

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

Institution: Evergreen Elementary School District
Dates of Visit: October 23-25, 2017
2017-18 Accreditation Team Recommendation: Accreditation

Previous History of Accreditation Status	
Date: N/A	Accreditation Status: Approved*

**Although Evergreen School District has operated a Commission approved educator preparation program since 2004, induction programs were not incorporated into the accreditation system until 2011. Therefore, the 2017 accreditation visit is the first accreditation site visit for this institution.*

Rationale:

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation** was based on a thorough review of all institutional and programmatic information and materials available prior to and during the accreditation site visit including interviews with program leadership, district leadership, site administrators, mentors, candidates, program completers, reviewers, and advisory committee members. The team felt that it obtained sufficient and consistent information that led to a high degree of confidence in making overall and programmatic judgments about the program’s operation. The decision pertaining to the accreditation status of the institution was based upon the following:

Program Standards

All program standards were found to be fully met.

Common Standards

All common standards were found to be fully met.

Overall Recommendation

The team completed a thorough review of the programs documents, program data, program fieldwork, including portfolios and ILPs, and interviews with program leadership, district leadership, site administrators, mentors, candidates, program completers, reviewers, and advisory committee members. As a result of finding all Common Standards and Met and all Program Standards are Met, the team unanimously recommends a decision of **Accreditation**.

On the basis of this recommendation, the institution is authorized to offer the following credential programs and to recommend candidates for the appropriate and related credentials upon satisfactorily completing all requirements

<u>Clear Multiple Subject/Single Subject</u> Teacher Induction	
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Staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
- Evergreen Elementary School District be permitted to propose new educator preparation programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- Evergreen Elementary 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 Lead:

Sean McCarthy

Murrieta Valley Unified School District

Common Standards:

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Etiwanda School District

Programs Cluster:

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Staff to the Visit:

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Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Documents Reviewed

Candidate Portfolios	Survey Data
Common Standards Submission	Formative Assessment Documents
Sample ILPs	Program Communications
Collaborative Logs	Advisement Documents
Preconditions	Workshop Agendas
Follow-up Survey Results	Conference Documents
Needs Analysis Results	Program Budget
Program Assessment Feedback	Meeting Agendas
Program Review Feedback	Organizational Chart
Mentor Application	Portfolio Rubrics
Accreditation Documentation	Induction Program Handbook
Job Descriptions & MOUs	
Common Standards Feedback	

Interviews Conducted

Stakeholders	TOTAL
Candidates	15
Completers	2
District Leadership	4
Site Administration	4
Program Coordinator	1
Professional Development Providers	3
Reviewers	9
Mentors	13
Credential Analysts	1
Advisory Committee Members	10
TOTAL	62

Background Information

The Evergreen School District serves students from TK-8th grade and operates fifteen elementary schools and three middle schools in East San Jose California. The district employs approximately 600 teachers and has a current student population of 11,798.

Education Unit

The Evergreen School District's Induction Program (EIP) is a two-year program created in response to SB 2042 providing opportunities for teachers new to the profession to develop individual plans for growth while clearing their preliminary credentials. The Evergreen School District approved induction program provides new teachers with mentors, information and non-evaluative assessment opportunities in order to empower future generations of educators in developing habits of personalized professional development.

Table 1
Program Review Status

Program Name	Number of Program Completers (2016-17)	Number of Candidates Enrolled (2017-18)
General Education Teacher Induction	6	17

The Visit

Due to the small size of the Evergreen School District Induction program and in accordance with the objectives of strengthening and streamlining accreditation processes the Evergreen Induction program site visit was conducted entirely through Zoom technology. All stakeholder group interviews and team meetings were successfully executed using this technology and the visit proceeded in accordance with all normal accreditation protocols.

Clear Multiple Subject/Single Subject Program Report
Teacher Induction
General Education

Program Design

The Evergreen School District (ESD) is the lead educational agency for the two-year Evergreen induction program. This program, housed in the Instruction Department, is designed to provide multiple/single subject preliminary teacher candidates with high quality extended preparation and professional development that enables them to meet the academic learning needs of their students and obtain a California Clear Teaching Credential. Due to the size of the program, the district has staffed the program with a coordinator and an assigned teacher on adjunct duty contracts. This program leadership team relies on district leaders, professional development providers, mentors and the advisory committee to successfully manage the approved induction program. Interviews confirm that the induction team collaborates closely with district leaders including the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction, the Director of Instruction, and the Director of Human Resources to integrate induction activities with district initiatives and resources. The Assistant Superintendent and the induction coordinator work together to update ESD administrators on the current implementation of the induction program and to seek their counsel on program issues.

Interviews confirmed that the coordinator regularly communicates with the credential analyst in the Human Resources Department to ensure that candidates encounter a timely and seamless transition into the program. All new hires are given information on program eligibility and the requirements for clearing their Preliminary Credential as well as provided access to ongoing support. Additionally, the coordinator collaborates regularly with the Instruction Department to plan and implement professional development activities, including a focus on EL learners and special populations. This collaboration ensures that candidates have access to professional development, mentoring and coaching, which may include demonstration lessons.

Program stakeholders are provided with meaningful opportunities to become involved in program evaluation and improvement. Informal communications with stakeholders occur throughout the year via emails and meetings. A formal advisory committee is in place that includes the assistant superintendent, district directors, site administrators, mentors, teacher candidates, and a teacher association representative. This committee reviews and analyzes evaluation data and makes recommendations for program revisions. The advisory committee reported that during their tri-annual meetings, they engage in a high level of decision-making around candidate competency, mentor competency, and program improvement. Members report that program revisions have been made in direct response to their feedback. In addition, mentors and teacher candidates have the opportunity to contribute information about the effect of the formative assessment system and professional development activities through locally collected program data through survey tools. These sources of data are used in a formative manner and have resulted in reworking and strengthening their formative assessment process under the current induction standards.

The program coordinator and leadership team member review professional development feedback results to make adjustments and improvements to meetings and trainings. Stakeholders noted the program’s responsiveness to survey feedback, particularly in providing professional development for teacher candidates more closely aligned to ILP goals. Network meetings have also been modified to better meet the “just in time” needs of the candidate. Meetings are strategically held throughout the year instead of on a monthly basis. Interviews with candidates and mentors confirmed that meetings and professional development offerings are structured to include ample opportunities for discussion and collaboration around current issues and are intentionally differentiated to meet the needs of both elementary and middle school teachers. Finally, teacher candidates and mentors have moved to using an online platform, Google Classroom, to access, complete, and submit all required program documentation.

Course of Study

The Evergreen School District induction program is based on processes from the Formative Assessment for California Teachers (FACT) system for candidates, which is responsive to local educational priorities, is based on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP), and provides specific evidence of an individual’s teaching practice. Teacher candidates are required to show growth across the CSTPs during their two years in the program. The program transcript outlines the documentation and program requirements that guide teacher candidates through induction.

Mentors guide and assist teacher candidates through a highly individualized and systematically designed set of experiences deliberately structured to result in a candidate’s application and demonstration of their pedagogical knowledge and skills. Candidates meet with their mentors on a weekly basis and with other colleagues at network meetings. In addition, site grade-level and cross grade level planning meetings, site professional learning communities (PLCs), and site and district- based professional development sessions provide multiple opportunities for candidates to reflect on teaching and learning.

The teaching standards are a focus of network meetings. Teacher candidates use professional development offerings as part of the research portion of their inquiry and individualized learning plan (ILPs). The district EL and pupil services teams provide the needed specialized training for teacher candidates along with professional development providers who are full-time classroom teachers. The program also utilizes administration personnel to share their expertise with participating teachers and mentors during network meetings. Periodically, the ESD induction program hires out-of-district consultants in the areas of mentoring, data driven dialogue, and inquiry. This is designed to build leadership expertise, as well as to provide the best training available for mentors and teacher candidates.

The mentor also conducts at least two classroom observations during each year of candidate participation. Teacher candidates also have the opportunity to observe veteran teachers as a

means of expanding their knowledge of practice outside the classroom, improving collaboration between colleagues, and contributing to their research as they develop their inquiries.

All teachers use the plan, teach, reflect, apply sequence and, when interviewed, report that this cycle has positively impacted their practice and pushed them to explore areas for professional development that they otherwise would not pursue. Candidates and completers report that they have learned to better modify and differentiate instruction...to be more “adaptable.” They also reported that they are now more comfortable integrating evidence and inquiry into their practice.

Assessment of Candidates

The induction program coordinator advises candidates about the program and professional credential requirements in a timely manner. Each candidate receives a copy of the Induction Program Information Handbook at the induction orientation meetings, which details information about the program and credential completion requirements. Candidates interviewed stated that they understood the requirements for completion including the obligation to accumulate evidence of growth in relation to the CSTP.

At the end of each induction year, the candidate’s portfolio is measured against a rubric, which indicates if the candidate’s evidence in terms of application and demonstration of progress towards mastery on the CSTPs is on track to be recommended for a clear credential. This rubric is distributed to teacher candidates and mentors with training on this tool so that requirements for completion are clearly communicated. Portfolio reviewers stated that they are trained on the rubric during professional development and that they calibrate and collaborate to score and reflect on sample portfolios. According to mentors, participation in this training also helps them serve as effective personal coaches who are equipped to provide additional support to their candidate. In addition, each teacher candidate participates in an exit interview. The interview questions are aligned with the CSTPs. If the presented evidence does not meet standard, the candidate meets with the program coordinator to plan remediation. Interviews confirmed that once a candidate has completed all requirements, an online recommendation to the Commission for a clear credential is submitted through the human resource department.

Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, program completers, mentors, professional development providers, district and program leaders, credential analyst, advisory committee members, and site administrators, the team determined that all program standards are fully Met for the General Education Induction Program.

COMMON STANDARDS FINDINGS

Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
Each Commission-approved institution has the infrastructure in place to operate effective educator preparation programs. Within this overall infrastructure:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The institution and education unit create and articulate a research-based vision of teaching and learning that fosters coherence among, and is clearly represented in all educator preparation programs. This vision is consistent with preparing educators for California public schools and the effective implementation of California’s adopted standards and curricular frameworks 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The institution actively involves faculty, instructional personnel, and relevant stakeholders in the organization, coordination, and decision making for all educator preparation programs. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The education unit ensures that faculty and instructional personnel regularly and systematically collaborate with colleagues in P-12 settings, college and university units and members of the broader educational community to improve educator preparation. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The institution provides the unit with sufficient resources for the effective operation of each educator preparation program, including, but not limited to, coordination, admission, advisement, curriculum, professional development/instruction, field based supervision and clinical experiences. 	X		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Unit Leadership has the authority and institutional support required to address the needs of all educator preparation programs and considers the interests of each program within the institution. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recruitment and faculty development efforts support hiring and retention of faculty who represent and support diversity and excellence. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The institution employs, assigns and retains only qualified persons to teach courses, provide professional development, and supervise field-based and clinical experiences. Qualifications of faculty and other instructional personnel must include, but are not limited to: a) current knowledge of the content; b) knowledge of the current context of public schooling including the California adopted P-12 content standards, frameworks, and accountability systems; c) knowledge of diversity in society, including diverse abilities, culture, language, ethnicity, and gender orientation; and d) demonstration of effective professional practices in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The education unit monitors a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements. 	X		
<p>Finding on Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation</p>	MET		

Additional information applicable to the standard decision:

Evergreen School District’s Induction Program prepares candidates by implementing a formative assessment process that is responsive to program rigor and development of the content standards and curriculum frameworks. Program faculty and relevant stakeholders are actively involved in the organization, coordination, and decision making, as indicated by interview discussions around collaboration and the analysis of program and candidate data. Sufficient resources are allocated for the effective operation of the program, as affirmed through interviews. Program and candidate needs are at the forefront of Evergreen’s approaches to meeting accreditation, as well as the development of candidate practice as it relates to teaching and learning. Recruitment and faculty development support hiring and retention of faculty who represent diversity and excellence as evidenced in candidate retention data. Interviews with site administrators and district leadership indicated mentor and professional development effectiveness through their ability to develop understanding on research-based practices, as well as support a candidate’s ability to assess and implement strategies based on those practices. One candidate described their mentor as having extensive understanding of the diverse needs of the students and the strategies necessary to meet their needs.

Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
● Candidates are recruited and supported in all educator preparation programs to ensure their success.	X		
● The education unit accepts applicants for its educator preparation programs based on clear criteria that include multiple measures of candidate qualifications.	X		
● The education unit purposefully recruits and admits candidates to diversify the educator pool in California and provides the support, advice, and assistance to promote their successful entry and retention in the profession.	X		
● Appropriate information and personnel are clearly identified and accessible to guide each candidate’s attainment of program requirements.	X		
● Evidence regarding progress in meeting competency and performance expectations is consistently used to guide advisement and candidate support efforts. A clearly defined	X		

process is in place to identify and support candidates who need additional assistance to meet competencies			
Finding on Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support	MET		
Additional information applicable to the standard decision:			
<p>The district recruits and admits candidates who appropriately hold a preliminary credential and match the diversity of the student population and provide the support, advice, and assistance to promote their successful entry and retention in the profession. The district credential analyst indicated her role as reviewing candidate credentials and experience, as well as informing them of the local induction program. The program coordinator and credential analyst regularly communicate on new-hire needs. Candidate support and needs are strategically seen as the primary guiding force of the program implementation in order to ensure candidate success. Interviews revealed the induction program coordinator oversees the day to day activities of the program, while many other stakeholders within the district and the program also participate in supporting candidate needs. Mentor, candidate, and completer interview feedback triangulated the program’s multi-faceted approach to assisting candidates in their growth and completion. The program regularly utilizes multiple measures to ensure candidate performance expectations are met. Stakeholder feedback, mentor activity logs, marking of the CSTP Continuum of Teaching Practice, and portfolio checks include the types of assessments shared during interviews.</p>			

Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unit designs and implements a planned sequence of coursework and clinical experiences for candidates to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills to educate and support P-12 students in meeting state-adopted content standards. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unit and its programs offer a high-quality course of study focused on the knowledge and skills expected of beginning educators and grounded in current research on effective practice. Coursework is integrated closely with field experiences to provide candidates with a cohesive and comprehensive program that allows candidates to learn, practice, and 	X		

demonstrate competencies required of the credential they seek.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unit and all programs collaborate with their partners regarding the criteria and selection of clinical personnel, site-based supervisors and school sites, as appropriate to the program 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through site-based work and clinical experiences, programs offered by the unit provide candidates with opportunities to both experience issues of diversity that affect school climate and to effectively implement research-based strategies for improving teaching and student learning. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site-based supervisors must be certified and experienced in teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process and criteria result in the selection of site-based supervisors who provide effective and knowledgeable support for candidates. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site-based supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All programs effectively implement and evaluate fieldwork and clinical practice. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For each program the unit offers, candidates have significant experience in school settings where the curriculum aligns with California’s adopted content standards and frameworks, and the school reflects the diversity of California’s student and the opportunity to work with the range of students identified in the program standards. 	X		
Finding on Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	MET		

Additional information applicable to the standard decision:

The Evergreen Induction Program implements an induction experience that offers candidates a job-embedded, individualized goal-driven program that allows them to apply the formative assessment cycle in order to learn, practice, and demonstrate competencies required of the credential they seek. Appropriately matched mentors are the primary support for candidates. Mentors are selected, trained, and evaluated based on evidence of their knowledge and implementation of best practices, ability to develop and maintain relationships, and their overall effectiveness. District leadership indicated that mentors have a significant responsibility and they have become an equally cohesive group as the new teachers: “Mentors take the idea of ongoing continuous training to heart and grow as much as our new teachers.” The diverse needs of the students within the district lend itself to candidate experiences that require teaching and learning about culturally responsive approaches and differentiation. Interviews affirmed program experiences related to coaching, observations, training, and examination of research-based strategies aligned to the content standards, framework, English Learners, special populations, and classroom management. The program implements and evaluates fieldwork and clinical practice through multiple avenues and various environments, mainly through the candidate’s classroom setting. Candidates are assessed against the CSTP, portfolio rubric criteria, and the feedback received on candidate growth provided to the program from site administrators and mentors. Candidates indicated that the use of classroom formative assessments and student achievement data guide their continuous reflection and examination of their approaches to teaching.

Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The education unit develops and implements a comprehensive continuous improvement process at both the unit level and within each of its programs that identifies program and unit effectiveness and makes appropriate modifications based on findings. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The education unit and its programs regularly assess their effectiveness in relation to the course of study offered, fieldwork and clinical practice, and support services for candidates. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Both the unit and its programs regularly and systematically collect, analyze, and use candidate and program completion data. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The continuous improvement process includes multiple sources of data including 1) the extent to which candidates are prepared 	X		

to enter professional practice; and 2) feedback from key stakeholders such as employers and community partners about the quality of the preparation			
Finding on Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement	Met		
<p>Additional information applicable to the standard decision:</p> <p>As a single district induction program, Evergreen’s approach to an improvement cycle includes timely implementation of measures to assess and provide specific data on the effectiveness of the program, course of study, fieldwork, and candidate competence. Interviews revealed the program’s community approach to the workforce of people who are inspired to collaborate on and continuously improve their district’s induction program. Identification of program effectiveness includes multiple sources of data, including formal surveys administered to candidates and mentors, informal feedback from all stakeholders, candidate individualized induction plan growth, and portfolio artifacts. Stakeholders indicated how regular examination and analysis of the data collected has supported many adjustments to program improvements. Examples provided include how fieldwork related to coaching and mentoring has been shifted to be classroom embedded, while paperwork has been updated to be individualized and “streamlined and genuine.” Use of the high performance indicated on student achievement data is included to triangulate the overall effectiveness of the program’s ability to prepare their candidates for the education profession.</p>			

Common Standard 5: Program Impact			
Components	Consistently	Inconsistently	Not Evidenced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The institution ensures that candidates preparing to serve as professional school personnel know and demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting state adopted academic standards. Assessments indicate that candidates meet the Commission adopted competency requirements as specified in the program standards. 	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The unit and its programs evaluate and demonstrate that they are having a positive impact on candidate learning and competence and on teaching and learning in schools that serve California’s students 	X		

Finding on Common Standard 5: Program Impact	MET
<p>Additional information applicable to the standard decision:</p> <p>The Evergreen School District Induction Program ensures its candidates are prepared to educate and support effectively all students in meeting the state adopted academic standards through their successful completion of a carefully articulated formative assessment experience and its associated obligations. The program design, including collaboration with well-trained mentors and differentiated professional learning experiences, helps candidates develop and demonstrate knowledge and skills to support the full range of learners. District leaders and site administrators reported that evidence from walkthroughs and other data affirmed the impact induction experiences had on helping candidates support students in meeting adopted standards. Both current candidates and program completers cited multiple examples of ways in which program experiences, particularly support from their mentors, helped them grow in their ability to support all students, including English Learners and special needs students access the curriculum by identifying specific strategies to differentiate instruction. Interviews with program leadership, the review team, advisory members, and candidates, and an examination of evidence, including Individual Learning Plans and other assessment data, affirmed that a wide variety of assessment data is used to gauge the impact the program is having on candidate competence and learning.</p>	

INSTITUTION SUMMARY

The Evergreen Elementary School District Induction Program has developed a research-based system of formative assessment for teachers around its vision to “develop competent, caring, and quality beginning teachers in order to promote increased student achievement and social well-being” and promote the “Evergreen Way” of commitment to continuous improvement. They have done so by establishing a team approach to induction. The program coordinator and leadership team work with a large and active advisory committee that includes district leaders, site administrators, mentors, and association representatives. The advisory committee members play a hands on role in the governance of the program. They are knowledgeable of program activities and use a variety of assessment tools to inform decisions on program direction. District leaders and staff members are also active in their support of the program, working closely with the program coordinator to ensure professional development opportunities are available for candidates. This team approach is a hallmark of Evergreen’s program design.

If the team approach is a key to the program design, the quality of mentorship is the strength of its implementation. As the program transitioned from a less paperwork-driven approach to a greater focus on mentoring and individualized support, the quality of the mentoring was essential. Candidates and site administrators affirmed throughout the visit that the collaborations with mentors are highly effective in supporting candidate growth. Mentors are both frequently available, as affirmed through interviews and collaboration logs, and do an excellent job fostering quality reflections, according to interviews with candidates and completers. They help candidates identify specific areas of need and individualize their learning

so they are not duplicating things they have already experienced. This effective mentoring has helped the program balance the long term teaching analysis with “just in time” mentoring needs of candidates.