
4C

Action

Professional Services Committee

Initial Institutional Approval

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents one prospective program sponsor for initial institutional approval by the Commission.

Policy Question: Has the institution reviewed in this report satisfied the Commission's requirements for initial institutional approval?

Recommended Action: That the Commission takes action to approve Ceres Unified School District as eligible to offer educator preparation in California.

Presenter: Lynette Roby, Consultant, Professional Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal

II. Program Quality and Accountability

- b) Effectively and efficiently monitor program implementation and outcomes, hold all approved educator preparation programs to high standards and require continuous improvement through the accreditation process.

Initial Institutional Approval

Introduction

This agenda item presents a prospective program sponsor for initial institutional approval by the Commission.

Background

An institution that wishes to offer a credential program in California and that has not previously been declared eligible to offer a credential preparation program must undergo a two-stage initial accreditation process: 1) initial institutional approval; and 2) initial approval of programs as described below. Provided below is information on the Initial Accreditation process.

Initial Accreditation is a two-stage process:

1. The prospective program sponsor prepares a complete program proposal that responds to all preconditions, Common Standards, and appropriate program standards. The proposal is considered to be the application for accreditation. The Common Standards document is reviewed by members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR) and the Preconditions document is reviewed by staff. The documents are reviewed for compliance with the appropriate preconditions and the Common Standards. Once the review process is complete, the application for initial institutional approval is presented to the Commission for consideration.
2. If the Commission confers initial institutional approval, the institution's proposed programs will be reviewed against the relevant program standards and then forwarded to the Committee on Accreditation (COA) for action. The program sponsor's responses to the credential program standards for each program the institution (sponsor) wishes to offer are reviewed by Commission staff and panels of expert advisors to determine the sufficiency of the responses.

Once granted initial accreditation, the institution will then be subject to the continuing accreditation procedures and will participate in the regular accreditation cycle for on-site reviews.

Request for Initial Institutional Approval for Ceres Unified School District

Ceres Unified School District seeks initial institutional approval from the Commission for the purpose of offering Commission approved General Education (Multiple Subject/Single Subject) Induction program.

Ceres Unified School District, located in Stanislaus County, is comprised of 11 traditional elementary schools (K-6), one dual immersion elementary school, a magnet elementary school focused on leadership and character development, three junior high schools (7-8), two

comprehensive high schools (9-12), a model continuation high school as well as three charter schools (K-12) and an alternative education independent study program. Ceres Schools serve 12,641 students in a community impacted by a significant number of individuals who live close to the poverty level. Currently 87% of Ceres students are eligible for the federally funded Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

The Ceres Unified Board of Trustees and educational leaders recognize that initial and ongoing high-quality, research-based professional learning is imperative to recruiting and retaining teachers in the education profession. The Ceres Induction Program vision is founded research that demonstrates that the retention of teachers in the education profession can be directly attributed to the support and professional learning they receive in their first years of teaching. The Ceres Unified mission is *“Committed to Excellence and Responsive to Every Student.”* To achieve this mission, a cadre of highly qualified, exceptional teachers dedicated to serving our diverse population of students is essential. To that end, the district has expressed its commitment to implementing an Induction Program to fulfill the Ceres Unified School District vision which is:

Through job-embedded, collegial, interactive, practical, and results-oriented professional learning connected to classroom practice, teachers in the Ceres Induction Program actively analyze their practices, reflect on their teaching, collaborate with colleagues, and gain the knowledge and skills needed to continuously improve teaching and student learning; they become long-term professional learners and educators.

In keeping with the Commission process for initial institutional approval, the Ceres Unified School District submitted its Preconditions document and a document responding to the Common Standards. The Preconditions document has been reviewed by staff and the Common Standards document has been reviewed by a review panel comprised of members of the Board of Institutional Review (BIR). The Preconditions worksheet is available in Appendix A of this item and the Common Standards document is available on the Commission’s webpage at <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2015-02/2015-02-4C-attachment.pdf>.

Staff Recommendation

Based upon a determination that the institution has met all relevant standards and requirements, staff recommends that the Commission grant initial institutional approval to Ceres Unified School District.

Appendix A
Initial Institutional Approval Precondition Review Worksheet

Ceres Unified School District

Precondition	Meets Precondition	How Ceres Unified School District Meets the Precondition
<p>(1) Accreditation and Academic Credit. To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program(s) must be proposed and operated by</p> <p>(a) Institutions of higher education: a college or university that (i) is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or another of the six regional accrediting associations, and (ii) grants baccalaureate academic credit or post baccalaureate academic credit, or both and (iii) an institution approved to offer educator preparation in California must notify the Commission within 30 days if its regional accreditation status changes. (This provision does not apply to professional preparation programs offered by school districts or other sponsors.)</p> <p>(b) School districts or other non-regionally accredited entities: the Superintendent or CEO of the district or entity shall submit verification of the governing board’s approval of sponsorship of the program. The agreement to sponsor a program must include verification of the following:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>	<p>Superintendent Scott Siegel, Ed. D has verified that the governing board of the Ceres Unified School District approved sponsorship of the induction program at the January 22, 2015 meeting. A copy of the letter is provided (<i>see page 9 of this agenda item</i>).</p> <p>Superintendent Scott Siegel, Ed.D has verified that each candidate accepted by the program will be enrolled until the candidate completes the program, withdraws from the program, is dropped from the program based on established criteria, or is admitted to another approved program. In the event the program closes, an individual transition plan will be developed for each candidate.</p>

Precondition	Meets Precondition	How Ceres Unified School District Meets the Precondition
<p>levels of authority and responsibility for each educator preparation program.</p>		<p>relationship between those individuals responsible for the program.</p>
<p>(3) Discrimination. To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, a program of professional preparation must be proposed and operated by an entity that makes all personnel decisions without unlawful discrimination. These decisions include decisions regarding the admission, retention or graduation of students, and decisions regarding the employment, retention or promotion of employees.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Ceres Unified School District verified that it has a process in place to ensure that all personnel decisions are made without consideration of differences due to gender or other constitutionally or legally prohibited considerations. Staff has reviewed a copy of Ceres Unified School District’s Board Policy, “Recruitment and Selection,” and has determined it to be aligned with this standard.</p>
<p>(4) Commission Assurances. To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must: (a) demonstrate that the program will fulfill all of the applicable standards of program quality and effectiveness that have been adopted by the Commission, (b) assure that the sponsor will cooperate in an evaluation of the program by an external team or a monitoring of the program by a Commission staff member, and (c) assure that the sponsor will participate fully in the Commission’s accreditation system.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>(a) Ceres Unified School District confirmed that it will operate the programs in alignment with all of the applicable standards of program quality and effectiveness that have been adopted by the Commission.</p> <p>(b) Ceres Unified School District confirmed that it will cooperate in an evaluation of the program by an external team or a monitoring of the program by a Commission staff member.</p> <p>(c) Ceres Unified School District confirmed that it will participate fully in the Commission’s accreditation system.</p>

Precondition	Meets Precondition	How Ceres Unified School District Meets the Precondition
(5) Prior to Program Approval. To be granted initial program accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the entity must confirm that there are program-specific Preconditions that must be met including preconditions for initial program approval.	Yes	Ceres Unified School District has submitted a response for all ten General Preconditions for initial institutional approval as well as all preconditions required for program approval including the four program-specific preconditions and the 11 General Education (MS/SS) Induction program preconditions.
(6) Requests for Data. To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the entity must identify a qualified officer responsible for reporting and responding to all requests from the Commission for data including, but not limited to, program enrollments, program completers, examination results, and state and federal reporting within the time limits specified by the Commission.	Yes	Ceres Unified School District confirmed that Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Debra Bukko, Ed.D and Ronda Munoz, Induction Program Specialist, will be responsible for responding and reporting all requested data within the time limits specified by the Commission.
(7) Veracity in all Claims and Documentation Submitted. To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the entity must positively affirm the veracity of all statements and documentation submitted to the Commission. Evidence of a lack of veracity is cause for denial of initial institutional accreditation or for stipulations from the Committee on Accreditation.	Yes	Superintendent Scott Siegel, Ed. D affirmed the veracity of all statements and documentation submitted to the Commission and understands that evidence found for a lack of veracity would be cause for denial of initial institutional accreditation or for stipulations from the Committee on Accreditation.
(8) Grievance Process. To be granted initial institutional accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the sponsor must have a clearly delineated grievance process for candidates and applicants. The grievance process information must be accessible to all candidates and applicants and the	Yes	Superintendent Scott Siegel, Ed. D confirms that Ceres Unified School District's Induction program has a clearly delineated grievance process for candidates and applicants and that the grievance process information is accessible to all

Precondition	Meets Precondition	How Ceres Unified School District Meets the Precondition
<p>institution must be prepared to provide documentation that the candidate has been informed of the grievance process and that the process has been followed.</p>		<p>candidates and applicants. Staff has reviewed the grievance process provided in the Ceres USD <i>Teacher Induction Program Commitment</i> which candidates are required to review and sign. Ceres Unified will also provide a link to the grievance process on the Ceres Induction program website.</p>
<p>General Preconditions Established by State Law</p>		
<p>(9) Faculty and Instructional Personnel Participation. All faculty and instructional personnel who regularly teach one or more courses in an educator preparation program leading to a credential, shall actively participate in the public school system at least once every three academic years, appropriate to their credential area. Faculty who are not in the Department, School or College of Education are exempt from this requirement. <i>Reference: Education Code Section 44227.5 (a) and (b).</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>	
<p>(10) Program and Candidate Specific Preconditions. An institution which operates an approved preparation program shall meet all program specific preconditions, including:</p> <p>(a) Require applicants for program admission to take the California Basic Educational Skills Test (CBEST) or have satisfied the Basic Skills Requirement (BSR).</p> <p>(b) Not allow a candidate to participate in public school-based field activities until the candidate obtains a Certificate of Clearance from the Commission.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Superintendent Scott Siegel, Ed. D confirms that applicants to the professional preparation program at Ceres Unified shall be required to meet the basic skills requirements (CBEST) and will not begin service within Ceres Unified without a thorough background check and a Certificate of Clearance from the Commission.</p>

Ceres Unified School District

"Committed to Excellence, Responsive to Every Student"

BOARD MEMBERS:

Valli Wigt, President
Lourdes Perez, Clerk
Teresa Guerrero
Faye Lane
Jim Kinard
Mike Welsh
Betty Davis

SUPERINTENDENT:

Scott Siegel, Ed.D.

January 22, 2015

Commission Members,

The Ceres Unified Board of Trustees is committed to hiring and retaining highly qualified teachers in the education profession. Members of the Board of Trustees recognize the critical role a teacher induction program plays in retaining educators in the teaching profession; in fact, three members of the Board are retired Ceres teachers.

A needs analysis conducted at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year revealed an increased number of Ceres teachers requiring induction as well as a need to tie induction learning to district initiatives and programs, deepening beginning teacher learning and classroom practice. In response to this need, the Board supported Superintendent Siegel's recommendation that the Educational Services division staff conduct research and complete the application for Initial Institutional Approval to become a program sponsor for the Ceres Unified Induction Program.

The Board has been updated at Study Sessions regularly over the last year of work toward completing this application and fully supports the induction program proposal. This program will include verification the candidate is accepted and enrolled until each candidate completes the program, withdraws from the program, is dropped from the program based on established criteria, or is admitted to another approved program. In the event the program closes, an individual transition plan will be developed for each candidate.

As President of the Board, I verify the Ceres Unified School District governing board approved sponsorship of the Ceres Unified General Education, Single and Multiple Subject, Induction Program at the January 22, 2015 meeting.

Thank you for your consideration of our application,



Valli Wigt
President