

**Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of Findings of the
Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at
Santa Cruz County Office of Education**

**Professional Services Division
May 2019**

Overview of this Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at **Santa Cruz 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** 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 Cruz County Office of Education

Dates of Visit: February 4-6, 2019

2018-19 Accreditation

Team Recommendation: Accreditation

| Previous History of Accreditation Status |
|---|
| <i>Although the Santa Cruz County Office of Education has been involved with teacher induction since the late 1980's and has operated a Commission approved educator preparation program since 2003, 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 program leadership, the county office superintendent, partnering district leaders, site administrators, program mentors, program completers and candidates. 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 program standards are **Met** for the Teacher Induction program.

Common Standards

All common standards are **Met** for the institution.

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 Cruz County Office of Education be permitted to propose new educator preparation programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Santa Cruz County Office of Education 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: | Carol Clauss Lancaster School District |
| Common Standards: | Katherine Tolliver Green Dot Public Schools |
| Programs Cluster: | Dawn Aguila Santa Ana Unified School District |
| Staff to the Visit: | Sarah Solari Colombini Commission on Teacher Credentialing |

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 | Collaboration Logs |
| Candidate Files | Assessment Materials |
| Candidate Handbooks | Individual Learning Plans |
| Survey Results | Performance Expectation Materials |
| ILP Roadmaps | Induction Website |

Interviews Conducted

| Stakeholders | TOTAL |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Candidates | 66 |
| Completers | 21 |
| Employers | 25 |
| Institutional Administration | 2 |
| Program Leadership | 4 |
| Mentors | 32 |
| Credential Analysts and Staff | 3 |
| Advisory Board Members | 16 |
| Institutions of Higher Education | 1 |
| TOTAL | 170 |

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

The Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project (SC/SVNTP) is a collaborative effort between the Santa Cruz County Office of Education (SCCOE) and approximately forty school districts and charters in Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, and San Benito counties.

Santa Cruz County Office of Education is the LEA for the SC/SVNTP and offers a California Commission on Teacher Credentialing accredited teacher induction program for both general education teachers and education specialists holding a preliminary credential. The primary goal of the consortium is to provide non-evaluative-embedded support and serve as a pathway to clear a professional teaching credential. The focus of the SC/SVNTP is to improve the participating teachers' classroom practice, to ensure student academic success, and to develop reflective teachers who are responsive to the diverse, cultural, social, academic, and linguistic backgrounds of all students.

The Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project believes that every student deserves a quality teacher. To achieve this goal, SCCOE collaborates with participating districts to partner highly trained mentors with teachers in order to earn their California Clear Teaching Credential.

The SC/SVNTP is built on the core values of equity, responsiveness, positive presupposition, reflective dialogue, and inquiry stance. Through an individualized goal-focused approach, the SC/SVNTP guides teachers and mentors in strengthening best practices within and beyond the classroom as outlined in the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) to ensure the growth of all students.

Education Unit

The SC/SVNTP offered by Santa Cruz County Office of Education contains a Teacher Induction program that serves over 650 candidates each year and recommends in excess of 300 candidates for a Clear California teaching credential. Candidates are supported in their growth in the teaching profession by highly trained mentors.

Table 1
Program Review Status

| Program Name | Number of Program Completers (2017-18) | Number of Candidates Enrolled (2018-19) |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Teacher Induction | 341 | 654 |

The Visit

The visit proceeded in accordance with all normal accreditation protocols.

Program Reports Teacher Induction

Program Design

The Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project (SC/SVNTTP) is a consortium of 40 districts and charter schools in Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, and San Benito Counties. Santa Cruz County Office of Education serves as the local education agency (LEA) and is led by the county superintendent. The induction program is coordinated and led by the organizational management team. The program is part of the Educational Services Division.

Interviews and a review of evidence confirmed that the program leaders regularly meet for the purpose of ongoing program decision making. To maintain communication with institutional leaders at the Santa Cruz County Office of Education, the program director attends monthly managers' meetings. In addition to internal meetings, program leadership meets quarterly with representatives from each partnering district as part of a steering committee. Spring visits are also scheduled with leadership from each partnering district in which program leadership shares and reviews program documents, data, and develops plans for the upcoming year.

With guidance from program leadership, nearly 80 full-time release mentors provide support for approximately 650 candidates. Interviews and a review of evidence confirmed that mentors typically spend three years out of their classroom being trained and serving in this role. Mentors are selected through a multistep process. They must meet the documented requirements (five years of teaching experience, currently employed in a participating district, and valid California credential), submit an application, resumé, and cover letter, and interview. Mentors may also be requested to submit a video of their own teaching performance. Interviews with mentors verified that the process of becoming a mentor was rigorous and challenging.

Once selected, mentors are partnered with new teachers of a similar teaching assignment and/or context with geographical considerations. Survey data shows that 97% of completers feel that they are well matched with their mentors. All mentors are trained using a set of induction tools and processes designed by the program to collaborate with their new teacher candidates. The process is designed to be personalized to address the candidates' identified goals on the ILP and collaborate with their mentor on which tools to use. Interviews with candidates and mentors confirmed that they utilize the provided tools based on individual needs and with the goal of developing lifelong habits. This individualized support allows candidates to develop effective habits of practice that will help them develop beyond their time in induction.

Program mentors receive dynamic, ongoing professional development and support from program leadership. New mentors attend a three-day training during the summer and all mentors attend twice-monthly forums to support professional growth, develop mentor skills,

and collaborate with others. Mentors stated during interviews that the training they have received through the program has been “the best professional training I’ve had in my entire career.” Mentors also shared during interviews that the forums help to connect them with other mentors, forming “a community that can lean on one another.” At the end of each forum, mentors are given the opportunity to provide feedback through a “plus/delta protocol.” Mentors reported that program leadership is “extremely responsive” to their needs, offering to shadow, provide feedback, and individualize support whenever it is requested.

The program leadership team collects feedback from mentors, candidates, and site administrators in a variety of ways including candidate surveys to monitor and adjust program implementation if needed. Candidates reported in interviews that they complete a thorough review of their mentors at the end of the year. Mentors shared in interviews that this feedback is collected by program leadership and shared with each mentor for review and reflection. In addition, the leadership team conducts quarterly meetings with a steering committee. The steering committee is comprised of university partners and district leaders from each of the participating districts in the program. These meetings provide regular opportunities for leaders to learn from one another, align induction with other district/school initiatives, ensure appropriate resourcing, share ideas, and provide feedback to the program. Interviews with steering committee members verified that these meetings provide local districts with a voice and opportunities to collaborate.

In addition to gathering feedback from all stakeholders, the program assesses the quality of services provided by reviewing candidate progress and growth in the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP). Twice each year, mentors and candidates submit evidence for review by the mentor community. The work is reviewed by two impartial mentors using the Assessment of Progress Rubric (AOP). Candidates submit evidence via Google Drive showing growth in the CSTP which aligns to their ILP(s). Mentors that review the evidence provide targeted feedback. If it is determined that the work does not adequately demonstrate growth, candidates receive a recommendation of “Not Met Yet” with feedback of suggestions so candidates can work collaboratively with their mentor to resubmit evidence of growth.

When local survey results indicated that there appeared to be a lack of continuity between the required evidence and documentation of teacher growth/practices, the program was responsive. Over the past two years, the program design has been modified in order to individualize the experience to best meet the needs of the teachers while capturing growth against the CSTP. In addition, the program moved from a “Required Evidence Planning Guide” to an “Individual Learning Plan Roadmap” to highlight choice and the goal-setting process. Interviews with mentors confirmed the program has “changed substantially” from a prescriptive approach to a more individualized and candidate driven system. Interviews with candidates as well as mentors confirmed that the program has been responsive to these concerns and emphasized the choice and flexibility of the use of tools. The program has moved from a model which identified “essential elements” specific CSTPs that year one and year two candidates must address, to an individualized approach that allows candidates and mentors to collaboratively identify two CSTPs per year on the ILP.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

In collaboration with their mentor, candidates use the CSTP Summary to reflect on their previous and current teaching practice in the CSTP, identifying areas of strength and areas for growth. Interviews with mentors and candidates indicated that they work collaboratively with the input of a site administrator to select two goals aligned to CSTP elements of their choice. Candidates then develop Individual Learning Plan(s) (ILPs) to guide their induction work in alignment with district goals and site initiatives.

Each ILP begins with candidates reflecting on current practice and reviewing of observational data which leads mentors and candidates to a co-assessment of teaching practice using the continuum. Candidates, mentors, and site administrators will revisit this continuum two additional times throughout the year. These checkpoints provide time for the mentor, candidate, and site administrator to celebrate growth, reestablish a course of action for continued growth in the CSTP, and a chance to realign resources for support. All participants are clear on the confidential, non-evaluative role of the mentor and at no time is the ILP used for evaluative purposes. Site administrators confirmed through interviews that they are active participants in this process and that it has a positive impact on teaching and learning at their sites.

After identifying goals, candidates identify current strengths and areas for growth. Candidates commented in interviews that the ability to identify strengths and focus on specific areas of their practice were valuable in the process. Following this step, candidates then identify and find alignment between their induction goal and site goal(s). Interviews with administrators confirmed that there is a strong connection between the candidates' inquiries and the site specific goals.

Candidates and mentors then work to create an action plan including measurable, observable evidence of meeting their goals, as well as steps that can be taken to address the goal. Interviews with mentors confirmed that the ILP Roadmap is utilized as a tool to support this process and connect candidates to tools and resources that can be utilized to support inquiry and growth. Throughout this process, candidates use job-embedded professional development to drive their inquiry. Mentors guide this work through face to face meetings, classroom observations, and small group professional learning communities.

Assessment of Candidates

There are multiple checks and balances in place to verify program completion. Progress towards mastery within the CSTP is reviewed twice a year. Two impartial mentors review the candidate's submission and provide feedback. Candidates who receive a score of "Not Met Yet" are given time to work collaboratively with their mentor to address the feedback and concerns provided. In addition to the Assessment of Progress (AoP) checkpoints, program leadership verifies attendance at the program orientation and completion of program agreements. All information on candidate progress and program completion is stored and electronically monitored by program leadership and the administrative secretary.

Interviews and review of evidence confirmed that at the end of each year, the program leadership, credential analyst, and administrative secretary collaborate to verify that candidates have met the program requirements. Once all requirements have been determined to be met, candidates are recommended for a clear credential by human resources analysts. Program candidates are notified of the process for obtaining their clear credential from program leadership and can access the directions for completing the clear credential process on the program's website.

Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, outcomes data including assessment and survey results, the completion of interviews with program leadership, district leaders, site administrators, program completers, mentors, and current candidates, the team determined that all program standards are fully **met** for the Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project (SC/SVNTP) at the Santa Cruz County Office of Education.

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 P-12 | X | | |

| | | | |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 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>Brief summary of information applicable to the standard (required for all findings) Santa Cruz County Office of Education as the LEA for the Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project (SC/SVNTP) coordinates collaboration between key stakeholders and the program’s steering committee in the organization, coordination, and decision making for the program in order to support effective implementation of the state adopted content standards, as affirmed through interviews and examination of shared evidence. The superintendent expressed the extreme value in the induction program and confirmed that there is institutional support in providing resources to allow for the effective operations of the program.</p> <p>There are continued efforts and priority given to promote inclusion, equity for all students and diversity throughout the districts served by the program. Interviews confirmed the districts’ efforts to hire and retain candidates who represent diversity. District leaders, site administrators and candidates report that mentors are highly skilled in supporting candidates while providing individualized, job-embedded support in improving teacher practice, implementing a clearly delineated process, which leads to fulfilling program requirements and recommendation for a clear credential.</p> | | | |
| Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support | | | |
| Components | Consistently | Inconsistently | Not Evidenced |
| 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 assistance to promote their successful entry and retention in the profession. | X | | |

| | | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <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 | | |
| Brief summary of information applicable to the standard Santa Cruz County Office of Education as the LEA for the Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project (SC/SVNTP) works with district partners to recruit and admit candidates who hold a preliminary credential. District personnel provide support, advice, and assistance to promote the candidate's successful entry into the profession beginning with a comprehensive orientation to the program that reviews the program requirements and the various resources available to candidates. In addition, each candidate is paired with an appropriately matched mentor. Program leadership and credential analysts shared their role and the systematic process used when recommending candidates for their clear credential. Program mentors and candidates confirmed the process for monitoring candidate progress throughout the induction experience. Program mentors verified a clearly defined process in place for candidates who need additional support to meet program expectations. Interviews with candidates and mentors affirmed that the program consistently defines performance expectations and provides resources and support for meeting those expectations. State survey data verifies that mentors and candidates work collaboratively on induction processes. | | | |
| 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 | | |
| · 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 | | |
| · Site-based supervisors must be certified and experienced in teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential. | X | | |
| · The process and criteria result in the selection of site-based supervisors who provide effective and knowledgeable support for candidates. | X | | |
| · Site-based supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner. | X | | |
| · All programs effectively implement and evaluate fieldwork and clinical practice. | X | | |
| · 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>Brief summary of information applicable to the standard</p> <p>Stakeholders unanimously report a climate of collaboration, within the community of districts and partners, in support of the teacher induction program. The program designs and implements a planned sequence of coursework, individualized to meet candidate professional needs and supported by the Individual Learning Plan roadmap. This roadmap promotes a plan, reflect, teach, reflect, analyze, and reflect cycle, that allows candidates to learn, practice, and demonstrate competencies. Candidates reported via statewide survey data that their mentor supports their work on the ILP and identified that the work advances their students’ learning. Program expectations allow for mentor and candidate selected pathways that align to candidate individual professional goals. As stated by candidates, the pathways allow for more flexibility, communication, and collaboration opportunities with their mentors in order to meet the academic needs of students and grow as a teaching professional.</p> | | | |

| | | | |
|--|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <p>Mentor selection is by an application with established criteria. During interviews, mentors confirmed initial and ongoing training in mentoring and “just in time” support. Candidates are assigned mentors based on credential and teaching context to ensure effective practices in each setting. The program employs multiple measures to assess mentor effectiveness, including candidate feedback data, analysis of candidate submitted requirements, and collaborative practices during meetings throughout the program year.</p> | | | |
| <p>Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement</p> | | | |
| <p>Components</p> | <p>Consistently</p> | <p>Inconsistently</p> | <p>Not Evidenced</p> |
| <p>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.</p> | <p>X</p> | | |
| <p>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.</p> | <p>X</p> | | |
| <p>Both the unit and its programs regularly and systematically collect, analyze, and use candidate and program completer data.</p> | <p>X</p> | | |
| <p>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</p> | <p>X</p> | | |
| <p>Finding on Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement</p> | <p>Met</p> | | |
| <p>Brief summary of information applicable to the standard</p> <p>Santa Cruz County Office of Education as the LEA for the Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project’s (SC/SVNTP) approach to continuous improvement includes 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, mentor training and effectiveness, and candidate competence. Data sources include program surveys administered to candidates, completers, mentors, and administrators.</p> <p>The program staff mentioned that they intentionally made modifications to the program based on data. The development of the ILP roadmap is an example of the program’s responsiveness to candidate needs. Interviews with candidates, mentors, steering committee, site administrators, and program staff verified that data-driven decisions provided systematic improvement to the</p> | | | |

program. The superintendent mentioned in his interview that this program is a model for data collection and analysis.

Overall, program participants shared many examples of how the program took stakeholder feedback and implemented changes to continually improve the implementation of the program.

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 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. | X | | |
| 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 | | |

Brief summary of information applicable to the standard

Santa Cruz County Office of Education as the LEA for the Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project (SC/SVNT) ensures that candidates are meeting state adopted standards and demonstrating growth in the California Standards for the Teaching Profession through an Individual Learning Plan and inquiry cycle. Site administrators said that the cycle of inquiry during the induction process was very powerful for their new teachers to become life-long learners. Candidates mentioned how working with their mentors helped to build confidence and clarify their teaching experience. Completers reported their participation in induction continues to impact their teaching and learning after the program.

One completer said, “I implemented the pre and post-test this year and it really continues to make a difference in my teaching and success of my students.” State survey data confirms that the induction program has a significant impact on candidate performance.

The induction program evaluates its impact by collecting data and evidence on a variety of program components. The program’s impact on mentors and candidates is evidenced by numerous positive statements referring to the program’s organization and responsiveness to both candidate and student needs.

INSTITUTION SUMMARY

The Santa Cruz County Office of Education (Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project (SC/SVNTP) has developed a research-based system of support for teachers founded by strong collaboration structures centered around highly trained mentors who work closely with program staff, administration and candidates. Mentors and program staff are highly responsive to school districts' and candidates' needs. A strength of this program and a testimony to the 40 participating districts' support of the program, is the employment of nearly 80 full- time mentors, who provide direct services to approximately 650 candidates.

To maintain quality within the program, mentors and candidates complete an ILP that includes an inquiry cycle and evidence of growth in the California Standards of the Teacher Profession. Candidates and site administrators consistently affirmed throughout the visit that mentors were highly effective, and that the collaboration between mentors and their candidates was the key to supporting growth and development in the teaching profession. Mentors were consistently available, as affirmed both through candidate and completer interviews, and were skillful at helping develop appropriate goals for ILPs while facilitating the inquiry process. Candidates and completers also reported that their mentors were equally adept in providing "just in time" support for every day challenges and were "the best part" of their induction experience.