

**Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of the
Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at
West Contra Costa Unified School District
April 2011**

Overview of this Report

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This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at West Contra Costa Unified School District. The report of the team presents the findings based upon reading the Site Visit Documentation reports, review of supporting documentation and interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the report, an accreditation recommendation of **Accreditation** is made for the institution.

**Common Standards and Program Standard Decisions
For all Programs Offered by the Institution**

	Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
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) District Employed Supervisors	Does not apply to Tier II credential programs		
9) Assessment of Candidate Competence	X		

	Total Program Standards	Program Standards		
		Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
General Education (MS and SS) Induction Programs	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 Site Visit Documentation
- 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: West Contra Costa Unified School District

Dates of Visit: April 11 – April 14, 2011

Accreditation Team

Recommendation: Accreditation

Rationale:

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation** was based on a thorough review of the site visit documentation; additional supporting documents available during the visit; interviews with candidates, program completers, site administrators, district office personnel, and local school personnel; along with additional information requested from program leadership during the visit. The team believes 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 the eight Common Standards related to the General Education (Multiple and Single Subject) Induction Program to determine if the Standards were met, met with concerns, or not met. The team found that Common Standard 1: Educational Leadership; Common Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation; Common Standard 3: Resources; Common Standard 4: Faculty; Common Standard 5: Admission; Common Standard 6: Advice and Assistance; Common Standard 7: Field Experience and Clinical Practice; and Common Standard 9: Assessment of Candidate Competence are **Met**.

Program Standards

Discussion of findings and appropriate input by individual team members and by the total team membership was provided for the General Education (Multiple Subject and Single Subject) Induction Program. Following the discussion the team determined that all of the General Education (MS/SS) Induction Program Standards are **Met**.

Overall Recommendation

The team conducted a thorough review of program documentation; evidence provided at the site; additional information provided by program administration; and interviews with candidates, program completers, site administrators, and other stakeholders. All General Education (Multiple Subject and Single Subject) Induction Program Standards are **Met**; therefore, the team unanimously recommends a decision of **Accreditation**.

- (1) On the basis of this recommendation, the institution is authorized to recommend candidates for the following credentials:

Advanced Teaching Credentials:

General Education (MS and SS) Induction Program

- (2) Staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the Preconditions be accepted.
- West Contra Costa Unified School District be permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- West Contra Costa 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:

Jan Barrett

Capistrano Unified School District

Common Standards Cluster:

Cheryle Browning

Retired Administrator – Los Angeles Unified School District

Beth Djonne

Rialto Unified School District

Advanced/Services Teaching Programs Cluster:

Patricia Beal

Retired – Murrieta Valley School District

Staff to the Accreditation Team:

Judy Roberts, Consultant

Fresno County Office of Education

Documents Reviewed

Common Standards Narrative	Program Assessment Feedback
Program Standards Narrative	Biennial Report
Program Summary	Biennial Report Response
Report of Findings	Preconditions
Documentation linked to standards	Induction Program budgets (2008-2011)
Participating teacher portfolios	BTSA Induction Handbook
Consultant contracts	West Contra Costa website
Monitoring documents	Early Completion Option criteria
Support provider/participating teacher logs	IEP @ a Glance form
Travel documents	Support provider training tracking report
Support provider profile	Master plan for English Learners
Professional development evaluations	FAS tools and processes
Inquiry instruction packets	New Teacher Center co-presenter debrief forms
RTI PowerPoint presentation	2010-2011 Inquiry packets
Professional development provider and support provider selection criteria	West Contra Costa School Board meeting agenda

Interviews Conducted

	Common Standards Cluster	Program Sampling Cluster	TOTAL
Candidates	12	26	38
Completers	3	0	3
Institutional Administration (Superintendent, Associate Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, Directors)	4	4	8
Employers (Site Administrators)	9	0	9
Program Coordinator	8	2	10
Field Supervisors – (Support Providers)	17	7	24
Faculty (Professional Development Providers)	0	2	2
Credential Analyst	1	1	2
Fiscal	1	0	1
Advisory Board members	6	0	6
Total			103

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

West Contra Costa Unified School District, located in Contra Costa County, is part of the San Francisco Bay metropolitan area. Contra Costa County is bounded on the north by the Bays of San Pablo and Suisun, the Straits of Carquinez and San Joaquin River; on the south by Alameda County; on the east by San Joaquin County and on the west by Alameda County and the Bay of

San Francisco. With approximately 1,051,677 residents, Contra Costa County is the ninth most populous county in California.

West Contra Costa Unified School District serves approximately 235,000 residents in the five cities of Richmond, El Cerrito, San Pablo, Pinole, and Hercules and the unincorporated areas of Bayview-Montalvin Manor, East Richmond Heights, El Sobrante, Kensington, North Richmond, and Tara Hills. The district is comprised of thirty-six elementary schools, six middle schools, six comprehensive high schools, and six alternative/continuing education high schools.

The mission of the West Contra Costa Unified School District is to *provide the highest quality education to enable all students to make positive life choices, strengthen the community, and successfully participate in a diverse and global society.* The district strives to *provide excellent learning and teaching experiences, safe, student-centered learning environments; support for all students and employees; as well as develop and maintain productive community partnerships and individual and collective accountability.*

The district serves approximately 30,000 students. Based on the 2010 California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Office (CBEDS), the student population includes: 48.2% Hispanic or Latino, 22.7% Black or African American, 11.6% white, 10.7% Asian, 5.5% Filipino, 0.7% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 0.4% two or more races or unreported students. Additionally, 32.6% of students are English Learners. Of those English Learners, the proportion of specific languages is as follows: 27.2% Spanish, 0.9% Filipino, 0.6% Vietnamese, 0.5% Mien, 0.5% Punjabi, and 2.9% other. In total, approximately 80 different languages are represented in the district. 65.7% of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

Superintendent Bruce Harter believes that “an effective teacher makes a greater difference than any other factor that impacts student achievement.” Certificated staff includes 1,495 teachers. Approximately 88% of the teachers are fully credentialed. Ethnicities represented by teachers include: 61.7% White, 12.5% Black or African American, 12% Hispanic or Latino, and 6.7% Asian, and 9.3% other.

Although West Contra Costa Unified School District is a program improvement district, data indicate that students continue to demonstrate improved achievement. The district’s overall Academic Performance Index (API) reported in 2010 increased from 688 to 696. The achievement gap has decreased in recent years; however, the difference in academic performance between the highest and lowest achievers continues to be a challenge for the district.

Graduation rates in 2009/2010 are unavailable, but 2008/2009 rates were 74.4%. One of the key initiatives of the district, identified in the West Contra Costa Unified School District *2009-10 Annual Report*, is to enhance the college and career oriented culture. The district reports an increased number of graduates who attend two and four year colleges, an increase in the number of students enrolled in college-level Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and an increased number of students enrolled in concurrent community and university courses.

The West Contra Costa Unified School District Student Population Projection Report indicates a projected increase in K-6 student population during the next 10 years. The overall 7-8 grade student population is expected to remain stable. The overall 9-12 student population is expected to decline annually until the 2014/2015 school year and then increase until the end of 2020.

Increased partnerships with businesses (Chevron and Target) and three foundations (James Irvine Foundation, Gooden Family Scholarship Fund, and Whittier Educational Foundation) provide substantial grants to the school district.

Education Unit

West Contra Costa Unified School District offers a General Education (Multiple Subject/Single Subject) Induction Program. The Induction Program is housed in the Human Resources Department and is overseen by the Human Resources Director of Certificated Staff and the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. The Induction Program Manager is responsible for day-to day operations of the program.

The induction program focuses on new teacher development and formative assessment. Each candidate is matched with an experienced and knowledgeable support provider who conducts mentoring and support throughout the Formative Assessment System (FAS).

**Table 1
Program Review Status**

Program Name	Program Level	Number of program completers (2009-10)	Number of Candidates Enrolled (10-11)	Agency Reviewing Programs
General Education (MS/SS) Induction Programs	Advanced	72	106	CTC

The Visit

The West Contra Costa Unified School District site visit team included three team members and a team lead. Prior to the visit, team members engaged in a telephone conference to discuss their completed Common Standards Planning Instrument and to develop questions for West Contra Costa Unified School District constituent group representatives. The team met at the district office to review documentation and interview stakeholders for four days.

Common Standards

Standard 1: Educational Leadership

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.

Findings

The West Contra Costa Unified School District implements an Induction Program aligned with the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession*, the state-adopted academic content standards, and curriculum frameworks. Interviews with district administrators, program leaders, and Advisory Board members, along with reviews of participating teacher binders, confirm that the vision of teachers who "...are knowledgeable, effective practitioners of current pedagogy who create safe and equitable environments in which all students learn" has been created and is articulated by the program. District administrators report that the vision of the Induction Program is an essential component of the district's priority of increased student achievement.

Participating teachers collaborate weekly with their support providers using the research-based Formative Assessment System (FAS) and the job-embedded cycle of plan-teach-reflect-apply to continually move their practice forward. Participating teachers develop an Individual Learning Plan that guides year-long inquiries into their practice and focuses on district initiatives towards creating safe and equitable learning environments where every student learns. Participating teachers, program staff, and district administrators report that professional development opportunities that support the inquiry process are made available to participating teachers. Review of participating teacher binders and interviews with participating teachers, support providers, and administrators confirm that the use of Formative Assessment System tools positively impacts teaching and learning in participating teachers' classrooms.

Program staff and stakeholders participate in the organization, governance, and coordination of all aspects of the program. The Advisory Board includes the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Director of Certificated Staff, an Institution of Higher Education (IHE) representative, and Program Managers. Interviews with Advisory Board members substantiate that they are involved in providing input for program design, review of participating teacher binders, professional development needs, and evaluation processes. They meet monthly to discuss policy and fiscal decisions and to assist in program implementation. They are also accessible to one another on an "as needed" basis through emails, telephone, and informal meetings. In addition to the Advisory Board, interviewees indicated that a Leadership Team will reconvene in 2011-2012. Membership will include participating teachers, support providers, site administrators, district leadership, union leadership, representatives from institutions of higher education, and BTSA staff.

The West Contra Costa Induction Program's organizational chart illustrates that it operates within the Human Resources Department and is overseen by the Human Resources Director of Certificated Staff and the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. In interviews, district administration expressed commitment to maintaining an effective induction program for new teachers. The Superintendent stated, "It's a given. We can't do without it!" Program Managers and other Advisory Board members confirmed that program staff is responsible for overall program design, implementation, and evaluation and are afforded "tremendous latitude and tremendous support" in those responsibilities. Ongoing communication that guides program implementation takes place between Program Managers and district administration at monthly meetings and through regular emails and conversations.

Document reviews and interviews with program staff, the Credential Analyst, and participating teachers confirm that the Induction Program collaborates with the Human Resources Department to implement a planned process that informs and supports new teachers towards completing the requirements for the Clear Credential. The Participating Teacher (PT) Journey documents an ordered sequence of steps from point-of-hire through completion of program requirements. Participating teachers report that they receive a copy of the PT Journey at their initial orientation meeting and utilize it to follow their progress towards program requirements. Semiannual binder reviews serve to monitor participating teachers' progress. District administrators, program staff, participating teachers, and support providers report that annual binder reviews provide useful feedback to participating teachers, not only for program completion, but also for identifying participant growth and areas of need. Participation records are maintained in the BTSA database. The Program Manager notifies Human Resources with the Letter of Completion. Each participating teacher is then advised and supported through the process of applying for the Clear Credential. This process was confirmed in an interview with the Credential Analyst.

Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation

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.

Findings

A review of documents and interviews with program staff, Advisory Board members, site administrators, and participating teachers confirm that the West Contra Costa Unified School District Induction Program implements an assessment system for ongoing program evaluation and improvement.

Data are collected and analyzed from a variety of sources throughout the school year and used to inform the program. The results of the annual statewide survey, the mid-year survey, feedback from the Inquiry Binder reviews, and feedback from professional development seminars are some of the data used to support program design modifications and to determine completer performance. Program Managers meet monthly with Advisory Board members to discuss unit operations specific to program improvement and candidate competence. Through interviews, the program completers reported that communication with Induction personnel continues to be

cordial and helpful. They confirmed that processes and pedagogical strategies demonstrated during their two-year induction experience are still used and valued.

Interviews with a variety of stakeholders and a review of the biennial report, participating teacher Inquiry Binders, and other program artifacts demonstrate on-going and comprehensive data collection related to candidate qualifications and proficiency, as well as program effectiveness. Strategies to support individual candidates and program improvement are determined through analysis of the data collected through informal classroom observations, post-observation reflections, self-assessments, Collaborative Assessment Logs, lesson plans, and Individualized Learning Plans. After interviews and document review, it was determined that West Contra Unified School District stakeholders demonstrate commitment to a quality program based upon the needs of the participating teacher and that Program Managers consistently collect, analyze, and use data to improve the program.

Standard 3: Resources

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.

Findings

As the Local Educational Agency (LEA) for an approved single-district Induction Program, the West Contra Costa Unified School District provides necessary facilities, technology, and support to prepare candidates to effectively meet the state-adopted standards for educator preparation. The district allocates funds to support program components in a manner consistent with the program design. During interviews with the Advisory Board, the Superintendent, and other district personnel, it was clear that the Induction program is a high priority. The district is committed to providing the funding necessary for continual program growth. District personnel reported that the district recently provided the program with a training room and an office for the program staff. Resources such as technology, office equipment, furniture, and supplies for trainings are also provided to the program and are present in each of the training and office areas.

A review of program documents and interviews with various stakeholders verify that the district hires personnel to adequately support the program. Currently, the program staff consists of one full-time and one part-time (.37 FTE) Program Managers. A part-time office assistant is also employed for office management tasks. Each participating teacher selects a support provider. Support providers are paid a stipend for each teacher they support. A review of the support provider match roster reveals that participating teachers are currently being served by either classroom-based teachers, retired teachers, or a district-employed Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) coach. Most support providers are classroom-based teachers who work at the same site as their participating teachers.

The Program Managers monitor and adjust resource allocations on an ongoing basis and conduct an annual review of resource needs. Annually, Program Managers develop and submit a proposed budget to the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and the Director of

Certificated Staff. Human Resources Department administrators negotiate with Fiscal and Educational Services for final budget approval. Interviews with Human Resources Department administrators and the Associate Superintendent of Fiscal Services, along with a review of budgets and expenditures, confirmed that multiple funding sources are utilized to ensure that program and candidate needs are met. An interview with the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services also indicated that the Program Managers collaborate with the Curriculum and Instruction Department to provide professional development for teachers.

Interviews with the Program Managers, the Associate Superintendent of Fiscal Services, and the Advisory Board members confirmed that there is a process in place for budget revisions when an unanticipated need arises. One example cited was the need to hire additional support providers due to increased number of participating teachers. Budget documents and program records also support this finding.

Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel

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.

Findings

The West Contra Costa Unified School District employs qualified staff to deliver the Induction Program to participating teachers. A full-time (1.0 FTE) and a part-time (.37 FTE) Program Manager oversee the day-to-day operations of the program. Program Managers and professional development providers collaborate in the design and delivery of professional development. The Program Managers provide much of the professional development for participating teachers and support providers, including Formative Assessment System (FAS) trainings. The FAS trainings are done in collaboration with the New Teacher Center which uses a gradual release model. Currently, the Induction program staff facilitates all year 1 support provider training, while New Teach Center consultants and Program Managers co-facilitate year 2 support provider training. The program staff will facilitate year 1 and year 2 support provider training for 2011-2012.

The Induction Program employs support providers and professional development providers who are exemplary and who demonstrate working knowledge of the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (CSTP), state-adopted content standards and frameworks, content and grade-level pedagogy, and developmental levels of learning. There are suggested selection criteria for support providers and professional development providers. Interviews with participating teachers, support providers, and site administrators indicated that the participating teacher is in charge of selecting their own support provider whether from a list provided by the

program or an alternate teacher of their choice. Each support provider must exhibit certain characteristics of exemplary teaching practice, as outlined on the distributed criteria. Support providers are matched with participating teachers based on subject matter competence, grade level, or site considerations.

The Induction Program provides regularly scheduled training opportunities that develop and refine skills and knowledge of the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* and the appropriate use of the formative assessment system tools. Additionally, program leadership regularly participates in high quality professional development activities at the state, cluster, and local level.

Upon review of the FAS documents and Inquiry Binders, it was evident that support provider training was conducted by professional developers who possess current knowledge of the context of the district and also best practices in teaching and learning. This knowledge translates into the reflections, Collaborative Assessment Logs, and work that the participating teachers produce.

The program makes every effort to ensure that professional development providers and support providers reflect the diverse society of the teachers and student populations they serve. Professional development for support providers targets diversity of abilities, culture, language, ethnicity, and gender diversity through the two-year FAS training sequence. In addition, the BTSA Induction Program focuses on identity safety which provides the framework for exploring issues of diversity and school/classroom environments while meeting students' social, emotional, and cognitive needs. The identity safety focus has a practical message. Even though stereotypes held in the larger society may be difficult to change, it is possible to create classrooms in which negative stereotypes are applied to a lesser extent. This focus gives teachers a way to think about an alternative colorblindness. It calls on teachers to strive to create a learning environment that fosters a sense of belonging among students in which each student is valued and respected as a contributive member in the classroom. Additionally, the identity safety focus invites teachers to explore the following foundational strategies that support the development and maintenance of an equitable classroom: 1) Expressing high expectations for all and developing and implementing structures necessary to support students' reaching those expectations; 2) Creating and maintaining respectful classroom relationships; 3) Cultivating positive student-teacher relationships; and 4) Viewing diversity as a resource for learning. Agendas and training materials were made available that outlined the training and implementation of this focus throughout the program. The identity safety focus was discussed in interviews with participating teachers, support providers, and the Advisory Board. It was clearly communicated that this is in alignment with a district-wide focus on cultural competence and understanding culturally responsive teaching.

West Contra Costa Unified School District supports ongoing collaboration among all stakeholders relative to their role in the program in order to facilitate support provider and professional development providers' development and program quality. The BTSA calendar includes multiple opportunities per year for the support providers to collaborate on program requirements. During interviews with relevant stakeholders, it was determined that other collaboration that takes place occurs at school sites through collaboration days or department and/or grade-level meetings. In some cases, multiple support providers meet with participating teachers at a site to collaborate.

Program staff collaborates with the Curriculum and Instruction Department in order to facilitate support provider and professional development providers' development and program quality. Collaboratively, they provide voluntary professional development opportunities to all teachers. Some are specific to all teachers and support staff and some are specific to Induction. There is a district professional development calendar that is extensive although it does not include the Induction trainings that take place. The BTSA database used by the program keeps records of Induction trainings that take place and the attendance at each meeting. The database is not correlated to the district system so it does not reflect participation in additional district-sponsored trainings.

Professional development providers are evaluated through training feedback forms collected at the end of trainings. Training feedback is one of the multiple data sources used in making program modifications. Support providers reported that changes have been made to the organization of trainings and participating teacher documentation requirements based on feedback they provided on evaluations. Support providers receive formal written feedback after every Inquiry Binder review. Once struggling support providers are identified, assistance is provided. Based on interviews with Program Managers and a review of documentation, if concerns are not addressed, ineffective support providers are not invited back. Interviews with the Program Managers indicate that only professional development providers and support providers who are consistently effective are retained.

Standard 5: Admission

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.

Findings

Through a review of documents and interviews with stakeholders, it was determined that Program Managers collaborate with Human Resources Department staff to ensure that only those teachers who meet the Commission-adopted admission requirements are admitted to the West Contra Costa Unified School District Induction Program. Upon hiring, participating teachers sign a Credential Information Sheet which indicates whether they meet admission criteria and are eligible to enter the Induction Program. Interviews with the Credential Analyst verified that she reviews applications, credentials, transcripts, and pre-service induction documentation for placement of participating teachers into the program. A Human Resources Intake form, Eligibility Agreement, and Participating Teacher Information form are some of the documentation verifying eligibility for participation. The Induction Program Agreement Form is signed and information is forwarded to the induction staff to determine the need for support providers. Each participating teacher is advised initially of the Early Completion Option. Early Completion Option eligibility criteria and requirements are outlined in the Induction packet.

The district encourages applicants from diverse populations. Interviews with the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and the Director of Certificated Staff revealed that the

district participates in recruiting fairs and community outreach programs in an effort to support applicants from diverse populations. Posting jobs on EdJoin also allows potential candidates to learn of employment opportunities in the West Contra Costa School District.

Since each candidate who is accepted to the Induction Program must hold the appropriate preliminary credential, it was determined that each of the candidates has 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. Interviews with various stakeholders and information contained in the Intake Form, the BTSA Induction Program Agreement, and the Participating Teacher Information form verified the existence of well-defined admission and eligibility criteria, as well as clear admission procedures. Evidence suggested that the Program Managers and Human Resources Department staff meet regularly to review program effectiveness and candidate progress towards professional competence and program completion ensuring that each participating teacher receives training and ongoing support.

Standard 6: Advice and Assistance

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.

Findings

Induction staff and Human Resources Department personnel of West Contra Costa Unified School District have appropriate educational backgrounds and work experience to advise candidates about their academic, professional, and personal development, and to assist each candidate's professional placement. Document reviews and interviews provided evidence that participating teachers who have previous experience in the district (i.e., paraprofessionals, substitutes, student teachers, interns) have a strong role in selecting their support provider. For those new to the district, participating teachers collaborate with site administrators and Program Managers in the support provider selection process. Although interviews with site administrators indicated that they would like to increase their involvement in the matching process, selections are based on well-defined criteria. Support providers participate in initial Formative Assessment System (FAS) training (five days in year 1 and three days in year 2), Credential Candidate meetings, and Individual Learning Plan workshops. Human Resources Department personnel attend trainings provided through the Commission on Teacher Credentialing regarding credential updates, including those specific to Induction.

To guide the participating teacher's attainment of all program requirements, the induction staff conducts a mandatory Induction Program orientation meeting to review program requirements. Documentation reveals that all year 1 participating teachers attend the meeting. A sequence of completion activities is also included in the Inquiry Instructions packet. Through document reviews and teacher interviews, the team confirmed that Program Managers provide feedback on progress to each participating teacher at the mid-year and end-of-the-year Inquiry Binder

reviews. In addition, teachers stated that Program Managers provide prompt individual assistance throughout the year. Credential candidate meetings held four times per year provide participating teachers and support providers with additional information and support regarding program completion requirements. The induction staff also reviews the weekly participating teacher/support provider activity logs to monitor progress and determine need for additional assistance.

Program Managers work collaboratively with Human Resources personnel in advising participating teachers of their credential completion requirements. Candidates are provided with contact information and other pertinent information at the orientation and in the Induction Handbook.

Each participating teacher has the responsibility to collect evidence of demonstration of the FAS requirements and to continue toward program completion. Performance is assessed through the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession*, Continuum of Teaching Practice, and self-assessments. The results of specific measures of progress and performance, such as candidate reflections, weekly collaboration logs, and analysis of student work as part of the inquiry process are used to guide and assist candidates. After a thorough review, the Program Manager signs and submits the verification of completion form to the Human Resources Department. The Credential Analyst and participating teacher then meet to complete the process to apply for a Clear Credential. The team's review of the collected evidence indicated that there are adequate checks and balances in place for assistance and guidance of candidates in the Induction program completion process.

Standard 7: Field Experience and Clinical Practice

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.

Findings

The West Contra Costa Unified School District's Induction Program provides a planned sequence of job-embedded experiences for participating teachers via a year-long inquiry of practice. By using the New Teacher Center's Formative Assessment System (FAS), participating teachers demonstrate application of pedagogy (Program Standard 5) and universal access (Program Standard 6-6b). Inquiry is structured around three components: Assessing Learning Context, Setting and Reflecting on Professional Goals, and Examining Practice through Inquiry. Program calendars, handbooks, instructions for completion, and the PT Journey support these required components.

Each year, the participating teacher creates an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) that serves as the road map for their year-long inquiry. This ILP consists of a teacher-selected, pedagogy-based inquiry question and an identity safety focus. Each participating teacher investigates their inquiry

question and identity safety focus through the lens of two case study students each year: a representative student (full range of learners) and a special populations student (year 1) or English learner (year 2). Support providers and participating teachers are provided training in completing and implementing the ILP. Instructions are provided in handbooks for participating teachers and support providers. ILP's were found in all available participating teachers' Induction Binders.

Each participating teacher's induction experience is facilitated by a trained support provider. Interviews with site administrators, participating teachers, and support providers indicated that the selection of the support provider is the responsibility of the participating teacher unless assistance is needed from the site administrator or Program Manager. In addition to the support provider selection criteria, personal and professional compatibility, the grade level, subject area, and location are also considered in the matching process. Participating teachers meet weekly with their support provider. The support provider uses FAS processes and tools to guide the participating teacher's classroom-based inquiry and completion of program requirements. These documents were all contained in the participating teachers' Induction Binders.

The Induction Program places an emphasis on the identity safety focus which provides the framework for exploring issues of diversity, as well as school and classroom environments, while meeting students' social, emotional, and cognitive needs. Agendas and training materials were made available that outlined the training and implementation of this focus in the ILP and throughout the program. The identity safety focus was discussed in interviews with participating teachers, support providers and the Advisory Board. It was clearly communicated that this is in alignment with a district-wide focus on cultural competence and understanding culturally responsive teaching.

As participating teachers work through the inquiry, they also develop and refine a repertoire of research-based strategies for improving student learning. Exploration of the pedagogy-based inquiry question enables them to demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to help students meet academic standards. These inquiry questions were clearly identified and reviewed throughout the Formative Assessment System and the Induction Binders. During interviews with participating teachers, they discussed how the identity safety focus and their investigation of their inquiry question benefited their teaching. Student evidence is contained in the Induction Binders.

Evidence reviewed by the site visit team indicated that candidates have the full range of experiences required by the standards. Accommodations are made if individual participating teachers are not assigned to a classroom setting that is conducive to meeting program requirements.

Standard 8: District-Employed Supervisors

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.

Does not apply to Second Tier Credential Programs

Standard 9: Assessment of Candidate Competence

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.

Findings

Processes and tools within the Formative Assessment System are used to generate evidence of participating teacher application and demonstration of the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* and the Induction Standards for pedagogy and equity. During the two years of Induction participation, observations, lesson plans, and analysis of representative student work (a special population student and an English learner) occur at regular intervals. This process also includes reflective writing regarding how to move students to the next level of proficiency and how to personally progress along the *Continuum of Teaching Practice*.

Twice yearly, participating teachers submit documented evidence of their competency requirements in their Inquiry Binders. Program Managers check for adequate progress toward program completion. Formative written feedback, based on a scoring rubric, is provided for each participating teacher/support provider pair to note specific areas of strength, areas for growth, and the need for resubmission due to missing or incomplete elements. If a participating teacher/support provider team is not progressing satisfactorily, a meeting is held to provide guidance, arrange for additional support, and develop an action plan, if needed. Interviews with participating teachers and support providers verified the accuracy of this process description and the efficacy of the process.

When a participating teacher has successfully completed all Commission-adopted competency requirements, a Letter of Completion is sent to the Credential Analyst in the Human Resources Department. During an interview with Human Resources staff and through a review of program documentation, the team confirmed that the Credential Analyst meets individually with candidates to assist them in the process for applying online for the Clear Credential with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

West Contra Costa Unified School District Induction

Program Design

The West Contra Costa Unified School District Induction Program is overseen by the Human Resources Director of Certificated Staff and is part of the Human Resources Department. The Program Manager provides the day-to-day leadership of the program. The Induction Program staff consists of one full-time and one part-time Program Manager as well as one part-time secretary. Most support providers are classroom-based. Retired teachers and the district's Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) coach are also utilized to provide one-on-one support to candidates. The Credential Analyst in the Human Resources Department works with the program staff to determine candidate eligibility for program participation.

The West Contra Costa Unified School District Induction Program uses the New Teacher Center's Formative Assessment System (FAS) which focuses on the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (CSTP), the P-12 Academic Content Standards, Curriculum Frameworks, Program Standard 5 (Pedagogy), and Program Standard 6 (Universal Access: Equity for all Students). Participating teachers collect evidence of their teaching practice through documentation of the inquiry process. Evidence includes lesson plans, analysis of student work, Collaboration Assessment Logs, support provider observation, reflection, and self-assessment. All inquiries include an identity safety focus.

Ongoing assessment of the professional development of the candidates in the program is achieved through activities and benchmarks as part of FAS. The FAS process guides candidates to become reflective teachers who are cognizant of individual student needs, who employ a variety of strategies while adjusting their teaching practice in order to meet the instructional and identity safety needs of all their students. Inquiry Binder evidence and participating teacher interviews confirmed an appreciation for the process while in the program and an expectation to continue these "habits of mind" after completion of induction.

In order to keep abreast of current best practices in teaching and teacher preparation, Program Managers collaborate with colleagues at BTSA Cluster 1-sponsored meetings and BTSA Institute of Higher Learning Collaboration Network meetings held throughout the year.

In recognition of the importance of the participating teacher/support provider relationship, participating teachers self-select their support providers. The participating teacher/support provider matching process is completed within 30 days of entry into the Induction Program. During the year, if either a participating teacher or support provider is dissatisfied with their match, Induction staff initially works to resolve differences. If a reassignment needs to be made for any reason, program staff follows the PT/SP Matching Guidelines to facilitate a new match. Participating teachers and support providers reported the process to be effective and timely.

During interviews with district management, a representative of the BTSA Institute of Higher Learning Collaboration Network, the Credential Analyst, participating teachers, and support providers numerous statements were heard indicating respect and trust in the Program Managers.

Course of Study

At the beginning of the year, participating teachers attend an orientation meeting where they are informed of the program structure and operating procedures. They are advised of the induction process, credential completion requirements, and the support provider selection process.

In September, the participating teacher/support provider pairs attend the initial Inquiry meeting to begin their collaborative process. Support providers have an opportunity to attend additional required participating teacher meetings. Interviews with Program Managers and a review of the support provider profile verify attendance at support provider trainings and meetings.

As candidates move through FAS, they work with their support provider to develop pedagogical-based questions with an identity safety focus for two inquiries per year. They investigate best-practice strategies, design lesson plans, prepare for observations and follow-up discussions, examine student work and assessment data, have reflective conversations regarding the data collected, and identify next steps.

Each inquiry focuses on a representative student from the range of learners in the class and another special populations student in year one, and an English learner in year two. During each year, two inquiries are completed with the same two designated students with multiple lessons, observations, data collection and analysis, and written reflections completed. Inquiry Binder examination demonstrated a narrow yet deep process in understanding effective practice for the identified students in their academic and personal growth.

Interviews with the Coordinator of Educational Services and the Special Education Local Planning Area (SELPA) Director indicated that they collaborate with the Program Managers to offer professional development in the areas of English learner and special population student needs. Services from English learner development specialists and special education staff are also available to participating teachers in the form of consulting and coaching. These site-based personnel monitor the implementation of adherence to legal and ethical obligations for teaching English learners and special population students during the participating teacher's induction experience.

Inquiry Binder reviews are conducted by Program Managers twice annually. Incomplete or less than standard work may be remediated, corrected, and resubmitted. In special circumstances, additional time beyond the two years may be requested.

Candidate Competence

Meetings for candidates and their support providers are held periodically throughout each of the two years to introduce upcoming inquiries that guide the pairs in their work. Candidates are introduced to induction requirements during the September credential meeting. The agenda is focused on an overview of the Formative Assessment System and an examination of the first tasks to be completed. Three additional candidate credential meetings are held during the year, where Formative Assessment System tasks are previewed and clarified. Meetings serve the following purposes: dissemination of information regarding credentialing requirements, due dates for specific activities, and required training dates that will lead to the completion of requirements for the clear credential. As each of the four FAS tasks are submitted, they are assessed for quality completion by Program Managers. A detailed Inquiry Review Feedback

document with assignments marked “Completed” or “Not met” with accompanying feedback is returned to the candidate/support provider pair. “Not met” items are to be completed and resubmitted.

Candidates complete all of the induction program requirements; required meetings and professional development attendance; online BTSA program evaluations; and submission of an Inquiry Binder containing a collection of evidence and artifacts related to the Formative Assessment System demonstrating competence in Program Standards 5, 6, 6a and 6b. The binder is reviewed and evaluated for completion by Program Managers. Participating teachers are informed of their completion status. If there are missing or incomplete evidence pieces, there are specific directions for remedy. When completion requirements are verified, candidates receive a letter from the Program Manager to submit to the district’s Credential Analyst. A Verification of Completion Form 41-Induction is issued to support their application for the clear credential. Once received, the Credential Analyst guides the candidate through the application process.

Findings on Standards:

After review of the institutional report and supporting documentation; and after conducting interviews with participating teachers, graduates, support providers, district office personnel, and employers, the team determined that all program standards are **MET**.