

**Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of Findings of the
Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at
Santa Clara Unified School District**

**Professional Services Division
May 2019**

Overview of this Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at **Santa Clara Unified School District**. 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** is made for the institution.

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

	Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
1) Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	X		
2) Candidate Recruitment and Support	X		
3) Course of Study, Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	X		
4) Continuous Improvement	X		
5) Program Impact	X		

Program Standards

	Total Program Standards	Program Standards		
		Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
Teacher Induction	6	6		

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: Santa Clara Unified School District

Dates of Visit: April 1-3, 2019

2017-18 Accreditation

Team Recommendation: Accreditation

Previous History of Accreditation Status
<i>Although Santa Clara Unified School District has operated a Commission-approved educator preparation program since 2004, induction programs were not incorporated into the accreditation system until 2011. Therefore, the 2019 accreditation visit is the first accreditation site visit for this institution.</i>

Rationale:

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation** 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, mentors, 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:

Program Standards

All standards were **met**.

Common Standards

All standards were **met**.

Overall Recommendation

Based on the fact that the team found that all standards for the Teacher Induction program were met and that all Common Standards were met, the team recommends **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

Teacher Induction

In addition, staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
- Santa Clara Unified School District be permitted to propose new educator preparation programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Santa Clara Unified School District continue 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.

Accreditation Team

Team Lead:	Loy Dakwa Antelope Valley Union High School District
Common Standards:	Tina Torres California State University, Northridge
Programs Cluster:	Alison Beech Stanislaus County Office of Education
Staff to the Visit:	Miranda Gutierrez Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Documents Reviewed

Common Standards Documentation	Field Experience Materials
Common Standards Addendum	Program Review Documentation
Course Syllabi and Course of Study	Program Review Addendum
Accreditation Website	Candidate Advisement Materials
Candidate Files	Faculty Vitae
Candidate Handbooks	Assessment Materials
Survey Results	Induction Welcome Letter
Preconditions Responses	Beginning Teacher Certification Info Sheet
General Administrative Meeting Slideshow	Verification of Completion form
Principal Updates	Meeting Agendas
Candidate/Mentor Matches	Exit Interview Documentation
Early Completion Option Application	ILP Rubric
Candidate Portfolios	Optional Candidate forms
List of Professional Learning Opportunities	

Interviews Conducted

Stakeholders	TOTAL
Candidates	13
Completers	7
Employers	11
Institutional Administration	5
Program Coordinators	2
Mentors	13
Credential Analyst	1
Advisory Committee Members	7
Professional Development Providers	8
Regional Induction Partners	7
IHE Partners	2
TOTAL	76

Note: In some cases, individuals were interviewed by more than one cluster because of multiple roles. Thus, the number of interviews conducted exceeds the actual number of individuals interviewed.

Background Information

Santa Clara Unified School District serves over 15,400 K-12 students and an additional 6,000 students in preschool through adult school. Neighborhoods in the cities of Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, San Jose, and Cupertino comprise the district's 56 square-mile area. Santa Clara Unified prides itself on having teachers, classified employees, and administrators who are dedicated, experienced professionals who care about each student's well-being and academic preparation. The district's schools offer reading, writing, mathematics, science, social science and physical education at the core of a comprehensive curriculum. Music and choral classes, art, foreign language, dramatic arts, a variety of career technical education classes and competitive athletics are some of the many programs which enrich students' education. Students in the district have an abundance of opportunities to explore individual interests through district offerings.

Education Unit

The teacher induction program is housed within the Human Resources Division of the district. It is the only Commission-approved program at Santa Clara Unified School District. The program is led by two program leaders and there are 27 mentors for the program.

**Table 1
Program Review Status**

Program Name	Number of Program Completers (2017-18)	Number of Candidates Enrolled (2018-19)
Teacher Induction	33	39

The Visit

The visit proceeded in accordance with all normal accreditation protocols.

Program Reports Teacher Induction

Program Design

Santa Clara Unified School District (SCUSD) is a single district induction program serving pre-K through 12th grade students. Mentors are (mostly) classroom teachers who support 1 or 2 candidates in both general education and special education. As confirmed through in-person interviews, candidates feel overwhelmingly positive about the pairings that the district has created for them with their mentors. Candidates report that they meet weekly with their mentors, receive “just in time” support, and “may have left the profession if it had not been for the support of their mentor.”

The teacher induction program is housed in Human Resources. The program leaders report to the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. There are two program leaders, one focused on elementary and one focused on secondary. Program leaders affirm feeling very supported by the district, citing that the district makes induction a priority (including setting induction meetings and trainings first on the district professional development calendar, as per district leadership) and provides all resources needed to make mentors and candidates successful. Within the program, SCUSD has lead mentors who collaborate with program staff a few times a year to help make major changes to the program. These mentors serve on a voluntary basis, and report that they feel valued and enjoy helping to shape the district’s induction program. The program also gets input from the Induction Advisory Committee. This group reports that they can clearly see the impact of their input on the program, stating that several changes (i.e. modifications for special education teachers, number of inquiry cycles, and choice points in professional development) have come about as a direct result of these collaborative Induction Advisory Committee meetings.

Mentor trainings occur monthly, throughout the year. During in-person interviews, mentors report that they enjoy the highly collaborative nature of these trainings and that they find them to be “authentic, intuitive, and helpful.” All interviewed mentors also reported that rapport with program leaders is strong and that they feel supported. New mentors have four half-day trainings in August before school starts, returning mentors have two half-day trainings. The program leaders meet with mentors monthly throughout the year, to continue their work in Mentoring Matters (a guide for learning focused relationships and best practices for mentors), and to talk about the ILP and documentation of growth. During these trainings, techniques such as role playing and collaborative conversations are utilized to help mentors hone the skills needed when working with their candidates.

Throughout the two years of the program, candidates are encouraged to attend professional learning opportunities that support their goals. These opportunities are all self-selected by the candidates. Candidates report that the feedback they have given the program has resulted in more relevant professional development opportunities and the ability to select trainings that

meet their individual needs. The professional development opportunities may include trainings conducted by the induction program, the district, online, or be out-of-district options.

Course Study (Curriculum and of Field Experience)

Candidates are first invited to hear about induction once the program leaders identify the candidates that need the program. In August, candidates are sent an email to attend an induction overview meeting and are assigned a mentor. Mentors are assigned with the input of site administrators and the Induction Advisory Committee, with attention to the needs of the candidate and strengths of the mentor. The overview meeting explains all the components of the program and shares all the expectations and rubrics to show growth over the two years. Make up meetings are done for late hires. Program staff reports that most of the positions are filled by the end of September. If positions are ever filled later in the year, program leaders report that a mentor would be assigned to ensure the needs of the candidate are being met; however, program staff also reports that this is a rare and uncommon occurrence.

In September, the candidates and mentors come together with program leaders to work on individual learning plan (ILP) goals. This is an opportunity to have focused time to learn more about the ILP and ask any questions they may have. After a site administrator reviews a candidate's drafted ILP goals and has the opportunity to provide feedback, candidates submit them to the program leaders within 60 days of the start of school. The candidates decide which standards they want to grow in, what one to begin with, and the timing of their ILP. During in-person interviews, candidates stated that choice and flexibility are built into the district's ILP format. Candidates are aware of the process for altering a goal, should the need arise. Mentors and candidates both spoke about the highly collaborative nature of the ILP process, and the ability to weave "just in time" support into the mentor-candidate relationship.

Due to the flexibility of the ILP, the "just in time" support allows for the candidates to have their most pressing and current needs met as they arise. SCUSD trains and encourages the mentors to meet the candidates where they are, and not rush them into working on a goal if they are not ready. Candidates report that the nature of the SCUSD induction program has "made (them) slow down, analyze and reflect, and creates a constant cycle of reflection." Mentors report that the shift in focus from paperwork to "just in time" support has made the process "more streamlined, hands-on, and useful" while creating a "balance between standards and practice."

Assessment of Candidates

The ILP gives a framework for the candidates to document their goals and growth. They can customize documents as needed. They work at their own pace, and they select their goals based on their current needs and teaching assignments. Program staff reports that teachers are assessed on their portfolios, which contain the goals and documentation of growth, using a rubric at the end of the academic year. Program staff and four to six mentors review the submitted portfolios, looking for evidence of growth in the California Standards for the

Teaching Profession (CSTP). Additionally, candidates have the option to attend professional learning opportunities of choice that best suits them; attendance at these trainings are documented in the candidate's portfolio.

Over the two years of induction, program staff assesses candidates to determine growth across the CSTP. Evidence of this can be shown in the mini inquiries that are offered in the ILP, markings on the Continuum of Teaching Practice, collaborative logs, or observation reflections. The program requires candidates to state how they have grown and give evidence to support their growth through one of these avenues. Mentors and candidates communicated that the Continuum of Teaching Practice is a valuable reference point and gauge for self-assessing growth in the CSTP throughout the academic year.

Candidates are required to submit their portfolios to program staff in January and May each academic year. Program leaders and a small group of mentors look over each portfolio, specifically looking for growth. If the candidate has not shown any growth, program staff first checks in with the mentor to see if additional support is needed. This practice was confirmed through interviews with program staff and mentors. Program leaders then talk with the candidate to help determine his or her needs and how to meet them. Program staff may look more often at the portfolios of candidates with greater needs. A rubric and growth check sheet are used to determine if candidates have demonstrated growth and are on the path to program completion. Beyond the twice annual review, candidates and mentors both expressed that program leaders are very communicative and helpful in situations where extra support and feedback are needed. Second year and early completion option (ECO) candidates also take part in an exit interview in May. These exit interviews are conducted and evaluated on a rubric by a variety of stakeholders, including mentors, site administrators, and district-level administrators, as confirmed by in-person interviews. Program leaders refrain from conducting the exit interviews in an effort to avoid any biased input into the process. Candidates that do not pass the exit interview portion of the assessment are given another semester of support from a new mentor, with the goals of demonstrating and articulating growth over that time period. At the conclusion of period of extra support, the candidate participates in a second exit interview with new panel members. Program leadership reports that this is not a common occurrence and has historically been resolved within the extra semester of support from the mentor.

Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, outcomes data including assessment and survey results, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, mentors, employers, and institutional leadership, the team determined that all program standards are fully **met** for the Teacher Induction program.

COMMON STANDARDS FINDINGS

Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
Each Commission-approved institution has the infrastructure in place to operate effective educator preparation programs. Within this overall infrastructure:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The institution actively involves faculty, instructional personnel, and relevant stakeholders in the organization, coordination, and decision making for all educator preparation programs. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and faculty development efforts support hiring and retention of faculty who represent and support diversity and excellence. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	X		

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.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The education unit monitors a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements. 	X		
Finding on Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	Met		
<p>Santa Clara Unified School District’s teacher induction program demonstrates a research-based vision of teaching and learning for its candidates. Interviews with institutional leadership, program leaders, mentors, advisory board members confirmed that the program engages candidates in a meaningful experience of individualized professional growth and development by immersing them in reflective work through a robust system of mentoring. Professional development providers, cabinet members and program leaders expressed that Santa Clara’s induction program strives to retain teachers and achieve educational equity by grounding their practice in ongoing cycles of inquiry focused on progression towards mastery of the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. Site administrators and district leaders report that mentors are highly skilled at supporting candidates while ensuring the full range of diverse learners meet the state adopted content standards. Candidates report that their mentors are highly capable and supportive, effectively balancing long-term analysis of teaching practice through the Individual Learning Plan with “just in time” support. Interviews with professional development providers and teachers on special assignment revealed that qualified personnel facilitate clinical experiences. Documentation from human resources showed that a clearly delineated process is established to ensure that all candidates recommended for a clear credential have met all requirements.</p>			
Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Candidates are recruited and supported in all educator preparation programs to ensure their success. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The education unit accepts applicants for its educator preparation programs based on clear criteria that include multiple measures of candidate qualifications. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The education unit purposefully recruits and admits candidates to diversify the educator pool in California and provides the support, advice, and 	X		

assistance to promote their successful entry and retention in the profession.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate information and personnel are clearly identified and accessible to guide each candidate’s attainment of program requirements. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	X		
Finding on Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support	Met		
<p>The Santa Clara Unified School District teacher induction program recruits and admits candidates based on clear criteria. The credential analyst is well versed in teacher credentialing and induction eligibility requirements. Upon hire, candidates receive a Beginning Teacher Certification Information sheet which they complete. Based on this information the credential analyst will determine placement in the induction cycle. The candidate is then asked to attend an induction program orientation to formally initiate candidates to the induction process. Once in the program candidates have access to personnel and information to guide them at each step of the process. The candidates have monthly checklist guides which they submit to Google Classroom and they also complete a mid-year review and an end of year review. Based on the mid-year review candidates are able to successfully use these results to “get back on track” as needed, resulting in all candidates successfully meeting expectations. Interviews with candidates and mentors affirmed that the program consistently defines performance expectations and provides resources and support for meeting those expectations.</p>			
Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
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.	X		
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.	X		

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	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site-based supervisors must be certified and experienced in teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process and criteria result in the selection of site-based supervisors who provide effective and knowledgeable support for candidates. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site-based supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All programs effectively implement and evaluate fieldwork and clinical practice. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For each program the unit offers, candidates have significant experience in school settings where the curriculum aligns with California’s adopted content standards and frameworks, and the school reflects the diversity of California’s student and the opportunity to work with the range of students identified in the program standards. 	X		
Finding on Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	Met		
<p>Documents reviewed and interviews with candidates and program leadership confirmed that 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. The program continues to update this sequence in ways that best meet the needs of their candidates based on individual candidate and mentor feedback. Interviews and documents reviewed also confirmed that mentors are trained, evaluated, and recognized in a systematic manner and that clinical practice experiences are taking place in school settings that reflect California standards and the diversity of California’s students. The program provides mentors feedback in different ways. Mentors take a self-assessment and create a growth plan in addition to a mentor survey through Sinclair Research Group. Professional developers are trained in equity and diversity content, and in turn bring this learning forward to the candidates.</p>			

Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
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.	X		
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.	X		
Both the unit and its programs regularly and systematically collect, analyze, and use candidate and program completer data.	X		
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 stakeholders such as employers and community partners about the quality of the preparation.	X		
Finding on Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement	Met		
<p>The Santa Clara USD Teacher Induction program’s approach to continuous improvement includes an ongoing collection and study of data from all stakeholder groups. These multiple measures are used to assess and provide specific data on the effectiveness of the program, course of study, support services provided, and candidate competence. Data sources include program surveys administered to candidates, mentors, and administrators, in addition to the CTC Program Completer Survey. Interviews indicate that regular examination and analysis of the data collected informs improvements to program components. For example, professional development (PD) providers and teachers on special assignment (TOSA) report that the PD training is guided by the teacher candidate’s feedback on surveys. The program leadership shares the survey data including the comments with the PD providers and TOSAs so that they can provide training on the areas needed by the candidates. The survey data are also shared with administrators, mentors, advisory committee and college/university members, to offer unique perspective for program changes.</p>			
Common Standard 5: Program Impact			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
The institution ensures that candidates preparing to serve as professional school personnel know and demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to educate	X		

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.			
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.	X		
Finding on Common Standard 5: Program Impact	Met		
The SCUSD teacher induction program ensures that candidates are meeting state adopted standards and demonstrating growth in the CSTP through the ILP inquiry process, inquiry cycle presentations, and exit interviews. Interviews with candidates and mentors confirmed that opportunities exist for candidates to develop and demonstrate practices that have a positive impact on teaching and learning. These opportunities include observations by mentors, observations of veteran teachers, and professional development of choice. The site administrators reported seeing growth in student achievement as a result of candidates’ goal-setting and professional learning via their participation in induction. The completers reported that induction continues to impact their teaching and learning beyond the program. As one completer said, “I continue to use the materials, resources, and strategies that were offered to me during induction.”			

INSTITUTION SUMMARY

The SCUSD Teacher Induction program has developed a researched-based system of support for teachers founded on its vision “to engage credential candidates in a meaningful experience of individualized professional growth and development by immersing them in reflective work through a robust system of mentoring.” Active collaborations with regional districts and institutes of higher education (IHE) partners have strengthened transition of candidates from preliminary programs to the induction program. Interviews confirmed that these relationships support the district’s efforts to hire and retain candidates who represent and support diversity.

Their collaborative approach to induction involves an array of stakeholders, which include district leadership, regional single district programs and institutes of higher education. Program leadership works closely with the Induction Advisory Committee, inclusive of district leadership, site administrators, mentors, and candidates, for advisement on program direction to help ensure it is responsive to teacher needs and aligned to district goals. District leaders are also active in the support of the program, providing many relevant professional development choices for candidates that support their ILPs. The collaborative approach to program development and candidate support is a distinctive feature of the program, and completer survey data indicates that program design is positively impacting candidate practice.

Another key trait of the SCUSD teacher induction program is its mentoring. The quality of mentorship was consistently identified as a strength of the program. Candidates and site administrators affirmed that mentors were highly effective, and that collaboration between mentors and their candidates was the key to supporting growth and development. District leadership reported that all cabinet members attend the end-of-year colloquium and appreciate observing the learning and growth demonstrated by the candidates after their induction journey.