
3A

Action

Educator Preparation Committee

Initial Institutional Approval – Stage II: Eligibility Requirements for Santa Maria Bonita School District

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents, as part of the Initial Institutional Approval process, Santa Maria Bonita School District’s responses to the Eligibility Requirements for consideration and possible approval by the Commission.

Recommended Action: That the Commission review the responses to the Eligibility Requirements and determine if the institution may move forward in the Initial Institutional Approval process.

Presenter: Michele Williams-George, Consultant, Professional Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal

II. Program Quality and Accountability

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

Initial Institutional Approval – Stage II: Eligibility Requirements for Santa Maria Bonita School District

Introduction

This agenda item presents for consideration one Local Education Agency (LEA) seeking to become a program sponsor through the Initial Institutional Approval (IIA) process. The LEA, Santa Maria Bonita School District (SMBSD), seeks IIA in order to offer a teacher induction program. SMBSD has submitted responses to the Eligibility Requirements for consideration and possible approval by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission). SMBSD resides in the city of Santa Maria which is the largest city in Santa Barbara County and is located in a coastal agricultural area 65 miles north and inland of the city of Santa Barbara. SMBSD is a public preschool through 8th grade district comprised of seventeen elementary schools, four junior high schools, and one combined elementary and junior high. The district's approximately 17,500 students are primarily Hispanic (over 90%) and it is the largest school district in Santa Barbara County.

It is an important reminder that approval of the institution for Stage II does not permit the institution to offer an educator preparation program that leads to a credential or license. Approval of Stage II allows an institution to move forward to Stage III in which Common Standards and Preconditions will be submitted for review. In addition, although there is important information about the proposed program contained in the submission for Stage II, review of the Common Standards and applicable program Preconditions and standards will occur in subsequent stages.

Background

California law provides the Commission with the authority to accredit institutions to offer programs that lead to a credential to serve as an educator in California's public schools. Among other responsibilities, Education Code section 44372(c) sets forth the Commission's responsibility to rule on the eligibility of an applicant for initial accreditation for the purpose of offering a program of educator preparation.

The Commission requires that an institution seeking to offer new educator preparation program(s) must first be approved for initial accreditation as a new program sponsor and must do so by completing the Commission's IIA process. At the December 2015 Commission meeting, the Commission approved a new IIA process requiring the satisfactory completion of five approval stages as part of the Strengthening and Streamlining Accreditation project. Updates to the IIA process were subsequently approved during the February 2017 Commission meeting. A chart detailing the five stages of the IIA process is provided on the following page.

Santa Maria Bonita School District

SMBSD seeks IIA in order to offer a teacher induction program. Summaries and excerpts of SMBSD's responses to the twelve [Eligibility Requirement Criteria](#) are provided below. SMBSD's full response is also available on the [Santa Maria Bonita Teacher Induction Program website](#). Criteria 1 through 9 have been reviewed by staff and a recommendation has been provided. Criteria 10, 11, and 12 have been summarized for the Commission's review and consideration.

Five Stages of the Initial Institutional Approval Process

Santa Maria Bonita School District is seeking approval of Stage II in order to be eligible for Stage III as highlighted in the chart below.

IIA Process	Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV	Stage V
Action	Prerequisites	Eligibility Requirements	Preconditions & Common Standards	Program Standards	Provisional Site Visit
Purpose	Ensures legal eligibility of institution in California Ensures institution understands requirements of Commission's accreditation system	Ensures that institution has capacity to sponsor effective programs	Ensures institution meets all relevant preconditions Ensures institution meets all Common Standards	Ensures all proposed programs meet all relevant program standards	Program operates for 2-4 years and hosts a provisional accreditation site visit
Requirements	Institution must: 1. Have legal eligibility 2. Attend Accreditation 101 with institutional team	Submit responses to: • 12 Eligibility Criteria	Submit responses to: • Preconditions • Common Standards	Submit responses to: • Program Standards	Institution must: • Collect data • Host provisional site visit
Reviewed By	Staff	Staff	Preconditions: Staff Common Standards: BIR	BIR	Site Visit Team & COA
Authority	Staff	Commission	Commission	COA	Commission
Decision	Determine Eligibility for Stage II	Eligibility: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Provisional Approval: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Program(s): 1. Approve 2. Deny	1. Grant Full Approval 2. Grant Full Approval & Remand to COA to Address Stipulations 3. Continue Provisional Status for 1 Year to Address Stipulations 4. Deny Approval
IIA Status*	Not Approved	Not Approved	Provisional Approval**	Provisional Approval***	Full Approval

*At conclusion of stage

**Institutionally approved but cannot offer programs

***May begin offering approved program

Criterion 1 through 9

In accordance with the Commission adopted process for determining eligibility for Initial Institutional Approval, Eligibility Criteria 1-9, as follows, includes a staff review and recommendation.

Criterion 1: Responsibility and Authority

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- Santa Maria Bonita School District is proposing to offer a teacher induction program.
- Shelli Hart will be the program coordinator who will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the program and this position is titled Induction Director. This position will report to the Director of Teaching and Learning, Jennifer Loftus, who will be responsible for ongoing oversight of all educator preparation programs.
- Santa Maria Bonita School District has submitted a complete organizational chart that indicates the teacher induction program will be housed under the Department of Teaching and Learning and in partnership with Human Resources.
- Santa Maria Bonita School District assures that the duties related to credential recommendations will be performed only by employees of Santa Maria Bonita School District and that these individuals will take part in the Commission training related to the recommendation process. Santa Maria Bonita School District has identified, Shelli Hart, Induction Director, as the individual who will be responsible for credential recommendations.

Criterion 2: Lawful Practices

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- A non-discrimination policy for SMBSD's employees is provided on the district website and in the SMBSD Employee handbook.
- A non-discrimination policy for the institution's program candidates is provided in the SMBSD Teacher Induction Program Handbook.

Criterion 3: Commission Assurances and Compliance

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

Santa Maria Bonita School District provided a statement of assurance signed by Matthew Beecher, Deputy Superintendent that states the institution:

- a) Will comply with all preconditions,
- b) Will submit all data reports and accreditation documents,
- c) Will cooperate in an evaluation of the program by an external team or monitoring of the program by Commission staff,
- d) Will participate fully in the Commission's accreditation system and submission timelines, and

- e) In the event the program closes, will offer the program and meet all adopted standards until the candidate completes, withdraws, is dropped, or is admitted to another program.

Criterion 4: Requests for Data

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

The Induction Director, Shelli Hart is identified as the qualified officer responsible for reporting and responding to all requests for data within timeframes specified by the Commission.

Criterion 5: Grievance Process

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- Santa Maria Bonita School District has provided a grievance process which will be accessible to all candidates and applicants in the SMBSD Teacher Induction Program Handbook.
- Candidates are informed of the grievance process during the Induction Program Orientation and confirm they have received information regarding program policies including the grievance process by completing the Induction Program Professional Agreement.

Criterion 6: Communication and Information

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- Santa Maria Bonita School District’s webpage will be accessible to the public without the requirement of log in information. The program website is accessible through the district website under the “Teaching and Learning” tab.
- Santa Maria Bonita School District will include the mission, governance, administration, and admission procedures on both the program website and in the Teacher Induction Program Handbook.
- Information regarding the program will be made available through the program website, SMBSD Board minutes, and advertising flyers.

Criterion 7: Student Records Management, Access, and Security

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- Induction candidates will have access to all documents that show their program progress through a shared digital folder of records. These records will include, but are not limited to, interaction logs which document candidates’ fieldwork and professional development, notes from meetings related to components of the Induction program, process tools and Individual Learning Plan (ILP) documents.
- The process for maintaining confidential documents will be in alignment with how the district currently maintains confidential employee records. The district office is a locked facility, and all offices are inaccessible to the public. All teacher candidates’ paper records will be kept in a locked file cabinet; electronic files will be stored on a secured district server

and access is limited to the SMBSD Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Director of Teaching and Learning, the Induction Program Director, and the SMBSD Credential Analyst. Teacher candidate records will be maintained indefinitely.

Criterion 8: Disclosure

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- The delivery model will include in person, online, and hybrid using a Google classroom platform with mentor, fully released coaches, and teacher on special assignment support for all new teachers.
- All in-person educator programs will be located in the Santa Maria Bonita School District building conference rooms. Candidates and coaches will meet regularly in the candidates' and/or coaches' classrooms or another preferred learning environment.
- Corwin Press may provide professional learning around engagement strategies, teacher clarity, and success criteria in the format of online conferences. All other direct educational services will be provided by SMBSD.

Criterion 9: Veracity in all Claims and Documentation Submitted

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

An assurance signed by Matthew Beecher, Deputy Superintendent has been submitted attesting to the veracity of all statements and documentation submitted to the Commission. The letter also attests to Santa Maria Bonita School District's understanding that a lack of veracity is a cause for denial of Initial Institutional Approval.

Criterion 10, 11, and 12

In accordance with the Commission approved process for determining eligibility for Initial Institutional Approval, [Eligibility Criteria 10-12](#) include a staff summary of the institution's submission, but do not include a staff recommendation.

Criterion 10: Mission and Vision

SMBSD Teacher Induction Program Mission

SMBSD will develop teacher capacity through a collaborative professional learning journey that is individualized to support teacher needs. The SMBSD Induction Program's hand-in-hand partnership with the mentor, supports the development of a deliberate, intentional culture of learning with high expectations where all teachers are supported in meeting the health, ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, linguistic and learning needs of all students. SMBSD induction candidates will be reflective practitioners who are committed to continuous improvement. SMBSD mentors will model reflection, quality instruction, provide collaborative support, guidance toward professional independence, along with a deep understanding of the California standards and frameworks for TK-12 students.

SMBSD Teacher Induction Program Vision

The proposed teacher induction program mission and vision exemplify SMBSD's commitment to California's adopted state standards and frameworks through the provision of high quality, research-based professional development that is in alignment with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession and emphasizes equity and access to all students.

Teacher candidates will contribute to this mission by successfully implementing the Common Core State Standards and frameworks as adopted by the California Department of Education by providing a rigorous curriculum, research-based quality instruction, and ongoing standards-based assessment.

- SMBSD's induction program is built on the core values of equity, responsiveness, positive presupposition, reflective dialogue, and inquiry. Through an individualized goal-focused approach, the induction program's structure guides teachers and coaches through strengthening best practices within and beyond the classroom, as outlined in the California Standards for the Teaching Profession, to ensure the growth of all students.
- In order to create a community of lifelong learners, the SMBSD Induction Program will facilitate professional learning and book studies around the works of Zaretta Hammond, Doug Fisher, and Jim Knight. All new teachers will walk through the learning presented in *The Skillful Teacher* by Saphier, Haley-Speca, & Grower which is aligned with the learning of district site leaders around *The Skillful Leader*. The program will interweave *The Teacher Clarity Playbook* as well as *The Success Criteria Playbook* by Doug Fisher and *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain* by Zaretta Hammond throughout learning experiences with all new teachers. Mentors and instructional coaches will use their professional development around the teachings of Jim Knight, Diane Sweeney, and Elena Aguilar to support their coaching conversations.

- The SMBSD’s induction program seeks to offer teacher induction for teacher from SMBSD and surrounding districts who hold Preliminary California Single Subject, Multiple Subject, and Education Specialist credentials to meet the needs of all California students. The goal of this teacher induction program is to recruit and retain quality teachers who reflect and support the diverse learners of SMBSD and its surrounding districts as well as address the statewide teacher shortage.

Criterion 11: History of Prior Experience and Effectiveness in Educator Preparation

- Santa Maria Bonita School District had been in a long-standing partnership with Santa Barbara County Office of Education to provide induction for its new teachers. During this partnership SMBSD provided additional support to its new teachers which was not a part of the Santa Barbara County Office of Education induction program. In 2020, the district officially added a Teacher Development program within the Department of Teaching and Learning. This program began providing multiple layers of support for new teachers, including recruiting and supporting mentors, training and supporting site instructional coaches, as well as providing individualized professional development, initial onboarding, new teacher collaboration, and bi-annual new teacher conferences. In 2021, SMBSD began partnering with San Luis Obispo County Office of Education because the district felt that program was more aligned with the type of support SMBSD chose to provide with the Teacher Development program. With this change also came the decision to develop a SMBSD induction program. The decision to seek their own accreditation was based upon the desire to continue the additional support currently being provided and integrate it into a cohesive program for SMBSD new teachers.
- Santa Maria Bonita School District has posted the third-party invitation for comments on the Santa Maria Bonita School District’s [website](#) where the public and all stakeholders can access it. No comments have been received at this time.
- As required by this criterion, staff researched the possibility of any additional available information relevant to Santa Maria Bonita School District’s application for IIA and found none.

Criterion 12: Capacity and Resources

- As evidence of capacity and resources, Santa Maria Bonita School District has provided a copy of its most recent audited budget dated [2020-2021](#) as well as a copy of a proposed [operations budget](#) for its education unit.
- Santa Maria Bonita School District has also detailed within its submission the facility resources that will be available for its candidates. These include the 21 campuses within the district as well as the district office.
- Additionally, within the submission document, Santa Maria Bonita School District has identified the job responsibilities and minimum qualifications for the program personnel and instructional support. Santa Maria Bonita School District’s personnel and instructional support will consist of the following:
 - Induction Director
 - Teacher Development Teacher on Special Assignment

- New Teacher Induction Teacher on Special Assignment
- Credential Analyst

Santa Maria Bonita School District is preschool through eighth grade school district. For the purposes of fieldwork, SMBSD is partnered with each school site within SMBSD for preschool through eighth grade placements and will partner with Santa Maria Joint Union High School District for any high school placements that may be needed.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission consider the responses to the Eligibility Requirements submitted by Santa Maria Bonita School District and grant eligibility.

Granting eligibility will allow Santa Maria Bonita School District to move forward to Stage III of the IIA process in which responses to the Preconditions and the Common Standards are submitted for review. Approval of Stage II will not authorize Santa Maria Bonita School District to offer an educator preparation program that leads to a credential or license, such as the teacher induction program.

If the Commission grants eligibility, it may identify topics that it will be looking for in Stage III. If the Commission denies eligibility, it may identify what it sees as missing in the current submission in the event the institution decides to continue to work toward institutional approval.

Next Steps

Based on the Commission's action, staff will take appropriate next steps related to the option chosen.