Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of Findings of the Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at San Diego County Office of Education

Division of Standards, Accreditation, and Workforce Investment

January 2026

Overview of this Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at **San Diego County Office of Education**. The report of the team presents the findings based upon a thorough review of all available and relevant institutional and program documentation as well as all supporting evidence including interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the report, a recommendation of **Accreditation with Stipulations** is made for the institution.

Common Standards and Program Standard Decisions
For All Commission Approved Programs Offered by the Institution

Common Standards	Status
1) Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	**Met**
2) Candidate Recruitment and Support	**Met**
3) Course of Study, Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	**Met**
4) Continuous Improvement	**Met**
5) Program Impact	**Met**

Program Standards

Programs	Total Program Standards	Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
Preliminary Single Subject, with Intern	7	6	1	0
Preliminary PK-3 Early Childhood Education Specialist Instruction, with Intern	7	4	3	0
Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs, with Intern	7	6	1	0
Preliminary Education Specialist: Extensive Support Needs, with Intern	7	6	1	0

Programs	Total Program Standards	Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
Preliminary Education Specialist: Early Childhood Special Education, with Intern	7	6	1	0
Preliminary Education Specialist: Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, with Intern	7	6	1	0
Teacher Induction	6	2	4	0
Preliminary Administrative Services	9	9	0	0
Clear Administrative Services	5	5	0	0
Designated Subjects: Adult Education	12	12	0	0
Designated Subjects: Career Technical Education	16	16	0	0
Designated Subjects: Special Subjects	23	23	0	0
Designated Subjects: Supervision & Coordination	4	4	0	0
Added Authorization: Autism Spectrum Disorders	3	3	0	0
Added Authorization: Deafblind	5	5	0	0
Added Authorization: Early Childhood Special Education	4	4	0	0
Added Authorization: Emotional Disturbance	3	3	0	0
Added Authorization: Orthopedic Impairment	4	4	0	0

The site visit was completed in accordance with the procedures approved by the Committee on Accreditation regarding the activities of the site visit:

- Preparation for the Accreditation Visit
- Preparation of the Institutional Documentation and Evidence
- Selection and Composition of the Accreditation Team
- Intensive Evaluation of Program Data
- Preparation of the Accreditation Team Report

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing
Committee on Accreditation
Accreditation Team Report

Institution: **San Diego County Office of Education**

Dates of Visit: **November 16-19, 2025**

Accreditation Team Recommendation: Accreditation with Stipulations

Previous History of Accreditation Status

Accreditation Reports	Accreditation Status
3/20/2018	Accreditation

Rationale:
The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation with Stipulations** was based on a thorough review of all institutional and programmatic information and materials available prior to and during the accreditation site visit including interviews with administrators, faculty, candidates, completers, and local school personnel. The team obtained sufficient and consistent information that led to a high degree of confidence in making overall and programmatic judgments about the professional education unit's operation. The decision pertaining to the accreditation status of the institution was based upon the following:

Preconditions
All preconditions have been determined to be aligned with the exception of Teacher Induction Precondition 1.

Program Standards
All program standards are **met** with the exception of:
Preliminary Single Subject program standard 3 which is **met with concerns**;

Preliminary PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction program standards 2, 3 and 7 which are **met with concerns;**

Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs (MMSN), Extensive Support Needs (ESN), Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), and Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) program standard 3 which is **met with concerns;**

Teacher Induction program standards 2, 3, and 5, and 6 which are **met with concerns.**

Common Standards
All common standards are **met.**

<u>Overall Recommendation</u>
Based on the fact that the team found that the team found that eleven program standards were **met with concerns** and that all Common Standards were **met,** the team recommends **Accreditation with Stipulations.**

The team recommends the following stipulations:
1. That within 30 days, the teacher induction program provides a plan for ensuring that candidates begin their induction program within their first year of teaching. (Precondition 1)

The institution will provide evidence within one year that
2. The Preliminary Single Subject, PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction, and Education Specialist credential programs require a minimum amount of program supervision involving formal evaluation of each candidate of six times per semester, and that clinical supervision is archived either by annotated video or scripted observations and evaluated based on the TPEs. (Program Standard 3)
3. The PK-3 ECE Specialist Instruction credential program is consistently conducting supervised field experiences that address foundational skills, meaning making, language development, effective expression, content knowledge, literacy instruction for children with disabilities, and integrated and designated English Language Development. (Program Standards 2 and 7)
4. The Teacher Induction program ensures that the Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) is done in consultation with the site administrator and guided by the Preliminary Program Transition Plan. (Program Standards 2 and 3)
5. The Teacher Induction program ensures a process to verify that candidates have received the required hours of mentor support and that it is documented prior to making the recommendation for the clear credential. (Program Standard 5)
6. The Teacher Induction program is regularly assessing the quality of services provided by mentors to candidates. (Program Standard 6)

In addition, staff recommends that:
- San Diego County Office of Education continues in its assigned cohort on the schedule of accreditation activities, subject to the continuation of the present schedule of accreditation activities by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
- San Diego County Office of Education be permitted to propose new educator preparation programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- San Diego County Office of Education permitted to propose new educator preparation programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.

On the basis of this recommendation, the institution is authorized to offer the following credential programs and to recommend candidates for the appropriate and related credentials upon satisfactorily completing all requirements:

- Preliminary Single Subject Intern
- Preliminary PK-3 Early Childhood Education Specialist Instruction Intern
- Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs (MMSN) Intern

- Preliminary Education Specialist: Extensive Support Needs (ESN) Intern
- Preliminary Education Specialist: Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Intern
- Preliminary Education Specialist: Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Intern
- Teacher Induction
- Preliminary Administrative Services
- Clear Administrative Services
- Designated Subjects: Adult Education, Career Technical Education, Special Subjects, Supervision   and Coordination
- Added Authorization: Autism Spectrum Disorders, Deafblind, Emotional Disturbance, Orthopedic Impairment, and Early Childhood Special Education

Accreditation Team

Team Lead:
Kimberly Lilienthal
Placer County Office of Education

Common Standards:
John Erratt
Orange Unified School District, retired

Manjit Singh
Fresno County Superintendent of Schools

Staff to the Visit:
William Hatrick
Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Programs Reviewers:
Noelle Won
California State University, Stanislaus

Tierra Crothers
Sacramento County Office of Education

Zoee Bartholomew
Dominican University

Programs Reviewers:
Renee Lucero
John Tracy Center – Mt. St. Mary's University

Elaine Semple
California State University, Dominguez Hills

Anna Marie Villalobos
Retired faculty

Lissette Magana
Riverside County Office of Education

Stacy Shasky
Merced County Office of Education

Debbie Meadows
California State University, Bakersfield

Documents Reviewed

Common Standards Submission
Program Review Submission
Common Standards Addendum
Program Review Addendum
Course Syllabi and Course of Study
Candidate Advisement Materials
Accreditation Website
Intern Portfolios
ILP Documents

Assessment Materials
Candidate Handbooks
Survey Results
Performance Expectation Materials
Precondition Responses
Performance Assessment Results and Analysis
Examination Results
Accreditation Data Dashboard
Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)

Interviews Conducted

Remove constituencies that do not apply and add the appropriate groups. (Please do not break the list down into all the various programs. This should be an aggregate list by constituency).

Constituencies	TOTAL
Candidates	118
Completers	60
Employers/Advisory	37
Institutional Administration	6
Program Coordinators	7
Instructors	35
TPA Coordinator	3
Support Providers	4
Field Supervisors – Program	22
Mentors	63
Credential Analysts and Staff	12
TOTAL	**367**

Note: In some cases, individuals were interviewed more than once due to multiple roles. Thus, the number of interviews conducted exceeds the actual number of individuals interviewed.

Background Information

San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) is a local education agency that provides support and services to school districts, teachers, and students throughout San Diego County, California. There are approximately 477,000 students enrolled across 43 school districts including SDCOE's juvenile court and community schools, and 126 charter schools. SDCOE runs a variety of schools and educational programs for students, including children with special needs and students referred by social services, probation, or districts, as part of the Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS) program. As of the 2023-24 academic year, the student population was 49% Latino, 28% White, 7% Asian, 7% two or more races, 3% Filipino, 4% African American, and 2% other races or not reported.

Education Unit

San Diego County Office of Education's teaching credential and added authorization programs are housed in the Human Resources Division under the leadership of the assistant superintendent, and executive director of Teacher Effectiveness and Preparation (TEP). The Administrative Services Credential programs are offered through the Learning and Leadership Services Division, which is overseen by the assistant superintendent and executive director for that division. There are currently 2,221 candidates enrolled across all programs in the education unit. This includes nine Preliminary and Clear teaching and administrative services credentials, four designated subjects credentials, and five added authorization programs in Special Education. Candidates are supported by approximately 100 course instructors.

Table 1: Enrollment and Completion Data

Program Name	Number of Program Completers (2024-25)	Number of Candidates Enrolled (2025-26)
Preliminary Single Subject Intern	6	7
Preliminary PK-3 Early Childhood Education Specialist Instruction Intern	0	60
Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs Intern	52	92
Preliminary Education Specialist: Extensive Support Needs Intern	23	42
Preliminary Education Specialist: Early Childhood Special Education Intern	18	19
Preliminary Education Specialist: Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Intern	11	16
Teacher Induction	543	899
Preliminary Administrative Services	53	128
Clear Administrative Services	77	103

Program Name	Number of Program Completers (2024-25)	Number of Candidates Enrolled (2025-26)
Designated Subjects: Adult Education	75	148
Designated Subjects: Special Subjects	34	98
Designated Subjects: Career Technical Education	195	579
Designated Subjects: Supervision and Coordination	10	2
Added Authorization: Autism Spectrum Disorders	74	22
Added Authorization: Deafblind	2	0
Added Authorization: Emotional Disturbance	2	0
Added Authorization: Orthopedic Impairment	3	0
Added Authorization: Early Childhood Special Education	36	6

The Visit

This site visit was conducted virtually. Institutional and program constituencies were interviewed via technology.

The visit proceeded in accordance with all normal accreditation protocols.

<div align="center">**PRECONDITION FINDINGS**</div>

After review of all relevant preconditions for this institution, all have been determined to be met with the exception of the following:

<u>Teacher Induction Precondition 1</u>: Each Induction program must be designed to provide a two-year, individualized, job-embedded system of mentoring, support and professional learning that begins in the teacher's first year of teaching.

<div align="center">**PROGRAM REPORTS**</div>

<div align="center">**Preliminary Single Subject Intern**</div>

<u>Program Design</u>
The San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) Preliminary Single Subject Intern Program is administered within the Teacher Effectiveness and Preparation (TEP) Unit of the Human Resources Division. SDCOE offers the Single Subject program in both Mathematics and Science. This program constitutes a job-embedded, two-year internship model in which candidates serve as teachers of record in mathematics or science across districts within San Diego County.

Program oversight is provided by the intern program coordinator, who leads a team consisting of intern support staff, program instructors, credential analysts, field supervisors, and project specialists. In addition to convening regular meetings with the core program team, the coordinator meets weekly with instructors and maintains ongoing individual communication to ensure consistent collaboration and support. At least twice annually, the program convenes joint meetings of instructors and field supervisors to review program data, analyze outcomes, and identify areas for continuous improvement.

The program further engages external partners and constituents through advisory structures, including the advisory committee and network and collaboration meetings with higher education institutions. These venues provide formal opportunities for consultation, feedback, and dialogue regarding educator preparation pathways, program innovations, credentialing regulations, and best practices in teacher development.

A recent program enhancement includes the implementation of a comprehensive database designed to track candidate schedules, information sessions, registration, advising, activities, and support logs. This system enables the aggregation and disaggregation of data for systematic program monitoring and review. Additionally, as of October 2024, preservice coursework for general education and education specialist candidates has been differentiated to more effectively address the specific requirements associated with each credential area.

A review of program documentation and partner interviews confirms that the program employs both quantitative and qualitative data to support ongoing improvement. Weekly and biannual

program meetings, individual advising sessions with interns, weekly instructor debriefs, Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) results, and end-of-course survey data are regularly analyzed to inform program improvement. End-of-course and end-of-program surveys consistently indicated positive feedback on course content, instructional quality, and professional growth. Each survey, with between three to five respondents, emphasized strong instructor knowledge, effective use of materials, and alignment between course objectives and outcomes. Candidates also reported increased confidence in their ability to design assessments, plan inclusive lessons, and apply effective pedagogical concepts.

While the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) completer survey data are unavailable due to the small cohort size (three math and three science completers in 2024-2025), the program's internal feedback and review systems provide a comprehensive framework for data-driven continuous improvement.

<u>Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)</u>
The Single Subject Intern program is a fully online, cohort-based, two-year preparation model that integrates coursework with clinical practice. All courses follow an eight-week format with one weekly, three-hour synchronous meeting and required asynchronous learning. Program curriculum is grounded in Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), which guides candidates to build knowledge by moving through iterative cycles of experiencing, reflecting, conceptualizing, and acting. Throughout the program, interns collect evidence, analyze impact on learners, and engage in reflective cycles to address growth areas aligned to the California Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE). The CalTPA is embedded across both years; Cycle 1 in Year 1 and Cycle 2 in Year 2.

Before entering the intern phase, candidates complete a 12-week preservice experience that includes 45 hours of targeted preparation in: instruction for English learners; general and subject-specific pedagogy; human development; and classroom management. Preservice includes field-based tasks that introduce candidates to ELT routines (goal setting, evidence collection, and reflection), orient them to program expectations, and verify readiness to serve as teacher of record.

Across the two-year intern program, candidates engage in a sequenced blend of coursework and clinical practice that fosters reflective, data-informed, and equity-centered teaching. In the first year, candidates complete foundational coursework and fieldwork supervision focused on creating inclusive learning environments, developing TPE-aligned goals, and completing CalTPA Cycle 1 with structured support. Courses such as Creating Positive and Inclusive Learning Environments 1 and Teaching through the Lens of Equity and Belonging emphasize culturally responsive pedagogy, while Methods 1 provides content-specific instructional strategies for math or science. During the second year, candidates advance their practice through Planning and Assessment, Creating Positive and Inclusive Learning Environments 2, and Methods 2, deepening their understanding of standards-based planning, universal access, and differentiated instruction. Completer interviews communicated the usefulness of program coursework in preparing them to work effectively with diverse learners.

Fieldwork and supervision continue throughout, providing regular observation, coaching, and feedback that guide progress toward mastery of the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE), completion of CalTPA Cycle 2, and readiness for credential recommendation. Interviews with program instructors indicated the emphasis on addressing math/science content standards and the TPE in class assignments and activities.

According to the program handbook, clinical practice is structured around a collaborative supervision model that uses the TPEs to guide the observation process with field-based reflection on areas of strength and growth. The fieldwork portfolio documents that each intern should receive four formal and four informal observations per semester, addressing TPE focus areas and next steps. Program staff are required to provide at least 39 hours of annual instructional and supervisory support, while site-based mentors must offer a minimum of 189 hours per year, including 45 hours dedicated to English learner instruction. Interns must log engagement activities in the learning management system to ensure at least 144 documented hours of ongoing support. The intern and supervisor meet twice a year to align goals and monitor the Individual Learning Plan (ILP), revisited at the end of each semester. Continuous assessment is guided by TPE-aligned self-assessments and corrective action plans when needed. CalTPA Cycles 1 and 2 are embedded across the two years, with structured guidance, office hours, and individualized remediation ensuring timely completion. Clinical practice is sequenced and developmental through a focus on TPE 1, 2 and 5 in Year 1, and a focus on 3, 4, 6, and 7 in Year 2 as interns develop foundational skills in student engagement, creating effective environments before diving deeper into instructional design and development as a professional educator.

Single Subject Math/Science Intern candidates receive continuous, multi-layered support to monitor and promote progress toward mastery of the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE). Interviews communicated that candidate growth is tracked through coordinated systems that integrate coursework, fieldwork seminars, portfolio development, and frequent field supervision meetings. Field supervisors play a central role by observing instruction, holding post-observation conferences, and helping candidates connect course learning to classroom practice through individualized goal setting and reflection in their portfolios. Instructors and supervisors shared that they maintain regular communication to ensure consistency and alignment across courses, sharing updates whenever a candidate misses class, struggles with assignments, or exhibits performance concerns. Additional interviews from course instructors and program leaders described what occurs when a candidate encounters challenges. Program safeguards are immediately activated with supervisors, instructors, and site administrators collaborating to provide targeted, wraparound support such as one-on-one coaching, Zoom sessions, scaffolded feedback, and modeling of effective strategies. The program emphasizes encouragement and confidence-building, offering both structured interventions and informal mentoring to help interns manage workload demands while addressing specific instructional or classroom management challenges.

Evidence from fieldwork portfolios and interviews indicates that current informal visits for intern supervision are not consistently evaluative in nature. These visits can vary, described as check-in phone calls or general support rather than formal evaluations. While the visits are expected to focus on TPEs, documentation provided did not always verify this as a focus.

Assessment of Candidates

The SDCOE Single Subject Math/Science Intern Program monitors candidate progress toward mastery of the TPEs through an integrated system of coursework, fieldwork supervision, and performance assessment. Candidates are informed of assessment expectations during orientation, through course syllabi, and via ongoing communication in the learning management system. Course assignments include evaluation criteria and some rubrics, with assignments graded as Meets Requirements (M) or Revisions Required (R); any "R" must be successfully revised to demonstrate competence. Multiple "R" grades or incomplete coursework trigger academic probation and may lead to dismissal if not remediated. Fieldwork supervisors observe interns formally four times each semester, providing structured feedback on lesson planning and instruction aligned with the TPE, while instructors and program coordinators monitor overall progress across academic and clinical components.

Preparation for the California Teaching Performance Assessment (CalTPA) is embedded throughout coursework and fieldwork. Two CalTPA seminars, facilitated by a TPA instructor, provide cycle-specific guidance, office hours, and access to official CalTPA resources and rubrics. The structure and language of the CalTPA are intentionally mirrored in course and fieldwork assignments such as the Final Demonstration of Mastery in Math and Science Methods, which guide candidates through the plan-do-study-act cycle. Candidates receive direct modeling, peer collaboration opportunities, and individualized feedback to ensure understanding of expectations and readiness to meet the state's passing standard.

Program faculty described a collaborative and responsive instructional team that meets regularly to reflect on outcomes and implement continuous improvement cycles. Instructors monitor candidate engagement closely and provide targeted assistance through detailed feedback, 1:1 video conferencing sessions, and modeling of effective strategies to promote confidence and growth. Faculty uses assessment and survey data to inform course revisions. For example, a CURR 610 module was revised from differentiated instruction to culturally responsive instruction, and they are also exploring the impact of technology use on engagement based on candidate feedback. These practices reflect a strong culture of collaboration, responsiveness, and data-informed improvement that supports candidate success and program effectiveness.

Findings on Standards

After review of the accreditation website, supporting evidence, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, intern teachers, instructors, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are fully **met** for the Preliminary Single Subject, with Intern program except for the following:

Standard 3: Clinical Practice – **Met with Concerns**
The team could not confirm that the required minimal amount of program supervision involving formal evaluation of each candidate of 6 times per semester is occurring consistently. Additionally, clinical supervision must be archived either by annotated video or scripted observations and evaluated based on the TPEs, which could not be confirmed for all candidates.

Preliminary PK-3 Early Childhood Education Specialist Instruction Intern

Program Design
The San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) was approved to provide the PK-3 Early Childhood Educational Specialist Instruction credential program, intern pathway in May 2024, with the first cohort beginning fall 2024. Originally serving San Diego County, the program has expanded to support multiple regions in California, specifically Alameda and Santa Clara counties, in partnership with the county offices of education. Program leadership noted the strong relationships with the county offices allowing for a seamless integration of the San Diego program into these areas.

Evidence reviewed included the original initial program review submission, current program data, candidate files, and interviews with constituents (candidates, faculty, field supervisors, district mentors, district leadership, and program leadership). The program is overseen by a program coordinator who reports directly to the director of teacher effectiveness. Program staffing has increased to include a project specialist and program assistant. The program coordinator in collaboration with the project specialist directs the overall operations of the program including course scheduling, candidate admission and advising, training for instructors, field supervisors, and district mentors, and the day-to-day decisions regarding the program. Course development is completed in collaboration with faculty and courses are currently reviewed at the end of each term for relevance and any revisions needed. It should be noted most classes have only been taught once at this time. Interviews with program leadership, faculty, and field supervisors affirm the collaborative nature of the relationship among the leadership team. The commitment to personalizing support for the candidates, faculty, and field supervisors was clear during these interviews. Candidates, faculty, and field supervisors confirmed a consistently high level of support and guidance from the leadership team.

The program offers the preliminary credential through an intern pathway which is 100% online with three hours of synchronous instruction and three hours of asynchronous instruction weekly. Courses are eight weeks long and the fieldwork course is 16 weeks long. The program admits candidates each spring term for prerequisite courses. Candidates must meet all admission requirements including subject matter competency to begin the prerequisite classes. During interviews, candidates confirmed the admission process was clear and supportive. Candidates stated encouragement to apply came from SDCOE communications, human resources staff, site administrators, and colleagues in the preschool field. Several candidates noted the credential opportunity was welcomed and will open doors for them that they never thought available. One candidate reported, "[I was] always an assistant teacher dreaming to be

a teacher. This program is perfect for me. So grateful for program leadership to have this program available for us."

Once an intern position has been offered, candidates are recommended for the intern credential, and the two-year program phase begins. Years one and two courses are offered on a cohort basis once per academic year and completion of the credential program is expected to take five academic terms. There are currently two cohorts: the first began in May 2024 with 13 candidates, and the second began in fall 2025 with 55 candidates which represents a 139% growth from year 1 to year 2. SDCOE anticipates the first PK-3 credential program completers to finish in spring 2026.

In addition to monthly meetings with directors and assistant superintendents to discuss program data and continuous improvement efforts, the program offers monthly program meetings for field supervisors and candidates, end of course debrief conversations with instructors, individual advising for candidates, and quarterly advisory committee meetings. These opportunities provide program leadership with well-rounded opportunities to ensure they are listening to constituents and continuously improving the program. The program coordinator and project specialist meet with instructors and fieldwork supervisors to disseminate and discuss program data, candidates, program expectations, and program improvements. Monthly field supervisor meetings serve to support the clinical practice work. Educational partners are included through quarterly advisory meetings that include a discussion of admission, enrollment, candidate feedback, TPA data, and program surveys. During interviews, advisory committee members offered that discussions during these meetings allowed for multiple opportunities to collaborate and work with program leadership to ensure workforce support. Program leadership was praised for their commitment to ensuring that local needs were heard and responded to quickly. Partners shared the opportunity to provide feedback on the PK-3 program, both during the initial approval process and with the current cohorts, has allowed for meaningful community input and strong alignment to the local context.

Educational partners from the two northern California counties shared that SDCOE worked directly with them to ensure candidates in their area are completing the same program with additional support provided by a local COE contact. Clear communication lines were set up for both the COEs and candidates. Placements are made in the local area and are facilitated by local contacts. Local field supervisors must complete the SDCOE training and attend the monthly meetings. Local contacts shared that this program is a game changer for candidates in rural areas with online courses and local supervision. They affirmed that the PK-3 credential program provides both credential and local district training and support.

Due to the 2024 start of the program and low candidate numbers, the Commission data dashboards did not have any program completer survey or TPA data. The program maintains internal data utilizing spreadsheets, a newly implemented candidate database, online course rubric data, and the fieldwork portfolio. Candidates' end-of-course surveys indicate a high level of satisfaction with courses and instructors, and this was confirmed during interviews. Year one

candidates have a 100% pass rate on the CalTPA Multiple Subject Cycle 1. Candidates who did not pass on the first submission were supported for resubmission and were successful. Overall, year one candidates believed they were being supported through the TPA process, but voiced concern regarding the revised TPA and the timelines created for submission. Program leadership noted the new PK-3 CalTPA math and literacy cycle training was currently rolling out and candidates will be supported this term and during the spring term.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)
Before program admission, candidates must meet all program and intern credential recommendation requirements. During early field experiences, candidates complete coursework online and 150 hours of early field experience in a mentor's classroom. Support for this placement is provided on an as needed basis. Interviews verified the prerequisite classes provided strong preparation for the program and their intern assignments.

PK-3 candidates complete a total of 39 units. Synchronous course instruction and seminars are offered in the evenings. A learning management system and video conferencing meeting space are utilized for the asynchronous and synchronous portions of the program and for the required weekly seminars. Instructors shared they score candidates based on rubrics and work closely with any candidate who might struggle to complete assignments. There is a clear policy for contacting program leadership if an instructor has concerns regarding a candidate's coursework. Field experiences are supported by both a field supervisor and district mentor. The fieldwork portfolio includes four formal observations and four informal observations per term. Document review and interviews indicated the informal observations were inconsistently aligned to the evaluation of TPEs in practice. Candidates and field supervisors reported the informal observations were primarily discussions and support regarding assignments, TPAs, strategies, and reflections.

The program ensures clinical practice hours are met through tracking in a new database. Candidates verified, in addition to their intern assignment, they must complete 100 additional field experience hours each year in the corresponding grade range to their intern assignment. While most of the candidates entered the program with significant early childhood teaching experience (year one: 100% have previous teaching experience and year two: 74% have previous teaching experience), most need K-3 placements to meet credentialing requirements. The requirement to complete these additional hours during prep time, lunch breaks, vacation days, and substitute days were seen as, "pulling me away from my students to get this done." Another candidate noted the experience was valuable but difficult to achieve.

Overall, candidates consistently described the program as being high-quality, accessible, and flexible. Program leadership, faculty, field supervisors, and mentors are both accessible and flexible. All constituents view SDCOE's approach as an "amazing opportunity" that provides a rigorous, supportive, and affordable route to credentialing.

Assessment of Candidates
Candidate assessment begins in the prerequisite courses through assignments and early field experiences. Course assignments including rubrics, discussion board posts, synchronous

discussions and activities, fieldwork observations (formal and informal). Data collection is growing as candidates move through the program. Initial data and interviews show clear program satisfaction and the desire to continue to learn and grow as PK-3 professionals.

A review of course syllabi indicated candidates complete two literacy formal observations each term. After reviewing candidate fieldwork portfolios as well as field supervisor and candidate interviews, it was found that candidates self-select TPEs for formal observations with no requirement to select a literacy TPE. The site visit team was unable to verify how the program tracks and guarantees supervised field experiences in foundational skills, meaning making, language development, effective expression, content knowledge, literacy instruction for children with disabilities, and integrated and designated English Language Development.

The required 144 hours of Intern support and guidance are tracked in the program database where the candidate, mentors, and field supervisors log their respective hours. Program leadership ensures each candidate is on track for completion each academic year. The program utilizes the CalTPA central scoring option. Candidates complete the first TPA cycle in year 1 and the second in year 2. A seminar each semester supports the development and submission of the cycles. Clear policies and procedures are set up for TPA support and remediation. Candidates, faculty, and field supervisors indicated their understanding of the TPA process. Candidates must complete all program coursework, fieldwork, and pass the TPA prior to preliminary credential recommendation.

Findings on Standards
After review of the accreditation website, supporting evidence, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, intern teachers, instructors, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are fully **met** for the Preliminary PK-3 Early Childhood Education Specialist Instruction, with Intern program except for the following:

Standard 2: Preparing Candidates Toward Mastery of the TPEs – **Met with Concerns**
Through document review and interviews, the team could not verify that the program's clinical practice experience provides multiple opportunities for candidates to learn, apply, and reflect on each TPE in Domain 7: Effective Literacy Instruction for PK-3 Settings.

Standard 3: Clinical Practice: Opportunities to Learn and Practice – **Met with Concerns**
The team could not confirm that the required minimal amount of program supervision involving formal evaluation of each candidate of 6 times per semester is occurring consistently. Additionally, clinical supervision must be archived either by annotated video or scripted observations and evaluated based on the TPEs, which could not be confirmed for all candidates.

Standard 7: Effective Literacy Instruction in PK-3 Settings – **Met with Concerns**
While coursework clearly describes the emphasis on all Literacy TPE elements, the team could not confirm consistent supervised field experiences that address foundational skills, meaning

making, language development, effective expression, content knowledge, literacy instruction for children with disabilities, and integrated and designated English Language Development.

Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs Intern
Preliminary Education Specialist: Extensive Support Needs Intern

Program Design

The Preliminary Education Specialist Mild to Moderate Support Needs (MMSM) and Extensive Support Needs (ESN) Intern Credential programs are comprehensive two-year, cohort-based preparation pathways designed for candidates who are hired as the teacher of record and seeking to earn a credential through a job-embedded intern model. With a fall enrollment start, the programs integrate synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences to accommodate the demanding schedules of working educators. Candidates engage in ongoing collaboration with instructors, mentors, administrators, and program faculty to ensure they receive the targeted support needed for successful development of instructional skills, professional dispositions, and pedagogical competencies. To further scaffold early success, preservice coursework is offered twice each year in January and April, providing essential foundational knowledge prior to full classroom responsibilities.

The institution prepares candidates to earn one of four Education Specialist Credentials—Mild to Moderate Support Needs (MMSN), Extensive Support Needs (ESN), Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), or Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH). Through a combination of coursework, coaching, and field-based application, candidates in all of SDCOE's Education Specialist programs learn to design inclusive learning environments, implement evidence-based practices, and support diverse learners across a range of settings. Because the intern pathway is job-embedded, interns apply their learning in real time, strengthening their effectiveness and deepening their understanding of special education service delivery. The programs' collaborative structure and consistent support create a strong foundation for candidates to grow into reflective, skilled, and compassionate Education Specialists.

Candidates in the MMSN and ESN programs reported a high level of support from both faculty and staff, emphasizing the accessibility, responsiveness, and commitment demonstrated throughout their coursework and field experiences. This supportive environment was consistently identified as a key contributor to their early success and confidence in the program. Candidates also highlighted the value of participating in an "on-the-job" training model through the Intern program structure. They expressed appreciation for the opportunity to apply instructional practices in real time while receiving direct guidance from mentor teachers, supervisors, and program faculty. This integration of immediate practice with ongoing support was described as both meaningful and professionally enriching.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

The programs' curriculum is delivered through a robust virtual coursework model hosted on the Canvas LMS platform, where all instructional materials are collaboratively developed and regularly refined by the full team of instructors. This collaborative approach ensures consistency, alignment to program outcomes, and meaningful integration of evidence-based practices across courses. The curriculum includes consolidated course sequences to streamline learning, along with dedicated TPA support courses designed to help candidates successfully navigate state performance assessments. The program curriculum is updated each year to incorporate the most current research, practical classroom strategies, and real-time supports that directly address the instructional needs and challenges candidates encounter in their existing positions.

Field experience within the MMSM and ESN programs are largely embedded in the intern program model, where candidates are employed and teaching in the very credential area they are pursuing, allowing them to apply coursework directly to their daily practice. Each intern is supported by a highly structured organizational team that includes a coordinator, project specialist, program advisor, field supervisor, site mentor, and a network of administrative support throughout the duration of the program. This comprehensive support system ensures that candidates receive continuous, targeted guidance as they develop their instructional skills in real time. Ongoing observations conducted collaboratively across members of the support team provide candidates with actionable feedback and help ensure alignment and mastery of the TPEs, ultimately preparing them to become effective, confident Education Specialists.

Field Supervisors provided valuable insight into the effectiveness of the Education Specialist MMSN and ESN programs, particularly in relation to candidate development and support during clinical practice. Their role centers on observing candidates' lesson planning, lesson implementation, and overall performance as measured against the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs). Supervisors consistently noted that candidates demonstrate steady growth in instructional planning and delivery, supported by structured program expectations and ongoing guidance.

Supervisors reported that the program provides strong and consistent support to them in their evaluative and coaching roles. They highlighted several contributing factors, including access to training, opportunities for consultation, and participation in triad observations with candidates and mentor teachers. These structures were described as effective in promoting alignment across stakeholders and ensuring that candidates receive coherent and meaningful feedback. Overall, field supervisors described the program as strong, well-organized, and responsive. They emphasized that the combination of structured evaluation tools, collaborative observation processes, and consistent communication contributes to a positive experience for both supervisors and candidates, and supports the development of competent, reflective, and well-prepared emerging educators.

Assessment of Candidates

Candidate assessment is a comprehensive, ongoing process that integrates both coursework and fieldwork to ensure consistent development and mastery of professional competencies. Throughout the program, candidates are evaluated through multiple measures, including formal observations conducted by field supervisors, weekly check-ins with site mentors, and structured assignments embedded in each course. However, the team was unable to confirm that all candidates are getting the required minimal amount of program supervision involving formal evaluation of each candidate which must be four times per quarter or six times per semester. It is unclear if all informal observations meet the requirements of the program standards. Both formative and summative assessments are used to monitor progress, reinforce learning, and guide individualized support as needed. In addition to course-based evaluations, candidates also complete a series of program-level assessments designed to measure growth over time and ensure readiness for credential completion. This multilayered approach provides a clear picture of each candidate's strengths and areas for continued development, promoting continuous improvement and alignment with the Teaching Performance Expectations.

Findings on Standards

After review of the accreditation website, supporting evidence, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, intern teachers, instructors, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are fully **met** for the Preliminary Mild to Moderate and Extensive Support Needs, with Intern programs except for the following:

Standard 3: Clinical Practice – **Met with Concerns**

The team could not confirm that the required minimal amount of program supervision involving formal evaluation of each candidate of six times per semester is occurring consistently. Additionally, clinical supervision must be archived either by annotated video or scripted observations and evaluated based on the TPEs, which could not be confirmed for all candidates.

Preliminary Education Specialist: Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Intern

Program Design

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Education Specialist intern pathway is one of four Education Specialist intern programs offered through SDCOE. The DHH pathway currently enrolls sixteen candidates across two cohorts, with six recent program completers. The DHH cohort size is consistent with statewide patterns for DHH intern preparation programs.

Program oversight is provided by the TEP executive director, program director, and a coordinator who manages all four intern pathways with support from a project specialist, credential technician, administrative assistant, and program secretary. The coordinator and project specialist manage admissions, scheduling, the development of Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs), faculty communication, clinical supervision logistics, and candidate support across pathways. Instructors reported that they feel supported by program leadership

and that they have autonomy to adapt courses while receiving consistent communication and guidance.

The DHH credential program was approved in June of 2021 emerging from regional demand and statewide shortages. The coordinator confirmed that recruitment remains flexible to accommodate the needs of multiple county offices, resulting in cohort variability across years. Advisory council members emphasized the program's importance in expanding preparation opportunities for districts that struggle to fill DHH positions, noting that very few DHH intern programs exist statewide.

Candidates reported that program expectations were communicated clearly throughout the program. They described the program as responsive, well-organized, and supportive, with communication through email, Canvas announcements, and the program website helping them stay up to date with requirements.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)
The DHH intern program is a two-year (four-semester), fully online program delivered synchronously two evenings a week to accommodate working educators. All Education Specialist interns complete three preservice courses, and DHH candidates complete a fourth preservice course, *Introduction to Deaf Education*, prior to beginning the program and their internship. During the internship, DHH candidates complete both the shared Education Specialist curriculum and a set of eight DHH-specific courses that address language development for DHH learners, hearing technology, Deaf+ considerations, early childhood DHH education, culturally responsive practices, and strategies to ensure access to academic content. Instructors review courses annually, and candidates described coursework as rigorous and meaningful. A program completer noted that she continues to use instructional materials developed during her coursework, including a Deaf history unit.

Candidates described the integration of coursework and fieldwork as strong. Coursework includes lesson planning, IEP development, reflective teaching videos, itinerant teacher shadowing, transition planning, and analysis of case-based scenarios. Candidates reported that these assignments directly support their daily work with students and help them connect theoretical concepts with practice.

Fieldwork is embedded within candidates' employment settings under district MOUs with SDCOE. Candidates typically serve in itinerant roles or classroom settings, depending on district needs. Coursework supplements these experiences to ensure exposure across age ranges and service delivery models. Supervision is provided by field supervisors who hold appropriate credentials and experience in DHH education. Supervisors reported that they conduct approximately two observations per month, one categorized as formal and one informal. They maintain ongoing communication with candidates. Site mentors meet weekly or regularly with interns to support lesson planning, assessments, caseload management, and IEP goal development.

Candidates stated that they receive detailed written and verbal feedback after both formal and informal observations. Supervisors and mentors reported increased emphasis on literacy expectations across both program years, and candidates confirmed that literacy is addressed across coursework and supervision.

Program leadership described a supervision model in which interns are observed and evaluated at least eight times per semester using structured tools aligned with the TPEs. However, because the program designates some required supervisory visits as "informal," the team was not able to confirm whether all of these visits consistently meet the definition of evaluative observations required by Program Standard 3A. Support for candidates is strong and the required frequency of observations appears to be in place, but there was a lack of evidence of consistent categorization and documentation of required observations.

Assessment of Candidates
Candidates and program completers reported that assessment expectations were clear and consistent. They receive regular feedback through course assignments, lesson plan evaluations, observation notes, reflective conferences, and semester performance reports. One program completer shared that she continues to use a resource document created with her supervisor during her internship, illustrating the practicality and relevance of program assessments.

Candidates demonstrated understanding of how their progress toward the TPEs is monitored. Several described regularly checking their status in Canvas, where course grades, assignment feedback, and observation documentation are housed. Candidates also shared that they communicate with their DHH advisor to confirm they are progressing appropriately and to seek clarification when needed. Instructors serve as the first point of contact when concerns arise, and issues may be elevated to the DHH advisor, project specialist, or coordinator as appropriate. Supervisors reported that program leadership is accessible and responsive in addressing candidate needs.

Candidates receive structured support for the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA), beginning with early communication about passing standards and continuing through a dedicated TPA support course that all interns complete. Additional supports include optional review sessions, targeted advising, and opportunities for resubmission when needed.

Findings on Standards
After review of the accreditation website, supporting evidence, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, intern teachers, instructors, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are fully **met** for the Preliminary Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, with Intern program except for the following:

Standard 3: Clinical Practice – **Met with Concerns**
The team could not confirm that the required minimal amount of program supervision involving formal evaluation of each candidate of six times per semester is occurring consistently.

Additionally, clinical supervision must be archived either by annotated video or scripted observations and evaluated based on the TPEs, which could not be confirmed for all candidates.

Preliminary Education Specialist: Early Childhood Special Education Intern

Program Design

The Preliminary Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Intern program is a two-year intern program. Program administration is led by the program coordinator, program specialist, and program secretary. Candidates begin by attending an information session, after which they may apply. Applications are housed in SharePoint and are screened first by the program secretary, then reviewed by the program coordinator and program specialist, who determine acceptance. Candidates are notified of their status via letter. Orientation is required to enroll in preservice courses. Candidates shared that orientations are limited in number, with one reporting postponed enrollment due to being unable to attend a required orientation session. Candidates suggested that additional orientation options or flexible attendance modalities would be beneficial.

Following orientation, candidates are assigned to a cohort and enroll in three preservice courses held either January–March or April–June. Each pre-service course is one month long. Applicants may apply for verification of intern eligibility upon successful completion of preservice coursework. Job offers are considered valid only when 50% FTE or greater, and each placement is reviewed by the coordinator or program specialist to ensure alignment with credential requirements and program expectations. Once employed, candidates are recommended for the intern credential and begin the two-year sequence. Year 1 and Year 2 coursework is delivered in two 10-week cycles per semester, with three courses per 20-week period. Candidates also participate in a fieldwork seminar that meets twice per semester. All credential types participate together in this seminar, which includes whole-group professional learning and breakout sessions with field supervisors. Supervisors, faculty, and mentors attend these seminar events.

The mentoring and supervision structure is robust. District mentors provide comprehensive support across all aspects of the internship, meeting weekly or more often as needed. Many mentors, who are selected by the candidate's district, also serve as district induction coaches, applying consistent systems of support across programs. Candidates upload mentor hour logs monthly. Mentors and supervisors were consistently described by interns as attentive, knowledgeable, and highly supportive, often providing supplemental tools such as IEP "cheat sheets," conference guides, and example materials. Field supervisors are employees who meet all required qualifications. Supervisors apply through EdJoin, and applications are vetted by program leadership. Field supervisors and mentors remain with the same intern for all four semesters unless a change is warranted. Supervisors attend monthly meetings, participate in program kickoff meetings, and collaborate with instructors throughout the year. Supervisors also assist candidates with Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) development and complete final feedback summaries, though grading is conducted by program leadership.

Improvement plans, when needed, are developed collaboratively with the program coordinator, program specialist, district mentor, and field supervisor. Candidates reported that school site administrators are not consistently involved in ECSE or early childhood programs, often due to unfamiliarity with preschool and special education contexts. In these cases, mentors and supervisors fill critical support roles. In some districts, particularly where mentors serve district-wide rather than site-based, candidates on elementary campuses reported occasionally feeling overlooked without strong on-site administrative presence. This suggests a potential need for dialogue around site capacity and administrator engagement.

ECSE interns are required to observe different age groups outside their own classroom or caseload. The program also includes one session during the intern sequence in which an infant–toddler specialist provides targeted instruction for working with that population. The required observations are recorded on a form which is archived in the Canvas course. Candidates reported that the observations were beneficial and would gladly participate in additional opportunities, but that the leave time from the classroom created a challenge.

In terms of candidate recruitment, interviews revealed that ECSE interns learned about the program from site administrators, colleagues, or mentors, many of whom had participated in the program themselves. Several candidates noted that they previously worked as paraeducators, general education preschool teachers, or substitute teachers, and expressed the belief that the program may be too intensive for individuals without prior experience. Program communication and responsiveness is an area of strength and candidates consistently described program leadership as highly responsive, noting that calls and emails are answered promptly.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)
The ECSE Intern program begins with the common trunk coursework shared across MMSN and ESN pathways, followed by ECSE-specific coursework aligned to the ECSE TPEs. The program coordinator shared that candidates had high pass rates on ECSE TPA field test and pilot. Across interviews, ECSE intern candidates described coursework as rigorous but manageable, with instructors being flexible and supportive. Coursework was consistently described as practical, meaningful, and aligned to classroom responsibilities. Several candidates expressed appreciation for strong connections between coursework, lesson design, and assessment practices. A few candidates noted that when two sections of the same course run simultaneously but are taught by different instructors, the content can feel different across sections.

In terms of intern field experience, supervisors conduct four formal and four informal observations per semester, with additional observations possible for candidates needing support. The four formal observations require a written lesson plan and extensive documentation on the part of both the candidate and the field supervisor and the TPEs are clearly referenced. However, the informal observations are less standardized with field supervisors reporting that these meetings include the triad (once per semester meeting with the candidate, mentor and field supervisor), video conferencing, phone calls, or in person

visits. Forms are available to document these interactions, but don't appear required. While the field supervisors reported that the TPEs are a focal point in the informal observations, the intern candidates did not express a strong sense that these informal observations were evaluative.

Intern candidates also complete additional observation/fieldwork assignments, guided by a standardized observation form with instructions for host teachers and students. These fieldwork assignments require candidates to meet with host teachers in specific environments different from their intern placements, prior to observations, and document instructional foundations addressed during lessons. Candidates must observe both small- and whole-group instruction.

Supervisors monitor Canvas submissions and flag concerns early. Improvement plans are collaboratively developed with program leadership and include additional observations and targeted support. Candidates complete end-of-course surveys, which are analyzed and shared with instructors. Annual kickoff meetings with instructors allow for reflection on survey findings and guide course revisions. Faculty and program leadership meet quarterly to review course updates, candidate progress, instructional best practices, and program needs. Students, faculty, mentors and supervisors all report that the program is responsive to feedback and makes adjustments and takes action based upon the feedback.

Findings on Standards
After review of the accreditation website, supporting evidence, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, intern teachers, instructors, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are fully **met** for the Preliminary Early Childhood Special Education, with Intern program except for the following:

Preliminary ECSE Standard 3: Clinical Practice – **Met with Concerns**
The team could not confirm that the required minimal amount of program supervision involving formal evaluation of each candidate of six times per semester is occurring consistently. Additionally, clinical supervision must be archived either by annotated video or scripted observations and evaluated based on the TPEs, which could not be confirmed for all candidates.

Teacher Induction

Program Design
The SDCOE Teacher Induction Program (TIP) is a two-year Commission-approved program for teachers needing to complete induction to clear their preliminary or level 1 credential and is operated out of the Teacher Effectiveness and Preparation (TEP) unit. The TEP team meets three times weekly, while the TIP team works together daily to support district/SDCOE leads (DL). District/SDCOE leads are the primary pathway of communication with districts and schools and work to support the site administration as well as mentors and candidates in their assigned

areas. The TIP program is a 100% online program and has an enrollment of nearly 900 teacher candidates supported by 550 mentors in approximately 105 districts.

The program coordinator, project specialist and the district/SDCOE leads communicate regularly on both a scheduled and an as needed basis. A monthly meeting is held to support the work of the DLs which includes direction around communication with the districts, recruitment of mentors, support of local mentors and the identification of new teachers qualified to enroll in teacher induction. It was discovered through interviews with candidates that many entered the induction program later than their first year of teaching, and the recent completer data reflects that nearly 55% of candidates who responded did not enroll in their first year of teaching (statewide response reflects that 37% also enrolled after their first year of teaching). Candidate interviews revealed that many candidates felt they were given the option of enrolling in their first year but chose not to because of the extra workload. Documentation reviewed supported the detailed training of the DLs, and interviews revealed that they feel supported by program leadership who are very responsive to questions.

Mentors are selected by the district/SDCOE leads based on the requirements of Program Standard 4. Document review and interviews confirm that the standard criteria are utilized for identification and enrollment and that the information is reviewed and retained at the program level. Candidates and mentors are matched within 30 days of program enrollment. The process for matching candidates with mentors begins once the candidate and mentor register for the TIP. District/SDCOE leads and the TIP project specialist work together to make sure candidates and mentors are appropriately matched.

Documents revealed and interviews with mentors confirm that the SDCOE TIP program has a robust training and support program for mentors. New mentors and mentors returning to service after a three or more year break from TIP service participate in a three week initial mentor skill building training to orient them to quality coaching, program requirements, and program expectations. In addition to the training course, both new and returning mentors participate in three virtual mentor review sessions throughout the year. Sessions are recorded and made available to mentors that were unable to attend. Mentors report receiving frequent communication and support from district leaders and appreciate their availability and responsiveness when answering questions.

Mentors are the primary support and guide for candidates enrolled in the TIP. Candidate growth goals are developed within the first 60 days of the candidate's enrollment in the program. When candidates are unclear about anything related to the program, they contact their mentor who will either respond or connect with a DL. Interviews with candidates and mentors confirmed that mentors and candidates have a solid relationship of support. Candidates expressed their appreciation for their mentor's availability and concern about their success. Candidates expressed during interviews that they "feel supported and respected by their mentor" and that when questions or concerns arose, they often "didn't have to bring them up because their mentor would address the issues before they could."

There is evidence from program documents and interviews with both mentors and candidates that they work together to develop the ILP to address the connection with their pre-service work, teaching context, and self-assessment. Candidates and mentors conveyed appreciation for the direct and specific instructions and that all documentation required was in one place making it easier for busy professionals to manage.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)
Mentors and candidates are matched based on their credential type as verified in tracking documents. The program monitors the credential match through a pairing list that is a living document shared between program leadership and DLs. Candidate interviews confirmed that if the credential was not an exact match that they were provided direct support in the content area by colleagues.

Candidates develop their professional growth goal in conjunction with their assigned mentor after first considering their teaching context, observation feedback, areas that they feel they would benefit from support, and feedback from conversations with their district lead or site administration and previous teaching experience. In some cases, the district lead provides direction when selecting the ILP growth goals, but it could not be confirmed that site or district administrators consistently had input into the development of the ILP.

The program relies on mentors to monitor and evaluate a candidate's completion of program requirements. Candidates receive formal feedback from their mentor and a second reviewer, often a coach or DL, three times each year. Each round of formal feedback is presented after a section of the ILP is due. Each section of the ILP has a signature verification space for the mentor and second reviewer. The DL is consulted in the event that there are questions or support needed.

Throughout the two years in the program, candidates and mentors collaborate to complete observation cycles which are submitted within the candidate coursework as an assignment. Each observation cycle includes a pre-observation conversation, an observation, and a post-observation conversation. This promotes dialogue between the mentor and the candidate about what to observe, what was observed, and what the areas of strength and growth are moving forward. The observation cycles are embedded into the ILP and are required once in the fall and once in the spring. Although there is a process for the SDCOE or district lead to verify that candidates have completed most requirements for the Clear credential before the recommendation, there was inconsistency around tracking the hours of support provided by the mentor.

Each year in the program culminates with a colloquium activity. Interviews with SDCOE/District leads confirmed that the program provides guidelines to the DLs who then coordinate the event based on local preferences. One mentor reported that at the completion of the induction program, teachers present their learning to the school board. Year two candidates present at the colloquium on learning and growth throughout the program based on their ILP. Year one

candidates participate in the event, interacting with and learning from the experiences of the year two candidates.

Mentors and candidates confirmed in interviews and document review supported that mentors and coaches are surveyed about program progress and program satisfaction at least two times each year. Interviews with program leadership confirmed that data collected in surveys is used as reflection tools to guide change in program support and requirements as needed.

Assessment of Candidates

The program relies on the mentors and DLs to monitor and evaluate a candidate's completion of meeting program requirements using the data/evidence collection and CSTP integration rubric. The ILP is reviewed three times throughout each year. The first review is completed by the candidate's mentor, and the second review of the work is completed by a mentor not assigned to the candidate. The first reviewer signs a statement confirming that they discussed the findings from the section with the candidate and that they compared the work against the rubric and left feedback for the candidate. The second reviewer also signs the document confirming that they used the rubric and communicated with the candidate to ensure that the work was complete.

The program relies on the mentor to monitor and inform the DL if a candidate is not making sufficient progress. Interviews with mentors confirm that the DL is "very supportive" in helping get candidates back on track and helping to resolve issues. It was also reported that the DL makes every effort to support the mentor to handle the situation so that direction and support to the candidate comes directly from the mentor. Interviews with mentors and DLs revealed that they felt the program leadership was "extremely responsive" to requests for support and that their questions or concerns were addressed within 24 hours.

Mentor feedback is provided through the second review of the ILP which occurs three times annually. Mentor interviews confirm that they believe that the second reviewer provides feedback not only to the candidate but to them. They report that the interaction between the two reviewers is supportive and helps support their practice in guiding their new teacher through the creation and implementation of the ILP goals. Although this process does provide feedback on the ILP, the team is unable to find convincing evidence that the program leadership provides formative feedback to mentors on their work.

During the ILP review process the candidate has an opportunity, with the support of the mentor, to modify the document to move the work toward meeting the standard for submission. The ILP goes through the complete review process as many times as necessary to prepare it for submission to program leadership in the learning management system.

Findings on Standards

After review of the accreditation website, supporting evidence, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined

that all program standards are fully **met** for Teacher Induction program except for the following:

Standard 2: Components of the Mentoring Design – **Met with Concerns**
The development of an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) for candidates is not consistently done in consultation with the site administrator nor guided by the Preliminary Program Transition Plan. Interviews indicated some candidates complete their ILP with their district lead who may not be the candidate's site administrator.

Standard 3: Designing and Implementing Individual Learning Plans within the Mentoring System – **Met with Concerns**
Various constituency groups reported that the employer does not consistently have input into the development of the ILP.

Standard 5: Determining Competence for the Clear Credential Recommendation – **Met with Concerns**
There was inconsistent evidence that the Teacher Induction program ensures a process to verify that candidates have received the required hours of mentor support, and that it is documented prior to making the recommendation for the clear credential.

Standard 6: Program Responsibilities for Assuring Quality of Program Services – **Met with Concerns**
There is a process by which candidates receive feedback on their ILP progress by another mentor and this feedback is often useful for mentors; however, there is insufficient evidence to support that the program is regularly assessing the quality of services provided by mentors to candidates.

<div align="center">

Preliminary Administrative Services
Clear Administrative Services

</div>

Program Design
The San Diego County Office of Education is a lead educational agency the preliminary administrative services credential (PASC) and clear administrative services credential (CASC) programs housed in the Learning and Leadership Services Division (LLS). As shown in documentation and evidenced throughout interviews, both programs are passionately committed to developing socially conscious leaders who are equipped to provide effective leadership needed to produce high-performing schools.

As confirmed by the SDCOE organizational chart and various constituent groups, both the PASC and CASC program leadership includes the Assistant Superintendent and Senior Director who work collaboratively to guide the administrative services programs with a lens of continuous improvement and drive to make a positive impact. Throughout multiple interviews, an internal

study of retention and longevity was shared which indicated an above average retention of SDCOE's graduates with above 93 percent remaining in the field for five years. This is one demonstration shared regarding the strength of the program and commitment to providing support beyond the program.

The PASC and CASC programs each have a director who is responsible for program guidance and implementation as well as coaching and teaching in both programs. Additionally, full-time executive leadership coaches are responsible for teaching courses, coaching, and just in time support for candidates throughout the programs to ensure candidates are successful. Each program has an additional support staff member who assists with the technical side of the programs, including applications, payment, recommendations and were highlighted by candidates as a great means of support.

Interviews praised the strong collaborative culture and integrated approach that exist within the programs' structure. Documentation confirmed that the Senior Director and Executive Director maintain active involvement through attending monthly collaborative meetings led by the directors of the PASC and CASC programs with all executive leadership coaches. These meetings focus on continuous improvement of course work, field work, program design and candidates progress in the programs. Due to the nature of the executive leadership coaches, co-teaching the PASC courses as well as being coaches for the CASC program, the program design for the two programs are fully integrated and seamless. The executive leadership coaches maintain other roles within the county office to support the 43 local districts and 126 charters as well, strengthen their knowledge of the current trends within the region. They provide professional development, training, and support which allows for a strong collaborative relationship and depth of knowledge of the current trends and needs locally. Additionally, as confirmed during interviews, program leadership meets with educational partners to collaborate on the needs for the region and provide high quality programs as needed per program, either bi-annually or monthly. These meetings allow for collaboration, input, feedback and on-going continuous improvement.

SDCOE's administrative services programs benefit from a quarterly meeting of an advisory council. The advisory council members, representing Local Education Agencies (LEAs), county offices, Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), Institute of Higher Education (IHE), and program alumni, provide local context of current trends and support program improvement. Program leadership outlines an agenda for the meeting with topics relevant to program improvement. During an interview with members of the council, it was confirmed that this is a "think group" who reviews data including internal end of course surveys, completer surveys, self-assessments and is not just a "rubber stamp" but actively works together to improve the program. Members shared an example of reviewing a possible new textbook and how they dove into the content of the text, asking what might work, what might work, and how it relates to the members district's focus. The advisory council supports the programs' high expectations and wraparound services for all candidates to be successful.

The county's PASC program prepares candidates for education leadership through deliberately sequenced course of study that includes the development of visionary leadership, school improvement, community engagement, professional learning, instructional leadership, and organization and systems leadership, all while grounded in the California Administrator Performance Expectations (CAPEs) and aligned with the leadership skills for the California Administrator Performance Assessment (CalAPA). Interviews with current and past candidates confirmed the value of their preparation through the county program, indicating the depth of courses allow candidates to use the theory-based concepts into practical application. Candidates continually discussed the hands-on and engaging approach to courses.

SDCOE's CASC program offers new administrators the opportunity to clear their preliminary administrative credential through the tailored and highly individualized induction program based on their current administrative position grounded in the California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CPSELs). The program assigns a highly-qualified executive leadership coach who has experience in leading schools and like experiences, who supports the candidate for a minimum of 40 hours, although noted many times the hours go above and beyond. During interviews, candidates expressed appreciation for the relationships built with coaches during the program including professional guidance, support with the program, being highly available, and continued support even once the program is completed.

For both the PASC and CASC programs, throughout interviews, including candidates, there was a strong emphasis on relationships, collaboration, equitable leadership, "leadership voice" and the passion to support aspiring and new leaders to successfully support local schools and students. This is also evident through the PASC and CASC completer survey results where the vast majority of responses were in the 4, well, and 5, very well, range and no participants in either program marked poorly or not at all for any answer on the 2024-25 report.

As part of SDCOE's continuous improvement, program leadership has made modifications based on data, input and collaboration with executive leadership coaches/faculty, candidates, education partners and advisory council. Multiple examples were offered during interviews such as adjusting the length and number of leadership seminars to allow for focused time on relevant and timely professional development. Additionally, the program shifted the order of the CalAPA Cycles to better support candidates in completion. This shift with the CalAPA has successfully supported candidates in not only completing the cycles during the program, but also better align the course content with the cycle.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)
The PASC program has three different pathways toward completion: two-year (four semesters) starting in Fall; two-year (three semesters) starting in Spring; and a one-year intensive program with a special education focus in conjunction with the South County SELPA. All three pathways are structured and driven by a theory of action that connects school leadership practices to sustainable school improvement. The program is guided by the CAPEs and candidate progress is monitored through embedded formative assessments through the coursework and fieldwork. Course and program components are sequenced to move candidates into more sophisticated

practice, embedding CAPE components throughout. This was documented and confirmed during interviews when candidates shared there's a throughline of assignments, articles and textbooks that build upon each other which helps build confidence as a new administrator.

The coursework emphasizes the importance of equity driven leadership, understanding diversity in education and leading, and attaining access for all. Candidates confirmed this during interviews stating the program was "very inclusive" and many times candidates used the term, "equitable leader" and "shared decision making." Additionally, candidates confirmed the theory of action focus by describing the coursework as relevant to their schools and districts and "everything I'm learning can be put into practice while at work." Surveys as well as completer interviews reported that candidates strongly agree that the coursework was relevant and meaningful to them as a prospective administrator.

As documented and confirmed in interviews, candidates are provided with a clear understanding of all requirements, including those for the CalAPA. The program provides multiple avenues of support for candidates to fully understand the depth and breadth of each cycle, and also successfully pass. Coursework is closely aligned to the CAPEs, and therefore aligned with the CalAPA which provides candidates with the opportunity to explore content and concepts prior to doing their cycles. As candidates are working on their CalAPA cycles they can gain support through their course instructors, director, CalAPA seminars and pre-recorded videos, which were highlighted by candidates in interviews. Candidates in SDCOE's PASC program have a high passing rate which is evident on the Accreditation Data Dashboard with overall passing rates for between 2018 to 2024 as: Cycle 1 at 99.6 percent, Cycle 2 at 91.7 percent, and Cycle 3 at 96.7 percent.

The SDCOE CASC program offers two admission entry points, one in the fall and the other in the spring. Program documents and interviews confirm that coaches are assigned to candidates within the first 30 days. The executive leadership coaches start meeting with their candidates right away and as confirmed by the completer surveys, they continue to meet on average twice a month to once a week. Coaches collaborate with candidates to help guide, assess, and assist in meeting the demands of their job while also supporting the completion of program requirements. Additionally, according to the completer survey, 100 percent of candidates reported that they would recommend the SDCOE CASC program to potential candidates. These components of coaching support are clearly identified in the CASC Handbook and live throughout the program.

Candidates begin the program by completing a self-assessment which informs the Individualized Growth Plan (IGP) which is the cornerstone of the SDCOE CASC program. In collaboration with their executive leadership coaches, candidates develop this plan and reflect on current job-embedded opportunities to grow. The plan is grounded in the CPSELs with candidates self-selecting which CPSEL they will focus on first, and moving forward. The Description of Practice (DOP) is a guiding document for candidates and was confirmed during interviews that it was a foundation to their reflection and learning. The candidate and executive

leadership coach engage in an initial self-assessment process with the DOP and use it as a baseline for leadership areas of strength and developmental next steps.

Supporting their IGP goals, candidates participate in professional learning each year, with attendance at self-selected and SDCOE provided professional development a minimum of 40 hours per year. To develop learning leaders with a focus on evidence-based leadership practices, SDCOE offers a series of CASC leadership seminars during the two-year induction program. Seminars are to support systems-thinking leaders who strategically build capacity in their organization to ensure equity and access for each and every student. Candidates commented on the connection of the professional development and alignment to the IGP work being job-embedded and relevant to their role and school.

Assessment of Candidates
Interviews with candidates, faculty, coaches, and program employees confirmed candidates are assessed for competency and program completion through formative and summative assessments in both administrative services programs. Program staff utilize ongoing monitoring to closely monitor student progress through the Canvas portal, CASC program portal, and multiple internal spreadsheets. Additionally, the unique nature of all program staff including faculty, advisors and coaches being full-time employees, allows for a wrap-around coaching that highly supports student progress in both programs.

In the PASC program, formative assessments are threaded throughout, via coursework, assignments, and individualized coaching. Summative assessments include but are not limited to course completion, fieldwork, benchmark reflection, and passage of the CalAPA. During interviews it was confirmed that candidates receive extensive and timely feedback that is individualized and supports growth and learning. While the quality feedback was highly appreciated by candidates during interviews, major course assessments are also scored on a three point rubric based on the CAPEs.

CASC participants are ensured a high-quality induction experience through an extensive program. Participants complete a self-assessment three times throughout the two-year program: an initial, mid-program, and end of program assessment. The assessments and artifacts are performance demonstrations, based on the CPSEL and DOP. The results are reviewed by the participant, coach and a program panel at an exit interview. The exit interview is a time candidates highlight their leadership growth. During interviews it was confirmed that having this culminating experience to share their leadership growth was rewarding.

Competence within the CPSEL is further demonstrated through the completion of six CPSEL-aligned (three each year), job-embedded growth goals and action plans. As confirmed during interviews, candidates and coaches participate in ongoing reflective meetings which provide feedback to move forward with goals and overall leadership development.

At completion of a candidate's administrative services credential program, SDCOE support staff and directors review completion of all requirements through Canva, SCOE portal, individual

checklists and internal spreadsheets, as well as payment status for each candidate. Once all requirements have been met, program support staff recommend candidates directly to the Commission. This process is documented and confirmed through interviews with program leaders and employees. Additionally, candidates reported the process to be clear, smooth, and in a timely manner.

Findings on Standards

After review of the accreditation website, supporting evidence, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, instructors, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential and Clear Administrative Services Credential programs.

Designated Subjects: Adult Education
Designated Subjects: Career Technical Education
Designated Subjects: Special Subjects
Designated Subjects: Supervision and Coordination

Program Design

The Designated Subjects (DS) Credential Programs offered by SDCOE include Career Technical Education (CTE), Adult Education (AE), Special Subjects (SS), and Supervision and Coordination (S and C) operates within the Teacher Effectiveness and Preparation (TEP) unit, housed in SDCOE's Human Resources Division. The TEP's executive director reports directly to the assistant superintendent of human resources. The TEP team includes one executive director, one director, five coordinators, three project specialists, one credential technician, two program secretaries, and two administrative assistants. The DS programs are led by the director with a team of one coordinator, one project specialist, one credential technician, one administrative assistant, and one program secretary.

This team manages day-to-day operations and reports to the director; the director reports to the executive director. Program leadership maintains structured, ongoing communication with district, charter, and independent school administrators across the region and state through monthly candidate advisories, credential analyst advisories (five times a year), and administrative advisory meetings (two times a year). These forums provide updates, surface candidate and mentor needs, and collect feedback via targeted surveys to inform program improvements. In addition, it was established through interviews with teacher candidates, administrators, and credential technicians that the DS teacher preparation program staff communicate regularly with candidates, mentors, instructors, and other stakeholders through email, phone, the program website, and video conferencing. Course instructors meet regularly with program staff to review survey data collected from teacher candidates and mentors.

The program has undergone some modifications over the last two years that include programmatic, process, and personnel (staff) changes. A focus has been to clarify the tracking process for the Early Program Orientation (EPO). Interviews and documentation indicate that the DS teacher preparation program has expanded, doubling course offerings in some areas,

grown to seven instructors, and incorporated the CPR legislative update into the Preliminary DS credential. These changes facilitated further alignment with standards and increased the number of course offerings to teacher candidates. Program leadership is currently piloting an Adult Education consortium meeting.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)
The program offers a meaningful, developmentally sequenced curriculum that equips DS teachers to meet the needs of all learners. Delivered 100% online for working educators, the course of study requires candidates for preliminary CTE, AE, or SS credentials to first secure employment in a role requiring the appropriate DS credential, then complete a sequence of asynchronous courses within two years. Instruction is provided through video, web links, and narrative text, with embedded discussions, quizzes, and frequent reflection to connect theory and practice. Candidates apply new learning directly in their classrooms and collaborate with instructors and peers through course discussions and collaborative tasks. Candidates who already hold a clear California teaching credential complete the core course and teach for one year to earn the clear DS credential, while the Supervision and Coordination credential consists of a single, clear-level course followed by the clear application process. Expectations, grading, professionalism, and assessment criteria are communicated through the candidate MOU and course modules, and instructors provide timely feedback.

Field experience is fully job-embedded: candidates serve as the teacher of record, with employment verified during the preliminary credential application. Foundations and Emphasis each include two required observations that connect coursework to classroom practice. First-time preliminary candidates receive non-evaluative mentor support, assigned by the employer per the program MOU, with at least monthly check-ins and observation-aligned coaching, while instructors evaluate coursework and provide actionable feedback. If a pairing proves ineffective, program staff coordinate with the candidate and employer to reassign the mentor. Continuous improvement is driven by course-embedded candidate surveys, post-Foundations and post-Emphasis mentor surveys, and recurring advisories for candidates, credential analysts, and administrators; program staff analyze these inputs to refine mentoring, coursework, and fieldwork processes.

Given the nature of the CTE credential pathway, and through interviews with teacher candidates and mentors, it was established that fieldwork functions primarily as just-in-time, classroom-embedded support paired with required observations. While not fully sequenced across all coursework, mentors work with candidates to align their day-to-day practice to program standards. Interviewees consistently noted SDCOE's responsive, needs-based support for teacher candidates, emphasizing that assistance is tailored to individual contexts.

The program provides both formal and informal support to help candidates succeed across coursework and field experience. When a candidate struggles with coursework, program instructors coordinate with program staff and may coordinate with the mentor to deliver targeted assistance. If concerns persist and assignments do not meet program standards, staff follow up by phone and email to co-develop an informal action plan.

There is a formal and informal system of support for candidates to successfully complete the program both in their coursework and field experience. Through interviews it was established that when candidates struggle in completing coursework, the program staff reaches out to the mentor to provide support. If candidates continue to not meet program standards through assignments, the program staff make phone calls and send emails to create an informal plan of action.

The program's consortium model relies on districts to assign mentors to newly hired candidates. Evidence and interviews indicate that mentors are selected by site administrators rather than through a formal hiring process. The program prioritizes pairing candidates with mentors who have CTE experience. However, given the region's geography and the limited number of CTE teachers, this isn't always feasible. When a CTE-experienced mentor is unavailable, mentors receive targeted CTE resources and guidance. Field placements are coordinated and monitored by program staff.

<u>Assessment of Candidates</u>
Assessment is continuous, standards-aligned, and embedded in practice. Candidates demonstrate competency through graded assignments, discussions, and quizzes, as well as two required classroom observations in both Foundations and Emphasis. Employer-assigned mentors offer non-evaluative support with at least monthly check-ins and observation-based coaching tied to course requirements. Expectations and evaluation criteria are outlined in the Candidate MOU and reinforced in course modules. When concerns arise, instructors initiate a triad with the mentor and as needed, program staff to deliver targeted support. Program staff track coursework, teaching-time requirements, and key milestones to ensure only candidates who meet all requirements are recommended for the credential.

Assessment of candidates in SDCOE's Designated Subjects programs is ongoing, standards-aligned, and job-embedded. Candidates demonstrate competency through graded coursework (assignments, discussions, quizzes) and required classroom observations (two each in Foundations and Emphasis), with instructors using published rubrics aligned to Commission standards to evaluate work and provide actionable feedback, typically within 48 hours via the LMS, where candidates can continuously view progress. It was established through program documentation and interviews that mentors, assigned by employers and serving a non-evaluative role, support preliminary credentialed teacher candidates with at least monthly check-ins and observation-based guidance tied to course requirements and CSTPs. Expectations and evaluation criteria are communicated up front through the Candidate MOU and reiterated in course modules. If a candidate struggles, the instructor initiates support and forms a triad with the mentor; if needed, program staff intervene to determine next steps. Progress toward completion (including coursework, teaching-time requirements, and key milestones) is tracked for credential recommendation by program staff, ensuring only candidates who meet all program requirements are advanced.

<u>Findings on Standards</u>

After review of the accreditation website, supporting evidence, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, instructors, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for Designated Subjects: Adult Education, Career Technical Education, Special Subjects, and Supervision and Coordination programs.

Added Authorization: Autism Spectrum Disorders
Added Authorization: Deafblind
Added Authorization: Emotional Disturbance
Added Authorization: Orthopedic Impairment
Added Authorization: Early Childhood Special Education

Program Design

The San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) Added Authorization in Special Education (AASE) Program is housed in the Teacher Effectiveness and Preparation (TEP) unit. The AASE program offers the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Deafblind (DB), Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), Emotional Disturbance (ED), Orthopedic Impairment (OI), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) added authorizations. However, the TBI program is inactive at this time and no candidates are enrolled. Additionally, no candidates are currently enrolled in the DB, ED, or OI added authorization programs, but program completers from previous years were interviewed.

Overseeing the AASE programs is a coordinator with a team of one project specialist, a credential technician, administrative assistant, and a program secretary. Per the leadership organization chart and AASE leadership interviews, the team handles the daily operations of the program and reports to the coordinator who then reports to the director or executive director as needed.

All of the AASE coursework for the programs is delivered virtually. In interviews with program leadership, instructors, and candidates, each group reported that the candidates complete an AASE orientation course where they learn to operate the learning management system (LMS) and how to navigate the technology needed to access and interact with the course content. Per interviews with leadership instructors and candidates, the coursework extends over 16 weeks and focuses on two sections: content on disability and educational practices. During the first six weeks, the course content is focused on the specific disability area. The remaining 10 weeks of all the courses are structured the same and are dedicated to assessment practices, behavior, collaboration, specialized healthcare, and transition. Within each of these remaining modules there is differentiation for each authorization area which asks the candidate to use the lens of the disability in their area of authorization when completing assignments.

Quarterly meetings with program staff and faculty are held to review course updates, candidate progress, share general input and review best online pedagogical practices. According to program leadership, the TEP team meets bi-weekly to discuss program updates, clarify

processes, and share upcoming events. The TEP executive director attends countywide human resources administrator meetings and the TEP director communicates with the assistant superintendent of human resources regarding TEP programs. Relevant information is then shared with the SDCOE superintendent and the cabinet. The SDCOE accreditation teams meet quarterly to share program updates, align with accreditation activities, and review program data.

The program seeks input and feedback from internal constituents through a series of meetings and surveys with course instructors, candidates, and program leadership. Interviews with leadership, faculty, and candidates confirm that candidates complete a mid-course and an end of course survey and instructors complete yearly program surveys. Evidence of this are the changes the program leadership made to the course over the last two years based on feedback from candidates and staff surveys. For example, modules are now open for two weeks at a time and there are prerequisites within the courses. Instructors also report that they regularly make suggestions for course content and are part of the process for updating the coursework. Program leadership reports they share updates and respond to inquiries from community partners via email and participate in meetings with TEP and SDCOE leadership.

Coursework and Field Experience
In interviews with candidates, completers, and program leadership, all candidates are actively working within the field of special education and have access to at least one student with the disability in the associated area of authorization for which they are seeking. The candidates obtaining the ECSE added authorization must have access to students with disabilities in the birth – kindergarten age range. The first six weeks of the programs are designed to build foundational learning in the disability area of authorization. Evidence provided in the LMS and in interviews with the candidates, instructors, and program leadership describes how the courses begin with six in depth weekly modules that describe the characteristics of the disability and its impact on the student in their academic, social, and daily life. The content in the first six weeks consists of videos, websites, and articles gathered into modules that are aligned with the standards. Discussion posts, reflections, a student observation, and pre- and post-tests on the materials presented in the modules are used to demonstrate the implementation of the standards. Candidates and completers stated, "The discussion posts were great, you learn a lot from your colleagues." "I appreciate the way the course is designed for working and veteran teachers."

The second portion of the course is 10 weekly modules and focuses on behavior, assessment, collaboration and transition and specialized healthcare. During this portion of the course, candidates have content related to the module topics and are required to complete a series of assignments and formative assessments related to each subject area. Built into the program are requirements tied to the individual added authorization program standards (e.g., video lesson, action plan, person driven plan, behavior plan, etc.,). In interviews with candidates, program leadership, and faculty, the use of the standards and elements legend was viewed as a culminating assignment that captured how the candidate addressed each of the standards in their coursework and in the field. The instructors and candidates highlighted the importance of

the action plan and the video lesson and the post reflection as essential for demonstrating instructional and assessment practices in the standards. One candidate stated, "This assignment was great for building in reflection into my practices. Even though I am a veteran teacher it was a good way to refresh my practice and to think about what I could do differently." Instructors and candidates report that the instructor provides regular guidance, feedback, support, and monitoring for all assignments, fieldwork, and course activities. Gradebooks in the LMS provide regular feedback to candidates on their progress.

This is provided through email, phone calls, and virtual meetings, including designated office hours twice during the course. Communication and feedback are also embedded within each assignment. The candidates state that they find the instructor's feedback very valuable on their assignments. Program leadership, instructors, completers, and candidates all report that course instructors hold required online office hours a minimum of two times during the course to support candidates and to facilitate discussions. Candidates also report that instructors will schedule video conference meetings as requested and are very responsive to emails and phone calls. Candidates receive direct observation and feedback from field supervisors and district mentors.

Assessment of Candidates
A review of courses in the LMS included verification of grading criteria for each assignment and pre- and post-tests and quizzes for modules. Instructors provide feedback and guidance to assist candidates with their learning. The assignments are graded as "complete" or "incomplete" and are maintained and posted in the LMS. Candidates are allowed to retake tests and quizzes and if they receive a "incomplete" on an assignment. They are required to redo the assignment based on teacher feedback until it meets the program standard(s). Candidates must successfully earn a grade of "complete" on each course assignment to complete the course and receive the authorization recommendation for the Commission. The Standards and Elements Legend is viewed as a culminating assignment that captured how the candidate addressed each of the standards in their coursework and fieldwork. Candidates who are not making progress are supported by the instructor with direct feedback and virtual conferences. Program leadership and faculty report that both the course instructor and the program leadership verify the candidates' evidence of meeting the added authorization standards.

According to interviews with program leadership, instructors, candidates, and the AASE handbook, if a candidate struggles with successful program completion the instructor will communicate with the project specialist and coordinator to develop next steps, including co-creating an Assistance Plan that includes due dates to support the candidate in completing the course.

In the AASE handbook and in the mandatory AASE Orientation course the grading policy is explained to the candidates. In addition, each assignment has grading criteria that are explained on the assignment page in the LMS. Completers reported, "The courses have clear expectations, and you always knew what you were supposed to be doing."

Findings on Standards

After review of the accreditation website, supporting evidence, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, instructors, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for Added Authorization: Autism Spectrum Disorders, Deafblind, Emotional Disturbance, Orthopedic Impairment, and Early Childhood Special Education programs.

INSTITUTION SUMMARY

The San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) supports 169 districts and charters that serve 476,884 students including special education programs and Juvenile Court and Community Schools. The unit is made up of 13 credential and five added authorization programs which are divided into two divisions: Teacher Effectiveness and Preparation, and Learning and Leadership Services. Although the unit consists of two departments with different leadership, the strong collaboration between them ensures a cohesive, well-aligned preparation system within the unit.

SDCOE declares, "Because each person is born with inherent worth and dignity, and because equitable access and opportunity are essential to a just, educated society, SDCOE employees commit to being: respectful of differences and diverse perspectives, accountable for their actions and their impact on students, proactive in improving ways we support and engage our students, school districts, and community partners, responsible stewards of our resources, and lifelong learners who contribute to our collective success so that students thrive now and in the future." Their collective mission supports the goal to "reduce the percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch as part of a larger effort to elevate the needs of historically underserved students and families". These commitments are the foundation of their educator preparation programs.

While the unit consists of a combination of new and veteran program staff, consistent support from within the organization, collaboration and continuous improvement was evident in reviewed evidence and interviews across constituents. A key component of strength within the unit can be attributed to the frequency of collaboration as well as a commitment to coaching their leadership team within the unit.

A common theme from multiple partner interviews is SDCOE provides high quality programs responsive to their needs. The impact of the unit extends beyond San Diego County and the programs provided by the unit as staff participate in state-wide and regional work including Board of Institutional Review and collaboration with a variety of educational partners.

COMMON STANDARDS FINDINGS

Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	Team Finding
Each Commission-approved institution has the infrastructure in place to operate effective educator preparation programs. Within this overall infrastructure:	*No response needed*
The institution and education unit create and articulate a research-based vision of teaching and learning that fosters coherence among, and is clearly represented in all educator preparation programs. This vision is consistent with preparing educators for California public schools and the effective implementation of California's adopted standards and curricular frameworks.	**Consistently**
The institution actively involves faculty, instructional personnel, and relevant constituencies in the organization, coordination, and decision making for all educator preparation programs.	**Consistently**
The education unit ensures that faculty and instructional personnel regularly and systematically collaborate with colleagues in P-12 settings, college and university units and members of the broader educational community to improve educator preparation.	**Consistently**
The institution provides the unit with sufficient resources for the effective operation of each educator preparation program, including, but not limited to, coordination, admission, advisement, curriculum, professional development/instruction, field based supervision and clinical experiences.	**Consistently**
The Unit Leadership has the authority and institutional support required to address the needs of all educator preparation programs and considers the interests of each program within the institution.	**Consistently**
Recruitment and faculty development efforts support hiring and retention of faculty who represent and support diversity and excellence.	**Consistently**
The institution employs, assigns and retains only qualified persons to teach courses, provide professional development, and supervise field-based and clinical experiences. Qualifications of faculty and other instructional personnel must include, but are not limited to: a) current knowledge of the content; b) knowledge of the current context of public schooling including the California adopted P-12 content standards, frameworks, and accountability systems; c) knowledge of diversity in society, including diverse abilities, culture, language, ethnicity, and gender orientation; and d) demonstration of effective professional practices in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service.	**Consistently**

Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	Team Finding
The education unit monitors a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements.	**Consistently**

Finding on Common Standard 1: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard

The mission of the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) is "inspiring and leading innovation in education". Their education preparation programs demonstrate a coherent, research-based vision that is consistently enacted across all programs. The vision, "quality service and continuous improvement that puts people first", is deeply rooted in the broader purpose of serving the region's most vulnerable students. Holding a regional role, the unit grounds its priorities and commitment to preparing educators who are responsive to California's diverse P–12 learners and aligned with the state's adopted standards and curricular frameworks. Interviews confirmed these values are widely understood and consistently referenced in decision-making, program design, and resource allocation.

A review of evidence and interviews confirm all educator preparation programs align directly with the institutional mission, vision and goals. Program materials, interviews, and handbooks demonstrate a cohesive foundation built on adult learning theory, action research, and change theory. Programs are intentionally job-embedded and context-driven, supporting candidates in applying professional standards within their workplace settings. Reviewers found consistent evidence that these research-based principles appear across coaching and mentoring, coursework, fieldwork expectations, and candidate formative assessment.

The institution's infrastructure supports a collection of well-established and robust educator programs. Over the past 17 years, the unit has expanded from 1.5 full-time staff supporting two programs to 17 full-time staff supporting 18 programs illustrating substantial long-term investment in expanding programs, staffing, coordination, and leadership. Interviews with leadership across the unit as well as business staff and a review of evidence including meeting schedules and organizational charts confirm program leaders possess the authority and autonomy needed to identify program needs, respond to emerging challenges, and request resources. The Business Services team supports the unit to braid and monitor funding, conduct regular fiscal reviews, support grant implementation, and ensure balanced access to resources within all programs.

Evidence from interviews with faculty, coaches, coordinators, and district partners demonstrates strong institutional support for ongoing faculty development and collaboration. The unit employs and retains highly qualified personnel with current knowledge of California

standards, diversity and equity considerations, and effective instructional and leadership practices. A recent strategic shift to hire full-time internal leadership coaches reflects a deliberate effort to strengthen program quality and coherence.

Finally, the unit's active involvement with regional and state-wide partners, including community colleges and multiple IHEs, further reinforces a shared, research-based vision of educator development grounded in serving educators as "people first" and in support of all students.

Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support	Team Finding
Candidates are recruited and supported in all educator preparation programs to ensure their success.	*No response needed*
The education unit accepts applicants for its educator preparation programs based on clear criteria that include multiple measures of candidate qualifications.	**Consistently**
The education unit purposefully recruits and admits candidates to diversify the educator pool in California and provides the support, advice, and assistance to promote their successful entry and retention in the profession.	**Consistently**
Appropriate information and personnel are clearly identified and accessible to guide each candidate's attainment of program requirements.	**Consistently**
Evidence regarding progress in meeting competency and performance expectations is consistently used to guide advisement and candidate support efforts. A clearly defined process is in place to identify and support candidates who need additional assistance to meet competencies.	**Consistently**

Finding on Common Standard 2: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard
Across the accredited programs at SDCOE, candidate recruitment, admissions, and support systems are well-structured. The unit accepts applicants for each program based on clear criteria and multiple measures. Program coordinators from the various programs conduct individualized meetings with each applicant to review qualifications, prerequisites, preservice or degree requirements, and required documentation or assessments. Program directors discussed self-assessments, narrative responses, and interviews as part of the enrollment process to determine the best program and format for candidates. Admission requirements and expectations for candidates are clear through application materials, interviews, orientations, and program handbooks. The Educator Pathways website presents the prerequisites and

requirements, including assessments, for each program. The website also includes links directly to the Commission website.

SDCOE works to purposefully recruit and admit candidates to diversify the educator workforce. Program leadership spoke of the multiple non-traditional teaching pathways from intern programs, residency models, classified-to-certificated pipelines and several grant opportunities. Interviews shared insights as to how frequently a traditional preparation pathway is not feasible for candidates and non-traditional pathways meet the needs of many other candidates thus leading to more diverse candidates. Leadership emphasized that SDCOE's alternate pathways remove traditional barriers, making credentialing more accessible for BIPOC educators. These pathways were truly a point of genuine pride for leadership members. Residency and intern models allow candidates to "earn while they learn," drawing many classified employees into teaching roles. Reviewers heard throughout interviews that these non-traditional pathways naturally attract a diverse candidate pool from current classified employees. The grants the unit has sought out provide greater access to the teaching profession for underrepresented candidates by reducing tuition. Leadership consistently evaluates recruitment effectiveness by reviewing applicant demographics, gathering district feedback, and monitoring access to grants and supports. Leaders discussed the lack of diversity in coaches in previous years, and the intentional recruitment steps taken to change the demographic of coaches. Unit leadership shared a research "white paper" on diversification efforts and a clear plan of action. Leadership also described equity networks (African American, Hispanic/Latino) that provide mentorship and leadership development and serve as leadership recruitment pipelines.

SDCOE personnel are clearly identified and accessible to candidates. Based on the program, candidates are assigned mentors, instructors, site-based field supervisors, district leads, and program coordinators. Handbooks and orientations clearly outline personnel roles and communication options. Candidate interviews confirmed they know who to contact for their program and revealed the ease they have in reaching out for support or advisement. Programs provide online office hours, after class support, and on-site visits/observations as well. Instructor expectations from the program for response time and feedback are high, especially in online programs. Program leadership and instructors discuss and reinforce expectations through orientations, syllabus reviews, weekly routines, and frequent communication.

Evidence regarding progress in meeting competency is consistently used to guide advisement and candidate support. Candidate progress is reviewed through real-time data available in the online learning management system, instructor communication, and rubric-based assessments/assignments. Programs identify candidates who may need additional support through assignment review, timeliness of submissions, and emotional check-ins. Interviews with coordinators and instructors referred to regular weekly and monthly collaboration meetings between instructors, project specialists, and coordinators. When candidates fall behind or stop responding, instructors immediately reach out and inform program leadership, who then develop individualized support plans. Support plans may include modified timelines, technology help, coaching the coach, or contacting the employer to ensure wraparound

support. Programs also rely on their strong relationships with district leaders, who often contact coordinators when a candidate needs assistance. Program staff spoke of their goal to retain candidates whenever possible. There is a formal process for creating a special assistance plan to adjust timelines or expectations if needed, although faculty noted that they have never had to use it because of the strong communication among support personnel. Instructor interviews emphasized relationship-building, trust, and individualized support. Feedback survey data from candidates reflected strong satisfaction with the program, staff, and overall communication. It is evident that SDCOE has strong systems for candidate recruitment and support.

Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	Team Finding
The unit designs and implements a planned sequence of coursework and clinical experiences for candidates to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills to educate and support P-12 students in meeting state-adopted content standards.	**Consistently**
The unit and its programs offer a high-quality course of study focused on the knowledge and skills expected of beginning educators and grounded in current research on effective practice. Coursework is integrated closely with field experiences to provide candidates with a cohesive and comprehensive program that allows candidates to learn, practice, and demonstrate competencies required of the credential they seek.	**Consistently**
The unit and all programs collaborate with their partners regarding the criteria and selection of clinical personnel, site-based supervisors and school sites, as appropriate to the program.	**Consistently**
Through site-based work and clinical experiences, programs offered by the unit provide candidates with opportunities to both experience issues of diversity that affect school climate and to effectively implement research-based strategies for improving teaching and student learning.	**Consistently**
Site-based supervisors must be certified and experienced in teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential.	**Consistently**
The process and criteria result in the selection of site-based supervisors who provide effective and knowledgeable support for candidates.	**Consistently**
Site-based supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.	**Consistently**
All programs effectively implement and evaluate fieldwork and clinical practice.	**Inconsistently**

Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	Team Finding
For each *program* the *unit* offers, candidates have significant experience in *California public schools* with diverse *student* populations and the opportunity to work with the range of *students* identified in the *program* standards.	**Consistently**

Finding on Common Standard 3: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard

SDCOE designs and implements a clearly planned sequence of coursework and clinical experiences that intentionally build candidates' knowledge and skills to support P–12 students in meeting state-adopted content standards. Candidates shared that their coursework has created a strong foundation in instructional practices, equity, and research-based strategies. The work with their mentors and coaches allows them to apply and refine their learning within their daily work. Candidates described alignment across assignments, goal setting through learning plans, focus-student analyses, and consistent discussion of the standards, TPE, CSTP, CAPE, and CPSEL.

A review of the ILP document and intern portfolio showed a robust system of teacher inquiry, reflection, observations, and feedback. Fieldwork supervisors and mentors conduct observations, followed by immediate and actionable feedback that help candidates strengthen their practice. Candidates reported seeing their own growth alongside growth in their students. Mentors also described experiencing their own professional growth as a result of working so closely with candidates.

SDCOE offers a high-quality course of study focused on the knowledge and skills expected of beginning educators and is consistently grounded in current research and effective practice. Candidates shared that their coursework provides a strong breadth of knowledge. Areas that were called out in course documents and interviews were equity, instructional planning, assessment, developing a growth mindset and reflection. One candidate noted that all educators should take the equity course offered through SDCOE. Course instructors connect coursework to fieldwork through alignment to the TPEs. Candidates described how assignments reinforced what they were seeing and doing in their school sites. In the Preliminary teaching credential programs, some candidates and mentors reported that formal evaluations were not always occurring consistently in the required amount of six times per semester.

SDCOE maintains clear criteria to ensure that faculty, including instructors, site-based supervisors, fieldwork supervisors, mentors and coaches, are properly credentialed and meet all required experience qualifications. Faculty are vetted through EdJoin postings, interviews, reference checks, and a review of prior coaching and mentoring experience. CASC coaches must have a minimum of five years of previous administrative experience. District MOUs include

mentor and coach requirements and ensure partners understand program expectations. Mentor and coach applications are rigorous, requiring letters of recommendation and written responses to reflective questions such as experience supporting diverse student populations. Ongoing mentor training includes program orientations, adult learning theory, coaching and mentoring frameworks, reflective practice, and program-specific expectations for the different mentor roles within the TEP system. Mentoring modules are self-paced and updated regularly, with re-training required after gaps in service. Multiple supervisors reported that training is robust, interactive, and prepares them well for their responsibilities. They included that program leaders have high standards for their mentors and the annual training is non-negotiable. Course instructors and fieldwork supervisors meet at the start of the year. There are also monthly meetings held with fieldwork supervisors and program leadership.

SDCOE ensures candidates have opportunities to experience the diversity within California public schools. San Diego county shares a border with Mexico and supports a diverse student population. During interviews, candidates consistently described working with a wide range of student groups, including multilingual learners, students with IEPs and 504 plans, Native American students, and students from low-socioeconomic communities. One candidate referred to how the rich diversity in their classroom made the instruction more interesting. Programs have included a focus on a wide range of students through assignments such as focus-student analyses, equity reflections, and ILP goal setting. A consistent theme across candidate interviews was that site mentors and school districts provide strong support, resources, and community partnerships to help them improve teaching and student learning. SDCOE leadership, instructors, and intern candidates spoke of equity and bias training. Candidates shared that they found the training incredibly helpful and noted it positively impacted their teaching.

Supervisor evaluation is ongoing and systematic, though more consistency is needed in the Teacher Induction program. Program leadership reviews candidate feedback during semesterly advising sessions and through survey data, monitors the quality and timeliness of instructor/supervisor feedback and collaborates with district leads when concerns arise. In some programs, leadership observes supervisor interactions. Fieldwork supervisors are evaluated by the fieldwork instructors as they get regular feedback on their submissions in the teacher portfolios. Program directors shared that they would make a change of mentor, if necessary, after meetings and possible action plans.

Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement	Team Finding
The education unit develops and implements a comprehensive continuous improvement process at both the unit level and within each of its programs that identifies program and unit effectiveness and makes appropriate modifications based on findings.	**Consistently**

Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement	Team Finding
The education unit and its programs regularly assess their effectiveness in relation to the course of study offered, fieldwork and clinical practice, and support services for candidates.	**Consistently**
Both the unit and its programs regularly and systematically collect, analyze, and use candidate and program completer data as well as data reflecting the effectiveness of unit operations to improve programs and their services.	**Consistently**
The continuous improvement process includes multiple sources of data including 1) the extent to which candidates are prepared to enter professional practice; and 2) feedback from key constituencies such as employers and community partners about the quality of the preparation.	**Consistently**

Finding on Common Standard 4: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard
The education unit and its programs regularly assess their effectiveness as documented through multiple data sources including candidate and completer internal surveys, collaborative logs, attendance records, performance assessment pass rates and rubric scores and ~~CTC~~ Commission completer surveys. Each program collects data from candidates, district leads, mentors and coaches at multiple points during the program. Programs noted an increase in survey participation when responses are provided anonymously. Quantitative and qualitative data are collected on program courses as well as field placement and supervision experiences. Program completers provide additional data through exit surveys. Internal surveys are administered twice a year to allow candidate comments as well as scaled responses to questions. These surveys include common questions that generate a shared data the unit can analyze to identify strengths, areas of growth and share best practices across programs. Data is aggregated and used to guide comprehensive program improvement within the individual programs, in unit functions, and in operations. Data are reviewed at meetings at the unit and program levels as well as at advisory committee meetings held throughout the year to discuss continuous improvement at unit and program levels.

In multiple interviews candidates and completers expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their programs and with program and unit level support services and accessibility, a finding confirmed by survey data. School district partners, especially those from rural areas of the state where teacher recruitment is a challenge, expressed a high level of satisfaction with the unit overall and with specific program and unit support provided to their districts and candidates working in their schools. They particularly noted the programs are preparing educators to support students with low-incidence disabilities where few teacher training programs are offered at other institutions. Representatives of partner school districts provide input to the unit and its programs through virtual and in-person meetings at regularly scheduled advisory committee meetings throughout the year. Constituents shared a common opinion that the

programs provide a viable and necessary alternative for quality teacher and administrator preparation outside traditional program formats.

Common Standard 5: Program Impact	Team Finding
The institution ensures that candidates preparing to serve as professional school personnel know and demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting state adopted academic standards. Assessments indicate that candidates meet the Commission adopted competency requirements as specified in the program standards.	**Consistently**
The unit and its programs evaluate and demonstrate that they are having a positive impact on candidate learning and competence and on teaching and learning in schools that serve California's students.	**Consistently**

Finding on Common Standard 5: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard.
The SDCOE offers preliminary and clear teaching and administrative credentials through relationships with partner school districts throughout the state. The unit offers added authorizations in teaching credentials to support students with low-incidence disabilities in addition to early childhood, general education, special education, and administrative credentials. Most courses are offered virtually, making them accessible to candidates throughout the state, many of whom would otherwise be unable to access preparation programs. Notably, the added authorization courses for low-incidence disabilities give educators in rural and remote areas of the state valuable opportunities to learn how to support and teach students with high needs and/or low incidence disabilities. Through rigorous coursework, accessible instructor support, meaningful practicum experiences, and thorough assessment of coursework and student teaching, candidates meet state adopted competency requirements for teaching and administrative credentials. A review of course syllabi and interviews with instructors and candidates verified that course content aligns with state adopted requirements. Interviews and summative assessments demonstrate that candidates meet the Commission adopted competency requirements as specified in program standards.

Candidates are regularly assessed and complete mid-term and end-of-course surveys. Reviews of survey data and interviews with candidates, program instructors and coordinators, and district administrators demonstrate that the unit and its programs have a positive impact on educator learning and competence to serve California's diverse student population.