

**Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of the
Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at
Tulare City Elementary School District**

Professional Services Division

April 2012

Overview of This Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at Tulare City Elementary School District. The report of the team presents the findings based on reading the Institutional Self-Study 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	N/A		
9) Assessment of Candidate Competence	X		

Program Standards

	Total Program Standards	Program Standards		
		Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
Induction Clear Credential	6	X		

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 Team Report

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

Institution: Tulare City Elementary School District

Dates of Visit: March 19-21, 2012

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 program leadership, district administrators, school site administrators, Human Resources personnel, Support Providers, candidates, completers, and Advisory Board members; along with additional information requested from program leadership during the visit. The team determined that they obtained sufficient and consistent information leading them 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 entire team reviewed each of eight Common Standards and determined whether the standard was met, not met, or met with concerns. The site visit team found that all eight Common Standards are **Met**.

Program Standards

Discussion of findings and appropriate input by individual team members and by the total team membership was provided for the BTSA Induction Program. Following discussion, the team considered whether the programs standards were met, met with concerns, or not met. The CTC team found that all program standards are **Met**.

Overall Recommendation

The team completed a thorough review of program documents, program data, *FACT fieldwork*, and interviews with program leadership, district administrators, school site administrators, Human Resources personnel, teachers' association representation, Institutes of Higher Education representatives, Support Providers, candidates, completers, and Advisory Committee members. Due to the finding that all Common Standards are **Met**, and all Program Standards are **Met**, 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:

General Education (MS and SS) Induction Program

(2) Staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
- Tulare City ESD be permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Tulare City ESD continues 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:	Sean McCarthy Murrieta Valley USD
Common Standards Cluster:	Gail Pinnell Antioch Unified SD
Program Sampling Cluster:	Adora Fisher Cupertino Union SD
Staff to the Accreditation Team:	Gordon Surface Consultant

Documents Reviewed

Agendas and Newsletters
Common Standards Report
Candidate Files
Induction Handbook
Mid-Year & Statewide Survey results
Program Assessment Feedback
Biennial Report Feedback
Formative Assessment (FACT) field work
Calendar of Program Events
Communication Documents
Advisement Documents
Selection Criteria & Applications for:
--Professional Development Providers
--Support Providers
Program Budget Plan
Participating Teacher Completion Data

Interviews Conducted

	Common Standards Cluster	Program Sampling Cluster	TOTAL
Candidates	18	17	35
Completers	14	14	14
Employers – Site Administrators	18	18	18
Institutional Administration	4	4	8
Program Coordinators	3	3	3
Professional Development Providers	8	8	8
Field Supervisors – Support Providers	17	16	33
Advisory Board Members	5	5	10
Advisors – Program Staff	2	2	2
Credential Analysts and Human Resources	4	4	4
TOTAL			136

Note: In some cases, individuals were interviewed in one session for more than one cluster because of their multiple roles; however, the TOTAL does represent the number of interviewees.

Background Information

Tulare City Elementary School District (TCESD) as LEA, and Tulare Joint Union High School District (TJUHS) as co-sponsor, are located in a rural community of approximately 48,000 situated in the Central San Joaquin Valley along Highway 99, 45 miles south of Fresno and 60 miles north of Bakersfield. The districts have a history of collaboration that began in 1999 when they established an agreement to sponsor a Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program. TCESD provides for the educational needs of approximately 9,300 K-8 students in ten elementary schools, four middle schools and one community day school while TJUHS serves approximately 5,300 9-12 students in three comprehensive high schools and one alternative campus. A five-member Board of Trustees governs Tulare ESD and a five-member School Board governs Tulare JUHS.

Education Unit

The Tulare City ESD BTSA Induction Program consortium was begun in 1999. The BTSA Induction Program Directors, one from the elementary district and one from the secondary district, oversee the program and share responsibility for its implementation. The Program Directors have primary responsibility for overall administration of the program. The Human Resources Department staff communicates directly with the Program Directors regarding new hires and their qualifications for program participation. The Program Directors also collaborate on a monthly basis with the BTSA Advisory Committee, which is made up of representatives

from both districts including district and site administrators, teacher association members, Support Providers, and past candidates. The role of Advisory Committee members is defined in a Memorandum of Understanding and includes evaluation, monitoring, and adjustment of the program effectiveness.

The Induction Program utilizes the Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT) as a means of application and demonstration of pedagogical knowledge and skills acquired in the preliminary credential program. The Induction Program provides comprehensive professional development for candidates in coordination with the sponsoring districts. Professional development choices are guided by candidates' professional growth goals established in their IIP.

The program had a total of 44 candidates complete the program in the 2010-2011 school year. During the 2011-2012 school year, the program has 37 candidates.

Table 1
Program Review Status

Program Name	Number of program completers (2010-11)	Number of Candidates Enrolled or Admitted (2011-12)	Agency or Association Reviewing Programs
Induction	44	37	CTC

The Visit

The site visit began on Monday, March 19 at 12:00 noon and was completed on Wednesday, March 21, 2012. On Tuesday afternoon, a Mid-Visit report was shared with the program facilitator. On Wednesday morning, consensus was reached on all standard decisions and on an accreditation recommendation. A presentation of findings for program leadership was held late morning on Wednesday, March 21, and a presentation of findings for invited guests immediately following. There were no unusual circumstances affecting this visit.

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.

The institution has created and articulated a program aligned with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) and the California adopted standards and curriculum framework, evident in its use of Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT) system. Examination of the FACT tools and processes, including completed FACT documents, Individual Induction Plans, reflections, fieldwork protocols, and evaluations confirmed this alignment.

The vision provides for a program that is designed to meet the individual needs of teachers and the students they serve. District leadership, program leadership, and Advisory Committee members all assert that the program is aligned with both districts' missions for developing a quality staff and their goals for student achievement. Site administrators cited several examples of alignment of site goals with BTSA induction experiences, including supporting English Learners, knowledge of students, and grade level collaboration.

Program leaders and relevant stakeholders are actively involved in the organization, coordination, and governance of the professional preparation program. Interviews with district leadership, program leadership, and Advisory Committee members made it clear that the program was systemic to the district. The Advisory Committee members are reflective of stakeholders from both districts and a variety of roles. They report a strong system for decision making that enables them to provide input on program direction, along with a high degree of communication and collaboration that makes the two district entities "feel unified" in the development of the program. Site administrators also affirmed active participation in the program. Many reported having been BTSA candidates or Support Providers, and all indicated they valued their teachers' participation in the program. Site administrators also confirmed that they played a role in working with candidates on their fieldwork, including the FACT Context for Teaching and Learning module, the "Mid-Year Check In," and support of developing IIP goals and action research plans.

Both program leaders report a high degree of institutional support that enables them to create an effective program. The Tulare City ESD Superintendent was involved in the original program implementation and design, and has always provided strong program support. The role of the TJUHSD program director as Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources has assured the authority and institutional support needed as well. Both superintendents affirm that the Program

Directors have this authority and support. Interviews with other stakeholder groups also confirm that the unit leadership is well positioned to ensure program effectiveness. Interviews showed that the Advisory Committee works closely with the Program Directors on program implementation responsive to the needs of candidates.

The program maintains a comprehensive credential recommendation process. It includes a mid- and end-year review of fieldwork by the Advisory Committee. Candidates who do not meet requirements are provided feedback and an opportunity to re-submit their fieldwork. All candidates who do meet program requirements based on this review process are recommended to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) for their clear credential.

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.

Interviews with program staff, advisory committee members, site administrators, district leadership and program participants, as well as the review of documents confirm that the Tulare City ESD BTSA Induction Program has an assessment system for ongoing program evaluation and improvement. The program contracts with an outside evaluator, Sinclair Research Group, to analyze state survey and internal data relating to candidates, Support Providers, alumni, professional development providers, site administrators, and program staff. The Formative Program Assessment model used is standards-based and ongoing, uses multiple qualitative and quantitative assessment measures, solicits information from all stakeholders, and is valid, reliable, and objective.

The program utilizes multiple measures to collect data including the *Participating Teacher California Standards for the Teaching Profession Continuum Assessment*, *Support Provider Self-Assessment*, *PT/SP Mid-Year Survey*, *Site Administrator Survey*, *Meeting Feedback Survey*, *PT Assessment of SP Effectiveness*, *Statewide Survey*, and *Alumni Survey*. These data collection tools are administered by the program and then analyzed by Sinclair Research Group. Findings are analyzed and discussed by the Advisory Committee, which includes program leadership, resulting in program improvements. Results of data analysis are communicated to all stakeholder groups with opportunities for continuous feedback regarding those results. Support Providers and candidates reported specific examples of program changes that were a direct result of feedback they provided.

The program collects data related to candidate qualifications, proficiencies and competence through the use of the New Teacher Support Tracking System (database). The program tracks completion of: individual FACT activities; Individual Induction Plans (IIPs); Induction Standards 5 and 6; and professional development requirements. Additionally, Support Provider monthly service logs are used to provide feedback regarding each eligible teacher's level of participation throughout the program. Candidate progress is monitored through four Fieldwork Reviews during the two year Induction Program that are performed by the Program Directors, Support Providers and members of the Advisory Committee based upon a calibrated rubric assessment. This feedback assists the Program Directors in identifying candidates who need individual assistance as well as common areas of need that are then addressed through professional development provided by the program. All candidates also take part in a Culminating Conversation during which time additional evidence is collected to determine candidate competence as well as providing information for program improvement purposes.

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.

The funding sources that support the Tulare City Elementary School District (ESD) BTSA Induction Program draw from Title II funding and district general funds from the Tulare City ESD and the Tulare Joint Union High School District (JUHSD). District leadership from both districts, Program Directors and Advisory Committee members expressed a strong commitment to educator preparation, which is demonstrated through an agreement to keep funding resources at an appropriate level to support program and participating teacher success. The Curriculum Specialist/BTSA Director for the Tulare City ESD has primary responsibility for overall direction of the program in collaboration with the Co-Director who is the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for the Tulare JUHSD. Interviews confirmed that both Program Directors are given the authority and resources necessary to administrate the program. They work along with the Advisory Committee to ensure that program decisions and actions are considerate of all program participants and that the program effectively meets both the Common Standards and Program Standards for teacher preparation as delineated by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Resources are provided by both districts to supply office space, custodial assistance, meeting rooms, office supplies and professional development materials. The budget also verified that funds are allocated for clerical support for daily operation of the program.

The Program Directors work closely together to ensure effective operation of the BTSA Induction Program. Additionally, Program Directors collaborate with the Human Resources Departments of both districts to coordinate services for program admission, advisement and credentialing. Program components are supported through funding from both districts, including New Teacher Summer Professional Development, ongoing Induction Program sponsored professional development conference attendance, materials to support professional growth, teacher release days, the BTSA Induction Director and Co-director salaries, and Support Provider stipends. The program makes every effort to leverage existing district resources in order to maximize opportunities for all program participants. Both school districts coordinate multiple professional development opportunities sponsored through various departments allowing a variety of professional development resources to be made available to program participants. Coordination is accomplished through ongoing articulation with curriculum departments and other funded programs, resulting in annual professional development calendars and catalogues which describe events and are available to program participants. The program budget evidences support of assessment management through the funding of the outside evaluator Sinclair Research Group.

Professional libraries are available for program participants through both districts and the Tulare County Office of Education. District assistance is provided in the areas of technology and web resources by Curriculum Specialists and the Program Director. Interviews confirmed that resource needs are determined based on reviews of data and fieldwork reviews by the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee membership reflects all stakeholder groups and committee members confirmed that the diverse make-up of the group provides differing perspectives that ensures that needs of the program are considered and met.

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.

The Tulare City ESD BTSA Induction Program is administrated by co-directors who are highly qualified and have extensive experience as educators, including providing professional development, supervising teachers, and managing support and assessment programs for teachers. The Program Directors are responsible for: implementation of the Induction Program; coordinating and conducting training and professional development activities for Support Providers, administrators, and candidates; assignment of qualified Support Providers; and selection of professional development providers.

The Program Directors are members of the Tulare City ESD BTSA Induction Advisory Committee that oversees the program and has developed well-defined criteria for the selection of qualified Support Providers. Advisory Committee members examine and score Support Provider applications using a calibrated rubric system to ensure that only qualified teachers are selected. The roles and responsibilities of Support Providers are clearly defined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Evidence of these criteria was documented in individual Support Provider letters of application and through interviews with Support Providers and candidates. Professional Development Providers are selected from within district staff based on their areas of expertise. Signed MOUs verify that Support Providers and Professional Development Providers are knowledgeable about diverse abilities, culture, language, ethnic and gender diversity. Both sponsoring districts provide district-wide and school site professional development in the areas of equity and diversity that furnish Support Providers with resources for teaching culturally responsive curriculum that promotes equity for diverse students. Every effort is made to match Support Providers and candidates at the same school site, which confirms that Support Providers have experience with the specific needs of the student population at their candidates' sites.

All Support Providers are expected to be experts with the state-adopted academic content standards and performance levels for students, content specific pedagogy, state-adopted curriculum frameworks, and assessment. Letters of application outline Support Providers' training and experience in these areas. Site administrators report that only lead teachers who are "models" for beginning teachers are recommended for Support Provider positions. This is ensured by a Letter of Recommendation that is written by the site administrator as a requirement

of the application process. Upon hiring, Support Providers receive four days of initial training on the *Formative Assessment for California Teachers* (FACT). Training includes development of skills and abilities for supporting beginning teachers and knowledge and skills surrounding the FACT modules.

During the Inquiry Module component of training, Support Providers learn how to guide their teachers in selecting appropriate academic content standards as they develop their Individual Induction Plan focus. They also assist candidates in completion of the *Essential Components of Instruction* as part of the FACT Inquiry, which is based on key ideas from the curriculum frameworks including content standards, learning goals, use of assessment to guide instruction, and strategies that engage all students in learning. Support Providers collaborate on a monthly basis in network meetings to further develop and refine their skills, and to problem-solve, assess and reflect on teaching. Support Providers reported that these monthly networking opportunities build collegiality and ensure that they have time, supported by the program, to further develop the skills needed for their roles.

The program also requires education and training for district Professional Development Providers in order to further their knowledge and skills. Professional Development Providers confirmed that the program sponsors multiple opportunities for them to refine skills and integrate training efforts with BTSA and districts' goals - including FACT Skill Building, Equity & Diversity, Roles and Responsibilities of K-12 School Organizations, and Cognitive Coaching. Professional Development Providers indicated their appreciation for training in adult learning theory and effective presentation skills utilizing the work of Laura Lipton and Bruce Wellman.

The program assesses the quality of services provided by Support Providers to candidates using multiple sources of evidence. Candidates complete a local Mid-year Survey designed by the program's external evaluator, Sinclair Research Group, and the Statewide BTSA Survey, the results of which are used by program leadership to identify areas of strength and areas of need related to services provided by Support Providers. Support Provider logs, submitted monthly, are monitored by the Program Directors to ensure Support Providers meet regularly with candidates, provide a variety of services, and complete FACT activities according to the timeline. The Program Directors also monitor attendance of Support Providers at required monthly networking meetings to ensure Support Providers continue to develop their skills for coaching and mentoring candidates.

The Program Directors provide formative feedback to Support Providers twice during the year showing the status of their required work including regular meetings with assigned candidates, completion of FACT activities, Individual Induction Plans, and attendance at Support Provider Network meetings. Program evaluation data is also shared with Support Providers so they are aware of any general concerns candidates might have. Candidates are asked to complete a *Participating Teacher Assessment of Support Provider Effectiveness* survey at the end of each year of program participation. The directors review this feedback and address any specific concerns that are made evident. This may result in a conference with an individual Support Provider or identify an area for focus at future Support Provider Network meetings. Support Providers are recognized for their excellence at the yearly Colloquium where programs publicly acknowledges the work they do to support candidates and the Induction Program.

In order to evaluate the performance of Professional Development Providers, every training event conducted within the program is subject to a written evaluation by its participants. These evaluations are shared with Professional Development Providers in a debriefing session immediately after each presentation. Evaluations are read and discussed, and suggestions are made for improving presentations. Candidates, Support Providers, and Professional Development Providers reported that the results of the evaluations are used for refinements of trainings. Evaluations are also reviewed by the Program Directors and are summarized by the program's external evaluator, Sinclair Research Group. If a professional development provider receives an overall averaged score below 8 on a 10 point scale, the Program Director works with the Professional Development Provider to modify the professional development for the next presentation. If the professional development continues to receive low ratings, the Program Director solicits the assistance of another provider. The results are also shared with the Induction Program's Advisory Committee, the districts' curriculum staffs, and site administrators in order to ensure quality professional development sessions for candidates.

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.

Program Directors collaborate with the Human Resources departments in each district to ensure candidate eligibility based on Commission-adopted requirements. The Program Directors mail candidates a letter explaining BTSA Induction and requesting the participating teacher contact the Program Director to arrange a meeting to discuss eligibility and requirements. This also includes a "Notification of Eligibility and Responsibility to Enter a Teacher Induction Program" form and information regarding the BTSA Induction Orientation. Eligible candidates sign the Memorandum of Understanding for Participating Teachers as documentation of their admissions advisement for induction. The Program Directors then work with site administrators in the assignment of a Support Provider to each candidate.

Interviews with program leadership and Human Resources department members indicated that the recruitment process in both districts is designed to actively encourage diversity in applicants. While it has been challenging for the district to obtain a teaching population reflective of the student population, it is clear through interviews with Human Resources personnel that this is a high priority. These efforts take the form of a variety of strategies, from utilizing online recruitment tools to partnerships with universities that enable the district to recruit from student teaching pools. Because many teachers hired by the districts have completed their supervised teaching in schools within the districts or local area, administrators have the opportunity to observe pre-service experiences and select those candidates who have personal and professional characteristics that suggest a strong potential for professional effectiveness.

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.

The Tulare City ESD Program Director works with the Human Resources Department to advise candidates of their credential completion and induction requirements for a clear credential. The Tulare JUHSD Program Director, as Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, is responsible for advising district candidates of their credential completion and induction requirements for a clear credential. Both program leaders use input from site administrators to assign eligible candidates to a Support Provider.

Eligible candidates are invited to a BTSA orientation where they are informed of program requirements, completion options, including extensions and early completion, and where they sign an MOU agreeing to conditions for program participation and completion. During orientation, candidates are provided with the "Participating Teacher Handbook" which outlines all of requirements and guidelines that must be followed to attain the clear credential. Candidates reported that they were informed and made aware of the various program options available to them at the orientation, and that they were also aware of the information's availability in the program handbook. Candidates also indicated that the Program Directors made additional contacts with candidates they felt were eligible for program options - extensions or early completion - to ensure their awareness.

The program provides assistance for candidates who are struggling to meet program requirements. In addition to the monthly BTSA Professional Assistance Meetings for all candidates, optional assistance sessions are scheduled each month where candidates have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with the Program Director for informal support. In addition, candidates whose fieldwork does not meet all requirements at the mid-year or end-of-year fieldwork reviews meet individually with the Program Director for assistance on how to revise their submission for re-assessment. Candidates who continue to struggle meet with the Program Director and, in the case of Tulare City ESD candidates, the Director of Personnel, or in the case of Tulare JUHSD candidates, with the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, in order to develop a formal assistance plan.

The Program Directors regularly use evidence of candidate progress and performance, both through fieldwork reviews and informal interactions with candidates and Support Providers, to guide advisement and assistance efforts. For example, the Program Directors reported that evidence from a fieldwork review indicated that candidates were struggling with developing lessons to support English Learners. As a result, they developed additional professional development for Support Providers to enable them to better assist candidates in this aspect of fieldwork.

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.

The BTSA Induction Program uses the Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT) system, which provides multiple opportunities for candidates to demonstrate application of the knowledge and skills they have acquired to educate and support all students effectively in meeting the state-adopted academic content standards. Examination of fieldwork shows that candidates engage in a planned sequence of job-embedded experiences designed to help the teacher understand his/her classroom context, assess his/her teaching, create an inquiry of his/her practice, and reflect upon his/her development. Program leadership indicated that making FACT and other fieldwork experiences relevant to each candidate's teaching context was a major focus of the monthly assistance meetings. During interviews, candidates indicated that the FACT modules' focus on identifying academic content standards played a role in "keeping standards in front of you" as a focus for lesson planning, instruction, and reflection. This also helped them identify areas for inquiry. Candidates and completers also indicated that conversations with Support Providers helped them demonstrate and develop the knowledge and skills to help students meet academic content standards. Support Providers reported that the conversation guides in the FACT modules, along with the candidate self-assessment using the Continuum of Teaching Practice, helped them ask the right questions to target support and action research that was relevant to candidate needs and the needs of their students. Site administrators asserted that candidates are even able to help veterans because they are "closer to the CSTPs" as a result of their BTSA experience, and that they have been an asset in assisting with program improvement due to their knowledge of best practices.

The Program Director for each district assigns a Support Provider to the candidate and uses input from site administrators in developing these matches. Where possible, Support Providers and candidates are matched by site and grade level/subject area. The program strives to ensure that no Support Provider has more than one candidate to support. Support Provider logs indicate that they consistently and regularly meet with candidates to engage in work on FACT modules and other fieldwork experiences. Interviews with Support Providers and candidates affirm that match ups are effective because most Support Providers are assigned to the same site and are experienced at the same grade level and/or subject area. Site administrators affirmed that Support Providers were effective teachers *and* leaders, and the input they were able to provide to program leadership helped ensure effective matches for candidates. Site administrators also expressed that the program was very responsive to requests for changes in candidate-Support Provider assignments.

The FACT system provides candidates with opportunities to understand and address issues of diversity and to help them develop research-based strategies for improving student learning. Examination of field work demonstrates that candidates engage in inquiry, lesson planning, and other modules related to supporting students with diverse learning needs. These experiences include the use of formative assessments to design learning experiences for students and multiple reflections on the impact of the actions and strategies used to support them. Additionally there was evidence of professional development experiences on working with English Learners and other diverse learning populations. An examination of agendas and materials of these seminars indicated a range of options available to support professional development in this area. During interviews, candidates and completers reported that they felt the fieldwork, Support Provider interactions, and professional development opportunities all contributed to helping them better meet the needs of English learners, students with disabilities, gifted students, and other students with diverse learning needs. Candidates reported that the data and information gathered in the FACT Context for Teaching and Learning module was particularly helpful in “shedding light on where students were coming from.” Site administrators indicated that the BTSA FACT modules and fieldwork raised candidates’ knowledge of their students so that they could better meet individual student needs, and cited this was especially true with regard to supporting academic achievement of English Learners and other students with special needs. They reported that candidates were more reflective, more collaborative, and more open to exploring research-based strategies to improve student learning.

Fieldwork is reviewed twice each year by the Advisory Committee, which follows a protocol for using rubrics to evaluate the quality of fieldwork and ensures it has met requirements. The Advisory Committee reports that they go through a careful calibration process to ensure the evaluations are accurate and consistent. They also reported that they strive to provide meaningful feedback to candidates that can be used to continue their development.

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.

Review of fieldwork and interviews with stakeholders reveal that candidates who have completed the program requirements know and demonstrate the professional knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting the state-adopted standards. Candidate fieldwork indicates evidence of application of the CSTP and induction standards, and completion of all required elements of the FACT system and related professional development. Program leadership has a clearly defined process in place for evaluating and monitoring this fieldwork experience to ensure candidates know and demonstrate the professional knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting the state-adopted academic standards. Survey data and interviews with candidates and completers indicate that, upon completion of the program, candidates are well prepared to educate and effectively support all students in meeting the state adopted content standards. Candidates and Support Providers indicated that the process of self-evaluating using the Continuum of Teaching Practice helped candidates track their growth and development over the course of program participation. Completers also indicated that they continue to incorporate the plan-teach-reflect-apply cycle into their instructional practice. Interviews with district and site administrators affirm that, based on their observations, program completers are better able to support students in meeting the academic content standards. Support Providers also reported that program participation results in candidates who are aware of the many resources they can turn to throughout their teaching careers to help meet the needs of their students. Site administrators valued how the BTSA induction experiences raised candidate knowledge of their students so that they could better meet individual needs, and cited this was especially true with regard to supporting academic achievement of English Learners and other students with special needs. Site administrators also provided a variety of examples of how BTSA experiences aligned with school site goals, such as knowledge of students, collaboration, supporting English Learners, and developing academic vocabulary.

Candidate fieldwork and program involvement is reviewed formally at mid-year and end-of-year by the Advisory Committee, as well as throughout the year by the Program Directors and Support Providers. To ensure accuracy of records, candidate information is maintained in an electronic tracking system. Candidates who successfully meet all program requirements are recommended for the clear credential. All candidates from the TJUHSD who successfully complete program requirements are recommended to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) for their clear credential by the Tulare City ESD Program Director. All candidates from the Tulare City ESD who successfully complete program requirements are recommended to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) for their clear credential by the Human Resources Department.

Tulare City Induction Program

Findings on Standards

Program Design

The Tulare City Elementary School District (ESD) BTSA Induction Program is a consortium involving Tulare City Elementary School District as LEA and the Tulare Joint Union High School District as co-sponsor. The design of the program has been collaboratively developed through the work of the Tulare City ESD BTSA Induction Advisory Committee that has representation from all stakeholders within the program. During interviews with committee members, the work of the Advisory Committee was described as: “two districts working together as if they are a unified district.” The Advisory Committee interviews and archived minutes depict the committee as a working and decision making body that uses data from multiple measures to determine direction and improvements to the program.

The Tulare City ESD Induction Program implements a purposeful, logical, sequenced structure of extended preparation and professional development that prepares candidates to meet the academic learning needs of all K-12 students and retains highly qualified teachers. The intensive two-year sequenced program of preparation is based upon the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) and formulated around the Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT). The Advisory Committee plays an integral role in the implementation of the FACT system by participating in reviewing and scoring candidate fieldwork associated with FACT documents and determining if candidates are meeting expectations and requirements of the program as outlined by the CTC.

The Tulare City ESD Induction Program provides candidates individualized support from a qualified Support Provider, professional development opportunities, teacher observations, peer observations, and additional support as needed resulting from candidates’ IIP or fieldwork reviews. Interviews with the Program Directors indicated that Support Providers have an average of seven-years teaching experience. Program Directors, Advisory Committee and Support Provider interviews, and application documents corroborate the described yearly intensive hiring and review process of Support Providers and Professional Development Providers, ensuring candidates have access to quality mentoring, coaching and training, are exposed to effective program implementation and that Support Provider/candidate pairings are effective. Completer interviews confirmed experiences specified in program documentation and further complimented the program leadership for the thorough and extensive training they received that prepared them for their classroom practice.

The Superintendent of the Tulare City ESD attributes high teacher retention rates and student success to support provided to candidates through the Induction two-week Summer Institute, knowledgeable and effective Support Providers, and professional development aligned with district goals and objectives.

Course of Study: Curriculum and Field Experience

Candidates in the Tulare City ESD Induction Program complete three FACT inquiries (assess, plan, teach, reflect, apply) during their two years in the Induction Program, which provide

systematic opportunities to demonstrate their understanding and application of state-adopted academic content standards, performance levels for students and state-adopted curriculum frameworks. FACT documents in each candidate's Professional Credential Fieldwork binder validates the implementation of the FACT inquiry process. The binder also contains documentation of a mid-year check-in with principals where candidates discuss the implementation of their inquiry cycle and principals have an opportunity to learn candidate inquiry focus areas, how they are addressing the focus area, what additional support they might need and how the cycle is impacting teaching and learning in their classrooms. Interviews with site administrators also validate the results of implementation of the FACT inquiry cycles. Site administrator interviews indicated that candidates continue to use the inquiry cycle after Induction completion, that the cycle itself helps teachers focus on meeting the needs of their diverse student populations and often the inquiry aligns with the goals and objectives of the school site. An example was given by administrators of a candidate researching her effectiveness in meeting the needs of the English learner (EL) population in her classroom. This inquiry directly aligned with the goal of the school site to increase academic achievement in the EL population. Program completers pointed out that their experience with the inquiry research cycle was so meaningful that they continue to use the FACT inquiry research cycle to deepen their practice and learn more about meeting the needs of their diverse student populations.

Interviews with candidates confirmed the use of FACT for reflecting on their practice using multiple measures that include observations, norms of inquiry, collaboration with colleagues, data-driven dialogue, and reflective conversations to improve student learning. Candidates confirmed multiple opportunities to learn and demonstrate their knowledge, understanding, and application of the CSTP over a two-year period. Review of the candidates' *Individual Induction Plans (IIP)* contained a CSTP goal that assists the candidate and Support Provider in preparing a plan for professional learning, and a step-by-step implementation plan that includes evidence, and resources. Candidates confirmed that their teaching practice is regularly measured against the *Continuum of Teaching Practice (CTP)* enabling the candidates and Support Providers to collaboratively look at growth and practice over time. Reviews of Tulare City ESD Induction survey data, taken by stakeholders throughout the year, and administered and aggregated by the Sinclair Research Group, identify areas of strength, interest, and need in specified areas of the program. This information is used to improve the induction program on an ongoing basis. Stakeholder interviewees stated that they knew their voices were heard as they experienced positive changes to the program.

Candidate Competence

To guide candidates' completion of all program requirements, candidates are informed by the Induction staff at orientations, monthly assistance meetings, weekly meetings with their Support Providers, and individual meetings with the Program Director as needed or requested. Weekly emails from the Program Director keeps candidates updated on an efficient completion timeline. Candidate and completer interviews confirm that candidates are kept abreast of the formative assessment process and the required components throughout the two-year induction process. Review of Tulare City ESD Induction Program documents confirm that the program maintains records for candidates and notes completion on a database transcript and in the Candidate Completion Fieldwork binders created for each candidate. Throughout the process candidates are

given formative feedback by the induction staff regarding progress at mid-year and end-of-the-year fieldwork reviews. Monthly activity logs and other documentation indicating the progress of candidates are reviewed by induction staff and the Advisory Committee to see if additional support is needed for program completion. Interviews with candidates and Support Providers provided consistent evidence that candidates are knowledgeable of their fieldwork requirements and reviews and meet with induction staff to clarify fieldwork review results and make changes when required. Co-directors reported that only when it is clear that the formative assessment documents adequately address program completion requirements are they verified as completed.

Findings on Program Standards:

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with program leadership, district administrators, school site administrators, Human Resources personnel, IHE representatives, Support Providers, candidates, completers, and Advisory Board members, the team determined that all program standards are fully **met** for the Tulare City Induction Program.