

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

**Professional Services Division
May 2019**

Overview of this Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at **Ceres 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 Program	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: Ceres Unified School District

Dates of Visit: March 18-20, 2019

2018-19 Accreditation

Team Recommendation: Accreditation

Previous History of Accreditation Status
<i>The Ceres Unified School District was approved to offer an approved educator preparation program effective June 24, 2015. 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 candidates, completers, site administrators, institutional administration, program leadership and mentors and advisory committee members. 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 were **Met**.

Common Standards

All Common Standards were **Met**.

Overall Recommendation

Based on the fact that the team found that all standards for the Ceres Unified School District Teacher Induction Program **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 institutions response to the preconditions be accepted.
- Ceres Unified School District be permitted to propose new educator preparation programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Ceres 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:	Darby Williams Sacramento County Office of Education, Retired
Common Standards:	Roseann Rasul Santa Clara Unified School District
Programs Cluster:	Dianne Randall Culver City Unified School District
Staff to the Visit:	Roxann Purdue Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Documents Reviewed

Common Standards Submission	Program Review Submission
Common Standards Review Feedback	Program Standards Review Feedback
Common Standards Addendum	Program Review Addendum
Candidate Individual Learning Plans	Candidate Advisement Materials
Accreditation Website	Recruitment Brochure
Candidate Files	Assessment Materials
Candidate Handbooks	Budget Reports
Survey Results	Performance Expectation Materials
Precondition Responses	Digital Candidate Portfolios
Advisory Meeting Agendas	Collaboration Logs

Interviews Conducted

Stakeholders	TOTAL
Candidates	71
Completers	22
Site Administrators	18
Institutional Administration	4
Program Leadership	2
Mentors	34
Joint Panel	5
Credential Analyst	1
Advisory Committee Members	15
TEAM Collaborative Facilitators	22
Institutions of Higher Education	2
Consultant – <i>Just Ask</i>	1
TOTAL	197

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

Ceres Unified School District is a school district located in the central San Joaquin Valley in the heart of Stanislaus County, California. The city of Ceres is located in a diverse agricultural area. The school district is comprised of 13 elementary, 3 junior highs, 4 high schools, and 1 charter school with approximately 13,000 students enrolled. The school district's student ethnicity is represented by over 75% Hispanic-Latino. The Ceres High School has a manufacturing and green technology program (MGTP) that receives recognition from the state each year.

Education Unit

Ceres Unified School District Induction program is housed in the Educational Services Division of the district. The Induction Program Specialist is the district administrator with day-to-day oversight of the program but meets with the Director of Elementary Education twice a month to provide updates on program activities and to receive support. The Induction Program Specialist and Director of Elementary Education also have regularly scheduled check-in meetings with the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services to provide updates on

program activities. The Induction Program Specialist also attends bi-weekly meetings with other educational services administrators as well as elementary and secondary study sessions, management meetings, and executive council meetings. The Induction Program Specialist provides program updates to principals several times throughout the year at study sessions.

Table 1
Program Review Status

Program Name	Number of Program Completers (2017-18)	Number of Candidates Enrolled (2018-19)
Teacher Induction	34	92

The Visit

The visit proceeded in accordance with all normal accreditation protocols.

Program Reports Teacher Induction

Program Design

Ceres Unified School District Teacher Induction Program is a single district program which incorporates and seeks to prepare candidates to meet the academic learning needs of all students and retain high quality teachers. The Ceres Induction Program became accredited in 2015. Prior to that, candidates were served through the Stanislaus County Office of Education Induction Program.

The Ceres Induction Leadership Team is composed of the Director of Elementary Education, the Induction Program Specialist, and a lead mentor. Interviews confirmed the induction program specialist meets with the Director of Elementary Education and the Assistant Superintendent on a regular basis to discuss program data and program improvements within the Induction program.

The program includes General Education and Education Specialist candidates with wide ranging assignments. Each candidate is paired with a mentor, who is also a classroom teacher. Candidates are matched by site and credential whenever possible. Mentors are selected by applying for open positions. After a potential mentor meets qualifications, the Joint Panel, comprised of union and administration representatives, interviews and observes prospective mentors. The Joint Panel selects the mentors and they are notified. Interviews and documentation confirmed the process. The mentors are trained at the beginning of the year and also attend monthly trainings. It was confirmed through interviews and documentation that mentors and candidates meet for an hour a week, with no less than four hours per month. It was evidenced by candidate interviews that mentors are accessible and available to their mentees and provide “just in time” support.

The Advisory Committee meets throughout the year and is comprised of principals, associate principals, a year one candidate, a year two candidate, an induction program completer, an Education Specialist teacher, an instructional coach, a credential analyst, a budget analyst, and an institute of higher education (IHE) partner. These program stakeholders review data collected throughout the year from mentors and candidates and have an opportunity to provide input and feedback to the program.

Within the last two years, modifications to the induction program have been made based on survey results taken from the mentors, candidates, and feedback from the Advisory Committee. These modifications include the amount of paperwork the candidate must complete and choice of sessions available for TEAM Collaborative meetings. The TEAM collaborative consists of several teachers and coaches who provide standards-based trainings.

Course of Study

The Ceres Induction program is a two-year program with an Early Completion Option. The candidates of the program complete four inquiry cycles based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) over two years, while Early Completion Option candidates

complete three inquiry cycles in one year. These focused inquiries are based on the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and are chosen by the candidate.

When available, Induction candidates use their transition plan from their preliminary program to help set Induction goals. Each of the six California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) are addressed within the two years of Induction and found in the ILP. Interviews confirm that during the triad meetings with the mentor, administrator and candidate, ILP goals are discussed and may be adjusted to align with the site goals. The approach is collaborative and as a site principal stated, he feels, “as a second mentor” regarding his beginning teacher.

Professional learning opportunities and support are available to all candidates. In the first year of induction, each candidate attends five ILP workshops throughout the year. For second year candidates, four ILP workshops are required. For candidates that need additional assistance, there is also ILP support workshops who need “just a bit more help”. In addition to the ILP workshops, fifteen hours of professional learning is required by the district, which is tied to the candidate’s Individual Learning Plan goals.

Assessment of Candidates

Candidate portfolios are read by paired mentors and scored four times a year with results shared out with candidates. Before mentors are allowed to read independently, the Induction Program Specialist leads the mentors through a calibration process. Determination for recommendation for the California Clear Credential is made by the contents of the candidate’s Induction Portfolio and Individualized Learning Plan completion. At the end of Year Two of Induction, the Induction Program Specialist reviews the Portfolio and signs Documentation Completion forms.

Candidates, whose work has been determined to meet criteria and growth along the Continuum of the Teaching Practice, with evidence of growth toward mastery of the standards are recommended for their California Clear Teaching Credential. Once candidates have completed Induction, they meet with the credential specialist who ensures that a completed recommendation for clear credentials is successfully processed through the Commission.

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, site administrators, Advisory Committee members, professional learning providers, and unit leadership, the team determined that all program standards are fully **met** for the Ceres Unified School District 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 		X	

Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
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.			
<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</p> <p>The Ceres Induction Program (CIP) serves candidates within the Ceres Unified School District. With the support of qualified and trained mentors, candidates participate in research-based cycles of inquiry aligned with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. The program is situated within the Education Services Division. Interviews with the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and Deputy Superintendent of Personnel Services Division, confirm that the Induction Program Specialist, as an active member of the educational unit, is well supported and resourced. Additionally, documents and interviews confirm that the Ceres Unified Teacher Induction Program has a clearly stated vision that is understood and supported within the educational unit, <i>Teachers will... actively analyze their practice, reflect on their teaching, collaborate with colleagues and gain knowledge and skills needed to continually improve teaching and student learning.</i></p> <p>Interviews confirm that the Advisory Committee, composed of relevant stakeholders (candidates, mentors, administrators, unit leaders, IHE partners, and representatives from personnel and business), work with program leadership to ensure that all parties are engaged in continuous improvement. Advisory is actively involved in supporting meaningful changes to the program. A successful collaboration with neighboring induction programs and university partners ensures that Ceres stakeholders remain current and effective.</p> <p>Under the leadership of the district, the program has a system for hiring well-qualified mentors and professional learning presenters. A selection process is used that, for the most part, ensures that candidates are appropriately matched with a job-alike mentor. With the support of a well-qualified mentor, candidates follow a clear path to completion of induction. Candidates are informed of credential requirements at an initial orientation and a one-on-one meeting with the program specialist. Progress is carefully reviewed and monitored for completion by the program</p>			

specialist. Once candidates have completed induction, they meet with the credential specialist who ensures that a completed recommendation for clear credentials is successfully processed through the Commission.

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

Ceres Unified School District purposely recruits and admits candidates to diversify the educator pool in a variety of ways. They strive to recruit local graduates to support the diversity in the District. Interviews indicate that the Deputy Superintendent of Personnel has close connections with nearby universities, attending a class in the fall of student teachers at California State University Stanislaus to review how to interview and get their first job. Both high schools have a club for future teachers and the district actively recruits at these meetings. In addition, principals notify personnel when they have a student teacher they want to be sure to hire, and those teachers are called into personnel and offered a job. "We're out in front," says the Personnel Deputy Superintendent, "We post and advertise early and get the cream of the crop...sometimes even before the Christmas break." She notes that it is a team effort between her department, the principals, the business department, and the superintendent. Evidence shows that the staff is increasingly diverse.

Candidates are matched with program mentors within 30 days of hire and meet for an average of an hour weekly throughout the year. Candidate progress toward completion is reviewed by the Induction Program Specialist and mentors and input given several times a year and as needed. In addition to mentor and program support, candidates are supported in reaching their program goals by their site administrators, colleagues, and district coaches.

Mentors collaborate with candidates to create standards-based goals on an (ILP) that guides the focus of each teacher for the two years of the induction program. Administrators verified that they participate in a triad meeting where they sit down with the mentor and candidate to review/modify/add to goals on the ILP, assuring that they incorporate site with induction goals. Administrators also use the roles and responsibilities for site administrators from the induction program to assure they are meeting site requirements. While most candidates meet program deadlines, both evidence and interviews confirmed that the teachers have multiple supports when struggling. For example, one new teacher received a poor evaluation and within a week the principal sent him out with the mentor to observe, then out with two different coaches to observe, then within the month to a workshop.

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		

Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
• 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>The Ceres Unified School District’s Induction Program provides mentors for each candidate. These mentors have gone through a rigorous application process and are able to provide effective and knowledgeable support for candidates in their growth toward mastery of the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. They are trained in the summer in both coaching and the logistics of the program and then have monthly trainings to expand their skills throughout the school year. Interviews verified that mentors set mentoring goals (“We rubric ourselves on our own goals.”) and receive feedback from the Induction Program Specialist and from candidate surveys.</p> <p>Mentors work with candidates over two years on four cycles of inquiry. Using their ILP, candidates collect examples of teaching practice, reflect on their growth and student progress, and complete evidence collection. This work is completed online and reviewed regularly. Candidates interviewed appreciate mentor expertise and support. “I like how my mentor helped me link my work to student growth and achievement.” Reflection is one of the most valued aspects of the program... “I love setting a goal, working on it, and learning that if I do not meet the goal I have support in figuring out this didn’t work because....”</p>			

The program provides a variety of trainings and resources to support the diversity of candidate needs and the diverse needs of their students. The TEAM collaborative, for example, consists of several teachers and coaches who provide standards-based trainings. These trainings are designed specifically for meeting the diverse needs of students in the district and are attended by new teachers and interested veterans. Presenters leave their contact information and frequently provide additional, individual follow up. One presenter indicated, “Anyone involved in TEAM helps additionally when they are contacted—that is a non-negotiable.” Trainings are evaluated and are updated based upon this input. One teacher attended a special education training and received an entire packet on her student, then was able to refer to it in order to adjust her strategies as she worked with him. Candidates choose professional learning based on their ILP goals.

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		
Brief summary of information applicable to the standard (required for all findings)			
Interviews with stakeholders confirmed that the Ceres Induction Program is committed to a culture of continuous improvement. Multiple sources of data are systematically collected. Both the unit and program reviews and evaluates candidate admission, advisement, support, and assessment. Additionally, mentor preparation is critically evaluated.			
To determine if objectives are being met, the program gathers program completer information, progress towards mastery of the CSTPs, induction workshop feedback, and candidates’			

satisfaction with mentors. Additionally, site administrators provide feedback at the mid-year and end-of-the-year on the impact of induction on their teachers and to identify any needs the program can address. The program specialist, mentors, unit, and the advisory committee reflect on the effectiveness and efficacy of the program. Interviews confirmed that data is used to frame subsequent improvements to the program. For example, ILP requirements have been streamlined to better support goal setting and action planning; professional development offerings have been expanded to better match teaching assignments; and support workshops have been reformatted to offer more collaborative work time. All stakeholders expressed that they felt their input was valued, and that they appreciated the open lines of communication within the Induction 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

The Ceres Induction Program ensures its candidates are prepared to educate and support effectively all students in meeting the state adopted academic standards through their successful completion of a carefully articulated formative assessment experience and its associated obligations. The program design, including collaboration with well-trained mentors and differentiated professional learning experiences, helps candidates develop and demonstrate knowledge and skills to support the full range of learners. District leaders and site administrators reported that evidence from walkthroughs and other data affirmed the impact induction experiences had on helping candidates support students in meeting adopted standards.

Both current candidates and program completers cited multiple examples of ways in which program experiences, particularly support from their mentors, helped them grow in their ability to support all students; for example, identifying specific strategies to differentiate instruction for English Learners and special needs students to access curriculum . Mid-year surveys from candidates showed that 85% of the candidates felt that the induction program had an extremely strong impact on student learning while 15% felt it had a strong impact. Interviews with program

leadership, advisory members, and candidates, and an examination of evidence including ILPs and other assessment data, affirmed that a wide variety of assessment data is used to gauge the impact the program is having on candidate competence and learning. Cited one site administrator, “I just beam when I see them implementing something they just learned.”

INSTITUTION SUMMARY

The Ceres Induction Program has developed a quality induction program that offers a formative assessment system for teachers to support effective teaching practices and strengthen professional practice while supporting the district’s vision, *Committed to Excellence and Responsive to Every Student*. They have accomplished this through intentional collaboration and communication with all stakeholders. The program specialist works with a large and active Advisory Committee that includes district leaders, site administrators, mentors, candidates, completers, IHE partners, and union representatives. The Advisory Committee members play a hands-on role in the governance of the program. They are knowledgeable of program activities and use a variety of assessment tools to inform decisions on program direction. District leaders are also active in their support of the program, working closely with the program specialist to ensure professional learning opportunities are available for candidates. As one administrator shared, “it is critical to build teacher’s confidence that they are progressing.”

Interviews with candidates demonstrated that they view the Induction program as relevant and supportive of their daily instruction. They value the choices they have in goal setting and the opportunities provided to collaborate. As a candidate shared, “I find out it is not only me...I am not alone.”

Across all stakeholder interviews, there was an overwhelming appreciation for the personal, individualized attention, availability, and dedication to educational excellence on the part of the Program Specialist. Under her leadership, the priority is to provide the resources, support, and training so that all candidates have the opportunity to start their career with a strong foundation upon which they can grow in their professional practice. As a candidate shared, “I am now a more reflective teacher. I have grown into a professional.”