

# PDI Has Potential to Improve Lives Of Everyone in the Profession

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The purpose of the Professional Development Initiative (PDI) is to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of the professional superintendent that will contribute toward improved playing conditions and the enjoyment of the game of golf.

As golf has evolved from a pure sport to a multifaceted business, the role of the superintendent has evolved from a traditional greenkeeper to a high-level manager. Recognizing this, GCSAA will be developing a state-of-the-art curriculum that will provide superintendents the tools needed to meet the challenges they face in managing agronomic, staff and budget facets of the golf course operation. Furthermore, GCSAA will be positioned to recognize the accomplishments of the professional superintendent with a competency-based classification system.

In order for golfers and employers to truly value superintendents, we need to enhance the knowledge sets through an integrated, competency-based curriculum. Furthermore, it is important that we measure the impact of this education and its effects on the playing conditions of the golf course. We need to give employers language they can understand, a bottom-line financial impact and a return on their investment.

The Member Standards Resource Group (MSRG), a member group appointed in 1997 to focus on PDI, has helped create this presentation. It contains their recommendations on how membership in GCSAA should be based on a set level of competencies, combined with formal education and experience as a golf course superintendent.

From October 1999 to May of 2000, members of the MSRG will visit GCSAA chapters to discuss the proposed classification and continuing education program. This time will be important because the MSRG will not be selling the project, but will be listening to the membership and collecting questions and concerns so that the PDI can be adjusted to what the membership need.

The Professional Development Initiative is perhaps the most important undertaking of the GCSAA since it was founded. If adopted, the PDI has the potential to change and improve the lives of everyone currently in the profession as well as those who will eventually join us. Because it involves change, parts of the PDI may feel threatening to some members.

It's critical then that members do two things:  
Understand the proposed elements of the PDI.

Express any concerns or reservations about the PDI and help us resolve them

To explain the Professional Development Initiative. We want you to be fully informed about the PDI purpose, process, and projects. Your understanding, involvement, and buy-in are critical if the PDI is to be successful.

To gather your feedback on the PDI and communicate that feedback to GCSAA Headquarters. We will gather feedback in several ways:

A form that can be mailed in to GCSAA headquarters anytime between now and May 2000.  
Comments made on the web site.

Let's outline the major parts of the presentation.

Point 1 outlines the mission, goals, underlying assumptions and history of the PDI.

Point 2 explains the concept of competency-based performance assessment and why it is a necessary and desirable part of the PDI.

Point 3 explores the impact of the PDI on membership classification issues.

Point 4 talks about how the education program will be re-designed to support the superintendent competency profiles and membership requirements.

Point 5 explains the Communication Plan for sharing information about the PDI with members.

Let's look at the mission statement for the PDI.

The mission of the PDI is two-fold: to improve the competencies of superintendents and to improve playing conditions resulting in greater enjoyment of the game for all who are involved.

PDI goals: The success of the PDI will be measured in the following areas: Increased salaries of golf course superintendents; Enhanced job security of golf course superintendents; Intensified recognition by employers and influential golfers of the golf course superintendent as a viable member of the golf course management team.; Improved job opportunities for golf course superintendents. Substantiated credentials that can be marketed to employers through improved playing conditions.

The underlying logic of the PDI is simple and based on principles that have been proven again and again in many industries. The PDI model shows the cyclical inter-relationship of the component parts that are driving the project.

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Professional development starts with understanding the marketplace--what the employers of golf course superintendents need, want and value from the people who manage the game's most critical asset.

Competency analysis fleshes out the generalized profile from marketplace analysis by detailing the knowledge, skills, and attributes required of superintendents to satisfy the needs of employers.

Education in its many forms and delivery methods provides the means for superintendents to fill any gaps between current competencies and needed competencies.

Marketing: The value of a GCSAA branded or credentialed superintendent is "sold" to employers. Members are encouraged to pursue professional and personal growth through a variety of means.

The PDI provides the means to link together the components that will permit us to achieve our goals--namely, better recognition, better compensation, more opportunities and at the same time, improve the game of golf.

Before you see the details of the PDI, here's a brief history of how it came to be. In early 1997, GCSAA embarked on a journey to develop a system that would elevate the professional qualifications and recognition of golf course superintendents through enhancements of their knowledge, skills and abilities.

A volunteer member group, the Membership Standards Resource Group (MSRG) was appointed to lead the development of the initiative. Four committees supported their efforts: Education, Membership, Certification and Career Development.

In July 1997, the MSRG approved four major research projects to advance the Professional Development Initiative:

1. Job Analysis Study -- to determine the range of knowledge and skills necessary for the golf course superintendent now and in the future.

2. Membership Study -- to learn more about members' educational needs and preferences.

3. Employer Study -- to determine what employers value in their superintendents now and in the future.

4. Education Study -- to analyze current GCSAA educational strategy and programs.

SRI International, formerly the Stanford Research Institute, was retained to conduct the research studies. In October 1998, SRI submitted a report with their findings. SRI's strategic recommendations were unanimously adopted by the MSRG and the GCSAA staff was directed to immediately begin implementation of the recommendations.

After a national search where more than 30 vendors were considered, Franklin Covey of Salt Lake City was chosen to assist GCSAA in implementing the SRI recommendations. Franklin Covey was chosen because they have extensive expertise and experience in bringing together the various

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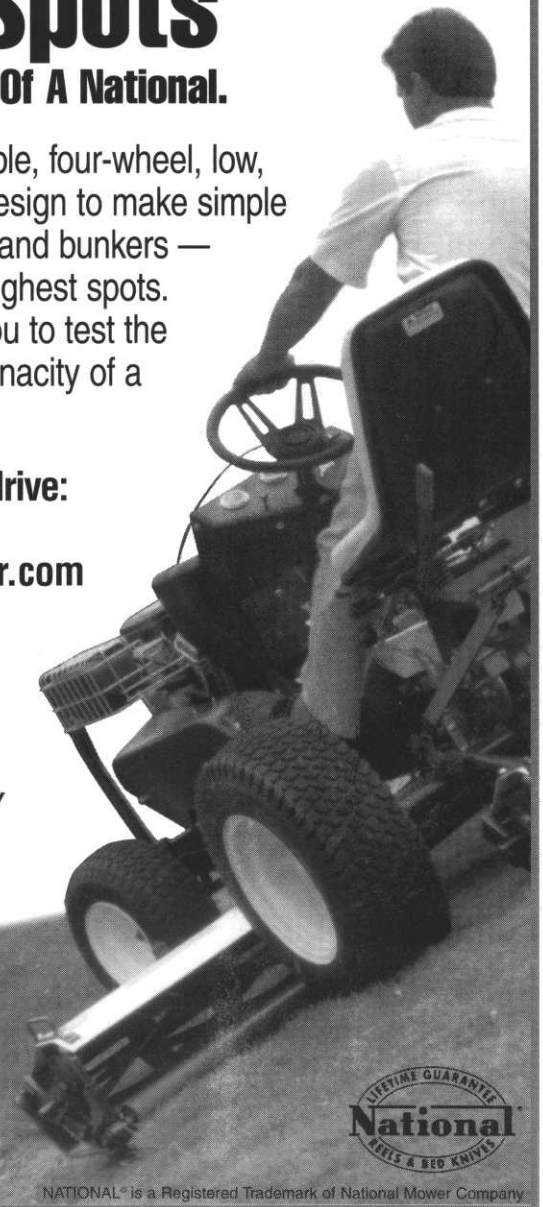
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be parts of the Professional Development Initiative. Franklin Covey has been tasked to do 8 things, as outlined.

Among the most important tasks that Franklin Covey has been hired to do is to prepare superintendent competency profiles. "Superintendent competency profile" is an academic term that means "figure out what successful superintendents do and write it down."

Let's see why competency profiles or models are important to each of us.

As the name suggests, the Professional Development Initiative is all about improving our knowledge and skills and making good decisions about career choices. The key to professional development is the competency model. A competency model is a catalog of the knowledge and skills required to perform successfully as a golf course superintendent..

The competency model provides the facts necessary to make good decisions about your career development. By assessing yourself against the model, you identify opportunities and pathways to improve your skills and take control of your career.

Let's look at a competency model for superintendents.

As explained earlier, SRI conducted research (superintendent focus groups and interviews) to identify the superintendent competency categories and organized them into the cluster. Franklin Covey conducted additional superintendent focus groups to validate and "flesh out" the competency model data.

So, the information in the superintendent competency model comes from working superintendents from around the country. In fact, you may have been involved in either the SRI focus groups or those conducted by Franklin Covey.

The competency model consists of three major components: competencies, levels of proficiency and performance statements. Competency categories (superintendent skills and knowledge) organized into appropriate clusters. The Franklin Covey consultants were amazed at the range of knowledge and skill required to be a superintendent. Some of our employers would also be amazed by this list.

Proficiency levels. Below each competency category is a series of five boxes labeled Level 1 through Level 5. These boxes are used to classify the level of proficiency or skill that a superintendent has in each competency category. Proficiency ranges from a Level 1, who is a novice, up to Level 5, who is an expert in that competency category.

Performance statements. Within each Proficiency Level are performance statements describing the observable behaviors of superintendents performing at that level of proficiency.

Let's look at what these performance statements might look like and discuss what they mean.

Level 1 proficiency is not much more than awareness of the category. Level 2 means that the performer needs considerable help or coaching in the category. Level 3 involves less assistance in performing. Level 4 is the ability to per-

form well in the category without assistance and to coach others. Level 5 indicates mastery of the category and the ability to invent new approaches in that area of knowledge or skill.


Some people ask: "Shouldn't a successful superintendent need or want to perform at Level 5 in every competency category?" The answer is an emphatic no! This is not like grades given in school where the goal is make parents

*"PDI is all about improving our knowledge and skills and making good decisions about career choices."*

proud by getting "As." The goal is to perform at the level of proficiency required for a particular job. Only rarely would a superintendent be expected to perform at Level 5 in any competency category. More typically, expected proficiency will range from Level 2 to Level 4.


For example, a superintendent at an Arizona course may need to be a Level 4 in competency regarding irrigation systems, but a superintendent in Northwestern Washington State may only need to be a Level 2 or 3.

Expected proficiency levels in each competency should  
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be established in performance discussions with your employer. The competency profile can be helpful in that discussion if you choose to use it.

Now that you know the components parts of the competency model, let's talk about how you might use the model.

The model permits the several profiles to be developed for individual superintendents:

- My current competencies
- My current job
- My next job
- Member classification
- Member Certification

As stated earlier, the competency profile can also be used for performance discussions with your employer if you choose to use it in that way.

In short, the competency profile provides fact-based information to assess where you are and how to get where you want to be in your career.

Let's see how a competency profile can help you in career planning and development.

Let's suppose that you have done your personal assessment and it looks like a graph.

The graph line shows how you might have assessed yourself against the proficiency levels in the various competency categories. The graph line does not extend over into the personal skills cluster because these competencies, while important at the personal level, are not likely to be measured as part of career development.

This personal profile provides the baseline for analyzing gaps between your current profile and the profiles that may be required for career advancement or attainment of professional credentials.

Take a look at a hypothetical superintendent -- Forest Green -- and show you how Forest could use the competency model for professional development -- which could involve such things as:

Developing needed skills to enhance performance in his current job.

Preparing for his next job.

Preparing to meet the GCSAA requirements for member classifica-

tion or certification.

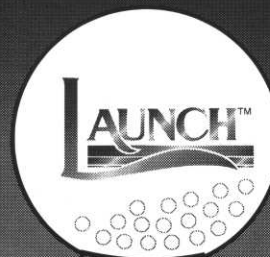
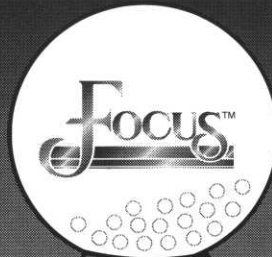
Forest currently works for a 9-hole municipal course, but eventually wants to be the superintendent at a large private club course.

The competency model can assist him in understanding his current competency status. The graph represents an assessment of Forest's current proficiency levels for each competency. This assessment could be based on a self assessment, self and boss, or self and several others, including boss and peers.

The green graph represents the required proficiency levels for his current job, as determined by discussions between Forest and his boss.

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Notice that by analyzing these graphs, we can easily identify Forest's strengths as well as developmental needs in his current job. In some competencies he is performing above his employer's expectations and in other cases below expectations. In the places where he has a negative gap -- performing below expectations -- Forest has a need to strengthen his knowledge and skills. He can use the gap data to tell him where he needs additional education, training, or perhaps mentoring. Helpful in improving performance in your current position and in preparing for a new position. The profile is also very helpful in preparing to meet professional credential requirements.

This chart illustrates what the GCSAA "Branded Class A" membership proficiency may look like. These are mock graphs. Members will determine what the actual levels will be. For our purposes let's assume the orange line represents the competency profile of a branded Class A member.

Forest appears, based upon his self assessment, to meet or exceed most of the requirements for Class A membership, with a few gaps to close. After he takes steps to close the gaps, he will be ready to take the GCSAA classification test.

By using the competency profiles, Forest has three simple but powerful charts that point to competency areas he should strengthen in order to meet his career goals. He can use this information to decide what development activities he should pursue.

At this point you may be wondering how Forest created his competency profiles. Glad you asked. Forest (and all of us) can quickly and easily create these profiles using a web-based software tool called HR Web. A video will soon be available to show you how the software tool works.

A paper-based version of this profiling tool will be available for superintendents who don't have access to computers or the web.

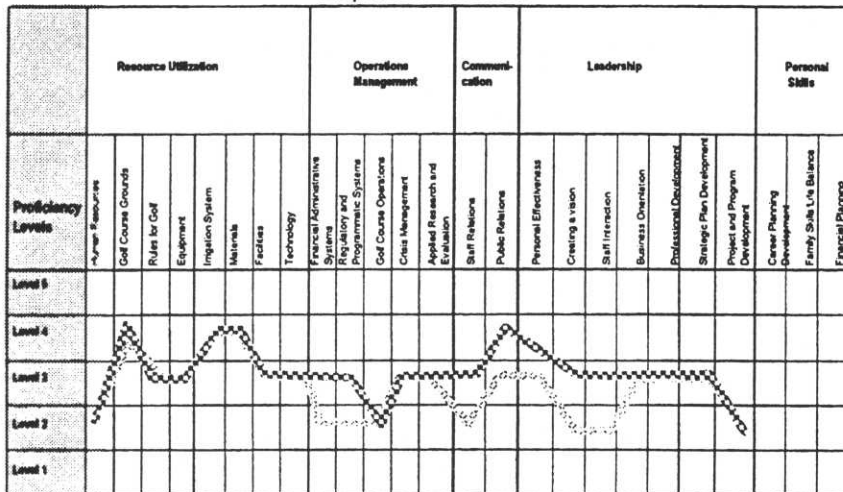
As you can well imagine, competency modeling involving multiple competencies, five proficiency levels, and 20,000 plus members generates a lot of data. To manage this whole process, we will use the HR Web. HR Web provides a data management tool that has these outlined features and characteristics:

- Is easy to use and interpret.
- Is based on the competency profile created by superintendent focus groups.
- Does individual "competency gap analysis" for professional development, member classifica-

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## Golf Course Superintendent Competency Profile

### Expertise Clusters



Key = My current status  
"Branded Class A" membership

Mock model—proficiency levels to be determined



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tion and member certification.

- Tracks individual progress in closing the competency gaps.
- Provides information about development opportunities.
- Enables you to manage your own professional development.
- Provides data security controlled by the individual superintendent.
- Links to education/training registration
- Can be accessed from the internet, at regional locations and during the annual Conference and Show.

The HR Web software's features are best appreciated when demonstrated, as will be done at chapter meetings. There will be a demonstration available at conference and show with a complete testing model available in the spring. With access to a computer and some training, we are confident you can create your own competency profiles. Remember, there will also be a paper-based version of the competency profiling tool for those who prefer to use it.

Now we get to the part that many of you have been waiting for--the issue that set the whole Professional Development Initiative in motion in the first place -- member classification.

What you have heard about so far in this presentation is the process and curriculum that will support this idea of a new classification system. And frankly, this is easy to support. Members have been and will be involved in setting both the competencies and the proficiency levels associated with the performance statements. And members will set the rest of the classification system. What we will discuss in the next part of our program will be what the MSRSG has struggled with for the last two years -- a model for a classification system. This proposal is not set in stone. It's not even set in playdough. We want input from members on this. That is why we have prepared an extensive communication plan that is described later in the presentation.

Classification is a difficult issue for us to discuss because it is so personal. GCSAA means something to ALL of us -- if it didn't we wouldn't be here. We are proud to be members, and to be so bold as to set standards to be a member is difficult for all of us personally -- because it affects us personally.

We begin the discussion by with outlining some of the assumptions that the MSRSG began with: First, it was unanimous within our group that we wanted the GCSAA to remain an inclusive organization. In other words, everyone who wants to be a member should have that right. However, we also agreed that in order to be "branded" or marketed to employers, we wanted our classification system to "mean something." So we started outlining what we wanted the end product -- in this case, our branded Class A member -- to look like and that process led to the proposed standards which will be outlined next. We also wanted to make sure that the requirements are attainable.

We must begin thinking about education in different ways. The half-day, one-day and two-day seminars will still be available, but so will alternative methods of delivery. Furthermore, we all agreed that Class A and above members should have required ongoing continuing education. Our industry continues to change and as professionals, we must be ready to meet those challenges. Another assumption was that we wanted a clear differentiation between Class A and Certified. Finally, we also agreed that there would be some type of grandfathering of Class A and Certified members into the new system. We recognize the value of our existing members and believe that you have laid the foundation for the new requirements. However, we also recognize that you should not be held to entry standards. Let's discuss how we propose to grandfather current Class A and Certified members.

The model we are discussing today has taken us two years to discuss and develop. Please review objectively the proposal and the rationale used to develop it.

Next, we'll cover information about membership classification, the education program and the communication plan.

: We have prepared a Comparison of Current and Proposed Requirements -- let's focus on the requirements for Class A. As you will note, there is no change in Class C for the assistant superintendents. At this point, we do not anticipate any major changes with the exception of allowing Cs to utilize the HR Web for their career guidance. We also see no major changes in the Class B requirements. Frankly, this is where we see the inclusive nature of our organization being utilized. If a person is a superintendent and wants to pay their dues, they can be a Class B member. However, if they aspire to continue their professional development whether as a superintendent or seeking more responsibility, then there will be appropriate recognition for them through the branded Class A or Certification program.

In order to be a Class A member, a potential member must hold the job responsibility of a superintendent. In this profession, we have seen lots of different names and unfortunately we have been constrained by that label. With the competency assessment, we have a good handle on what superintendents' jobs are and if a person meets that definition, they can apply for Class A status. Class A members will be required to self-assess against the competency statements and then have this self-assessment validated. The validation process has not been totally developed. However, there are a number of ways to accomplish this mission. For example, if you have a good relationship with your employer, enlisting their help in validating your proficiencies could be an option. But maybe it would be better handled by one of your colleagues. Our consultant, Franklin Covey, will develop various options for validating the proficiency levels for us. The proficiency levels are currently being set by the MSRSG and by members who have been involved in various focus groups. These levels and the HR Web will be available for members next summer -- two years prior to any required use. This will allow members time to experiment with the examination and with the self-

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assessment and get comfortable with these tools.

In addition to the self-assessment, we recommend that Class As have a minimum of three years experience in holding the responsibility of a superintendent, same as it is currently. We all know that it is great to have the formal education, but experience teaches us to apply that education practically on the course.

And finally, let's move into formal education. We recommend that our branded Class A members possess either a two-year turf degree or a four-year college degree. We recommend this for the following reasons: Society and thus employers recognize formal education as a requirement for a professional. In order to advance the image of the golf course superintendent, it is imperative for us to convey that professionalism to our employers and to golfers who may become our future employers. Our profession is one that demands a commitment to life-long learning beginning with the fundamentals we get from a college education. Before you react, please understand that these education requirements will apply only to new members after the date of implementation. Current members, such as ourselves, will not be required to meet the education requirement. This will be explained in more detail when we talk about grandfathering.

First, let's talk about on-going requirements for membership.

We all agreed early on that Class A members need to have some type of ongoing requirements. We need to encourage members to maintain currency and relevancy within the profession. We believe in the old adage that as a profession, we are only as strong as our weakest link. Therefore, we are proposing the following ongoing requirements for all Class A members.

First administratively, we set a renewal cycle of every three years. We selected three years for two main reasons: #1 - Each year new products and technologies are released into our industry and it is imperative that we keep current on those items. And #2, we also believe that by keeping the period fairly short, we would help members organize their own professional development. In other words, all of us know people who wait to recertify until the last three months of the five-year period. It becomes very difficult to complete. By keeping the period shorter, we keep the message in the forefront of our members' thoughts. This must be something we make a priority in our professional lives.

We talked about the self-assessment requirement during the discussion of entry-level requirements. We believe that in order to guide a member's professional development, they should have to take a self-assessment once during every renewal cycle. One thing we haven't discussed is that the HR Web will continually be updated and revised to meet the evolutions our jobs require. As it changes, we need our members to continually reassess themselves and their proficiency levels. This will help them guide their own professional development as well. In order to support that pro-

fessional development, we will require some level of continuing education. Education is not going to look the same as it does today. We are not going to be fighting to get our requirements complete because we can't get the seminar we want in our region or at C&S. In addition, as vital as continuing education is, we recognize that there are other factors that we need to foster and one of those is some type of recognition for participation in civic, chapter and national committee work. So this type of professional development will also play a part in the on-going requirements.

Let's look at the proposed requirements for certified members.

Class A is moving to a higher level and that requires that Certified move to a higher level as well. This becomes a discussion for the Certification Committee but these are the recommendations that will be made to that group. One of the things we can agree on is that we need to simplify certification. At this point in time, explaining certification is the most difficult part of becoming certified. So, goal one for certification is that it should be a higher level than Class A. Goal 2 is to simplify the system. Goal 3 is to ensure that it is integrated with education. Right now, education and certification are disconnected and they need to be more integrated. By overarching the whole program with competen-

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cies and basing both education and certification on required competencies, we can achieve that goal.

Our proposal is as follows: in order to be certified, you must have served three years as a Class A member. We recognize the value of experience. To be a Class A superintendent, you must hold the job responsibilities of a superintendent for three years. In order to be certified, you must be a Class A member for three years - so a total of six years is required. Again, we believe that the competency assessment will help us link our education and certification. We will require the proficiency levels to be validated. Certification should designate members who have achieved

more, who can demonstrate their knowledge at a higher level. So we will set the standard higher. Because we have raised the bar on formal education, we will keep that requirement the same: a two-year turf degree or a four-year degree in another non-turf related field.

In terms of on-going requirements for certification, we have also set a renewal cycle of three years. We set a high priority on keeping the system simple! We will require continuing education and professional service, again at a higher level than Class A. These requirements are yet to be determined. And as with a Class A, in order to guide your own professional development, you will be required to self-assess once every renewal cycle. However, we do not recommend that you be required to have your results validated every three years. It merely means you self-assess - no one will have access to your individual record but you. However, it will guide the development of your continuing education.

So you now have the entry level requirements for Class A and Certification. And you have the ongoing requirements. Let's move to the grandfathering issues.

PDI Grandfathering Considerations have been developed. We are proposing an extensive communication plan to take information about the PDI out to the chapters.

**Timeline --** Next year at the Delegates meeting, you will see the results of that communication plan and we will have a by-laws vote to consider in Dallas in 2001. However, we propose that the new requirements not go into effect until July 2002. This gives us 18 months to develop the administrative processes and to communicate the revisions to our membership. It gives us time to begin testing a pilot program for the new system. We will begin the pilot with a small group of people to develop the new administrative processes that will be required to effectively oversee this program. That pilot program will be held from March 2001 to March 2002. That will give us about five months to make the appropriate administrative revisions to ensure the smooth transition of this program.

**Recommendations --** We recommend that all Current Class A members will move into the new branded Class A and the only requirements they will be responsible for is ongoing continuing education or professional development requirements. All Current Class B members would transition into the Class B category but would be able to apply for Class A membership by only passing the Competency Assessment and experience level requirements. Then as Class A members, they too would be responsible for ongoing requirements.

The net impact of the new requirements on current members is this: You will be expected to meet

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on-going continuing education requirements and complete a self-assessment during each three year renewal cycle.

What does grand-fathering mean for those who are certified? We propose that all current CGCS members retain their certification. However, we also recognize the value of this new system and propose that they be required to maintain the new ongoing requirements of completing a self-assessment during their renewal cycle. For those individuals who are currently Class A members who are working toward meeting the current certification requirements, we propose they register their intent before July 2002. They will be exempt from the new eligibility requirements until July 2007. However, we recommend that they maintain the new ongoing requirements.

So bottom line, you move into the same category you are currently in but you may have ongoing requirements.

So what about these ongoing requirements? Let's talk about the restructuring of the education program to support the changes in member classification.

Listed above are some of the components of the Education Vision for GCSAA. The actual vision statement is being developed under the direction of the Education Committee. Three major activities are underway as part of the education redesign effort as listed.

Curriculum mapping involves comparing the content of educational opportunities (like seminars and courses) against the competencies that superintendents need to be successful. GCSAA staff and the Franklin Covey team have done high-level mapping of the GCSAA seminars

Gap analysis tells us whether the educational opportunities match the competencies completely, somewhat or not at all. On a gap analysis table, black signifies that the competency is well covered by the educational opportunities, gray means the competency is covered somewhat, white means the competency is not covered at all.

Overall, the gap analysis reveals that we have a few areas of black, lots and lots of gray, and some areas of white.

Let's look at a gap analysis table for one competency cluster-- leadership. Gap analysis is being done for each of the competency clusters, but looking at a single table will give you feel for how curriculum gap analysis is valuable.

In looking at this curriculum gap analysis for leadership, you can see that our current educational offerings address only 6 of the 17 competencies in this cluster. The six competencies that are addressed are mostly gray, meaning that the coverage is incomplete. We have only one area of black, meaning that we think the current educational offerings cover this part of the competency quite well. Clearly we have a lot of work to do in developing or redeveloping our curriculum in leadership.

Some people may think that the gaps in our education program mean that we haven't had a good program. Actually, our current program is very good -- it just wasn't designed to map to the competencies that only recently have been identified.

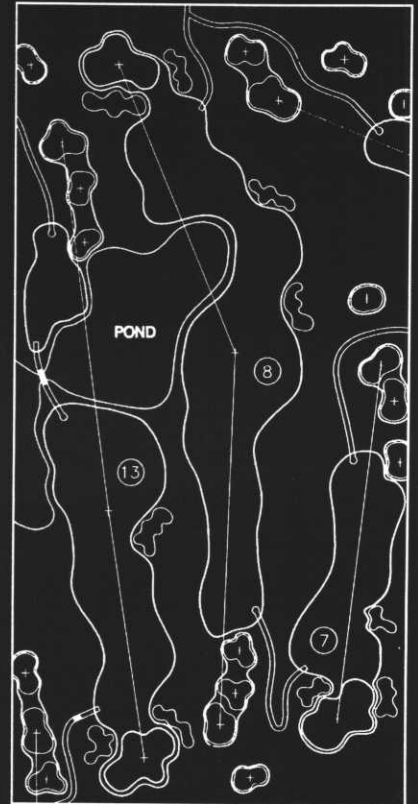
Fortunately, the curriculum coverage is better in the agronomy arena. We have many courses that are directed toward these "technical" competencies. Still, there is development and re-development that needs to be done with the agronomy portion of the curriculum as well.

As explained earlier, the curriculum gap analysis reveals where the curriculum needs to be strengthened or expanded. The most significant gaps in competency coverage

Our proposal is as follows: in order to be certified, you must have served three years as a Class A member. We recognize the value of experience. To be a Class A

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## **PDI-**

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superintendent, you must hold the job responsibilities of a superintendent for three years. In order to be certified, you must be a Class A member for three years - so a total of six years is required. Again, we believe that the competency assessment will help us link our education and certification. We will require the proficiency levels to be validated. Certification should designate members who have achieved more, who can demonstrate their knowledge at a higher level. So we will set the standard higher. Because we have raised the bar on formal education, we will keep that requirement the same: a two-year turf degree or a four-year degree in another non-turf related field.

In terms of on-going requirements for certification, we have also set a renewal cycle of three years. We set a high priority on keeping the system simple! We will require continuing education and professional service, again at a higher level than Class A. These requirements are yet to be determined. And as with a Class A, in order to guide your own professional development, you will be required to self-assess once every renewal cycle. However, we do not recommend that you be required to have your results validated every three years. It merely means you self-assess - no one will have access to your individual record but you. However, it will guide the development of your continuing education.

So you now have the entry level requirements for Class A and Certification. And you have the ongoing requirements. Let's move to the grand-fathering issues.

PDI Grandfathering Considerations have been developed. We are proposing an extensive communication plan to take information about the PDI out to the chapters.

Timeline -- Next year at the Delegates meeting, you will see the results of that communication plan and we will have a by-laws vote to consider in Dallas in 2001. However, we propose that the new requirements not go into effect until The committee is co-chaired by Dr. Michael Hurdzan and Dr. Paul Rieke, both active members of the Membership Standards Resource Group.

This resource group will research faculty related issues and make recommendations for acquiring and retaining faculty members who reflect "best practice" standards in adult education. In addition, they will have input into the curriculum and what are the best ways to offer new programs for GCSAA members.

The last major piece of the PDI is the Communication Plan. Let's talk about what it is and how it affects you.

We are truly looking to the membership for their input into the PDI. As a result, we have designed an extensive program that will provide clear and consistent communication to the general membership and obtain their comments, concerns and questions regarding the PDI.

Beginning in October, members of the Member Standards

Resource Group started to visit various chapters. During our visit, we will provide a standard presentation on our

proposal and then we will begin to collect input from the general membership regarding their questions or concerns on particular pieces of the plan. To date, more than 30 meetings have already been set. A list of presentations that have been scheduled is available on this site, and will be continually updated here and in Newline. It is critical for this initiative to succeed that we discuss it with all members.

We will continue to make this presentation through May of 2000. During this process, the comments and concerns we collect will be systematically catalogued into a document and consistently given to us so we can see what the membership is thinking about this process. Next summer, the MSRG will meet to make our final recommendations.

In addition to these chapter presentations, we recognize that not all members can attend the presentations, so we will be providing several other means of communications about the PDI. For example, a Town Hall Meeting is scheduled at C&S for Feb. 19, 2000. This will be held immediately after the Annual Meeting and any member attending C&S will be encouraged to attend. A standard presentation will be made for those who haven't heard about the PDI, but more importantly, we will be again collecting the general membership's comments about the PDI.

Obviously, we will utilize our existing publications, GCM and Newline, to provide continual detailed updates to members. And this web site has additional features, like a list of Frequently Asked Questions. A printed publication will be released on a quarterly basis and will just address issues related to the PDI.

Finally in all publications and on the web, members will be encouraged to complete a comment card to tell us what they REALLY think about the project. Maybe some of those concerns about accessibility and how it impacts you directly are general in nature and if we can start discussing those issues, we can show members what a valuable resource we have in the PDI.

The communication is extensive, but it is not a sales job. We will change the program according to what members want. There will be varying opinions and it will be our job on the MSRG to sort through all of the comments to come up with an answer that is acceptable to as many people as possible.

We return full circle to the mission statement that drives the PDI. The goal of the PDI is to strengthen the knowledge, skills and abilities of superintendents. Improved skills will enable us to make an even greater contribution to the game of golf through improved playing conditions. The Professional Development Initiative was placed in motion at the request of members. We are eager to learn how members feel about how the initiative is currently unfolding.

To reiterate -- we are not here to sell this program. We have responded to a request from the members to educate our members better and have them recognized for their contributions to the game of golf. We want to continue hearing from them through next summer so that we can come back to you with good recommendations that represent the interests of our members.

Comments: E-mail us at [pdi@gcsaa.org](mailto:pdi@gcsaa.org).