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March 24, 2014

Code: AA-2014-05

TO: Deans of Colleges and Schools of Education

FROM: Beverly Young, Ph.D. *Beverly A. Young*
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SUBJECT: Improvement and Accountability Program Revisions

The CSU Colleges of Education are committed to using evidence of teacher preparedness to drive program improvement, ensure accountability, and demonstrate program outcomes. Since the Chancellor's Office launched our current accountability initiative in 2008, program effectiveness ratings from teachers and employment supervisors have increased dramatically in several areas of teacher preparation that were selected as most critically important for system and campus improvement.

Of paramount importance to our improvement and accountability efforts is the availability of consistent, reliable, and robust evaluation data. Unfortunately, the percentage of teaching graduates and employment supervisors completing our systemwide evaluation surveys has been on the decline for the past several years. We are implementing revisions meant to increase participation in the systemwide evaluation and, concurrently, improve the accuracy and usability of the current Improvement and Accountability Program (IAP) reporting system.

The changes to the IAP reporting system include the following:

- Addition of indicators of survey participation among teaching graduates and employment supervisors, emphasizing communication with potential respondents;
- Modification of the systemwide priority areas to reflect current systemic concerns and encourage campuses to establish additional local priorities;
- Addition of clarifying documentation to the evidence charts provided by the Center for Teacher Quality (CTQ);
- Streamlining the text boxes that are used for reporting progress in each priority area; and

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- Addition of an “Overview” section to the reporting template for campuses to provide contextual and background information about the IAP.

The attached document outlines the IAP changes in greater detail along with the underlying rationale for each. These changes may present new challenges for campus staff who must take meaningful action toward improving participation rates among their teaching graduates and employment supervisors. Research has demonstrated that the survey forms used in our systemwide evaluation are valid and reliable measures of program effectiveness. It is incumbent upon us to make full use of these tools in gathering a robust set of data.

There are at least two areas in which diligent efforts on the part of campus staff has led to higher participation outcomes:

- Encouragement of local school districts to help identify the schools where graduates are working. CTQ is able to determine whether your graduates are working as classroom teachers and which school district they work in, but does not know the specific school site. CTQ has set up an online reporting system that allows school district staff to provide the school location for each first year CSU teaching graduate working in their district. Although CTQ contacts each district in the state to request their assistance, past experience shows that it helps tremendously for each campus to establish relationships with district human relations staff in their region and further encourages them to assist in our follow up efforts. When we cannot identify the school site for a particular teacher, we are much less likely to receive a survey response from that teacher and his or her employment supervisor.
- Contact of your teaching graduates and their employment supervisors directly, and encouraging them to help improve our preparation programs by completing the evaluation survey. Obtaining high response rates on the follow up surveys is largely a matter of persistence, making multiple contacts with graduates and employers through telephone and e-mail communications. Although this task can be time consuming, some campuses utilize student assistants most effectively to complete this step.

Profound and accelerating changes in the teacher education landscape make it imperative for the CSU to be much more strategic, aggressive, and effective in evaluating our teacher education programs. The CSU Systemwide Evaluation provides an unrivaled mechanism for enabling our academic administrators and campus faculties to monitor the effectiveness of, and make needed improvements in, the preparation of K-12 teachers for California’s public schools. We appreciate your continued efforts to ensure the ongoing quality and value of this important work.

Enclosure