

***Greatness by Design* Statewide Meeting Proceedings**  
**February 15, 2013**

Because every child in California deserves a great teacher, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson, with Mary Sandy, Executive Director of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), convened the Educator Excellence Task Force (EETF) to figure out what California needs to do to create and maintain a highly effective educator workforce. Comprising more than fifty education stakeholders – parents, K-12 educators, postsecondary educators, researchers, community leaders – the task force drafted recommended actions that could be woven together into a coherent system to produce exceptional teachers and principals. These recommendations were published in *Greatness by Design – Supporting Outstanding Teaching to Sustain a Golden State (GbD.)*

Moving GbD recommendations from paper to practice requires extensive work, ranging from state policy development to collecting and disseminating readily applicable examples for districts. The CDE and CTC partnership asked the California Comprehensive Center at WestEd (CA CC) to join with them in an Ad Hoc Steering Committee advised by Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond, co-chair of the EETF. This Steering Committee is charged with ensuring progress in all six GbD areas - teacher and administrator recruitment, preparation, induction, professional development, evaluation and distributed leadership. For its part, the CA CC will provide technical assistance and support for implementation planning, stakeholder involvement, and identifying, vetting and sharing sample resources.

On February 15, 2013, nearly fifty state policy leaders came together at WestEd's Sacramento office to discuss how to strengthen educator effectiveness in California. Working from GbD recommendations, key Steering Committee members led participants to share opinions and experiences that targeted the best ways to implement the sixty recommendations.

The one-day meeting was organized into two parts. Part one centered on a briefing of the GbD report and recommendations, tailored for stakeholders less familiar with specifics in the report. Not all participants elected to attend this part of the day. Jannelle Kubinec (CA CC) convened the group and welcomed them, along with both Lupita Cortez Alcala (CDE) and Teri Clark (CTC). Then Holly Jacobson (CA CC), Teri Clark (CTC) and Phil La Fontaine (CDE) led short presentations summarizing state needs, GbD recommendations, and work already in progress for each of the report's chapters. The briefing helped prepare policymakers to better participate in topic discussions later on the agenda.

Additional participants joined the second part of the meeting, which focused more in depth on implementation challenges and opportunities for GbD. Lupita Cortez Alcala again welcomed guests. Mary Sandy (CTC) explained the Commission's role and progress in setting preparation, licensing, and induction policies included in GbD. Phil La Fontaine and Marcia Trott (CDE) shared emerging designs and directions for a new professional learning system that is called for in the recommendations that are a number one priority for CDE. Then Karen Kearney (CA CC) helped participants organize into small discussion groups of 5-10 members per topic for each of the two one-hour sessions. She asked them to focus on two questions:

- What's your best advice about implementing Greatness by Design recommendations?
- What can your agency do to help implement recommendations?

The groups were facilitated and recorded by CDE, CTC, and CA CC staff and participants had the opportunity to participate in two topic areas. The topics were aligned with GbD chapters and the following themes emerged from those small groups:

*Key Themes from the Recruitment and Preparation Groups Included:*

- Need leadership and funding from the state.
- A framework for the effective use of local funds should be developed.
- Strong programs/best practices should be made more visible.
- Better involvement of community colleges is important.

*Key Themes from the Induction Groups Included:*

- BTSA is a good model, but because of inadequate funding many teachers don't have access to this type of support. This is an issue of equity and must be addressed. The state needs to address this issue.
- Practical induction guidelines for administrators are necessary.
- The credential renewal process must require some evidence of professional learning, but the requirement shouldn't be too bureaucratic or arduous.
- Need a mechanism to hold districts accountable.

*Key Themes from the Professional Learning Groups Included:*

- Need to determine more ways to embed professional learning in the workday
- Ideas about how to implement professional learning beyond what is broadly outlined in GbD would be helpful.
- Technology can be a useful tool.

*Key Themes from the Evaluation Groups Included:*

- Districts need access to good models from around the country.
- Policy and practice may need to be revamped simultaneously.
- Labor-management relationships/collaboration will be key.
- Administrators can model the relationship between meaningful evaluation and professional learning.

*Key Themes from the Leadership and Career Development Groups Included:*

- Labor management is key, including tools to develop trust, mutual agreement and perhaps "interest-based" bargaining.
- Conversations needed at state level to establish parameters.
- Need mechanisms to recognize and reward experience, expertise, and competence.

To end the day, Jannelle Kubinec summarized recommendation themes that surfaced across the nine small group discussions. Those themes included:

- Frequent discussions of resources, specifically adequacy, incentives, and priorities.
- A desire for the state to take a leadership role in providing guidance, support, and resources.
- The critical need for collaboration and partnerships to support implementation.
- A call for best practices and examples.

- The need for collaboration and time for teachers and administrators to implement these recommendations.
- The understanding that GbD requires changes to policy and practice, with a simultaneous approach as the ideal.

Kubinec went on to lead a lively conclusion by asking participants to use hand-held “clickers” to indicate their opinions on areas of continuing interest and commitment and quality of the day. Participants were positive about the day as a starting point and felt able to help support implementing GbD recommendations by communicating to stakeholders and providing expertise to support implementation planning.