

History of TEACH California Website Development (November 17, 2010)

When TEACH California.org first started in 2004, the website provided comprehensive information about the three “basic” teaching credentials (special education, single subject, and multiple subject), and focused on the requirements to complete a preliminary/level I credential. At that time, a decision was made that instructions on how to obtain a clear/level II credential were not needed on the website. Additionally, colleges began to add masters and doctoral programs to the TEACH California database because these programs were education-related. However, the website did not actively contact campuses for information on masters and doctoral programs because the site focused primarily on teaching.

A few years ago, when TEACH California developed its “Partner” section, one of the partners (California Speech and Hearing Association – CSHA) asked if the website could help by informing users of the shortage of speech pathologists. Thus, the speech pathology credential was added to the program database, and, because speech pathology was a subset of the clinical rehabilitation credential, all the other clinical rehabilitation-related credentials were added. At the same time, the pupil personnel credential programs were added to the database. In 2009, information was added about supplementary and subject matter authorizations to help people weather the budget cuts.

Recently, CTC has made more changes in the credentialing structure. These changes include a new pathway within special education that will exist simultaneously with the current pathway. Additionally, there are now two ways to obtain a preliminary administrative services credential. The creation of a stand-alone speech pathology credential is another change. CTC and the TEACH California website staff are working together to make sure that these changes are clearly understood, before updating the website.

The dilemma is that while the website tries to keep the focus on the basic credentialing choices, the website’s content is getting pulled in more directions. Each seemingly slight addition requires more and more staff time (updating both credential and student program contact information takes

almost 8 days, and is done by a college student), and also creates a broader picture of who TEACH California is serving. This isn't necessarily bad, but once a little information is added about a different credential, the expectation is that it will be given equal consideration as compared to the existing credentials. In addition, it makes sense that if the website is going to provide information for teachers AND other education service providers, the site should “officially” expand what is offered on the website, who the site is working with, who the site sees as its audience, and promote the site as an “education recruitment” website, rather than a “teacher recruitment website.” On the flip side, if the site wants to maintain the teacher credentialing focus, the site should think of scaling back and re-focusing the content on the website.

The California Leadership Team provided direction for the TEACH California website, and recommended that the focus for the website remain on “teacher recruitment for high need areas: special education, math, and science (November 17, 2010).