

Feedback from Commissioners on Presentation of Draft Recommendations and Updates on Interim Actions

April 10, 2025 • Agenda Item 3C

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Themes in Feedback from Commissioners

The transcript of Commissioner feedback, included below, was entered into ChatGPT, along with the request that ChatGPT generate themes from the transcript and provide supporting evidence.

1. Emphasis on Shared Accountability and Equity

Key Idea: The commissioners consistently emphasized the need for equitable, inclusive, and asset-based assessment practices that promote shared accountability across stakeholders.

Supporting Evidence:

- **Commissioner Simmons** highlighted appreciation for Outcome 3: “the idea of shared accountability — it's really important.”
- **Commissioner Uzoff** praised the “asset-focused” approach of the workgroup, especially in regard to student teacher experiences.
- **Commissioner Pavri** emphasized asset-based tasks and culturally responsive pedagogy, advocating for moving away from a fixed mindset in evaluation.

2. Strategic Use of AI for Efficiency and Support

Key Idea: Commissioners widely supported the exploration of **AI tools**, both for operational efficiency and as supportive tools for teacher candidates.

Supporting Evidence:

- **Commissioner Simmons** proposed using AI for initial scoring (e.g., “AI passes it, and you're good... the negatives would all be written by people”) and shared a personal anecdote of using ChatGPT to boost HR productivity.
- **Commissioner Uzoff** saw AI more as a **thought partner** for candidates: “...how our candidates can use AI to help clarify anything within the TPA as a thought partner.”
- **Commissioner Pavri** discussed the challenge of using AI in rubrics to allow for “individuality and creativity” while maintaining assessment rigor.

3. Alignment with Broader Educational Frameworks

Key Idea: There's a strong push to align the new TPA system with California's existing educational frameworks (e.g., CSTPs, ELD roadmap, math framework).

Supporting Evidence:

- **Commissioner Pavri** stated: “...use the same vocabulary as is used in the math framework, the ELD roadmap...”
- Commissioners emphasized the importance of **embedding TPA tasks** authentically into teacher preparation, not as separate hurdles.

4. Need for Systemic and Structural Change

Key Idea: Questions were raised about the **structure and sustainability** of the testing system, particularly around cost, infrastructure, and central oversight.

Supporting Evidence:

- **Commissioner Pavri** questioned: “What is the role of the testing company? ... Who is helping with the infrastructure? Is there going to be a central agency...?”
- She also flagged **programmatic burden**, especially for rural or underfunded districts, and how this could disincentivize mentorship roles due to insufficient compensation.

5. Prioritization and Practicality in Implementation

Key Idea: Commissioners called for prioritization of essential recommendations, attention to cost and unintended consequences, and clarity on which changes are mandates vs. suggestions.

Supporting Evidence:

- **Commissioner Lit** emphasized: “It’s not clear yet what are the ones that the work group finds most essential... vs. potentially valuable...”
- He warned that requirements “come at a cost,” urging caution in overburdening candidates and programs financially.

6. Calibration and Scoring Consistency

Key Idea: Transitioning to more authentic, culturally responsive assessments will require **more nuanced training** for calibrators and evaluators.

Supporting Evidence:

- **Commissioner Pavri** noted: “Calibration is going to be... more challenging... calibrators need deep content knowledge on culturally responsive and equity-based pedagogy.”

7. Concerns Around Scope and Feasibility

Key Idea: The sheer **number of TPEs** (Teacher Performance Expectations) and their integration into short programs was seen as overwhelming and unrealistic.

Supporting Evidence:

- **Commissioner Pavri** said: “A Multiple Subject program has 56 TPEs... there’s a lot of work to do... how do we make all this work?”
- **Commissioner Simmons** proposed discussing “power standards” to streamline expectations, comparing it to realistic curriculum planning in K-12 education.

8. Strong Appreciation for the Workgroup and Public Engagement

Key Idea: There was widespread gratitude for the **workgroup’s thoughtful efforts** and the public feedback received, as well as confidence in the direction being taken.

Supporting Evidence:

- **Commissioner Lit** thanked the group for addressing core Commission priorities (advancing the profession, equity, and quality).
- **Commissioner Cardenas** summarized the tone: “Thank you for staying focused, streamlining, and being actionable to impact our students and our candidates.”

Transcript of Feedback from Commissioners

Commissioner Simmons: I just really enjoyed this item. I feel like that is, well, for one thing, I feel like it really follows the end code, which was the biggest task. And I appreciate all the outcomes. I especially like 3, the idea of shared accountability — it's really important.

And I also really like the idea of a separate work group addressing AI. It reminds me of, I think of, when we did the MSAT all those years ago, where we changed scoring so that if you had a positive score, you didn't had to have two readers. You only needed two readers if you had a negative score. I could see where you could do something like: AI passes it, and you're good. Every tenth one, you do a human read, but then you would have, the negatives would all be written by people.

And I have to give Shireen a shout-out because she talked about AI. After that, I bought ChatGPT for everybody in my HR department, and it has so increased our productivity. In fact, I even take ChatGPT to dinner a couple times a week. We talk about all sorts of things! I think that is a really good idea and I imagine there are other places besides the TPA where we could find efficiency.

Commissioner Uzoff: Hi everyone. Sorry I'm not there, I'm feeling under the weather. I love everything about your work group, and I love that it's asset-focused. I'm working with so many student teachers in our Alder program, and one of the things that has been talked about was how disconnected it has been for them when they're doing the TPA. So I'm so glad to see all of this being worked in. And most importantly, I'm very glad to see the AI component in there. I would love to help however I can share. I know that with the CSU really embracing it, I really appreciate that too.

And it was interesting how Commissioner Simmons was talking about how AI can be utilized for efficiency. I didn't even see it that way — I saw it as how our candidates can use AI to help clarify anything within the TPA as a thought partner. So, love more conversations on that. But thank you for all your hard work, and again, that asset-based evaluation is so vital for our candidates. I just truly appreciate it.

Commissioner Pavri: I have a lot of feedback, but I want to start with really a big, big thank you to the Workgroup. Your deliberation — I was also able to just see the deep deliberations. Please do thank them on our behalf.

There are so many positive shifts that I think we've heard from our public comments as well as others.

I'm going to speak less to some of the direct things and instead give you some suggestions and thoughts that have come up from people who I have been talking with and other thoughts.

As far as the test content is concerned, the development of authentic, asset-based tasks is absolutely the way to go. As we think about it, and speaking to what other Commissioners have said, how does what we have our teacher candidates do in their clinical practice and in their programs tie back to what teachers are doing in their classroom?

I did see that you do have in there tying it back to induction and the CSTPs. I think it would be really helpful for us, as we are developing these tasks, is using the same vocabulary as is used in the math framework, the ELD roadmap, the authentic tasks that candidates are already engaged in or soon will be.

I do have some questions around the big picture, which I think, is probably the next step beyond the work group, in some ways, in terms of who is identifying and developing these tests? What

is the role of the testing company? Is there a role for them anymore or not? I think the costs are incumbent on that decision, right? Who is identifying technical adequacy in the items? Who is helping with the infrastructure? Is there going to be a central agency that will be overseeing this? That would be really great if we could remove that burden from the individual EPPs and have that done at a more central level. I think that will take off some of the onus and the cost and the infrastructure development at multiple levels. So that's something else that I think about.

And then also we need to ensure calibrators are getting the same messaging. But also they need to have deep knowledge. We're really moving away from a fixed mindset and a restricted view where candidates have to show everything in this limited amount of time in the same way to pass. And so I think the calibration is going to be a little bit more challenging because we want our calibrators to have that deep content knowledge on culturally responsive and equity-based pedagogy. And it doesn't always look like this; it could look like this or like that, right? And when we talk about bringing in multiple modalities, that is wonderful — as a special educator and coming from a UDL perspective, I think that is the way to go. But it is going to make scoring a whole lot more challenging. And it's going to make cross-institutional comparisons, if that is, indeed, one of our intents, even more challenging.

I think there are a few other things. Um, folk have been very curious about timelines, and so maybe we can talk a little bit about the timeline because there's lots of concerns with giving programs sufficient lead time to gear up for the new assessments and for the changes that would be required there.

There's also concern around how much focus our programs will need to place on the TPA. So, as an example, one of my programs was talking about the fact that a Multiple Subject program has 56 TPEs. Oftentimes these programs are one year in length. There's a lot of work to do to address these 56 TPEs. Our TPE needs to be really embedded in this work because if programs are expected to provide individualized, personalized feedback on the elements of the TPA and they're not tied directly to the TPEs, we're just like how do we make all this work? So that's a concern.

Um, there could potentially be an, well, I think there's lots of merit to having multiple players come in, you know, your teachers, your districts. For larger programs that partner with multiple districts, and for, you know, programs like our Cal-State teach that works across the state with school districts, some really small rural districts which have limited capacity. We don't want this to become a situation where there's even more reluctance to take on a student teacher or to become a mentor. And so we would look to the CDE to help us, I think, in getting school districts on board because, again, we don't pay our mentor teachers enough—if we even pay them at all—to take on additional responsibilities. And so these are very real variables that need to be thought through.

I think we've spoken some to, again, you know, moving away from those confined rubrics. The rubrics are going to be extremely helpful; the candidates should have them. But can we structure them, maybe using AI, to allow for the individuality and creativity, you know, the expertise of a candidate to actually show rather than again sticking with that compliance issue. I'll stop.

Commissioner Lit: Thank you, Commissioner Cardenas. Since uh the presenters already uh cited me um encouraging um I will um I will spare um all of you in the commission my full six pages of uh notes uh from the report um so let me try to offer some su uh succinct um notes and feedback

as well as appreciations. But if staff would like um any further um notes or thoughts, please feel free to reach out.

Uh, first just want to offer some, uh, appreciation, um, for the presentation, and more importantly, for the work, um that's behind it. Um, also, um, a real appreciation for the public comment, um, and, which is really helpful and thoughtful. I think, um, the level of public interest and engagement on this issue, um, underscores its importance, um, both to the Commission and to the educator workforce that we support. Um, so thank you to all the members of the working group and the commission staff who've been working hard and really thoughtfully, uh, to bring this forward to us.

At a kind of large level, I just think it's worth underscoring things that maybe we know but sometimes gets lost, um, when we're working hard and aggressively to tackle big and thorny problems. So just to kind of, uh, elevate, um, for a moment. I think we're working on, you know, at least three core issues of the Commission's strategic plan: advancing the educator profession; um, advancing equity, inclusion, and diversity of the educator workforce; um, and assuring the competence, quality, and effectiveness of the educator workforce, uh, for the public good and public confidence. And so, you know, this suggests that this item gets to the core of the mission and the strategic priorities of the Commission, um, and so I appreciate the degree to which both the Commission but also this working group and the staff, um, are taking so seriously and thoughtfully, um, this particular project.

Um, also just as a another note and reminder, there are really strong and positive reasons, uh, why the state of California and this Commission has invested for well over a decade in developing a high-quality, authentic performance assessment system, right, to support the work of developing a strong and well-prepared educator workforce, one that our public can have deep confidence is prepared to meet the needs of the students that we all serve. I think we're also well aware, from years of public feedback, um, that we don't have it just right yet. And so we need to continue to work to improve a system—that's important for our foundational efforts and mission—but one which requires continuous improvement.

And on that, let me just offer a few kind of broad level, uh, kind of notes, uh, back to the working group that maybe will be supportive, um, of the next iteration.

First, on the interim actions, I really appreciate the, um, the speed with which we've made, um, useful progress, um, and then brought back, um, immediate reporting to the Commission. I think it's an excellent reminder that we absolutely have the capacity and the will to do better when we know better, as the Executive Director likes to say. And this gives me a lot of confidence about the future work that we're going to do. So that's um really excellent that we're able to report back on that so soon, uh, so thank you for those efforts.

And then just to underscore a few, again, broad notes back to the working group. As you've already mentioned that I mentioned, I do think focused, streamlined, and actionable is really important. We're clearly not there yet, but I appreciate that that's been elevated as one of the key priorities for the working group coming up. I also want to just underscore, I think prioritizing is important. There's a lot of rich and potentially good ideas here, but it's not clear yet what are the ones that the working group finds most essential to meeting the charge and the needs of the field versus which are potentially valuable, wonderful, creative possibilities. And I do think that that's important because, at the end of the day, we have limited resources, time, and attention. And it would be useful to know what things the working group thinks are most essential and which might be beneficial down the road.

I also, um, want to elevate to the working group to be considerate of potential costs of implementation and likely unintended consequences. So there's a number of, um, current recommendations that I think come across as mandates to programs, um, which are different than, um, suggestions for best practice. So thinking through which of those you really want to suggest you require and which are oriented as recommendations for best practice. Requirements come at a cost, um, whether it's time or direct cost, most of those costs eventually will go back to the candidates. And since we've elevated as one of the key priorities reducing cost to candidates, I just think that's worth keeping in mind.

And, uh, maybe, uh, lastly, just again, underscoring what I think are, what I've heard as a Commissioner over the last year plus, as kind of key elements for our consideration as we update and improve this program. The high stakes has real, uh, implications for the way that this is experienced both by programs and by candidates. So thinking about ways to re-orient the assessment system such that the TPA is a key but not the sole element, um, required, uh, for credentialing is important. High cost continues to be a real barrier. Of course we have some limits to what we can do, but we can make some recommendations both to work with vendors and the legislature on this piece.

Maintaining authenticity I think is really important if we're going to work on a performance assessment, so I do puzzle a little bit about what we mean by embedded in preparation. That can mean a number of things. It can mean making sure that a rich and integrated performance assessment is supported through coursework. But a lot of the language sort of suggests that we're going to pull apart an integrated system, and then we may lose some of the authenticity. In doing that, we also may not be conscious of the vast different arrays in which programs um organize and what they even mean by coursework, um, so I think that's worth considering by the group. I really appreciate the orientation to the educative possibilities of the performance assessment, um, based on the current recommendations.

So, in sum, I'm just really appreciative of the general direction of the working group, appreciative of the thoughtful work that's gone into it so far, and looking forward to seeing, uh, the refined recommendations in the coming months. Thank you.

Commissioner Simmons: I want to go back to something that you talked about, the 56 elements of Multiple Subjects. I really think that is something that needs to be thought about. Uh, when we moved teacher evaluation to the CSTP 35 elements, I think we lost a lot in terms of, um, operation; principals doing a good job of evaluating teachers. So I wonder, is there a way to talk about power standards instead of every element? Is there a way to talk about them at a standard level, rather than at an element level? So it's like, if you're teaching first grade, there's too many standards for you to teach in a first grade class, you have to figure out what is it that you're going to need to do. And I wonder if that is either done at a local level or done at the state level. What would that look like? And um, but I think it, that is something that has to be addressed.

Commissioner Cardenas: I just want to reiterate, um, what the theme was today. I just want to say thank you to the work group for staying focused, um, for streamlining this process to make improvements, and then for being actionable to impact our students and our candidates in a positive way. So thank you for doing that.