3B

Information/Action

Educator Preparation Committee

Design Specifications for a Commission Model Teaching Performance Assessment

Executive Summary: This agenda item continues implementation of Senate Bill 1263 (Newman, 2024) following the Commission's adoption of revised Performance Assessment Design Standards by presenting draft design specifications for a Commission model Teaching Performance Assessment for Commission feedback. Staff will use Commission feedback to inform continued refinement of the specifications; expert and panel engagement; research and structured information gathering, including a request for information; and subsequent development of a recommended performance assessment development pathway.

Recommended Action: That the Commission review the draft design specifications for a Commission model Teaching Performance Assessment, provide feedback on their general direction, and, if appropriate, affirm their use in continued refinement; expert and panel engagement; research and structured information gathering, including a Request for Information; and subsequent development of a recommended performance assessment development pathway.

Presenters: Adam Ebrahim, Chief Deputy Director; Juliet Wahleithner, Director, Division of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment

Strategic Plan Goal

Educator Preparation and Advancement

- **Goal 1.** Educator 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.
    B. Develop educator performance assessments that are embedded in clinical preparation to ensure readiness to begin professional practice

Design Specifications for a Commission Model Teaching Performance Assessment

Introduction
This item continues implementation of Senate Bill 1263 following the Commission's adoption of revised Performance Assessment Design Standards. It presents draft design specifications for a Commission model Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) as an initial framework for the next phase of performance assessment development work. Staff seek Commission feedback on the general direction of the specifications to inform continued refinement; expert and panel engagement; research and structured information gathering, including development of a Request for Information; and subsequent development of a recommended performance assessment development pathway.

Background
Education Code sections 44320.2, 44320.3, and 44320.4 provide the statutory basis and governing framework for California's TPA system. Taken together, these provisions establish the TPA as a required component of preparation, require that it be ongoing and blended into preparation programs to the maximum extent feasible, and make clear that assessment results are to inform candidate readiness determinations, program quality and effectiveness, and continuous improvement. As the Commission has discussed in prior items, this framework requires the assessment to serve multiple purposes at once: It must support candidate learning and growth during preparation and into induction while also producing sufficiently comparable and credible results for licensure, reporting, and system oversight.

In response to sustained concerns in the field and the enactment of Senate Bill 1263, the Commission initiated redesign work to strengthen how those statutory purposes are carried out in practice. Consistent with Senate Bill 1263, the Commission convened the Workgroup to Review the Design and Implementation of Teaching Performance Assessments (RDI-TPA Workgroup) to identify needed updates to the current system. In June 2025, the Commission adopted the workgroup's recommendations and, in August 2025, approved an implementation plan that organized the work into a series of connected phases. Staff now bring forward specifications for a Commission model TPA as an early step within that broader implementation sequence.

Following the Commission's August 2025 approval of the implementation plan, key elements of the standards and accountability context for TPA model development work have been established. In February 2026, staff presented revised Performance Assessment Design Standards (PADS) that update expectations for approved assessment models in response to the RDI-TPA Workgroup's recommendations. Revised standards define the requirements that any approved TPA model must meet, including expectations for validity, fairness, reliability, assessor qualifications and calibration, candidate and program supports, score reporting, technical condition codes, candidate survey administration, and options for local scoring. Pursuant to SB 1263, staff also presented a proposed TPA Pass Rate Identification Framework

that clarifies how TPA results function within the broader system of program accountability and continuous improvement, serving as an early signal in a cycle of inquiry, support, and improvement. Under the framework, first-attempt TPA pass rates serve as the primary indicator of embedded preparation effectiveness, second-attempt TPA pass rates serve as a complementary diagnostic indicator of candidate support and follow-through, and cumulative TPA pass rates continue to be reported for transparency.

Against this backdrop, the specifications presented in this item address a related layer of the assessment system. They are distinct from statute and standards but operate in alignment with both. Statute establishes the governing basis and purposes of the assessment system, and the revised PADS provide the requirements that approved models must meet. The specifications build on that foundation by identifying the expectations staff will use to refine a Commission model and by translating prior Commission direction into a more defined framework.

The distinction matters because the Commission model must give effect to those statutory purposes and standards-based requirements through an assessment that works in practice. The model must serve two functions. It must position the TPA within preparation so that it supports candidate development through an embedded process of practice, feedback, reflection, and revision, while also requiring candidates to demonstrate formative use of evidence by eliciting, interpreting, and responding to student learning in real time during instruction and through subsequent analysis and instructional adjustment. At the same time, it must provide a distinct final submission and scoring process so that results may be used (a) as a determination of candidate readiness and to inform their continued professional development during induction and (b) for programmatic statewide reporting, accreditation, and continuous improvement.

To support these functions, the proposed model is organized around four connected instructional-cycle components that reflect the work of teaching, including the ongoing elicitation, interpretation, and instructional use of evidence of student learning during and following instruction. Together, these components are intended to provide a more coherent structure for candidates and programs while situating the assessment within the instructional cycle and carrying forward the core purposes reflected in statute, the revised PADS, and prior Commission direction.

Proposed Design Specifications for a Commission Model Teaching Performance Assessment
The specifications that follow present a working framework for a Commission model TPA as the next step in implementing Senate Bill 1263. They are not proposed regulations or a final technical design or procurement document. Rather, they are intended to support Commission feedback, continued refinement, expert and panel engagement, research and structured information gathering, including a request for information, and subsequent development of a recommended assessment development pathway.

Section 1: Assessment Structure and Instructional Cycles
This section defines the model as an instructional-cycle assessment embedded in authentic preparation practice.

(a) The Commission model TPA is organized around instructional cycles that reflect how teaching unfolds in practice. Within each cycle, candidates engage in a connected sequence of work that moves from understanding learners and establishing learning goals, to designing instruction, to enacting instruction and gathering evidence of learning, and, finally, to interpreting that evidence to inform next steps.

(b) The instructional cycle is expressed through four interconnected components:

(i) Know Your Learners and Learning Goals
This component focuses on the candidate's understanding of the students they are teaching, the instructional and community context, and the learning goals that guide the cycle. It requires the candidate to demonstrate how knowledge of learners—including their assets, needs, prior learning, language and literacy development, and relevant contextual factors—informs the identification of appropriate and meaningful learning goals.

(ii) Design for Access, Engagement, and Evidence
This component focuses on how the candidate designs instruction to support students' access to content, meaningful engagement in learning, inclusive participation, and opportunities to generate evidence of their understanding. It requires the candidate to demonstrate how instructional decisions, supports, and assessment opportunities are planned in ways that are responsive to learners, attentive to language and literacy demands, and aligned to the learning goals.

(iii) Teach and Gather Evidence of Learning
This component focuses on the candidate's enactment of instruction and on how the candidate engages students in learning while eliciting evidence of their understanding during instruction. It requires the candidate to demonstrate how instruction is carried out in practice, how evidence of student learning is generated and noticed in real time, and how the candidate responds instructionally in the moment to advance learning.

(iv) Interpret and Act on Student Learning
This component focuses on the candidate's interpretation of evidence of student learning gathered across the instructional cycle and the instructional judgments that follow from that interpretation. It requires the candidate to demonstrate what the evidence suggests about student progress toward the learning goals, how the candidate analyzes patterns in understanding and misunderstanding, and how that analysis informs subsequent instructional decisions, adjustment, and next steps.

(c) The model is modular and embedded within preparation rather than experienced as a separate event. Candidate performance assessment activities are specifically created so as to allow for integration into program activities, including coursework and clinical practice, and for completion during the normal course and duration of preparation in ways that are nonduplicative and strengthen coherence across program experiences.

(d) The model is adaptable across credential areas and instructional contexts while maintaining consistent expectations for rigor, comparability, sufficiency of evidence, and alignment to the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) and applicable state-adopted content standards.

Section 2: Embedded and Developmental Assessment Process
This section defines the model as a process that occurs within preparation and includes both a development phase and an assessment phase before a final submission, with structured opportunities for feedback, reflection, revision, and final submission.

(a) The model generates information during preparation that candidates, instructors, supervisors, and mentors may use to support candidate development. This information arises through the assessment process itself rather than being added onto it, allowing assessment activities to function as part of learning rather than as separate compliance exercises.

(b) During the development phase, candidates engage in instructional cycles that are open to feedback, reflection, and revision. Faculty, supervisors, and mentors have a visible role in helping candidates interpret expectations, examine evidence, and strengthen instructional decisions. Feedback during this phase is aligned to the rubrics but is not presented as formal scoring.

(c) The assessment phase supports candidate growth through repeated engagement with practice. Candidates have structured opportunities to improve the quality of their planning, teaching, analysis, and responsiveness to students over time rather than being expected to demonstrate readiness through a single performance.

(d) At defined points in the model, candidate work transitions from the development phase to a final submission phase. Once work is finalized and submitted for formal scoring, it is no longer subject to revision. The model and platform make these decision points explicit and administratively clear.

Section 3: Evidence of Candidate Practice
This section defines the body of evidence the model requires to examine candidate practice across the full instructional cycle.

(a) The model requires evidence that reflects the full instructional cycle in authentic teaching and learning contexts. Candidate submissions collectively demonstrate how the candidate understands learners and establishes learning goals; designs instruction for access, engagement, and inclusive participation; enacts instruction; elicits and examines evidence of student learning; and interprets that evidence to inform next steps.

(b) The Commission model includes, at a minimum, evidence of the candidate's understanding of learners and learning goals, instructional design, enactment of instruction, evidence of student learning, and analysis of instructional decisions and outcomes.

(c) The model requires video evidence of candidate-led instruction sufficient to allow evaluation of how the candidate engages students in learning, elicits and responds to evidence of student understanding during instruction, and advances learning in context. Video is accompanied by candidate analysis that explains instructional choices, interpretation of student learning, and implications for next steps.

(d) For PK-3, Multiple Subject, and Education Specialist credential areas, the model ensures that candidates demonstrate content-specific pedagogical competence in literacy and mathematics consistent with the revised PADS and applicable standards. For Single Subject credential areas, the model ensures that candidates demonstrate content-specific pedagogical competence in the authorized area. Content expectations developed in the next phase of work will further differentiate guidance by credential area and connect it to the relevant state-adopted PK–12 standards.

Section 4: Scoring, Feedback, and Determination of Readiness
This section defines how the model distinguishes developmental support from formal evaluation while maintaining scoring quality, comparability, and clear readiness determinations.

(a) The model uses construct-specific, analytic rubrics aligned to the TPEs. These rubrics provide a common basis for developmental feedback during preparation and formal evaluation once candidate work is finalized.

(b) During the development phase, rubric-aligned feedback supports candidate reflection, revision, and improvement. This feedback is clearly distinguished from formal scoring.

(c) The model establishes clear decision points at which candidate work is submitted and locked for formal evaluation. Once submitted for formal scoring, candidate work is final, establishing a clear distinction between a supported learning process and a comparable determination of readiness.

(d) Formal scoring is conducted through structured and calibrated processes designed to ensure comparability across candidates. These processes include scorer training, calibration, monitoring, and ongoing review to promote validity, reliability, fairness, and consistency.

(e) The Commission model will include an optional local scoring feature conducted within the same statewide platform and general rubric structure used for statewide scoring. When used, local scoring must meet the same general quality expectations and comply with requirements related to assessor qualifications, calibration, scoring quality, blind double-scoring, auditability, and reporting, consistent with the revised PADS. Local scoring may support candidate learning, educator learning, program improvement, and, where authorized, program-level credential recommendation decisions. Locally scored submissions may also be scored through the statewide scoring process to support comparable readiness determinations, statewide reporting, and accountability.

(f) The Commission maintains a primary passing standard and a secondary passing standard for the assessment, consistent with the revised PADS. The secondary passing standard may be used by a preparation program, in combination with other evidence of candidate competence aligned to Commission expectations, to support a recommendation for a teaching credential, consistent with Commission policy and reporting rules.

(g) A technical condition code is a determination that a submission cannot be validly scored due to missing, corrupted, misaligned, or noncompliant evidence or materials, and therefore

requires correction and resubmission before scoring can proceed. The model includes clear processes for technical condition codes, retakes, appeals, and score reporting, in alignment with the approved PADS. At a minimum, candidates are notified of technical condition codes within one week of submission, have an opportunity to resubmit within one week, and, when they resubmit within that timeframe, their submission remains in the same scoring window without additional fees. Score reporting distinguishes developmental feedback from final results and provides candidates and programs with timely and clear information about overall passing status, rubric-level results, and retake requirements.

Section 5: Candidate Experience and Program Support
This section defines the supports needed to make the model coherent, transparent, educative, and workable for both candidates and preparation programs.

(a) Candidates experience the model as part of preparation, not as a separate or duplicative requirement. Assessment tasks and evidence align as closely as possible with coursework and clinical practice so that candidates experience coherence among what they are learning, what they are doing, and what they are being asked to demonstrate.

(b) Candidates are provided clear guidance on the structure of the model, the instructional-cycle components, required evidence, scoring criteria, acceptable and unacceptable uses of technology, and the transition from developmental work to final submission.

(c) The model supports structured opportunities for feedback, reflection, and revision before formal evaluation. Candidate support is part of the assessment design, not external to it.

(d) The design of the Commission model supports preparation programs in organizing coherent faculty, supervisor, and mentor support around the assessment and in connecting candidate support to broader program improvement.

(e) Candidate and program support materials include, at a minimum, handbooks, task materials, rubrics, annotated passing and non-passing samples for each credential area, examples of commonly assigned technical condition codes, and orientation or calibration materials for those involved in supporting candidates. These materials are dynamic, searchable, and interactive to the extent feasible. The model allows for faculty review and feedback during the development phase before candidate work is submitted for formal scoring.

(f) Candidate support materials are provided at no additional cost and help candidates understand the nature of the assessment, task expectations, scoring rubrics, submission processes, and scoring processes. More broadly, the design and implementation of the model minimize direct candidate costs and do not shift additional costs associated with the revised assessment design, local scoring, or core platform functions to candidates.

(g) The model is accessible and inclusive, allowing multiple ways for candidates to demonstrate competence while maintaining consistent expectations for rigor. Principles of Universal Design for Learning inform both the assessment structure and the forms of evidence candidates may submit.

Section 6: Data Use, Reporting, and Continuous Improvement
This section defines how the model generates useful information for candidates, programs, and the Commission and how those results support improvement over time.

(a) The model generates and reports data at the candidate, program, and system levels. These data support candidate development, program improvement, accreditation, statewide reporting, and Commission oversight.

(b) The assessment generates data that are interpretable across the four instructional-cycle components and across broader domains of practice. The provision of these data supports analysis not only of whether candidates meet the standard but also of where they demonstrate strength and where programs may need to strengthen preparation.

(c) Results are reported in ways that are timely, clear, and useful to candidates, preparation programs, and the Commission. Score reporting to candidates and programs is consistent with the revised PADS, including timely return of results and sufficient detail to support interpretation and improvement.

(d) Aggregated results are usable as one source of evidence regarding preparation program quality and effectiveness. The model therefore supports reporting structures that allow preparation programs and the Commission to examine patterns in performance and identify areas where support or improvement may be warranted. TPA results may function as an early signal within a broader cycle of inquiry and improvement rather than as a narrow compliance metric.

(e) The system supports disaggregation of candidate outcomes to examine equity in access, support, and results across candidate groups, consistent with Commission data and privacy practices. It also supports analysis of local scoring and other program-level evidence to inform improvement in coursework, clinical practice, and candidate supports.

(f) The Commission periodically evaluates validity, reliability, fairness, and potential sources of bias in the assessment system and refines the model accordingly. Improvement therefore applies not only to preparation programs but also to the assessment system itself.

(g) The model and reporting structures support appropriate continuity across preparation and induction by enabling programs and candidates to use assessment results and related developmental information, as appropriate, to inform the next stage of professional growth and the development of individual induction plans.

(h) The model includes a standardized candidate experience survey administered at or near the point of submission to gather information about the extent to which the assessment was developmental, embedded in coursework and clinical practice, nonduplicative, appropriate for beginning teachers, and adequately supported by faculty, supervisors, and mentors.

Section 7: System Infrastructure and Platform Requirements
This section defines the platform and infrastructure needed to support the model at scale, including submission, workflow, scoring, reporting, and administrative transparency.

(a) The Commission model is supported by a secure digital platform capable of managing the submission, storage, review, and scoring of candidate work.

(b) The platform supports multiple artifact types, including video, instructional materials, student work, and candidate analysis. It also supports the transition from revisable developmental work to locked final submission in ways that are clear to users and administratively auditable.

(c) The system supports rubric-based feedback, communication, progress tracking, candidate survey administration, and reporting across both developmental and formal phases.

(d) The system supports statewide scoring workflows, assessor calibration, monitoring of scoring quality, and reporting and dashboard functions that support candidate feedback, program analysis, and Commission oversight.

(e) The infrastructure is designed with attention to usability, accessibility, reliability, scalability, and administrative transparency so that it can support statewide implementation across the range of preparation settings in California.

(f) Platform requirements developed in the next phase of work also address candidate usability, program workflow integration, data governance, and the extent to which core functions can be supported without imposing additional direct costs on candidates.

Section 8: Assessment Integrity, Authenticity, and Use of Technology
This section defines the guardrails needed to preserve the authenticity and integrity of the assessment while allowing appropriate use of technology.

(a) The model evaluates authentic teaching practice. Candidate submissions represent the candidate's own instructional decision-making, interaction with students, and analysis of teaching and learning in context.

(b) Candidates may use technology tools, including artificial intelligence, to support aspects of inquiry, drafting, and reflection where appropriate. The model requires disclosure of such use so that the role of these tools is transparent within the assessment process.

(c) The model establishes clear expectations regarding acceptable and unacceptable uses of technology. Evaluation remains focused on the candidate's professional judgment, instructional choices, and responsiveness to students rather than on polished production alone.

(d) Formal scoring remains grounded in trained human judgment. Technology may support workflow, completeness checks, or system functions, but it does not replace human evaluation of candidate performance for purposes of readiness determination.

(e) The Commission monitors the impact of technology use, including artificial intelligence, on validity, fairness, authenticity, and comparability and refines guidance as needed.

Taken together, these specifications describe the core features of a Commission model TPA and the conditions needed to support its development and implementation. The following section

describes the next phase of work staff would undertake to test, refine, and further develop that model based on Commission feedback.

Expert Review, Request for Information, and Development Planning
Following Commission review of these draft design specifications, staff would continue the next phase of work to test, refine, and further develop a Commission model TPA. This phase would focus on the coherence, usability, technical considerations, and implementation implications of the proposed model and would inform the range of development approaches available to the Commission.

This work would include consultation with content and assessment experts, engagement with preparation and practitioner stakeholders, continued review of relevant research and comparable models, and a Request for Information. In this context, an RFI would be used as an early-stage information-gathering process to obtain input from entities with relevant expertise on matters such as assessment design, development, implementation, administration, scoring, technology, training, and cost. Information gathered through the RFI would inform continued refinement of the specifications and analysis of feasible development approaches. The RFI would not commit the Commission to a particular vendor, model, or procurement pathway.

If the Commission affirms the general direction of these draft design specifications, staff will use that feedback to continue this refinement and information-gathering process and return to the Commission at its August 2026 meeting with a recommended performance assessment development pathway for further consideration.

Staff Recommendation
Staff recommends that the Commission review the draft design specifications for a Commission model Teaching Performance Assessment, provide feedback on their general direction, and, if appropriate, affirm their use in the next phase of refinement and development work.

Next Steps
If the Commission affirms the general direction of the draft design specifications, staff will continue the next phase of refinement, expert and panel engagement, research, and structured information gathering, including a Request for Information, and return to the Commission at its August 2026 meeting with a recommended performance assessment development pathway.

Appendix A

Updated SB 1263 Implementation Development Timeline

Phase	Quarter/Year	WBS	Key Development Activity
Design Standards	Q3 2025	1.1	Staff prepare revised Performance Assessment Design Standards
Design Standards	Q4 2025	1.2	Expert Panel reviews revised Performance Assessment Design Standards
Design Standards	Q1 2026	1.3	Commission considers revised Performance Assessment Design Standards
Specifications	Q1 2026	1.4	Staff develop initial specifications for the new performance assessment
Specifications	Q2 2026	1.5	Expert Panel reviews initial specifications for the new performance assessment
Specifications	Q2 2026	1.6	Commission considers initial specifications for the new performance assessment
Specifications	Q2 2026	1.7	Staff initiate development research and cost models based on approved specifications
Specifications	Q3 2026	1.8	Commission considers Performance Assessment Development Pathway Recommendation
Development and Implementation	Dependent on 1.8	1.9	Assessment development and user testing proceed consistent with the Commission-approved development pathway
Development and Implementation	Dependent on 1.8	1.10	Assessment pilot activities with select programs, as appropriate, proceed consistent with the Commission-approved development pathway
Development and Implementation	Dependent on 1.8	1.11	Expert Panel review of pilot results, platform roadmap, and recommended refinements, as appropriate
Development and Implementation	Dependent on 1.8	1.12	Commission consideration of pilot results, platform roadmap, and recommended refinements, as appropriate
Implementation	By July 1, 2028	1.13	Full implementation of adopted recommendations by the statutory deadline