

**Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of the  
Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at  
Placer County Office of Education  
May 2012**

**Overview of This Report**

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

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

	Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
1) Educational Leadership	X		
2) Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation	X		
3) Resources	X		
4) Faculty and Instructional Personnel	X		
5) Admission	X		
6) Advice and Assistance	X		
7) Field Experience and Clinical Practice	X		
8) District Employed Supervisors	Does not apply to Tier II credential programs		
9) Assessment of Candidate Competence	X		

	Total Program Standards	Program Standards		
		Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
General Education (MS and SS) Induction Programs	6	5	1	

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

- Preparation for the Accreditation Visit
- Preparation of the Site Visit Documentation
- Selection and Composition of the Accreditation Team
- Intensive Evaluation of Program Data
- Preparation of the Accreditation Team Report

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

**Institution:** Placer County Office of Education

**Dates of Visit:** April 23 – April 26, 2012

**Accreditation Team  
Recommendation:** Accreditation

**Rationale:**

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation** was based on a thorough review of the site visit documentation; additional supporting documents available during the visit; interviews with candidates, program completers, site administrators, district office personnel, and local school personnel; along with additional information requested from program leadership during the visit. The team believes that it obtained sufficient and consistent information that led to a high degree of confidence in making overall and programmatic judgments about the professional education unit's operation. The decision pertaining to the accreditation status of the institution was based upon the following:

Common Standards

The team reviewed the eight Common Standards related to the General Education (Multiple and Single Subject) Induction Program to determine if the Standards were met, met with concerns, or not met. The team found that Common Standard 1: Educational Leadership; Common Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation; Common Standard 3: Resources; Common Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel; Common Standard 5: Admission; Common Standard 6: Advice and Assistance; Common Standard 7: Field Experience and Clinical Practice; and Common Standard 9: Assessment of Candidate Competence are **Met**.

Program Standards

Discussion of findings and appropriate input by individual team members and by the total team membership was provided for the General Education (Multiple Subject and Single Subject) Induction Program. Following the discussion, the team determined that all of the General Education (MS/SS) Induction Program Standards are **Met** with the exception of Induction Program Standard 3: Support Providers and Professional Development Providers 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 administration; and interviews with candidates, program completers, site administrators, and other stakeholders. All of the Common Standards and all of the General Education (Multiple Subject and Single Subject) Induction Program Standards are **Met** with the exception of Induction Program Standard 3; therefore, the team unanimously recommends a decision of **Accreditation**.

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

**Advanced Teaching Credentials:**

General Education (MS and SS) Induction Program

- (2) Staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the Preconditions be accepted.
- Placer County Office of Education be permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Placer County Office of Education 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 Lead:**

**Melissa Meetze-Hall**

Riverside County Office of Education

**Common Standards Cluster:**

**Carolyn Csongradi**

Santa Clara University

**Advanced/Services Teaching Programs Cluster:**

**Juliana Sheldon**

Walnut Valley Unified School District

**Staff to the Accreditation Team:**

**Judy Roberts, State Consultant**

Fresno County Office of Education

**Documents Reviewed**

Common Standards Narrative  
Program Summary  
Biennial Report  
Documentation linked to standards  
Coach meeting documents  
TaskStream electronic portfolios  
Coach Logs  
Monitoring documents  
Early Completion Option applications  
FACT training  
Professional development evaluations

Program Standards Narrative  
Preliminary Report of Findings  
Biennial Report Response  
Preconditions  
Induction Program budgets (2010-2011)  
Participating Teacher Application forms  
Placer County Office of Education website  
Early Completion Option criteria  
New Teacher forms  
Orientation PowerPoint presentation  
Online recommendations

Blackboard  
 Statewide Survey data  
 Professional development trainings and  
 attendance records

District Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)  
 Mid-year review anchor papers

### Interviews Conducted

	Common Standards Cluster	Program Sampling Cluster	TOTAL
Candidates	17	34	<b>51</b>
Completers	7	0	<b>7</b>
Institutional Administration (Superintendent, Associate Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, Executive Directors, Coordinators)	0	1	<b>1</b>
Employers (Site Administrators)	9	15	<b>24</b>
Program Coordinator	0	4	<b>4</b>
Field Supervisors – (Support Providers)	15	15	<b>30</b>
Faculty (Professional Development Providers)	0	4	<b>4</b>
Credential Analysts and Program Staff	0	6	<b>6</b>
Leadership Team Members	9	0	<b>9</b>
Institutions of Higher Education	0	4	<b>4</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>140</b>

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

### Background Information

Placer County, in the heart of what is known as the Gold Country, is located 80 miles northeast of San Francisco. It is bordered by Nevada County to the north, the state of Nevada to the east, El Dorado and Sacramento counties to the south, and Sutter and Yuba counties to the west. Placer County is part of the Sacramento region which also includes El Dorado, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties. Due to the expansion of the greater Sacramento area, Placer County is one of the fastest growing counties in California. Placer County Office of Education is located in Auburn, the government center of Placer County.

There are approximately 350,000 residents, 18 school districts, and 17 charter schools in Placer County. The county is comprised of 76 elementary schools, three K-12 schools, 16 middle schools, one junior high school, 15 comprehensive high schools, two special education schools, nine alternative education/continuing education high schools, and three court and community schools. Fourteen districts, seven charter schools, and two private schools are affiliated with the Placer County's Induction program.

The County serves approximately 68,000 students. 25.9% of students in the county qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Based on the 2010-2011 California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Office (CBEDS), the student population includes: 0.8% American Indian or Alaska Native, 4.8% Asian, 0.4% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 2.2% Filipino, 17.5% Hispanic or Latino, 2.3% Black or African American, 67.6% white, 3.9% two or more races, and 0.4% unreported students. Additionally, 6.7% of the students are English learners. 6.1% are Fluent-English-Proficient (FEP) students. Of those English learners, the proportion of specific languages is as follows: 4.0% Spanish, 0.2% Filipino or Tagalog, 0.7% Russian, 0.5% Ukrainian, 0.3% Punjabi, and 1.1% other.

The mission statement says that the Placer County Office of Education is *an educational leader and a valuable and respected resource in fiscal practices, educational programs, and student services*. The vision of the Placer County Office of Education focuses on providing exemplary leadership and service to school districts, students, parents, and the community; while working together to provide a comprehensive, systematic, rigorous, and relevant education to all students in Placer County. The vision of the county's Induction program is to provide participating teachers with high-quality, job-embedded professional development experiences and individualized support to improve teaching practices resulting in increased student achievement.

Certificated staff includes 3,267 teachers. Ethnicities represented by teachers include: 0.4% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1.1% Asian, 0.1% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 0.3% Filipino, 3.6% Hispanic or Latino, 0.3% Black or African American, 78.3% White, 0.3% two or more races, and 15.5% unreported. Reflective of the county's commitment to teacher development, Superintendent Gayle Garbolino-Mojica reports that 90% of the teachers have received training on implementing professional learning communities, a county-wide initiative.

Based on the *Placer County Economic and Demographic Profile 2011*, the 2010 graduation rate for Placer County Office of Education was 90.5%. Generally speaking, Placer is a high-performing county. The county's overall Academic Performance Index (API) reported for 2010-2011 is 802-957 for approximately 76% of the schools, 704-798 for approximately 17% of the schools, and 497-561 for approximately 7% of the schools.

### **Education Unit**

Placer County Office of Education offers a General Education (MS/SS) Induction program. The Induction program is housed in the Educational Services Department and is overseen by the Associate Superintendent of Educational Services. The Director of Professional Development, who also serves as the Induction Program Director, is responsible for day-to-day operations of the program.

Candidates experience a rigorous and relevant induction program which focuses on new teacher development and formative assessment. Candidates are matched with experienced and knowledgeable coaches who mentor and support them throughout completion of the Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT) system.

**Table 1  
Program Review Status**

Program Name	Program Level (Initial or Advanced)	Number of program completers (2010-11)	Number of Candidates Enrolled or Admitted (11-12)	Agency Reviewing Programs
General Education (MS/SS) Induction Programs	Advanced	85	102	CTC

**The Visit**

The Placer County Office of Education site visit team included two team members and a team lead. Prior to the visit, team members engaged in telephone conferences to discuss their completed Common Standards Planning Instrument and to develop questions for Placer County Office of Education constituent group representatives. The team met at the County Office to review documentation and interview stakeholders for four days.

# Common Standards

## Standard 1: Educational Leadership

Met

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

### Findings

The Placer County Office of Education has articulated a research-based vision of teacher education that is tied to *California's Standards for the Teaching Profession*. The vision was confirmed by interviews with coaches, county leadership, and the Leadership Team. This clarity of vision provides direction for Placer County's induction candidates and includes a concentrated focus of integrating district goals with the state-adopted academic standards and curriculum frameworks. The candidates' induction experience is supported by the county-wide focus on Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and the use of Specific-Measurable-Attainable-Relevant-Timely (SMART) goals. Interviews with stakeholder groups, including district and program leadership, Leadership Team members, and site administrators, confirmed that the program creates and articulates this research-based induction program.

This vision also provides for an integrated induction experience for new teachers that moves beyond the initial knowledge and skill level. Interviews with site administrators referenced that "participating teachers have more confidence, and I have observed that BTSA has accelerated teachers' learning." Interviews with the program director, participating teachers, and coaches as well as the program narrative indicated that the Placer County Office of Education induction program operates a research-based program utilizing the state-developed Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT) system. FACT was developed based on current research and practice as it relates to new teacher development and formative assessment.

The overall management of the induction program is the responsibility of the program director, within the Educational Services Department. As evidenced by county leadership and administrator interviews, the director and education unit members have a depth of knowledge and understanding of the program goals. Leadership Team members have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, including the charge to share information with their district, as well as helping to set policies and to provide feedback. Interviews with program administrative staff, Leadership Team members, coaches, and participating teachers revealed that through program surveys, training evaluations, and feedback forms, stakeholders have a voice in the ongoing organization, coordination, and governance of the program. Review of documentation supported that unit leadership has the authority and institutional support needed to create the goals and vision of the program. Trainings and subsequent meetings for coaches further support

the stakeholders' commitment to teacher education. Program participants at all levels shared that the program has been responsive to the input, needs, and suggestions provided on surveys and during trainings. During interviews with professional development providers, they shared that they are able to collaborate with coaches and county staff in order to plan professional development.

The Placer County Office of Education Induction Program maintains a comprehensive clear credential recommendation process that ensures participating teachers have met all of the program requirements. Interviews with county personnel and credential analysts provided evidence that the unit properly implements and monitors the credential recommendation process. Credential analysts referenced the organizational structure and support which ensures communication and facilitates credential processing, including accountability reports. The formal process for monitoring participation in the induction program is completed using both TaskStream and an online database.

Interviews confirmed that a candidate's work is carefully reviewed by program coaches as well as the program director. Upon completion of program requirements, SB 2042 candidates are recommended through the online CTC process by the Induction Program personnel. A review of documentation confirmed that the unit properly implements and monitors the credential recommendation process. Progress monitoring occurs primarily through TaskStream and is augmented by the mid-year review process. The Placer County Induction Program ensures that candidates have completed all program requirements before being considered for recommendation. Upon completion of all required documents, the candidates are recommended for their California Clear Teaching Credential.

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

**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**

Interviews and program documentation confirmed that Placer County Office of Education uses a system of assessments which include the ongoing collection and evaluation of data and information on candidate progress and on program effectiveness. Feedback is collected both formally and informally and involves all stakeholders in the processes.

The program director reviews information from statewide surveys, as well as internal program data. Not only is data collected from all stakeholders – coaches, candidates, Leadership Team members, and site/district administrators – all stakeholders are also involved in some part of the analysis process. During interviews, site administrators referenced the statewide survey, coaches referenced program analysis using mid-year survey data, and the Leadership Team members outlined their involvement in analysis. The Leadership Team, consisting of county and school-site administrators, the program director, and district leadership, uses data to guide

decisions. Recent decisions have included the budget and coaching delivery model. The statements provided during interviews were confirmed by meeting minutes and agendas.

A review of documents and interviews confirmed that district Induction coordinators as well as other Leadership Team members act as a “communication link” between districts and the program to inform stakeholders of data relevant to program design. District leadership and site administrators reported that program updates, and decisions based on program assessment, are presented to site administrators during administrator meetings, as well as one-on-one meetings with the program director.

Data on candidate and program completers are collected and analyzed by program staff and stakeholders. These data include, but are not limited to, the statewide surveys, professional development feedback surveys, and participating teacher surveys. Coach logs, completed by each coach, were reviewed during the site visit. The logs document the amount of time spent and how that time is used with the participating teacher.

**Standard 3: Resources**

**Met**

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

**Findings**

Placer County Office of Education provides the necessary budget, personnel, facilities, and other resources to effectively prepare candidates to meet state-adopted academic standards for educator preparation. As the Local Educational Agency, Placer County Office of Education bears the fiduciary responsibility to protect funds; which are entrusted to its care. The budget development is based on the allocation of funds from the State of California. A review of the budget indicated that adequate resources are provided to prepare candidates to effectively meet the program standard requirements and to maximize participating teacher success. The program is staffed with a full-time program director and one program secretary. Additional resources also include facilities for coaching staff, meetings, training, professional development, and technology.

The program budget guidelines are reviewed by the program director, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and the Leadership Team. The entities analyze both the availability of resources and the needs with regard to program design and delivery of support. Interviews with the Leadership Team and review of program documents during the site visit confirmed that resources were allocated for the effective operation of the program. An examination of the budget shows that distribution of resources is allocated throughout participating districts in the consortium.

The leadership of Placer County Office of Education views Induction as an integral component of the supportive integrated vision within the county. Through interviews with the program director and Assistant Superintendent, the team found a dedication to maintain and protect Induction funding despite the current fiscal climate. Leadership Team members indicated that the budget, state funding trends, changes to the grant allowance, and other fiscal concerns are shared regularly at Leadership Team meetings. Additionally, team members stated that they identify program needs, provide financial input, and are involved in the decision-making process.

**Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel**

**Met**

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

**Findings**

Professional development and support to the participating teachers are qualified members of the education community. Further examination of documents and the 2011 statewide consent form report showed that 79% of Placer County Office of Education coaches hold advanced academic degrees and have an array of professional experiences, including teaching at local universities. The coaches are increasingly reflective of a broadly diverse society, and 58% of them possess an English Learner certification. Although the program director has led the Placer County Office of Education Induction program for only nine months, stakeholder interviews praised the administrator’s knowledge and leadership skills.

The Placer County Office of Education Induction Program has a system of ongoing professional development and training for coaches. At the start of the year, they received cognitive coaching training. The positive outcomes of this professional development were noted in training evaluations and interviews of coaches. The application of cognitive coaching skills was documented in a review of coach logs.

Working with the program director, professional development providers share research and collaborate to plan professional development for coaches during regular monthly meetings. The development of future offerings and training modifications are based on electronic and written feedback as indicated by interviews with the program director and professional development providers.

The Placer County Induction Program design allows for regular collaboration with colleagues. A review of meeting agendas and notes shows that coaches meet as a group monthly for 2.5 hours. During these meetings, coaches share challenges, review portfolios, undergo assessment training, and receive information about a wide range of topics. In the 2011 statewide consent form report, it was also noted that 26% of the coaches currently teach at institutions of higher education potentially bringing a broader perspective.

The program has developed specific criteria for coach selection, and communicates these criteria through a letter of Request for Interest that is followed by a review of resumes, transcripts, and letters of recommendations before a final interview. Coaches are assessed throughout the year by participating teachers who complete a coach's survey from which aggregated data is obtained. Interviews with the program director revealed that she reviews individual coaches by examining electronic portfolios, coach logs, and informally by participating teacher feedback. The program director utilizes this information to determine effectiveness. Coaches are hired on a yearly contract by the program director based upon effectiveness measures.

**Standard 5: Admission**

**Met**

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

**Findings**

Teacher candidates are admitted to the program when they were hired by one of the participating districts or by Placer County Office of Education. They must 1) hold a preliminary multiple subject or single subject credential that needs to be cleared or 2) has been trained out-of-state or out-of-the United States with a renewal code that requires induction for credential renewal. As a program leading to the Clear credential, the multiple measures for an admission process that encourage diversity and 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 were previously addressed by the candidate's teacher preparation program.

To ensure eligibility and placement of participating teachers into the program, the induction program's secretary collaborates with personnel from participating districts and with the Human Resources Department personnel at the county office by sending out an induction program Participating Teacher Application Form. Human Resources Department personnel either perform an initial evaluation of preliminary credentials or require all candidates to complete the form. Districts return completed copies of the form to the Placer County Office of Education Induction Program's secretary. The Participating Application Form supplies a candidate's personal information, education, and credential to the secretary who enters all the information into a searchable database that is used to track candidate progress and also to send out email reminders for upcoming seminars. The Induction program uses the completed Participating

Teacher Application to verify information about each district's newly hired candidate, such as credential held, authorizations, and previous participation in an induction program. Within six weeks of being hired, the induction program secretary verifies eligibility and sends all eligible participating teachers a Letter of Commitment with a cover letter explaining their eligibility, as well as program and credential requirements. Once admitted into the program, participating teachers are invited to attend an orientation where additional pertinent information is shared. The signed Letters of Commitment are collected and retained in a three-ring binder. The program induction secretary tracks candidates who are employed by districts later than mid-October and placed on hold until the following year.

Interviews of Human Resources Department personnel from district partners revealed that the induction program secretary, who responds quickly to questions by email or over the telephone, informally trains new personnel who are unfamiliar with induction program policies.

A review of the Placer County Office of Education Induction website and PowerPoint from a participating teacher orientation held at the beginning of the year confirmed that all candidates are given information that describes eligibility, deadlines, and requirements of the Early Completion Option (Senate Bill 57). Candidates also received an email reminder about the early completion option program deadline.

**Standard 6: Advice and Assistance**

**Met**

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

**Findings**

The program includes a variety of personnel to advise candidates throughout their participation in the induction program. Interviews with participating teachers indicated that coaches serve as sources of advice and assistance throughout the two-year program. In addition to the support from the induction program coach, candidates may view their progress in the program at any time by signing into their online electronic portfolio account. The induction program secretary also maintains a separate database of information and indicated that information about late assignments and seminar registrations were emailed to candidates, when appropriate.

Trained coaches, who support candidates through the program's formative assessment system, are assigned to each participating teacher by the program director. A review of resumes, documents, and interviews of professional development coordinators, the program director, and participating teachers revealed that coaches have extensive classroom experience, as well as professional training in FACT and the use of TaskStream as an online application for electronic portfolios.

The program director also assigns portfolios to different coaches during the mid-year review to check on every candidate's online progress and to provide candidates with additional feedback.

Electronic portfolios allow coaches, the program director, and the induction secretary to view candidate's progress. Submission due dates, dates of review, the name of the coach who reviewed the assignment and the assignment status are posted online. An interview of the program director revealed that while due dates may be flexible, only a week or two is extended before a teacher candidate is notified by email and a process of remediation is initiated. Information from the mid-year checks informs program policies and decisions, including coach meeting content.

A review of evidence demonstrated that the program has a process in place for notifying candidates who are "not in compliance". When a candidate fails to meet performance expectations, the program director sends a letter documenting the lack of compliance with a required make-up date. The candidate's coach is responsible for remediation and assisting candidates with below passing performance on assessment submissions. Candidates are permitted to reflect and resubmit unacceptable assignments.

Review of collected evidence indicated there are adequate checks and balances in place for the completion process and qualified members of the program are assigned and available to advise applicants and candidates.

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

**Met**

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

### **Findings**

The Placer County Office Induction program and its partners have designed and implemented a program that regularly assesses the sequence of field-based experiences for their participating teachers to develop and demonstrate their knowledge and skills to support all students effectively so that P-12 student meet state-adopted academic standards.

The program utilizes a research-based, job-embedded Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT) to support the participating teacher's growth along the continuum of teaching practice over a two year period. To implement the program design, the program director hired a group of experienced and trained coaches who function both as field mentors and as resources for teacher candidates.

A thorough review of coach logs verifies that coaches, who are expected to meet face-to-face with candidates for approximately one hour per week, also communicate with candidates over the phone and via email. Interviews with second-year participating teachers indicate a high level of satisfaction with assistance from the program personnel, citing the coach as a significant

source of instructional strategies, resources, support, who gave them an opportunity to “grow with advice”.

The candidates are employees of partnering school districts in Placer and Sierra County. As agreed in the Memorandum of Understanding with each district, the Human Resources Department, superintendent and/or principal ensures candidates are placed in the appropriate teaching assignment in order to demonstrate the knowledge and skills required for the attainment of a clear credential.

The program is regularly evaluated utilizing formal surveys and informal feedback collected at the conclusion of professional development seminars. Several surveys, including state-wide surveys completed by site administrators, support providers, and participating teachers, provide the unit with feedback used to identify areas for growth. Agendas showed that the program director structures the monthly coach meetings to begin with a connecting reflective activity and end with a collection of “what is needed” feedback. The mid-year review professional development for participating teachers followed a similar format where the program director asked the candidates for areas of needed support at the conclusion.

The selection of focus students within the context of the formative assessment provides a number of opportunities for participating teachers to understand and address the issues of diversity. The opportunities are included in the Context for Teaching and Learning *Conversation Guide* and the *Focus Student Selection*. A thorough review of the Summary of Teaching and Learning *Conversation Reflections* found in several electronic portfolios revealed more than 60% of year two teacher candidates sampled volunteered comments about differentiated instructional approaches relating specifically to one or more diverse populations (including one that addressed the special needs of poverty).

**Standard 8: District Employed Supervisors** – Does not apply to Tier II credential programs

**Standard 9: Assessment of Candidate Competence**

**Met**

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

## **Findings**

Program leadership has a clearly defined process for examining and monitoring teacher application of the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* (CSTP) and documentation of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to earn a clear credential. The FACT formative assessment system includes completion of two Individual Learning Plans (one for each year) and four Inquiry Action Plans (2 for each year) within the context of four modules submitted by participating teachers and scored by their coaches. The portfolio provides evidence that participating teachers demonstrate their professional knowledge and skills. Interviews and a review of documents demonstrated a systematic formalized review process and procedures to support participating teachers.

Participating teachers' evidence of application, program participation, and completion of required elements is reviewed formally by program leadership and coaches on an ongoing basis. To ensure progress toward successful program completion, the Placer County Office of Education Induction Program maintains an electronic database of program requirements that provides evidence of the participating teachers who meet the Program Induction Standards. All participating teachers who successfully complete program requirements are recommended by the program director. The Induction program secretary submits online recommendations for clear credentials to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

## **Placer County Office of Education Induction**

### ***Program Design***

The Placer County Office of Education Induction program is administered by a program director and supported by a full-time program secretary. In addition to providing the day-to-day leadership and oversight of the program, the program director is the Director of Professional Development.

The program design includes a Leadership Team, comprised of representatives from each participating district. A review of meeting agendas, sign-in sheets, and interviews with Leadership Team members confirmed that they meet quarterly to obtain credentialing and program updates, analyze program data, and share feedback regarding district goals. The analysis of this data and feedback forms the basis for program improvement, revealing the professional development needs for coaches and participating teachers.

Induction coaches are employed by Placer County Office of Education. As confirmed by coach applications and resumes, coaches are selected based on well-defined criteria. Many of the coaches are retired teachers and retired administrators. Some are employed by the County Office in an additional position. Credential analysts work with program staff to determine candidate eligibility for program participation. Coaches and participating teachers are matched by the program director. The matching process includes consideration of grade level, subject area, and knowledge of the school's diverse student population. All assignments are made within the first two weeks of school, with the exception of participating teachers who are hired later in the year. Coaches support between one and fifteen participating teachers.

As indicated in interviews with institutions of higher education (IHE) representatives and review of Capital Region Teacher Preparation Network rosters, agendas, and meeting minutes, the Placer County Office of Education Induction Program articulates and collaborates with university teacher preparation programs through ongoing quarterly meetings which bring together teacher preparation programs in the Sacramento area and a number of induction programs in the northern California BTSA Cluster Region 1. The program director coordinates and facilitates these meetings and has been instrumental in the coordination of the 2012 Education Conference at William Jessup University. IHE representatives report that there is regular communication with the program director regarding facilitating the transition from teacher preparation to induction.

The program director participates in several county-wide forums and leadership groups. The Curriculum and Instruction meetings include directors, Assistant Superintendents, and Superintendents; with a focus on increased communication, and instructional and classroom topics. Additionally, the program director attends county-wide Human Resources (HR) Department meetings. These meetings, attended by credential advisors, directors, and Assistant Superintendents of HR provide additional avenues to communicate and collaborate. These increased opportunities support the greater understanding and collaboration of all stakeholders, including district Superintendents and the Superintendent of the Local Educational Agency.

During interviews, site administrators and coaches identified multiple layers of communication, as well as other opportunities to collaborate with the program director. As an outcome of this communication and feedback, the program changed from Formative Assessment System (FAS)

to the Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT). At the time of the site visit, FACT had been in place for less than two years. This system provides tools to support and inform the participating teacher about their professional growth.

Interviews confirmed that site administrators participate in professional development focusing on their roles and responsibilities regarding induction and support of new teachers. Through Blackboard, an online training platform, they complete a training module which includes the completion of pre and post assessments and participation in threaded discussions with their colleagues and program director which also provides a means for stakeholder communication and input.

### ***Course of Study***

The Placer County Office of Education Induction Program has designed a two-year model for completion requirements leading to a clear credential that integrates what an effective teacher must know and the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession*.

As documented on coach logs, participating teachers and coaches meet regularly to collaborate and engage in reflective conversation. The FACT tools help participating teachers gather and reflect upon data about their teaching practices which leads to improved teaching and student learning.

The FACT system provides a logical and purposeful structure for participating teachers to engage in an ongoing learning process that follows a plan-teach-reflect-apply cycle. Participating teachers and coaches confirm that the design is supported by ongoing formative assessment consisting of frequent and continuous opportunities for reflection for improving pedagogical knowledge, skills, and performance of the participating teacher through a series of classroom-based activities. The FACT System provides the structure through which participating teachers bridge teacher preparation work with their induction experience.

In Placer County, FACT is organized as an online portfolio in TaskStream. Portfolio resources that support the Induction standards are also posted on TaskStream. Professional development resources for participating teachers and coaches are housed online in Blackboard. These professional development offerings include information about working with special populations, English learners, and digital technology. Candidates may also participate in other district and county professional development.

Throughout induction, coaches and participating teachers work together to develop a series of three activity plans that are consistent with the state-adopted academic standards. These activity plans can include lesson plans, assessment plans, or classroom management plans. Participating teachers also choose three focus students and create two focus student plans which outline differentiation strategies to address the specific academic learning needs of English learners and students with special needs. By focusing on these students, candidates are able to reflect on how they are providing an equitable learning environment in supporting a full range of learners in their classrooms.

It is at this junction, between the foundations, structures, and processes that the coach's thorough understanding of the processes involved are crucial. Interviews with coaches confirmed that they receive training in cognitive coaching techniques and FACT. A review of documentation and

interviews with the program director and coaches revealed that there was a concerted effort to focus on cognitive coaching skills during the early stages of FACT implementation. While participating teacher interviews confirmed that the cognitive coaching techniques enriched the conversations with their coach, additional coach interviews indicated a lack of depth of understanding of the processes of the formative assessment system. Interviews with the program director and coaches indicated that modifications which support the coaches' thorough understanding of the processes of formative assessment will be forthcoming. During interviews, participating teachers reported that collaborative interaction was one of the most valuable aspects of their induction experience.

### ***Candidate Competence***

Candidates for the Clear credential demonstrate the professional knowledge and skills necessary to educate and effectively support all students in meeting the state-adopted academic standards. The primary sources of evidence for this demonstration are the documents collected through the FACT system. Candidates demonstrate through their TaskStream portfolios that they are documenting the completion of the FACT system. Candidates formatively assess their practice twice each year on the Continuum of Teaching Practice, and document evidence of that practice. This assessment guides development of the Individual Induction Plan, in which candidates choose a focus question based on one of the *California Standards for the Teaching Profession* and create SMART goals for students, as indicated in each participating teacher's Individual Induction Plan.

Data about the candidate's progress toward completion is used to determine recommendation for the Clear credential at the end of induction. Teacher performance is measured using coach contact logs and FACT reviews. A formative review of the induction requirements occur at mid-year following the Assessment of Teaching and Learning module, as evidenced by evaluation records on TaskStream. Participating teachers receive feedback during these periodic reviews. This data is also used to evaluate and improve program operation, training, training materials, and support provided to program candidates.

As evidenced in the coach contact logs, the director and coaches review each candidate's formative progress toward completion, as well as the frequency and level of support the candidate is receiving. During the Summary of Teaching and Learning module, all candidates' online portfolios are reviewed for completion of induction requirements. Online portfolios not meeting the completion requirements are returned to the candidate for revision and resubmission. Candidates who meet the induction completion requirements are recommended for a Clear credential by the program director. Electronic copies of the online recommendations to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing are retained in the Placer County Office of Education's Induction program office.

### ***Findings on Standards:***

After review of the institutional report and supporting documentation; and after conducting interviews with participating teachers, graduates, coaches, district office personnel, and employers, the team determined that all program standards are Met with the exception of **Program Standard 3: Support Providers and Professional Development Providers which is Met with Concerns.**

## **Rationale:**

### **Program Standard 3: Support Providers and Professional Development Providers Met with Concerns**

Program Standard 3 states that coaches “...receive initial and ongoing professional development to ensure that they are knowledgeable about the program and skilled in their roles.” The standard further states that training includes “...the appropriate use of the instruments and processes of formative assessment systems.”

Interviews with the program director and coaches confirmed that initial training focused on cognitive coaching and familiarization of the FACT tools. A review of completed FACT documents and interviews with participating teachers, coaches, and the program director surfaced the need for additional coach training that focuses on the inquiry-based formative assessment system processes. The development of a thorough understanding of a process-driven versus a paper-driven “assignments” induction experience, and skill development regarding articulation of this understanding, will enhance participating teachers’ learning and ongoing professional growth, resulting in a meaningful experience which positively impacts student outcomes.