approved, the institution may offer the program for the four-year provisional period as specified by the Commission.

Background

California Education Code §44372(c), provides the Commission with the authority to accredit institutions to offer programs that lead to a credential to serve as an educator in California's public schools. The Commission has established the IIA process whereby an institution seeking to offer educator preparation program(s) in California must first satisfactorily complete five stages to be approved as a program sponsor.

The submission of Common Standards is Stage III of the five-stage process, as indicated in the highlighted column of the chart on the following page. Completion of this stage of the process results in a determination by the Commission of whether to grant the institution Provisional Approval. Provisional Approval permits the institution to offer an educator preparation program once the program standards are found to be aligned by a BIR team and the proposed program is subsequently approved by the Committee on Accreditation (COA) in Stage IV.

Five Stages of the Initial Institutional Approval Process

The Chicago School is seeking approval of Stage III in order to be eligible for Stage IV as highlighted and italicized in the chart below.

IIA Process	Stage I - Prerequisites	Stage II – Eligibility	<i>Stage III – Provisional Approval</i>	Stage IV – Initial Program Approval	Stage V – Full Approval
Purpose	Ensures legal eligibility of institution in California Ensures institution understands requirements of Commission's accreditation system	Ensures that institution has capacity to sponsor effective programs	<i>Ensures institution meets all Common Standards</i>	Ensures all proposed programs meet all relevant program standards and program-specific preconditions	Program operates for 2-4 years and hosts a provisional accreditation site visit
Institutional Requirements	Must: 1. Have legal eligibility 2. Attend Accreditation 101 with institutional team	Submit responses to: • 12 Eligibility Criteria • Initial Program Preconditions • General Precondition #9	<i>Submit responses to:</i> • <i>Common Standards</i>	Submit responses to: • Program-Specific Preconditions • Program Standards	Institution Must: • Collect data • Host provisional site visit
Reviewed By	Staff	Staff	<i>BIR</i>	Preconditions: Staff Program Standards: BIR	Site Visit Team & COA
Authority	Staff	Commission	<i>Commission</i>	COA	Commission
Decision	Determine Eligibility for Stage II	Eligibility: 1. Grant 2. Deny	<i>Provisional Approval:</i> 1. <i>Grant</i> 2. <i>Deny</i>	Program(s): 1. Approve 2. Deny	1. Grant Full Approval 2. Grant Full Approval & Remand to COA to Address Stipulations 3. Continue Provisional Status for 1 Year to Address Stipulations 4. Deny Approval
IIA Status*	Not Approved	Not Approved	<i>Provisional Approval**</i>	Provisional Approval***	Full Approval

*At conclusion of stage **Institutionally approved but cannot offer programs ***May begin offering approved program

The Chicago School

The Chicago School is a private university with its founding campus located in Chicago, Illinois. Additionally, The Chicago School has campus networks located in Washington D.C. and Southern California (Anaheim, Los Angeles, and San Diego). The Chicago School currently offers an Ed.S. School Psychology program at its Chicago campus that is approved by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). In 2011, The Chicago School moved its main campus to Los Angeles and has been regionally accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) since then.

The Chicago School completed Stages I and II of the IIA process and was approved as an eligible institution by the Commission at its [October 2023](#) meeting. This action allowed The Chicago School to move forward to Stage III in which responses to the Common Standards were submitted, as linked in this item. Currently, The Chicago School seeks Provisional Approval from the Commission. If approved, The Chicago School will seek COA approval of their proposed

- Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology

Stage III: Review to Determine Alignment with Common Standards

In keeping with the Commission's process for IIA, The Chicago School submitted its responses to the Common Standards. Two BIR members reviewed the Common Standards and have found them to be aligned.

Summaries of The Chicago School's responses to the Common Standards are included in this agenda item. [The complete Stage III submission of The Chicago School's responses](#) is available on their website.

It is an important reminder that although the responses to the Common Standards in this agenda item can provide some indication of the design of the program the institution proposes to offer, detailed program information will be provided in the institution's responses to the Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology Program Standards in Stage IV of the IIA process. The responses to the program standards will be reviewed by a team of BIR members to determine alignment. Once the review team has determined that the responses are aligned to the Program Standards, an agenda item will be brought to the COA for consideration of Initial Program Approval for the proposed program. If approved, the Provisional Approval period will begin, and the institution may begin offering the program.

Common Standards Responses

All responses to the Common Standards have been deemed, by a team of BIR reviewers, to be aligned. Beneath each Common Standard is information and excerpts from The Chicago School's Common Standards submission. The [2015 Common Standards](#) are provided here as a reference.

Common Standard 1 – Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation

The Chicago School's proposed school psychology program will be housed in the School Psychology Department with the Dean of the College of Professional Psychology serving as the unit head. The Chicago School's proposed program will emphasize evidence-based practice, diversity, and serving urban, culturally diverse populations. Rooted in the practitioner-scholar model, it will combine classroom learning with field-based training to prepare candidates for professional practice. The curriculum will align with California's program standards and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) domains of professional practice, focusing on psychological theory, scientific inquiry, and the application of research to practice. Candidates will gain hands-on experience through practicum and internships, applying assessment and intervention strategies in real-world settings. The program will ensure program completers are well-equipped to support the academic and behavioral success of TK–12 students from diverse backgrounds.

The program's research-based approach to teaching and learning will integrate adult learning principles and the scientist-practitioner model, emphasizing a global perspective, cultural diversity, and alignment with the NASP practice model. Candidates will progress through scaffolded learning experiences, starting with foundational coursework and advancing to applied fieldwork in assessment, intervention, and consultation. The curriculum will incorporate evidence-based frameworks like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and positive behavioral supports, preparing candidates to make data-driven, culturally responsive decisions in California's diverse educational settings. The structured sequence of coursework, applied training, and professional development will support the program's vision and align with California's educational priorities.

To ensure ongoing collaboration with urban schools and districts, The Chicago School will actively engage local educational agencies (LEAs), school administrators, and district partners in the development, organization, and decision-making processes of the proposed program. This engagement will ensure that the program remains responsive to the evolving needs of California's diverse TK-12 student populations and align with all credentialing requirements.

The Chicago School's proposed program will establish partnerships with school districts in urban areas to ensure that curriculum, training, and fieldwork experiences reflect the realities of California schools. District representatives will provide input on program structure, practicum and internship opportunities, and workforce demands through:

- Advisory Boards
- Constituent Focus Groups
- Collaboration on Practicum & Internship Placements

Additionally, candidates will be active participants in shaping the program experience through the following mechanisms:

- Student Advisory Committees
- Course and Program Evaluations
- Alumni and Employer Surveys

To ensure that faculty and instructional personnel regularly and systematically collaborate with colleagues in P-12 settings, higher education institutions, and the broader educational community, The Chicago School will establish structured policies, agreements, and ongoing engagement mechanisms to support continuous collaboration and program improvement including:

- Formalized Partnerships with P-12 Schools & Districts
- Faculty Expectations and Policy Integration
- Structured Program Collaboration and Improvement
- Professional Development and External Engagement

The Chicago School's proposed program will be funded through tuition and fees, with the budget collaboratively developed and approved annually, and adjusted mid-year based on enrollment and expenses. The program will be backed by administrative and candidate support staff with additional resources, including library access and technology, being provided by the department. Wellness support will include health insurance, mental health services, and self-care workshops, ensuring both academic and personal support throughout a candidate's educational experience.

Program faculty will be highly qualified professionals with doctorates and practical experience in school psychology. Faculty will emphasize ethics, cultural competence, and scholarship to prepare candidates as practitioner-scholars. Faculty must hold relevant credentials, stay active in the field, and contribute to research. The program will ensure quality training by selecting experienced faculty and vetting field sites and supervisors to meet California's standards.

The Chicago School will use Tevera software to manage and track practicum and internship experiences, ensuring candidates meet required competencies for entry-level school psychologists. Tevera supports placement, hour tracking, and performance evaluation, aligning with licensure and accreditation standards. A thorough credentialing process, tied to the internship course, will ensure that only eligible candidates will be recommended for the Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology credential.

Common Standard 2 – Candidate Recruitment and Support Preparation

The admissions criteria will be listed on the program webpage, and all applicants will have the opportunity to meet and discuss the requirements with an admissions counselor. The admission requirements for the proposed program are as follows:

- Application
- Resume or curriculum vitae

- GPA from undergraduate and any graduate schools
- Successful work history after completion of the baccalaureate degree
- Admission essay
- Three letters of recommendation from academic professors or professional or volunteer supervisors
- Undergraduate GPA of a 3.2 or higher on a 4.0 scale is required
- Previous Coursework: Earned grade of C or better in the following courses:
 - Psychology
 - Statistics or research methods

Diversity is a core value at The Chicago School, reflected in recruitment, scholarships, and student support. The Chicago School actively recruits underrepresented candidates and offers diversity-focused scholarships. Program-specific recruitment will involve virtual open houses, chats with faculty, and outreach at conferences. Additionally, demographic data will be reviewed regularly to guide inclusive enrollment. Support will continue post-admission with advising and wellness resources.

The program will ensure candidates are professionally prepared through continuous support starting at admission. Candidates will receive an advisor, mentor, and access to support services and wellness resources. A structured advisement system and regular progress reviews will provide ongoing feedback, helping candidates stay on track for program completion and career readiness.

Support for candidates will continue after program completion through alumni surveys, focus groups, and professional development opportunities. Completers will stay connected as mentors, guest speakers, and potential supervisors, fostering a two-way relationship that will enhance program quality and support career growth and retention in the field.

The proposed program will promote timely completion and candidate success starting at admissions by selecting candidates aligned with its goals. Candidates will receive clear expectations, regular feedback, and will be paired with faculty advisors who guide their academic and professional development. Advisors will support course and practicum planning, monitor progress, and assist with challenges. An integrated record system and collaboration with the Director of Clinical Training will ensure coordinated, ongoing support throughout the program.

The program will use a proactive advising model focused on candidate growth, featuring the Student Disposition Rubric (SDR) to assess key professional traits. Introduced in the first semester, the SDR will support self-assessment, goal-setting, and faculty feedback. Candidates will aim for high ratings, with lower scores leading to improvement plans. Progress will be formally evaluated each semester to ensure development and provide needed support. Candidates will receive continuous advisement and structured support, including personalized

academic development plans when necessary, to ensure they meet high academic and professional standards.

Common Standard 3 – Course of Study, Fieldwork and Clinical Practice

Practicum settings will be selected to serve a diverse student demographic, encompassing various disabilities, ethnicities, cultures, and economic backgrounds, aligning with the proposed program's commitment to fostering ethical, culturally sensitive, and competent school psychologists. Each site will provide opportunities for candidates to engage in diverse training activities crucial for developing a wide array of competencies that enhance teaching and student learning outcomes. The internship phase will be designed to prepare candidates for school settings through supervised field experiences, group internship seminars, and career development activities. The Chicago School notes that it is essential that internship sites feature a diverse student population to expose candidates to a comprehensive range of educational and behavioral challenges. In the first year, candidates will focus on foundational coursework. These courses aim to provide fundamental training and practical exposure in evidence-based professional practices, enhancing teaching strategies and student learning. In the second year, emphasis will shift to advanced training through practicum field experiences, seminars, and the culminating internship. This stage emphasizes integrating advanced knowledge with evidence-based practices, demonstrated through field-driven projects, presentations, and case studies. Candidates will apply evidence-based interventions, conduct assessments, implement tailored interventions, and evaluate outcomes using data-driven decision-making processes throughout their practicum and internship experiences.

The Chicago School's Directors of Training will ensure candidates receive appropriate, high-quality field experiences by developing diverse training sites, guided by candidate feedback and regular check-ins with seminar leaders. Sites will be vetted for alignment with program goals, diverse student populations, and qualified supervisors. Training Agreements will match tasks to candidate readiness, and comprehensive evaluations will assess candidates, supervisors, sites, and overall program effectiveness.

The Chicago School will ensure high-quality practicum supervision through annual supervisor training, orientation, and ongoing communication among faculty, supervisors, and seminar leaders. A training manual and structured evaluations will guide expectations and feedback, while Directors of Training will oversee placements to maintain rigorous standards. Candidates will reflect on experiences in field-based courses, and supervisors will be recognized through professional development opportunities and awards for excellence in mentorship.

The Chicago School will use a structured system to track and document supervisor training, ensuring accountability and quality. Training completion will be logged in a centralized database, with records stored in Tevera and certificates issued for accreditation. Supervisors will sign acknowledgments of responsibilities, and their performance will be evaluated through candidate and instructor feedback. Ongoing professional development will be recognized and documented, supporting continuous improvement and maintaining program standards.

Field supervisors will play a key role in candidate development through structured evaluations. Skill-based assessments will use a 3-point scale, requiring competency in all areas, while disposition evaluations in early practica determine program continuation. Internship evaluations will emphasize supervised growth, bridging candidates to professional practice. Continuous, transparent, and multi-stage assessments—pre-, mid-, and post-internship—will ensure timely support, uphold program standards, and guide candidates with constructive feedback to achieve professional competencies.

The Chicago School will ensure fair, consistent evaluation of field placements through a standardized process using NASP-aligned rubrics, multiple assessment points, and clear benchmarks (*Note: California's School Psychology program standards and performance expectations were developed in alignment with NASP standards*). Candidates will complete a disposition check before practicum, a formative mid-year review, and a summative final evaluation. Passing will require competency ratings of 2 or higher across all areas, with remediation plans if needed. Evaluations will be documented in Tevera, reviewed by Directors of Training, and analyzed annually to improve curriculum, training, and program accountability.

Through California public school field placements, candidates will gain experience serving diverse student populations while developing cultural competence and professional skills. Training will include three required practica: a 160-hour Beginning Practicum in year one and a 550-hour Intermediate Practicum in year two, both supervised by licensed school psychologists and paired with seminars. These experiences build skills in assessment, intervention, consultation, and ethics. A culminating 1200-hour internship further prepares candidates by exposing them to a wide range of educational and behavioral challenges.

The Chicago School will ensure high-quality field placements in California public schools through strict selection criteria, structured oversight, and tracking systems. Sites must serve diverse student populations, provide supervision by experienced, credentialed school psychologists, and offer comprehensive training across all school psychology competencies. Placements will align with program standards and will be formalized through MOUs. Using Tevera, the program will track hours, supervisor credentials, and site details. Ongoing evaluations by candidates, supervisors, and program directors will ensure placements consistently meet training goals and provide meaningful, supervised experience.

Common Standard 4 – Continuous Improvement

The Chicago School's proposed program will use a multi-year assessment cycle, combining annual reviews, five-year self-studies, and continuous feedback from candidates, faculty, supervisors, and alumni to ensure quality and improvement. Data will be collected on program learning outcomes, professional competencies, field placements, student achievement, retention, remediation, satisfaction, program completion/graduation rates, and alumni employment. Results will be reviewed in department meetings and retreats, reported to The Chicago School administration, and used for accreditation. Faculty will analyze strengths and weaknesses to refine curriculum, fieldwork, and support services, ensuring alignment with standards and continuous improvement in preparing entry-level school psychologists.

The Chicago School will maintain continuous improvement through a structured system of data collection, review, and constituency feedback. Key data sources will include program learning outcomes, professional competencies, field placement evaluations, candidate expectations, retention and remediation plans, satisfaction surveys, graduation rates, and alumni feedback. Faculty and program leaders will analyze this data annually and during mid- and end-of-year reviews to guide curriculum adjustments and ensure alignment with accreditation standards.

Employer and community partner input will be gathered systematically through surveys, focus groups, site supervisor evaluations, and an advisory board. Program completer and employer feedback will inform curriculum updates, fieldwork expectations, and targeted training enhancements. This comprehensive process will ensure the program remains rigorous, responsive to workforce needs, and effective in preparing culturally competent, practice-ready school psychologists.

Common Standard 5 – Program Impact

The Chicago School's proposed school psychology program will unfold over three years, moving from foundational learning to advanced practice.

- Year 1 will build core knowledge in ethics, diversity, and assessment, paired with a 160-hour Beginning Practicum under the supervision of licensed school psychologists.
- Year 2 will emphasize applied practice through coursework in crisis prevention and trauma-informed care, along with a 550-hour Intermediate Practicum focused on consultation, interventions, and data-driven decision-making.
- Year 3 will culminate in a 1200-hour internship in California public schools under the supervision of a credentialed school psychologist, providing broad, supervised experience across diverse settings.

Candidate progress will be assessed and tracked through supervisor evaluations, case study assessments, and the Praxis II Exam, with all fieldwork requirements logged in Tevera. Final eligibility for the school psychology credential will be verified through a formal review by program leadership before making a recommendation to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

The program will demonstrate a positive impact on candidates through a comprehensive assessment system that measures growth in key areas such as problem identification, analysis, intervention, and evaluation. Using field-based case studies, supervisor reviews, self-assessments, and Praxis II results, faculty will track progress with a 5-point rubric where scores of 3 or higher show competence. Data from case studies, employer and supervisor feedback, and completer surveys will confirm that candidates not only meet professional standards but also contribute to improved student outcomes. These results will guide continuous program refinements, ensuring program completers are well-prepared, effective school psychologists.

Staff Recommendation

The Board of Institutional Review (BIR) team has found the Common Standard responses to be aligned and Commission staff has found the Preconditions to be met. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission grant Provisional Approval to The Chicago School.

Granting Provisional Approval would allow The Chicago School's proposed Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology program to be reviewed by the Committee on Accreditation for Initial Program Approval in Stage IV. The Provisional Approval period would begin once the COA grants Initial Program Approval for the proposed program at the conclusion of Stage IV.

Staff recommends that if Provisional Approval is granted to The Chicago School by the Commission, the period of Provisional Approval be set to four years because Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology is designed to be three years in length. After four years, The Chicago School will have had an opportunity to have a cohort complete the program and the institution will have four years' worth of data that includes completers of the program. A Provisional Site Visit would occur and the report from the Provisional Site Visit will be brought to the Commission for consideration of full approval for The Chicago School in Stage V.

Next Steps

Staff will take appropriate next steps based on the Commission's action.