

# Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of the Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at Visalia Unified School District

**June 2015**

## **Overview of This Report**

This report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at Visalia Unified School District. This report represents the findings of the team, based upon review of the self-study report, supporting documentation, and interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the report, an accreditation recommendation of **Accreditation** is made for this institution.

## **Common Standard and Program Standard Decisions For All Programs Offered by the Institution**

	<b>Met</b>	<b>Met With Concerns</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
1) Educational Leadership	X		
2) Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation	X		
3) Resources	X		
4) Faculty and Instructional Personnel	X		
5) Admission	X		
6) Advice and Assistance	X		
7) Field Experience and Clinical Practice	X		
8) <del>District Employed Supervisors</del>	N/A		
9) Assessment of Candidate Competence	X		

## **Program Standards**

	<b>Total Program Standards</b>	<b>Program Standards</b>		
		<b>Met</b>	<b>Met with Concerns</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
General Education (MS, SS) Induction	6	6	0	0

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

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

**California Commission on Teacher Credentialing  
Committee on Accreditation  
Accreditation Team Report**

**Institution:** Visalia Unified School District

**Dates of Visit:** April 13-15, 2015

**Accreditation Team  
Recommendation:** Accreditation

**Rationale:**

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation** was based on a thorough review of the institutional self-study; additional supporting documents available during the visit; interviews with administrators, faculty, candidates, graduates, and local school personnel; along with additional information requested from program leadership during the visit. The team felt that it 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:

Common Standards

The team reviewed each of the eight Common Standards and determined if the standard was "met", "not met", or "met with concerns". The site visit team found that all eight of the Common Standards were **Met**.

Program Standards

After discussion of findings and appropriate input by individual team members, the team considered whether the program standards were met, met with concerns, or not met. The CTC accreditation team found that all program standards were **Met**.

Overall Recommendation

The team completed a thorough review of program documents, program data, FACT portfolios, interviews with program leadership, district administrators, school site administrators, support providers, participating teachers, completers, and Leadership Team members. Due to the finding that all Common Standards were **Met**, and all program standards were **Met**, the team unanimously recommends a decision of **Accreditation**.

On the basis of this recommendation, the institution is authorized to recommend candidates for the following Credentials:

**Advance Credentials**

Multiple Subject Clear

Single Subject Clear

Staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
- Visalia Unified School District is permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Visalia 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 Leader:**

**Adora Fisher**

Cupertino Union School District

**Common Standards Cluster:**

**Debbie Oler**

Corona Norco Unified School District

**Bob Miyamoto**

Ventura County Office of Education

**Advanced Programs Cluster:**

**Cathy Cranson**

Monterey County Office of Education

**Staff to the Visit**

**Teri Clark, Director**

**Documents Reviewed**

Common Standards Report  
Program Summary  
Program Assessment Feedback  
Biennial Report Feedback  
Advisement Documents  
Common Standard Narrative  
Communications Documents  
Local Control Accountability Plan  
Professional Development Schedules

Stakeholder Meetings Agendas and Minutes  
FACT Documents  
Candidate Portfolios  
Inductionsupport.com  
Memorandums of Understanding  
Biennial Program Report  
Survey Results  
BTSA Website  
Collaborative Logs

### Interviews Conducted

	Common Standards Cluster	Program Cluster	Total
Candidates	27	27	54
Completers		8	8
Institutional Administrators	4		4
Employers	13		13
Program Director	1		1
Support Providers	18	18	36
Professional Development Providers	5	5	10
Advisory Team	14		14
Institutions of Higher Education	3		3
Portfolio Readers	10	10	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>163</b>

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

### Background Information

The Visalia Unified School District (VUSD) is located in the heart of the Central Valley in Tulare County. The district was established in 1885 and is the oldest school district in Tulare County. Visalia serves 27,000 students and is comprised of 25 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 4 high schools and 3 alternative education schools. 56% of Visalia's student population is identified as low socio economic status.

Visalia originally served its new teachers through the Tulare County Office of Education Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Induction program. In 2008, a Visalia induction program was submitted and approved. Since that time the program has grown immensely and become a major contributing factor to the retention of new teachers within the district. Over time, Visalia Unified has retained approximately 137 of its 188 candidates that have gone through the program. This year the program serves 43 year one candidates and 49 year two candidates with 3 Early Completion candidates.

### Education Unit

Visalia Unified School District operates a General Education Induction Program for Multiple Subject and Single Subject Credential holders.

Numbers of Candidates and Completers for Three Years					
2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
Candidates	Completers	Candidates	Completers	Candidates	Completers
58	23	78	35	103	55

# Common Standards

## Standard 1: Educational Leadership

## Standard Met

The institution and education unit create and articulate a research-based vision for educator preparation that is responsive to California's adopted standards and curriculum frameworks. The vision provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance and experiences, scholarship, service, collaboration, and unit accountability. The faculty, instructional personnel, and relevant stakeholders are actively involved in the organization, coordination, and governance of all professional preparation programs. Unit leadership has the authority and institutional support needed to create effective strategies to achieve the needs of all programs and represents the interests of each program within the institution. The education unit implements and monitors a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements.

The foundation of the VUSD Teacher Induction program is built around research done by the New Teacher Center at UC Santa Cruz, which shows that mentor-based programs historically and consistently have a powerful and positive impact on teacher effectiveness and teacher retention. The Superintendent of VUSD, stated, "that a major goal of the district is to retain and recruit highly qualified teachers" and "the Induction program is an important piece of the district's teacher support program."

According to the Executive Cabinet, VUSD maintains the belief that placing a well-prepared and effective teacher in every classroom is important to meet their goal of "Every student succeeds". The vision of the VUSD Board explicitly states, "We believe it is our responsibility to provide an environment where a strong sense of significance and belonging for students and for staff is a priority. We also believe that learning is best supported by powerful teaching and we will continue to strive to recruit, hire and retain highly qualified and productive staff."

VUSD maintains high expectations for its staff, based upon the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP). Site administrators use the CSTP as a basis for evaluation, coaching and discussion and the Induction Program requires all candidates to evaluate and reflect on their practice in relation to the CSTP Continuum of Teaching Practice (CTP). The program also requires that all documents reflecting each candidate's work be scored against a portfolio review checklist, which is aligned with the CSTP.

In keeping with VUSD's vision of "Every Student Succeeds", the Induction program collaborates with the Curriculum and Instruction department on an ongoing basis. Based upon the Curriculum and Instruction department's professional development calendar, candidates receive training throughout the year in subject and grade level specific curriculum as well as the new Common Core and new English Language Development Standards.

Each candidate is required to submit an electronic portfolio twice a year. The portfolio is a research-based cycle of inquiry. This cycle of inquiry captures their implementation of Induction Standards, CSTP, Common Core Standards and curriculum to their teaching practice. These portfolios are scored by program portfolio readers based on specific criteria with feedback given to the candidates and their support providers. Portfolio readers all agreed that this feedback is most beneficial to the candidates, as it reflects their experience in the program and

drives the improvement of their teaching practice. Demonstrated growth on the electronic portfolio documents contributes to the determination of candidate competence and program completion.

The VUSD’s Induction program Advisory Team, consisting of the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Development (HRD), site administrators, credential analyst, teachers on special assignment, institutions of higher education, and professional development providers, meets several times a year to review survey data, program implications, make recommendations for ongoing program improvement, and overall governance of the program. Human Resources Leadership team meets weekly with the program director and “Induction Update” is a standing agenda item for discussion. These meetings have resulted in changes to candidate “Notification of Eligibility” as well as HR hiring practices. In addition, site administrators participate in an annual candidate “Exit Interview” process where they ask questions of the candidates and receive program highlights as the candidates showcase their best work to the District’s management team.

Interviews with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of HR confirmed that the VUSD Induction program operates within the structure of the Human Resources Development department. The Superintendent of this department serves as the Unit Head and the Supervisor of Teacher Support Services reports directly to the Unit Head and serves as the Induction program director. The Assistant Superintendent of HR, who also sits on the Advisory Team, provides support for the Supervisor to make all decisions regarding the design and implementation of the program.

Interviews with program portfolio readers indicate that each candidate is required to complete an electronic portfolio each semester they participate in the program. The readers score these portfolios and candidates are recommended for their clear credential, based upon their completion and growth on their portfolios. Candidate Portfolio Review Forms, provide evidence of completion as well as evidence of growth on the Continuum of Teaching Practice along with the Visalia Induction portfolio checklist. Upon review of all documentation and candidate requirements, the program director, in conjunction with the credential analyst, makes the final recommendation to CTC for the candidate’s clear credential.

**Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation**

**Standard Met**

The education unit implements an assessment and evaluation system for ongoing program and unit evaluation and improvement. The system collects, analyzes, and utilizes data on candidate and program completer performance and unit operations. Assessment in all programs includes ongoing and comprehensive data collection related to candidate qualifications, proficiencies, and competence, as well as program effectiveness, and is used for improvement purposes.

VUSD maintains a comprehensive evaluation system and continually reflects upon and makes modifications to improve program effectiveness and candidate performance. Interviews with district level administrators and review of documents indicate that there is a free flow of information between the program director and other stakeholders during advisory team meetings, monthly meetings for support providers, professional development trainings for all parties involved as well as exit interviews held annually during an end-of-year principal’s

meeting. Feedback is always welcome by the program leadership via surveys and advisory team meetings, which is shared with the stakeholders of the program. One advisory team member commented on the sense of connectedness among the group and the valuable input provided based on a myriad of backgrounds. This diverse group, “brings ideas and plays an active role in working toward the common goal of the best way to support new teachers”.

In order to maintain an organized and accessible system of data collection and program operation, the Induction program uses the services of InductionSupport.com. This is an online database and event registration system that facilitates collection, organization, and storage of data and information from support providers, participating teachers and site administrators. The Sinclair Research Group provides the Induction program services for collecting, analyzing, and compiling data. The program director meets with the group bi-annually to complete data discussions as well as set goals for the program. Analysis of the data drives change in professional development planning and dissemination of additional information. According to documents reviewed, the program director collects, analyzes, and utilizes data and participates in the Accreditation Activity Cycle, which serves as the major foundational component of their assessment and evaluation efforts. The program utilizes surveys for participating teachers and support providers; in addition to, support provider self-assessments, site administrator surveys, and a pre and post analysis of the Continuum of Teaching Practice completed by participating teachers.

The FACT system tools and support provider relationship help move each teacher forward in their practice as well as allow documentation for candidate growth, progress, and competence. For candidate and program completer performance, the program director and credential analyst review candidate credentials to ensure eligibility and maintain records for evidence of progressing toward program completion. In collaboration with their support providers, candidates self-assess on the Continuum of Practice, which is aligned with the CSTP, twice a year. According to interviews, support providers and candidates work in tandem on the job-embedded formative assessment documents, which are designed to guide the new teacher’s practice in support of student achievement. At the end of the year, the candidate submits an electronic portfolio that includes the formative assessment documents and reflections, which are reviewed by portfolio readers and program director for completion.

**Standard 3: Resources**

**Standard Met**

The institution provides the unit with the necessary budget, qualified personnel, adequate facilities and other resources to prepare candidates effectively to meet the state-adopted standards for educator preparation. Sufficient resources are consistently allocated for effective operation of each credential or certificate program for coordination, admission, advisement, curriculum and professional development, instruction, field-based supervision and/or clinical experiences, and assessment management. Sufficient information resources and related personnel are available to meet program and candidate needs. A process that is inclusive of all programs is in place to determine resource needs.

VUSD believes it is their responsibility to provide an environment where a strong sense of significance and belonging for students and for staff is a priority. They also believe that powerful teaching best supports learning and they will continue to strive to recruit, hire and retain highly qualified, talented and productive staff. District leadership states that the goal is

targeted recruitment for a more diverse pool of teaching candidates. “We want our teaching population to mirror our student population,” stated the superintendent, Dr. Craig Wheaton. With these goals in mind, VUSD has created a Teacher Support Services department, which is housed in Human Resources and Development. The Induction program is just one piece of Teacher Support Services. Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA) are a part of the Teacher Support program where they collaborate, model lessons, and offer professional development training to all teachers throughout the district.

The VUSD Induction program carefully reviews program needs to determine necessary resources, personnel and facilities, for program operation. The budget for the program is allocated annually from the district general funds. The budget aligns with LCAP Goal 8. Teacher Support Services and Induction are noted specifically under LCAP Goal 1.7, professional development for teachers. These resources are allocated to foster the program’s ongoing ability to meet program standards and deliver planned program components to candidates in alignment with program design. Interviews with the program director and district leadership reveal a strong belief in the importance of supporting new teachers and resources are readily available for that support. The program director works closely with the credential analyst to coordinate services for program advisement and credential applications. As part of the overall hiring process, the credential analyst and program director meet to review the list of eligible teachers including the name, site, teaching assignment, their credential status, and their years of service at the point of hire. Each candidate is then directed to complete a Notification of Eligibility and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of Responsibility to Enter a Professional Teacher Induction Program.

Teacher Support Services, which includes the program director, is qualified to provide the administrative coordination for the Induction program. The program director and support providers are viewed as accessible, informed, supportive, and responsive, as stated by all stakeholders during interviews. Resources across the program include two Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA) as well as onsite part time support providers. The program director collaborates with site administrators to assign a support provider to each of their new teachers. The majority of support providers teach at the same site as the new candidate. This model allows sufficient time for support providers to observe and conference with candidates, to conduct formative assessment activities, and participate in high quality professional development. During interviews with candidates, all reported attending a variety of professional development covering a range of topics including cultural responsiveness training, new ELD standards, technology, equity, special populations, and classroom management.

Throughout interviews with VUSD and review of documents, it was evident that there are sufficient resources and personnel available to meet program and candidate needs. Each member narrated accounts of how new teacher support is woven into the fabric of the district and the district fully commits to growth and improvement of their teachers. The superintendent as well as the advisory team commented on the desire to retain all teachers upon completion of the Induction program.



**Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel****Standard Met**

Qualified persons are employed and assigned to teach all courses, to provide professional development, and to supervise field-based and/or clinical experiences in each credential and certificate program. Instructional personnel and faculty have current knowledge in the content they teach, understand the context of public schooling, and model best professional practices in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service. They are reflective of a diverse society and knowledgeable about diverse abilities, cultural, language, ethnic and gender diversity. They have a thorough grasp of the academic standards, frameworks, and accountability systems that drive the curriculum of public schools. They collaborate regularly and systematically with colleagues in P-12 settings/college/university units and members of the broader, professional community to improve teaching, candidate learning, and educator preparation. The institution provides support for faculty development. The unit regularly evaluates the performance of course instructors and field supervisors, recognizes excellence, and retains only those who are consistently effective.

A review of documents and stakeholder interviews indicate that qualified persons are assigned to instruct and guide induction candidates through professional development activities and clinical experiences. The instructional personnel are comprised of professional development providers who have expertise in working with candidates, curricula and current best practices. In addition, experienced and trained support providers lead the candidates toward professional growth.

Professional development providers are actively involved in the design and delivery of content that is presented to the candidates in a variety of settings including required monthly support provider/candidate meetings and district sponsored events. The professional development providers are comprised of current District staff including a secondary English Language Art/English Language Development TOSA, Teacher Induction TOSA, and lead support providers. Interviews with professional development providers confirm that they stay current with best practices and research through ongoing trainings as needed in areas such as Cognitive Coaching, AVID Leadership training, formative assessment training, and Advanced Student Engagement training.

Support providers offer regular mentoring and oversee field-based experiences in connection with FACT. Selection criteria for professional development providers and support providers are consistent with the roles and responsibilities as specified in their MOU. To be considered for selection, teachers must have the recommendation of a site administrator and demonstrate qualifications consistent with their specified area of support, and knowledge of the state-adopted academic content standards, curriculum frameworks, technology, English Learners and Special Populations.

The team found through interviews with candidates, that the professional development experiences provided to all candidates had an impact on their teaching practice. Specifically, candidates cited work in classroom management and class context to be valuable in their initial teaching experience. Stakeholder interviews confirm that the Visalia instructional personnel team of the program director, Induction TOSA, subject and grade level TOSA from Curriculum and Instruction, and selected support providers are qualified to teach and lead the professional development activities.

Multiple stakeholder groups shared evidence that instructional personnel demonstrate a commitment to current and relevant content they teach. The team verified evidence that professional development providers participate in district FACT training, district Coaching Conversations training, and are considered experts in their subject area or grade level. The current team of professional development providers are not only highly skilled, but have made an effort to show ongoing support of the candidates through active involvement in monthly collaboration meetings.

Each district job description states, “Visalia Unified School District is dedicated to the goal of building a culturally diverse faculty and staff. Qualified candidates who represent diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds are encouraged to apply.” The team found evidence that the instructional staff is reflective of a diverse society in regard to language, ethnicity, and gender. Through document review, including MOUs, and verified through interviews, support providers and professional development providers are expected to be knowledgeable about diverse abilities, culture, language, ethnic, and gender diversity. The team heard multiple times that the priority of the district and the program to provide training in culturally responsive teaching and to continue in their ongoing training of cultural sensitivity.

The team found evidence that professional development providers and support providers are expected to be familiar with the state-adopted academic content standards and performance levels for students, content specific pedagogy, and state-adopted curriculum frameworks. Their work is consistent with established Board-adopted content standards in all core subjects and has developed “essential” grade level standards (with benchmarks and rubrics) to be taught, monitored, and tested.

Evidence gathered through interviews and a review of documents verifies the program provides opportunities for the instructional staff to collaborate regularly and systematically with colleagues to improve teaching, candidate learning and educator preparation. Monthly support provider/candidate meetings and district events provide the opportunities for collaboration to occur. Facilitated by the program director, the monthly meetings allow the support providers to further develop and refine their skills, reflect on their current role as mentor, and network with others who serve as support providers at similar sites. On a weekly basis, the program director collaborates regularly with the Administrator of HRD to discuss program and candidate progress, needs, and direction.

Through examination of documents and stakeholder interviews with instructional personnel, the team confirmed that the program provides support for faculty development. Teacher Induction TOSA are encouraged to seek out and participate in researching current practices and programs. The program director participates in Teacher Performance Assessments (TPA) readings for local Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) and serves as a panelist for candidate interviews for local IHEs as well as neighboring Induction programs.

A review of documents indicates that candidates in the VUSD Induction program complete local mid-year and end-of-year surveys. These surveys are used by the program director to identify

areas of strength and areas of need related to services provided by support providers. The data from the surveys is analyzed and the program director provides formative feedback to support providers on their work including reminders of incomplete documentation logs, and monitoring attendance and participation at monthly meetings.

To ensure the effectiveness of support providers as field supervisors, data from the previous year's survey is reviewed and discussed with site administrators before they make their final support providers/candidate matches. Support providers who were not effective as mentors and/or did not maintain their agreements listed in the Support Provider MOU will not be retained. Effectiveness is also determined by reviewing support provider Milestones activities such as Conversation Records where support providers record and reflect upon their conversations with the candidates and describe the type of support received. The candidates shared the positive impact the conversations had on clarifying and enhancing their instructional efforts.

Program staff evaluates the effectiveness of professional development providers by reviewing evaluations completed by candidates following each professional development offering. The survey is administered through InductionSupport.com.

A review of documents and evidence provided through interviews show that survey results are analyzed and suggestions are considered for improving future presentations. These evaluation results are summarized for presentation to the Advisory Team and HRD administration. If a professional development provider's performance is unsatisfactory, a decision is made by the program director to continue work with the provider on improving his/her performance or finding another resource to meet the professional development need.

**Standard 5: Admission**

**Standard Met**

In each professional preparation program, applicants are admitted on the basis of well-defined admission criteria and procedures, including all Commission-adopted requirements. Multiple measures are used in an admission process that encourages and supports applicants from diverse populations. The unit determines that admitted candidates have appropriate pre-professional experiences and personal characteristics, including sensitivity to California's diverse population, effective communication skills, basic academic skills, and prior experiences that suggest a strong potential for professional effectiveness.

As part of the hiring process, the credential analyst determines eligibility for the Induction program based on Commission-adopted requirements. A list of eligible candidates is given to the program director who meets with site administrators to assign each candidate a site support provider. Candidates sign all documents at the meeting (Eligibility and Responsibility, MOU, etc.). Documents reviewed during the site visit confirm that there is a well-defined admission criteria and procedure.

VUSD has recruitment and selection board policies that provide guidelines to ensure all candidates are sensitive to VUSD's diverse population, are effective communicators, and have the academic skills to be an effective teacher within the district. Employment decisions are based on interviews, student teaching, and letters of recommendation. As stated previously,

the program has placed an emphasis on recruitment efforts at colleges and universities that target diverse populations.

Once teachers are hired, the credential analyst and the program director determine the credential status and eligibility. Based on a review of the candidate's credential information from their pre-service program or transferring district (for candidates who have completed their first year in another induction program), the credential analyst informs the program director and the newly hired candidate of program eligibility and the requirements to enter and complete an induction program. Following intake, the program director and site administrators match the candidate with qualified support providers. Interviews with the Advisory Team, support providers, and site administrators confirmed that the program director consults with the site administrator to ensure that the support provider match is appropriate.

**Standard 6: Advice and Assistance**

**Standard Met**

Qualified members of the unit are assigned and available to advise applicants and candidates about their academic, professional and personal development, and to assist each candidate's professional placement. Appropriate information is accessible to guide each candidate's attainment of all program requirements. The institution and/or unit provide support and assistance to candidates and only retains candidates who are suited for entry or advancement in the education profession. Evidence regarding candidate progress and performance is consistently utilized to guide advisement and assistance efforts.

As evidenced through interviews with the program director and site administrators, the team verified that qualified members of the unit are assigned and available to advise applicants and candidates at VUSD. The site administrator at each site, a team of well-trained support providers, and the program director work together to provide appropriate advice and assistance to each candidate.

A review of documentation provided and stakeholder interviews of principals verified that all site administrators attend a Site Administrators Roles and Responsibilities training at the beginning of the school year and participated in ongoing training updating them on program requirements. Site administrators have found the training to be relevant and aligned with district goals and initiatives. The team heard praise from program leadership and site administrators for the exit interview event held for candidates at the conclusion of the induction experience. The event has promoted a greater understanding for all participants about the personal and professional development of the candidates.

Site administrators' interviews confirmed that small group advisement opportunities are provided to candidates at the schools. Topics related to current teaching practice and induction requirements are often discussed.

The VUSD Induction program regularly accesses data and information from a variety of sources at regularly scheduled intervals in order to monitor candidates' progress with the purpose of guiding their work toward full attainment of all program requirements. The team verified, through stakeholder interviews, that the program maintains an online database, InductionSupport.com, which documents each candidate's progress toward completion. The database facilitates collection and storage of formative assessment documents including

supporting evidence pieces. The candidate and the program monitor this electronic portfolio. Interviews with candidates attest to the ease of navigation through the portal and the value of having resource information including FACT documents and timelines available for immediate access and use. The team heard evidence that support providers and Induction TOSA collaborate and provide invaluable assistance to the candidate in using this tool.

The team heard multiple examples of the support they have received from the program director and Induction TOSA on helping candidates towards attainment of all program requirements. Comments like "...they are the best" and "awesome!" were shared. These same sentiments were repeated throughout the visit. The work that the Induction team has provided the district has been invaluable to the advancement of the district's goals.

The program has in place a process to provide support and assistance to the candidate throughout the program. The team reviewed evidence that teachers have the opportunity to make requests for specific assistance by contacting program leadership through email. The program staff then works collaboratively with candidates, support providers, and site administrators to meet the requested needs.

The program schedules "Advise and Assist" events to provide additional work time with staff to help candidates with their credential work and an opportunity to have their questions answered. The event is offered multiple times and candidates register online through Induction.com. Candidates found the event to be helpful in meeting program requirements. Teachers who do not complete all the components of the Induction program within the initial two years of teaching may request a program extension. Interviews with the program director and Induction TOSA describe the process of retaining and advancing candidates in addition to counseling and support with program requirements.

As verified through a review of documents and stakeholder interviews, the program monitors candidates' performance and collects data consistently on their progress. Program staff monitors weekly logs documenting progress made by the candidates. Portfolio readers conduct two induction portfolio reviews during each year of candidate participation. Whenever satisfactory progress is not being made or when work does not meet established program standards (as noted in the rubric on each portfolio guide), the program director sets a meeting with the candidate and the support provider to discuss a plan for assistance.

**Standard 7: Field Experience and Clinical Practice****Standard Met**

The unit and its partners design, implement, and regularly evaluate a planned sequence of field-based and clinical experiences in order for candidates to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support all students effectively so that P-12 students meet state-adopted academic standards. For each credential and certificate program, the unit collaborates with its partners regarding the criteria for selection of school sites, effective clinical personnel, and site-based supervising personnel. Field-based work and/or clinical experiences provide candidates opportunities to understand and address issues of diversity that affect school climate, teaching, and learning, and to help candidates develop research-based strategies for improving student learning.

The VUSD Induction program uses FACT to provide a logical and effective sequence of field-based, clinical and reflective experiences for the candidate. The program director and support staff meet regularly to review the implementation and focus of FACT activities, inquiries, and reflections to ensure Induction Program Standards are being addressed and that the K-12 California Common Core State Standards are incorporated. The design of the program requires participating teachers to complete one inquiry in year one and two inquiries in year two. The CSTP are used as the rubric for teacher self-assessment as they work through field-based experiences. An early completion option is available for teachers that formally apply, and meet specific criteria including previous teaching experience. An individually designed program of completion is developed and implemented by the program and supported by the Induction TOSA.

As verified through interviews, the VUSD Advisory Team serves as the primary stakeholder group for collaborative decision-making regarding selection criteria for support providers, recruitment of portfolio readers, selection of support providers and other district personnel to serve as facilitators and/or professional development providers. The committee is comprised of program leadership, district administrators, staff, representatives of IHE, and program support providers. Stakeholder interviews and a review documentation including sign in sheets and agendas verify that the Advisory Team is well attended and meets regularly.

Through a review of portfolio documents and stakeholder interviews, the team verified that through the implementation of FACT, candidates engage in a series of field-based work and clinical experiences including reflective examination of their classroom practice, school site culture, district goals, and the community at large. Candidates indicated that they analyze formative assessment data to guide their planning of research-based instruction and focus on improving each student’s learning. The team heard multiple examples of the positive impact of the formative assessment on the candidates’ teaching practice.

**Standard 8: District-Employed Supervisors****Not Applicable**

District-employed supervisors are certified and experienced in either teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential. A process for selecting supervisors who are knowledgeable and supportive of the academic content standards for students is based on identified criteria. Supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.

Institution Sponsors only Second Tier Preparation Program

**Standard 9: Assessment of Candidate Competence****Standard Met**

Candidates preparing to serve as professional school personnel know and demonstrate the professional knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting the state-adopted academic standards. Assessments indicate that candidates meet the Commission-adopted competency requirements, as specified in the program standards.

Through interview and document review, the team verified that teacher candidates work through the VUSD Induction Program with the goal of demonstrating professional knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support all students in meeting the state-adopted academic standards. During VUSD Induction orientation, candidates sign an MOU acknowledging their responsibilities to collect evidence of reflective practice, document all work done through FACT, document individualized professional development experiences, and organize the evidence to demonstrate professional knowledge and skills. To support their efforts, the program accesses pertinent data and information at regularly scheduled intervals in order to monitor candidates' progress and guide their work toward full attainment of all program requirements. Candidates store and organize the collected data in their electronic portfolio, which is reviewed by the program director and a team of portfolio readers twice per year.

Portfolio readers review and provide feedback to candidates on their portfolio strengths and areas to be further addressed via checklists and rubrics. Candidates are able to respond to the readers, if necessary and resubmit their portfolio for a second review. Candidates work with their support provider to address any areas of concern. Portfolio readers share results of the portfolios with the program's Advisory Team. Trends and patterns of strengths and areas of growth are discussed and adjustments to the portfolios questions may be made in order to continually strengthen the candidates' program.

Upon verification of completion of all program requirements the program director notifies the candidates in writing that, in keeping with the Commission adopted competency requirements specified in the Induction Program Standards, they have demonstrated the necessary professional knowledge and skills in order to be recommended for a clear credential and provides direction on how to move forward with the application process through CTC. Should additional assistance be necessary, "Advise and Assist" events are provided for those candidates needing additional support.

The team verified through document review and stakeholder interviews that candidates' portfolios serve as the primary assessment to determine their competence. Portfolios provide evidence of inquiry work, FACT documentation and include checklist of candidates' completed work. Portfolio readers assess the quality of work completed and provide specific details that address strengths and areas of needs based on specific criteria. Interviews of candidates who are currently enrolled in the program, and program completers report FACT reflection activities to be beneficial in the refinement of their teaching practices. Evidence reviewed by the team, indicate that candidates utilize content standards while developing their inquiries. A summative analysis in which the candidates reflect on growth and identify next steps is completed. In addition, a separate exit interview process conducted at the end of the Induction program,

allows candidates and principals to connect the candidates' work to district and site goals. This process has a distinct impact on the understanding of the Induction program.

## **Program Report General Education Induction**

### **Program Design**

The Induction program operates within the administrative structure of VUSD's Human Resources Department (HRD) under the leadership of the Administrator of HRD and the program director. In addition, the Advisory Team is comprised of various stakeholders who bring a variety of perspectives to the team. This team consists of representatives from IHE, support providers, site administrators, district administrators, and TOSA. Team members state that their "questions, recommendations, and suggestions are sought from the program director and through this process they are able to learn from each other and have a sense of connectedness to the district goals". Members feel they are vital contributors to the program leadership.

The program director collaborates with the Advisory Team along with other departments, such as Curriculum and Instruction, Special Education, and State and Federal programs in order to provide an integrated program of support to teachers. Interviews with stakeholders highlighted the ease of accessibility of the program director. "She is quick to respond and her eagerness and excitement about the program is evident." From the Advisory Team members to program completers, the ongoing accessibility of the director was noted.

The VUSD Induction program follows the FACT model. Candidate work is submitted, reviewed by the program, and stored in an electronic portfolio. The program provides feedback to candidates via a checklist and additional "Advice and Assistance" events about their work once each semester. Candidates are able to resubmit their portfolio should any area not meet standards. Interviews with the portfolio readers indicated that through portfolio calibration and feedback, they are able to refine their support for the candidates they work with and help them grow in their instructional practice.

During the 2010-11 school year, the role of program director was moved from the Instructional Services Department and was added to the responsibilities of the Administrator of HRD. This change has allowed for strong communication between the Induction program and the VUSD credentialing department. The program director provides appropriate training to support providers, maintains communication with principals, and works closely with the credential analysts on intake of new teachers and credential follow up. The recent addition of two Induction TOSA for elementary and secondary programs also provides support as professional developers. These teachers are also support providers so that they continue to be a support to the program. The district has additional TOSA who not only are support providers themselves, but also provide the professional development to both candidates and support providers. Integration of various department supports that include English Learners and special student populations has been added recently.



The program has an Advisory Team in place that meets regularly throughout the year. The Advisory Team is comprised of various stakeholders who bring a variety of perspectives to the team. This team is comprised of IHE, support providers, site administrators, district administrators, and TOSA. Team members state that their “questions, recommendations, and suggestions are sought from the program director and through this process they are able to learn from each other and have a sense of connectedness to the district goals”. Members feel they are vital contributors to the program leadership.

### **Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)**

VUSD Induction training begins with Induction orientation in the fall and continues with training meetings once each month around the steps in FACT. Topics are adjusted based upon feedback of the support providers and the candidates. A typical year of training for candidates begins with a focus on classroom management and FACT and inquiry process. The second year for candidates focuses on support for English Learners, special student populations, culturally responsiveness, equity, and continued work on the inquiry process. Training is differentiated for candidates and support providers. At least once a year, additional topics generated from candidates and support providers are offered as optional sessions. Candidates and completers report that these “Hot Topics are incredibly valuable and relevant to the needs of new teachers”. Examples of these additional topics include: differentiation, addressing critical thinking, and support for advanced learners.

VUSD offers regular mandatory meetings for all support providers and professional development providers. These meetings are organized around the steps taken in FACT and expectations of fieldwork experiences. Agendas and other documents indicate breakout sessions are included for support providers to build mentoring skills through cognitive coaching and capturing conversations, along with opportunities for the support providers to network and address pressing needs of their candidates.

To support each candidate’s individualized professional development, teachers are encouraged to attend district workshops in ELD, SPED, Positive Discipline, Direct Interactive Instruction, and Kagan Engagement Strategies. These experiences are used as part of their Individual Induction Plan (IIP) that allows candidates to reflect on the application of the knowledge gained. TOSA are the main professional developers, with the support providers addressing individual concerns of candidates. Survey results of each workshop address both the content and the manner of presentation. Adjustments are made based upon these surveys. Topics for teachers in their second year of the program focus on supporting English Learners, special student populations, and cultural responsiveness. Additional topics are added each year depending upon the needs of the candidates and their support providers.

VUSD Induction program currently has 43 First Year Participating Teachers, 49 Second Year Participating Teachers, and 72 Support Providers. Support providers monitor candidates’ fieldwork through documented weekly meetings as evidenced by samples of weekly logs, which indicate the particular topics discussed during each meeting. This information is also provided

within the electronic portfolios of the candidates. Candidates listed the support providers as the most valuable aspect of the Induction program. Program completers indicate that they continue to have an on-going relationship with their mentors. Candidates also indicated that the inquiry process allowed them to “focus on the needs of their students and provided a more robust learning environment for all”.

During weekly Induction meetings, candidates and support providers share classroom experiences and how they best use FACT. These discussions help all candidates and support providers in refining their important work. Interviews of both candidates and support providers also indicated that release time to visit one another’s classrooms along with additional opportunities to visit other teachers’ classrooms depending upon the need was invaluable. One program completer indicated that “even though my support provider did not teach the same content as I did, she arranged for me to visit another teacher who did teach the same content as myself. That visit was very informative and helped me understand what a typical classroom looked like for my content area”. All stakeholders shared that the coursework is very relevant to today’s classroom, with classroom visitations as being the number one impact for the new teachers.

Candidates submit their fieldwork and reflections electronically four times throughout the two-year induction process, once each semester. Interviews with portfolio readers indicated calibration of portfolio samples prior to the reading of candidates’ portfolios assisted them with providing constructive feedback in order to support candidates in meeting the standards of expectations for these documents.

### **Assessment of Candidates**

Teacher candidates work through the VUSD Induction Program with the goal of demonstrating professional knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support all students in meeting the state-adopted academic standards.

To support candidates’ efforts, the program accesses pertinent data and information at regularly scheduled intervals in order to monitor candidates’ progress and guide their work toward full attainment of all program requirements. Candidates store and organize the collected data in the electronic portfolio, which is reviewed by the program director and a review team of portfolio readers twice per year. Portfolio readers review and provide feedback to candidates on their portfolio strengths and areas to be further addressed. Candidates work with their support provider to address any areas based upon the comments provided by the portfolio readers. These review documents are also available to the candidates’ support providers for any additional assistance required.

Upon verification of completion of all program requirements the program director notifies the candidates in writing that, in keeping with the Commission adopted competency requirements specified in the program standards, they have demonstrated the necessary professional knowledge and skills in order to be recommended for a clear credential and provides direction on how to move forward with the application process through CTC. Should additional

assistance be necessary, “Advise and Assist” events are provided for those candidates needing additional support.

Final assessment for completion of program is determined by the following documentation:

- Weekly meetings with a support provider identifying areas of focus for discussion and progress of work
- Completion of individualized professional development by both the support provider and the district’s professional development providers
- Completion of one inquiry for year one and two inquiries for year two including IIP each with a focused research question candidates portfolios reflect evidence of inquiry work, along with the checklist completed by the portfolio readers indicating quality of work completed (below standard-meets standard-exceeds standard)
- Completion of all FACT activities which document growth in relation to CSTP and Induction Standards 5 and 6 that address Pedagogy and Universal Access respectively.

Utilizing the tools from the FACT system evidence reviewed includes:

- Thoughtful and in-depth reflections, which candidates who are currently enrolled in the program, and those who have completed the program report to be beneficial in refinement of their teaching practices. “I learned so much about myself and my teaching through my formative assessments during this program”.
- Well-organized preparation for lesson series that includes differentiation strategies with in-depth planning supported candidates during the process of program completion where those who have completed the program indicated that they view the backwards mapping as an integral part of their teaching practice.
- Use of state adopted content standards evidence indicates that candidates utilize content standards while developing their inquiries. Through collaboration with Curriculum and Instruction, professional development events focus on Common Core implementation.
- TOSA are also support providers for the Induction program, new teachers benefit from their expertise and support, along with their support providers.
- Program completers shared analyzed student work samples, teachers, through their inquiries, “review student work and analyze causal effects for performance”.
- Pre and post self-assessments, program completers commented that these self-assessments helped focus their inquiries significantly, especially as new teachers where everything seems important,
- A summative analysis in which the candidates reflect on growth and next steps during the exit interview process, recommended by the Advisory Team, with district and site administration. Candidates and principals were able to connect the work to district and site goals and this process had a distinct impact on understanding of the Induction program.

### **Findings on Standards**

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, graduates, intern teachers, faculty, employers, and supervising

practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are fully **Met** for the General Education Induction Program.