

**Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of the
Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at
El Rancho Unified School District BTSA**

Professional Services Division

**March 2011
Overview of this Report**

Overview of This Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at El Rancho Unified School District. The report of the team presents the findings based upon 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	5	1	

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: El Rancho Unified School District
BTSA Induction Credentialing Program

Dates of Visit: March 14-16, 2011

**Accreditation Team
Recommendation:** Accreditation

Rationale:

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation** was based on a thorough review of the institutional self-study; additional supporting documents available during the visit; interviews with administrators, program staff, candidates, program completers, and school personnel; along with additional information requested from program leadership during the visit. The team felt evidence provided was sufficient and contained 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 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 Program Standards were met, met with concerns, or not met. The site visit team found that all program standards are **Met** with the exception of program standard 5 which is **Met with Concerns**.

Overall Recommendation

The team conducted a thorough review of program documentation, evidence provided at the site, additional information provided by program staff, and interviews with program leadership, candidates, program completers, support providers, administrators, and other stakeholders. All Common Standards are met, and Program Standards One, Two, Three, Four, and Six are met. Due to the findings that only Program Standard Five is **Met with Concerns**, the team unanimously recommends a decision of **Accreditation**.

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

Advanced Teaching Credentials

General Education (Multiple Subject and Single Subject) Clear Credential

Staff recommends that:

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

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Common Standards Cluster:

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Elizabeth Keithcart
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Program Sampling Cluster:

Stacey Tisor
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Staff to the Visit:

Audry Wiens
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Documents Reviewed

Common and Program Standards Narrative	Leadership Reflection Forms
Program Assessment Preliminary Report of Findings	State Survey Results
Biennial Report & Feedback	Professional Development Reflections
Professional Development Online Resources	Participating Teacher Journey Graphic
Collaborative Assessment Logs	Verif Induction Completion Rubric
FAS Assessments and Electronic Portfolios	Leadership Advisory Agendas
ERUSD BTSA Induction Electronic Portfolios	BTSA Induction Budget
Local Surveys	ERUSD BTSA Induction Website

Interviews Conducted

	Team Leader	Common Standards Cluster	Program Sampling Cluster	TOTAL
Candidates		9	9	18
Completers		1	1	2
Employers		5	5	10
Institutional Administration	4	2		6
Program Advisor	6	4	4	14
Field Supervisors – Program (Support Providers)		12	12	24
Fiscal Personnel	2			2
Credential Analysts and Staff	1	2	1	4
Leadership Team Members	6			6
Cabinet	7	14	7	28
Institute of Higher Education	1	1		2
			TOTAL	116

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

El Rancho Unified School District (ERUSD) is a K-12 school district in southeast Los Angeles County serving the city of Pico Rivera, California. ERUSD is located approximately 12 miles southeast of the City of Los Angeles and some 15 miles north of Long Beach. 10,645 students attend eight elementary schools (Gr. K-5), three middle schools (Gr. 6-8), one high school (Gr. 9-12), one continuation high school, one Child Development Center, one Early Learning Program, and one adult school. Over 97% of the K-12 students are Hispanic, 1% are White, Non-Hispanic, and 0.4% are African-American. Approximately 30% of the students are English Language Learners. The District provides a variety of educational programs suitable to the needs of a multi-ethnic and varied socioeconomic community and is governed by a five member Board of Education, and the employees number at approximately 705 certificated and 692 classified staff.

ERUSD provides a variety of educational programs suitable to the needs of a multi-ethnic and varied socioeconomic community including a large Hispanic enrollment of ninety percent. El Rancho Unified believes in the importance of staff training to further employees' continuing education and regeneration. As a result, staff development is the cornerstone of educational improvement.

The mission of the El Rancho Unified School District, in partnership with the community, is to provide an innovative and challenging learning environment that promotes excellence. Educators prepare students as life-long learners to succeed academically, intellectually, socially, emotionally and culturally. ERUSD is committed to providing an enriched curriculum with high expectations for all students which emphasizes the skills, concepts and processes necessary for the technological and cultural challenges of the 21st century.

Education Unit

The rationale and overall design of the El Rancho Unified School District (ERUSD) Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Induction program is based on sound theory, research, and practice. The delivery of services to candidates is carefully planned and implemented in ways that are consistent with the holistic, developmental view of teaching reflected in *The California Standards for the Teaching Profession*. This collaborative model, utilizing full-time classroom teachers as support providers, focuses on improving classroom practice and on developing teachers who reflect on their practice while being responsive to the diverse cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds of all students.

The ERUSD BTSA Induction program is designed to assist and support candidates as responsible members of the teaching profession and leads to the recommendation for the California Clear Credential. The program design advances the application of candidates' skills and knowledge in relation to:

- *The California Standards for the Teaching Profession*;
- State-adopted academic content standards and performance levels for students;
- The state-adopted curriculum frameworks; and,
- *Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Induction Programs*.

ERUSD's Induction Program provides candidates with support providers who are veteran teachers of mentor quality, for individualized support and assessment in the application of:

- *The California Standards for the Teaching Profession*;
- State-adopted academic content standards and curriculum materials;
- The New Teacher Center Formative Assessment System (NTC-FAS) to promote reflection, self-assessment, and analysis of student work; and,
- Newly-acquired knowledge from seminars and individually chosen professional development activities that advances classroom teaching practice.

The El Rancho Unified School District, as the sole sponsor of the BTSA Induction Program, has in place an administrative structure that establishes clear direction and monitoring of the program. This foresight demonstrates a long-range and progressive commitment to the work of new teacher induction and teacher support and assessment.

Table 1
Program Review Status

Program Name	Number of program completers (2009-10)	Number of Candidates Enrolled or Admitted (10-11)	Agency or Association Reviewing Programs
Induction	17	14	CTC

The Visit

The El Rancho Unified School District site visit team included three team members and a team lead who have all been trained to conduct Accreditation Site Visits by the Board of Institutional Reviewers. During the week prior to the visit, team members engaged in a telephone conference to discuss their preliminary perspective on the extent to which the program met the Common and

Program Standards. The team reviewed the institution's narrative addressing Common and Program Standards, ERUSD's Biennial Report and the CTC staff's Response, along with the Program Assessment Preliminary Report of Findings. Evidence was reviewed prior to the visit, and the team met at the district office for a three-day period from March 14 to March 16, 2011, to verify and gather additional evidence.

On Monday, the team met to review the agenda and discuss the review of evidence during the site visit. The program's leadership provided an overview of the district and program, as well as a tour of the facilities and orientation to the electronic documentation. Interviews with Cabinet and program leadership were conducted, and the team reviewed evidence related to all standards before departing for the hotel at 5:15 p.m. The team held team meetings on Monday evening to discuss evidence as it related to standard language in order to craft questions in preparation for Tuesday's interviews with the IHE partner, site administrators, support providers, and candidates. On Tuesday afternoon, the team lead and state consultant presented the Mid-Visit Status Report to the BTSA Induction leadership team. On Tuesday afternoon and evening, the team met to discuss all standards and whether or not standards were met. The team deliberated and discussed evidence and interviews to reach a consensus on all standard findings and an accreditation recommendation was made. The institutional report-out was held at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday.

Common Standards

Standard 1: Educational Leadership

Standard Met

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

Findings

The El Rancho Unified School District (ERUSD) BTSA Induction Program aligns its induction program goals to the state-adopted curriculum frameworks and performance levels for students, the state-adopted content standards, and the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (CSTPs). Its rationale and overall design are based on sound theory, research, and practice. Interviews with Cabinet and program leadership demonstrate that the program is soundly integrated into the organizational fabric of the district. Further interviews with the program's Leadership Team and site administrators confirm that the program creates and articulates an induction program focused on creating a culture of comprehensive support for novice teachers centered on the achievement of all students. The delivery of services to participating teachers is carefully planned and implemented in ways that are consistent with the holistic, developmental view of teaching reflected in *The California Standards for the Teaching Profession*. Services are provided through a collaborative model that focuses on improving classroom practice and on developing teachers who reflect on their practice while being responsive to the diverse cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds of all students.

ERUSD program leaders and stakeholders organize, govern and coordinate all aspects of the program. The program's Leadership Team, composed of relevant stakeholders including representation from the district's Cabinet, candidates, support providers, teachers' association members, and Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) members are individuals who are actively involved in the organization, coordination, and governance of the program. Leadership Team members substantiated through interviews and evaluations of their meetings that they are involved in providing input for program design, professional development, and review of candidate completion. An institute of higher education (IHE) member of the team stated, "Being on this committee allows me a voice in addressing possible issues of redundancy between pre-service preparation and the induction experience. The program is always very responsive to concerns that I bring forward." Additionally, Leadership Team members are part of a continuous cycle of program improvement through the analysis of data paired with opportunities to provide feedback and input.

Interviews with district Cabinet members and program leadership, along with a review of program documents—including the district organizational chart—clearly denote that program leadership is well-positioned within the district and maintains the authority needed to represent the interest of the program. The district's commitment to maintain the program and provide them with the needed institutional support through fiscally challenging times is clear

demonstration of its belief in the value of the induction process. Interviews with stakeholder groups – candidates, support providers, site administrators, and the Leadership Team - revealed that they are informed of program rationale, design, and implementation. Program leaders and site administrators work in concert to promote candidate success. As one site administrator stated, “There is a tremendous amount of cooperation – we are all on the same sheet of music.” Additionally, site administrators learn about the program through professional development opportunities, the program’s website, site visits, and continuous communication.

In collaboration with a support provider, candidates utilize the *Formative Assessment System* (FAS) to advance their practice and demonstrate application of the CSTP, BTSA Induction Program Standard 5: Pedagogy, and Standard 6: Universal Access: Equity for All Students. Candidates develop an *Individual Learning Plan* (ILP) identifying growth goals, participating in professional development in support of those goals, and then documenting implementation within their classroom, including the impact on student achievement. Interviews with candidates and support providers noted the seamless connection the ERUSD BTSA Induction program provided between pre-service preparation and the induction experience. “It has taken everything I did as a student teacher and bumped it up, increasing the level of sophistication and application,” stated one candidate.

The ERUSD Induction Program maintains a comprehensive credential recommendation process that requires candidates to apply the knowledge they bring from their pre-service programs to their role as an ERUSD teacher and BTSA-Induction participant. Per evidence gleaned from ERUSD’s Organizational Chart and interviews, it is the BTSA Advisor’s responsibility to monitor progress and completion. This monitoring takes place continually throughout the two years of induction. Candidates also receive weekly advice and assistance from their support providers in regard to collecting evidence of successful classroom application of specific program completion requirements. The program leadership then formally reviews all evidence of such application and implementation through twice yearly electronic portfolio review sessions. Evaluated by a team of three teachers and site administrators using a rubric, candidates’ formative assessment work is carefully assessed to ensure all requirements have been successfully met or exceeded. Only when all documents are found to meet or exceed acceptable levels as detailed on the rubric are candidates then recommended for their professional clear credential. If the portfolio review team deems that documents submitted as evidence of meeting the program completion requirements do not meet acceptable levels of completion, the BTSA Program Advisor then informs the candidate of the steps necessary to resubmit said documentation. All candidates who successfully complete program requirements are recommended to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) for their clear credential.

Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation

Standard Met

<p>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.</p>
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Findings

A document review and interviews with program staff and candidates indicate that the El Rancho Induction Program has a process for collecting data on program and unit evaluation and improvement. On-going program evaluations collected at events throughout the year, include information for program improvement from multiple internal and external sources such as the Annual BTSA Induction Statewide Survey, Support Provider Forums, Beginning Teacher Seminars, professional development session evaluations and support provider and candidate collaborative logs.

Data on candidate and program completer performance along with unit operations are collected and analyzed. This data includes the state survey of program effectiveness, Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) and local mid- and end-of-year portfolio checks. Interviews with the BTSA Advisor and support providers indicate a system in place to analyze data and make program improvements.

Assessment includes ongoing and comprehensive data collection related to candidate qualifications, proficiencies, and competence, as well as program effectiveness through the FAS documents. Implications about new knowledge of application to teaching and learning are considered by careful analysis of the data established by collaborative logs, candidates' formative assessment documents, the ILP, feedback from surveys, portfolio mid-year and final reviews, and candidate self assessments using the Continuum of Teaching Practice.

Data is analyzed by program staff to identify patterns and trends that then serves as the basis for programmatic and unit decision-making in the biennial report. Interviews with support providers and the BTSA Advisor identified a system in place for collecting and analyzing data for immediate and long-term program improvement. One support provider summed it up by saying "We give a lot of input. Every monthly meeting we fill out our evaluations and by the next meeting changes are in place. As a support provider I feel very powerful. They do listen!"

Standard 3: Resources

Standard Met

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

Findings

The El Rancho Unified School District (ERUSD), as the sole sponsor and Lead Education Agency (LEA) of the induction program, has in place an administrative structure that establishes clear direction for budget expenditures and other resources to prepare candidates to effectively meet the state-adopted standards for recommendation for a professional clear credential. In an interview, the district's Cabinet expressed a strong commitment to educator preparation, which is demonstrated through the agreement to keep funding resources at an appropriate level to support program and candidate success in the midst of California's fiscal crisis. The funding sources that

support the ERUSD Induction Program are drawn from district general funds. The BTSA Induction Director has authority over the program, including the BTSA Induction budget that supplies program personnel, professional development sessions, office space, the New Teacher Formative Assessment System materials, technology, support provider training and stipends, and other resources and supplies as needed. The BTSA Induction Director meets with the BTSA Advisor to organize the budget, oversee expenditures, and make necessary adjustments in response to program and candidate needs.

As verified through evidence of fiscal expenditures and interviews, additional program components are supported through district and site professional development funded programs. These funds, in combination with the general funds described above, allow the program to effectively coordinate admission, advisement, professional development, classroom experiences, and program assessment management. Such resource allocation allows candidates to effectively meet the state-adopted standards in order to be recommended for their professional clear credential. The Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources directs the program with support from one 0.5 FTE release teacher-on-assignment who serves as advisor for the program. Interviews and contractual evidence confirmed that professional development is provided in an after-school format by both the program staff and outside consultants. Interviews with support providers and candidates additionally substantiated the importance of this specific program professional development, in conjunction with other district and site professional development, in supporting the continued professional growth of all candidates. Two annual release days are also provided to both support providers and candidates to attend meetings and trainings, conduct classroom observations and inquiries, collaborate with colleagues, and complete formative assessment modules. Support providers and candidates also have access to a variety of professional books and videos provided by the program staff and outside consultants.

Sufficient information resources and related personnel are clearly made available by the district to meet program and candidate needs. The ERUSD Human Resources Department confirmed through interviews and documentation that sufficient resources are provided for the admission, advisement, and program completion assessment. Candidates' initial introduction to the program is through the district's credential analyst who makes the recommendation for induction participation. Once part of induction, the program advisor takes the responsibility of supporting the candidates by assigning a support provider, conducting site visits, tracking all documentation of requirements, fielding questions or concerns, tracking candidates' collaboration with their support provider – including the completion of the required formative assessments – coordinating on-line portfolio reviews, and making the final recommendation for a clear professional credential based on successful completion of the program's standards-based requirements. Data collected from interviews with candidates and support providers revealed the direct access to and efficient response from the program advisor was directly related to their success in the induction program.

Through a review of documentation and interviews with program leadership, it is evident that the scope of work for the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources (as BTSA Induction Director) includes oversight for the program design, implementation, budget, staffing, and allocation of resources for support of the candidates in the program. Evaluating the program, collaborating with other programs, relaying induction information to the BTSA Leadership Team and other district departments, and communicating with cluster leadership are shared responsibilities with the BTSA Induction Program Advisor, while that program advisor

individually holds responsibility for the day-to-day management of the program; this coordination of responsibilities results in a process for resource management that is inclusive of all program needs and is responsive to change.

Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel

Standard Met

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

Findings

Qualified persons are employed and assigned to support candidates and provide professional development in the El Rancho BTSA Induction Program. All support providers hold a valid California Clear Teaching Credential and have appropriate professional backgrounds and experiences. Support providers submit an application and are nominated by their principal. The PAR Panel makes the final selection of support providers after reviewing applications with recommendations, and conducting an hour-long classroom observation. Professional development providers also submit an application that verifies required knowledge of the teaching profession.

Through the application process, support providers show an applied knowledge of academic state standards and performance levels for students, curriculum frameworks, accountability systems, and the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (CSTP). Evidence also confirmed their participation in a two-year Mentor Academy to acquire knowledge and skills needed to be an effective support provider. This knowledge base is then reinforced and practiced at the monthly Support Provider Forums.

All support providers are additionally required to attend Mentoring for Equity, a two-day training which addresses inequities regarding race, language and culture in the classroom and school-wide to ensure that support providers are knowledgeable about diverse abilities, cultural, language, ethnic and gender diversity.

Support providers must have a thorough grasp of the academic standards, frameworks, and accountability systems that drive the curriculum of El Rancho Unified School District as evident in the application process. Furthermore, ongoing opportunities for program leaders is provided in order to keep current with trends and issues for program development, implementation, evaluation and improvement, and the workings of the New Teacher Center (NTC) Leadership Network meetings, coaching from a NTC Liaison, and collaboration with the Southern California 12 FAS Users.

To further expand support provider development, experienced support providers have an opportunity to serve as local program FAS co-presenters and receive extensive training from the New Teacher Center staff and Liaison. Training is updated annually as revisions, modifications and adjustments are made to the NTC-FAS system.

Interviews with the BTSA Advisor and support providers indicate a system in place to monitor and evaluate support provider effectiveness. The BTSA Advisor monitors the online work by the candidate and support providers, and provides intervention for support providers who may fall behind or are less than successful. Support providers indicate that there is also a peer review process in place through the Portfolio mid year and end of year submission process. Three support providers review and submit comments regarding a candidate's submission. The candidate's support provider uses this as feedback for determining if their work with their candidate is on track.

Standard 5: Admission

Standard Met

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

Findings

The admission procedure for candidates includes the following steps, as verified by interviews and documents:

- The Credential Analyst informs newly hired teachers of their eligibility for and requirements of the BTSA Induction program
- The BTSA Advisor confirms eligibility and contacts the candidates before the first orientation meeting
- Candidates sign an Eligibility, Responsibility, and Participation Agreement verifying they have been informed within 120 days of the start of the initial teaching contract and have been provided with information about program requirements and expectations
- Candidates attend orientation meetings with support providers

As evidenced from documents and interviews, a clear recommendation process implemented by the ERUSD BTSA Induction program ensures participating teachers have met all California Clear Credential Induction requirements. At the time of hire and at orientation, participating teachers are informed of their responsibility for accumulating evidence of professional growth in relation to:

- *The California Standards for the Teaching Profession*
- The New Teacher Center Formative Assessment System
- The state-adopted academic content standards and performance levels for students
- Documentation of completion of all clear credential requirements

At an initial interview with the BTSA Advisor, candidates are informed of their responsibilities, program requirements and expectations, Early Completion Option, and program resources. A review of the evidence included the BTSA Induction Teacher Notification of Eligibility, Responsibility, and Participation Agreement, which is shared with and signed by each participating teacher to ensure accurate documentation of information.

Standard 6: Advice and Assistance

Standard Met

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

Findings

The El Rancho Unified School District Credential Analyst works closely with the BTSA Induction Advisor to determine program eligibility. Induction Program candidates are identified at point of hire and requirements for admission, participation, and completion of the program are communicated to the candidates. Program and credential information is also available through the ERUSD BTSA Program Handbook.

Appropriate information is accessible to guide each candidate's attainment of all program requirements. While candidates receive weekly advice and assistance from support providers regarding the collection of evidence for completion, it is the BTSA advisor's responsibility to monitor progress and completion.

The FAS formative assessment system is evidence-based. Performance is assessed through the *CSTP Continuum of Teaching Practice* and the Induction Program standards self-assessments. Candidate progress and performance is monitored through candidate reflections, weekly support provider/candidate reflective conversations, student work analysis as part of the inquiry process, and completion record documents. The mid-year and end-of-year evaluations of FAS formative assessment portfolio documents support advisement and assistance.

Evidence regarding candidate progress and performance is consistently utilized to guide advisement and assistance efforts. Support providers and the BTSA advisor indicated during interview that each candidate submits a portfolio electronically twice a year, three support providers assess it, and the BTSA advisor determines if a resubmission is needed or if it has met standards.

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 ERUSD BTSA Induction program, as evidenced from documents and interviews, has developed and implemented a support system structured to provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate the application of the CSTP standards. This sequence is evaluated regularly through formal and informal measures.

A review of evidence indicates that ERUSD has developed a planned sequence of experiences, based on Induction Program standards and state-adopted content standards. The *CSTP Continuum of Teaching Practice* criteria are used to evaluate candidate professional growth over the course of the two-year induction program. Multiple measures, such as the BTSA state survey, assessment tools from the New Teacher Center Formative Assessment System (FAS), a newly-developed candidate Portfolio Review Document, and a mid-year survey are used to regularly evaluate demonstration of candidates' knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support all students.

Candidates are supported in their clinical experiences by administrators as well as support providers. They attend professional development through the BTSA Induction program, as well as at the school site, regarding ways to support all students through differentiated instruction for English Learners and students with special needs. The district-wide plan for professional development dovetails into the BTSA support, prompting a comment that: "We're all reading from the same sheet of music."

The ERUSD BTSA Induction program design provides multiple opportunities for participating teachers to learn and demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and application of state-adopted academic content standards and performance levels for students and of state-adopted curriculum frameworks at their assigned grade level. Such opportunities are demonstrated through the following:

- Support providers and candidates work collaboratively to close the achievement gap and address the unique needs of students, as evidenced through completed tools in candidates' electronic portfolios;
- Support providers promote professional practices and attitudes regarding differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students, as evidenced by interviews with support providers site and administrators, for example, the support provider helps the candidate to look at IEPs and EL levels;

- Candidates participate in professional development sessions addressing issues of diversity, either by their own choosing or through site professional development activities, as verified through program documents;
- Candidates identify gaps in students' learning opportunities, assess inequities in their own classrooms, and utilize professional strategies to address those inequities, as evidenced by the comment by candidates who described collaboration with other teachers to compare benchmark scores and who "do the analysis, conduct a lesson study, modify, and change the lesson";
- Lesson plans reflect the beginning teachers' use of state-adopted academic content standards and curriculum frameworks at their assigned grade levels, as displayed in FAS tools, such as the Analysis of Student Work Pre-Assessment, Lesson Plan: Backwards Design, and Analysis of Student Work;
- Field is assessed using the NTC-FAS tools/documents through candidates' electronic portfolios;
- Candidates' standards-based instruction is formally and informally observed and assessed by the supervisors to ensure the candidates are incorporating the state-adopted content standards and frameworks into their lesson design.

Evidence from interviews indicates that, while the Advisory Board has not met recently, a structure is in place for the unit and its partners to design, implement, and regularly evaluate a planned sequence of candidates' field based and clinical experiences. In 2009-2010, a network of 16 Support Providers worked with 24 Participating Teachers, with 11 Site Administrators and the Program Director. Although the program has diminished to 14 Participating Teachers in 2010-2011, the district has maintained the program and collaborative networks.

FAS provides experiences for candidates to demonstrate understanding of issues of diversity in the form of formative assessment activities, professional development sessions and workshops, and the assistance and guidance of trained and qualified support providers. Site administrators interviewed stated that they work with support providers to provide candidates with site-based expert teachers as needed and candidates reported that they work not only with their support providers, but they regularly collaborate with other faculty.

Understanding that one of the key components of FAS is the collaboration with a qualified support provider, much emphasis is placed upon the support provider/participating teacher relationship. The induction program leadership has a clearly designed process for the selection and training of support providers, as well as resources. Lastly, the *BTSA Induction Handbook, 2010-2011* outlines a protocol for requesting a different support provider in the event it is needed.

Evidence from candidate portfolios indicates that FAS provides a logically sequenced structure of actions to focus the candidate's growth on planning instructional experiences, assessing student learning, creating equitable and effective learning environments, and reflecting on professional growth. Meetings with support providers and BTSA advisors are logically sequenced to support candidates' instructional needs throughout the year and enable candidates to meet the requirements of Program Standard 6: Universal Access: Equity for all Students. Interviews with site administrators, support providers and candidates identified additional district professional development opportunities in pedagogy, universal access, and technology available to candidates as choice options to support the requirements of the action research of their inquiry.

In addition, candidates stated that the BTSA program provides them with multiple opportunities to understand and address issues of diversity. The following are statements by the candidates interviewed by the team:

- We look at the general class and individual students.
- We are developing as a professional through seminars, meeting with colleagues.
- FAS, the support providers, and the professional developers support us in planning and differentiating instruction.
- We appreciate the way they set up the system, to observe support providers and other teachers. We appreciate the freedom.
- It is beneficial to have a mentor... having someone with experiences and who has had a student who has an English learner in class is beneficial.

To provide equal access to the curriculum for English learners, candidates discussed using multiple techniques: SDAIE, modeling, visuals, checking for understanding, word walls, individual white boards, providing a classroom environment of comfort and respect, foldables, concept development through vocabulary.

To provide equal access to the curriculum for students with special needs (GATE, IEP, 504 plans), candidates reported identifying specific student needs and providing appropriate strategies, such as grouping, differentiating instruction, scaffolding with small groups, repetition, and goal-setting.

Standard 8: District-Employed Supervisors Not Applicable for BTSA Induction Programs

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.

Standard 9: Assessment of Candidate Competence

Standard Met

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

Findings

The program uses the New Teacher Center Formative Assessment System (FAS) to assess and strengthen candidates' developing practice. As candidates complete FAS tools, they demonstrate professional knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support all students. Interviews with candidates indicated that they provide effective planning, assessment, and instructional knowledge and skills to meet student needs, such as assessing and planning "for the whole class as well as for individual students."

The program utilizes multiple verification tools, including formative assessment activities over the course of the two-year program. Examples of FAS tools include Verification of Induction Completion Timeline, Rubric, Inventory, Portfolio Review Forms, and checklist, as well as other documents reviewed during the site visit.

The Year-At-A-Glance was modified for the district to provide timely review and constant communication about the progress of candidates in knowing and demonstrating professional knowledge and skills. The candidate's Journey Graphic describes the process of formative assessment.

Samples of candidates' electronic portfolios included:

- Class lists to record students' primary language, ELD level, retention, and special populations.
- FAS School, Family and Community Resources, a format for candidates to identify school resources and programs available to assist students in meeting standards.
- Family Communication, in which candidates describe ways to communicate vital information about students to their parents; SP and reviewer comments provide feedback to candidates on corrections and depth.
- Instructional Groups, where candidates display a seating chart with consideration of students' learning needs.
- Assessing and Understanding Learning Context, a space for reflection on meeting the needs of students.
- Collaborative Assessment Logs, displaying interactions between the candidate and mentor on a regular basis as candidates demonstrate their knowledge and skills.
- Continuum of Teaching Practice, where candidates reflect on and give examples of evidence regarding students in the, e.g., using students' CST scores from the past year in planning daily lessons.

Candidates are assessed through multiple means, including documented support provider observations, candidate reflections on the Inquiry Action Plan, and student work samples documenting candidates' responses to individual needs of diverse students. Candidates reflect and collaborate with their support providers as they implement curriculum and address content standards. Administrators reported that candidates demonstrate that they are able to meet the needs of all learners, supported by the BTSA Induction program. One candidate said, "They come here to get perspective – elementary, middle school, and high school. They get perspective of all sorts of learners, and staff development. The topics are important. They go back to their sites with confidence that 'I can work with all students.'" Administrators agreed that candidates are better prepared with the help of their support providers and that the BTSA Induction program "shortens the learning curve" and expressed that candidates "know if something's not right. They identify problems and are being more proactive," in part because they are "willing to ask questions of BTSA support providers and other teachers as well."

Candidates meet competency requirements through the completion of an electronic Induction Portfolio exhibiting FAS tools and teacher selected evidence, such as:

- Self assessment of current teaching practices using CSTP criteria on the Continuum of Teaching Practices (CTP);

- Professional goals based on findings from the self assessment, using FAS Tools Self Assessment Summary, Individual Learning Plan, and the Mid-Year Review;
- Examination of practice through collaboration with support providers, using Collaborative Assessment Logs, Lesson Plan Series, Observation Tools, and Analysis of Student Work;
- Reflection on teaching evidence, practice, and student data using Assess and Understand Context Reflections for Standard 5: Pedagogy and Standard 6: Universal Access: Equity for all Students; and
- Development of a teaching question resulting in the implementation of an Inquiry Action Plan and reflections upon the outcomes of the plan.

Throughout the Inquiry Action Plan, the candidate demonstrates his or her advancement in teacher practice, based on:

- Application of professional development and/or instructional strategies, as described in interviews with program leadership, candidates, support providers, and site administrators;
- Collaborative experiences with colleagues, as reported by candidates and site administrators;
- Reflection on teaching practice, as displayed in candidate portfolios;
- Analysis of student work to inform practice, as described by candidates;
- Implementation of new strategies and technology, as reported by site administrators and candidates; and
- Planning and applying instructional strategies that meet the needs of a full range of learners in the classroom, as described by candidates, as stated in interviews with candidates and site administrators.

El Rancho Unified School District BTSA Induction

Program Design

The El Rancho Unified School District (ERUSD) Induction Program is administered by the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, while the BTSA advisor oversees the day to day leadership of the program. The BTSA Advisor is a teacher on special assignment who is 50% time. The program has nine support providers who support fourteen candidates. All support providers are full time classroom teachers.

Due to the California budget crisis and decreasing enrollment there have been changes in the program over the last year. The BTSA advisor position changed from a full time position to half time and clerical assistance was eliminated. Due to the decline in new teachers being hired, the district has swept half of the BTSA funding.

The two-year ERUSD Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Induction program:

- Advances the application of candidates' skills and knowledge in relation to the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (CSTP)
- Provides continuity between teacher preparation programs, the induction of new teachers and their ongoing professional development

- Prepares candidates to meet the academic learning needs of all P-12 students

The review of evidence and interviews with the BTSA advisor indicates that candidates complete a well thought-out electronic portfolio based on the New Teacher's Center (NTC) Formative Assessment System (FAS). By participating in NTC FAS, candidates have the opportunity to apply and demonstrate the pedagogical knowledge and skills listed above.

As the candidates complete the electronic portfolio, they gather evidence and reflect around the following three areas:

- Assessing and Understanding the Learning Context
- Setting and Reflecting on Professional Goals
- Examining Practice Through Inquiry

Review of on-line electronic portfolios indicates that program staff maintains an Induction Completion Inventory File of all candidates' FAS forms, documents and evidence that is required for completion. In order for a document to be considered completed it must be read by a committee of five people, which includes three support providers, two administrators and the BTSA advisor. According to program leadership, documents are reviewed in January and May using the ERUSD BTSA Induction Program Rubric. Once the committee has reviewed the document, they offer feedback to the candidate, which is then posted on the candidate's Wiki page.

Candidates meet with their support providers a minimum of one hour a week to discuss the NTC FAS tools, self-assess on the continuum, discuss professional development attended, create their Individual Learning Plans (ILP), Inquiry Action Plans, and reflect upon the CSTPs.

Course of Study: Curriculum and Field Work

As candidates move through FAS, they are constantly implementing the plan - teach - reflect-apply cycle. During the two-year program, candidates work with their support providers to develop, implement, and discuss lesson plans. They also explore best-practice strategies for equity, English Language Learners, and special population students, using Edusoft to analyze student data. Through the completion of FAS tools and their work with their support provider and the program, the candidate demonstrates competency in creating a well-maintained, inclusive classroom and differentiates instruction to meet the needs of English Learners and special needs students.

By completing the electronic portfolio and participating in professional development activities as identified in the candidate's Self-Assessment Summary and Individual Learning Plan, the candidate is guided to maximize the use of standards, performance levels, and state-adopted curriculum materials to support student achievement for all learners in the classroom. Following the development of an Individual Learning Plan, support providers engage candidates in identifying appropriate materials for student learning based on assessment data, planning content standards-based lesson plans with differentiation, and analyzing student work to inform future instruction. Support providers observe these lessons and then use the observation data with the candidates to reflect on growth in these areas and determine next steps in advancing practice.

The interviews with site administrators, support providers and candidates, along with a review of electronic documents, confirm that candidates use technology to assess, plan and deliver instruction. It is a district expectation that teachers will deliver lessons using technology such as document cameras and SMART boards. Candidates also use technology to analyze the data from benchmark tests, plan next steps for instruction, and deliver instruction. Although teachers are fluent users of technology when it comes to creating lesson plans and analyzing data only a few individual teachers enable students to use technology to advance the students learning as confirmed through interviews with candidates, support providers, and site administrators.

At the beginning of the year candidates receive an orientation to both the district and sites. During the interview site administrators confirmed they go over the policies around technology use, English Learners and special education. Candidates also confirmed they received an orientation where these policies were discussed. Support Providers then help teachers implement these policies into their lessons. One support provider said, "In our one-on-one meeting we discuss what those acronyms such as ELD and CELDT mean and then discuss their lessons and have them look at the lessons with an eye towards English learners and special needs students." The review of the completed FAS tools as well as the reflections shows that these conversations lead to candidates differentiating their instruction to maximize the learning of all students including English learners and special needs.

Candidate Competence

Interviews and documentation confirm that the ERUSD BTSA Induction program includes a planned process for admission into the program and advising candidates. When a candidate is hired they start the following process:

- Credential Analyst informs newly hired teachers of their eligibility for and requirements of the BTSA Induction program
- BTSA Advisor confirms eligibility and contacts the candidates before the first orientation meeting
- Candidates sign an Eligibility, Responsibility, and Participation Agreement verifying they have been informed within 120 days of the start of the initial teaching contract and have been provided with information about program requirements and expectations
- Orientation meetings are held within the first month of the school year, (thereafter, within the first month of employment), to inform and/or remind candidates of the requirements of the program

Evidence and interviews clearly demonstrate that candidates have a solid understanding that they must complete an electronic portfolio that includes documentation of application of Induction Program Standards 5 and 6.

When candidates complete all of the induction program requirements, which include completion of NTC formative assessment tools, completion of professional development based on the Individual Learning Plan, and ongoing collaboration with their support provider, they present a collection of evidence to be reviewed by a team that include three support providers, two site administrators and the BTSA advisor. Completion of each document is verified by using the ERUSD BTSA Induction Program Rubric.

During the interview, site administrators indicated to the review team that the program worked. One site administrator stated, “Participating in BTSA shortens the learning curve of the candidates. Instead of taking five years it now only takes two years for the candidates to get up to speed.”

Findings on Program Standards

After a review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with program leadership, district administrators, school site administrators, Human Resources personnel, teachers’ union representation, support providers, candidates, completers, and Leadership Team members, the team determined that all program standards are fully met with the exception of Program Standard 5 which is Met with Concern.

Rationale: Program Standard 5 states: *Participating teachers are fluent, critical users of technological resources and use available technology to assess, plan, and deliver instruction so all students can learn. Participating teachers enable students to use technology to advance their learning. Local district technology policies are followed by participating teachers when implementing strategies to maximize student learning and awareness around privacy, security, and safety.*

This standard is met with concern because insufficient evidence was found to confirm that all candidates enable students to use technology to advance student learning.