

**Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of Findings of the
Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at
Redwood City School District**

**Professional Services Division
January 2021**

Overview of this Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at **Redwood City School District**. The report of the team presents the findings based upon a thorough review of all available and relevant institutional and program documentation as well as all supporting evidence including interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the report, a recommendation of **Accreditation** is made for the institution.

**Common Standards and Program Standard Decisions
For All Commission Approved Programs Offered by the Institution**

Common Standards	Status
1) Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	Met
2) Candidate Recruitment and Support	Met
3) Course of Study, Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	Met
4) Continuous Improvement	Met
5) Program Impact	Met

Program Standards

Programs	Total Program Standards	Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
Teacher Induction	6	6	0	0

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

- Preparation for the Accreditation Visit
- Preparation of the Institutional Documentation and Evidence
- 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: Redwood City School District

Dates of Visit: November 16-18, 2020

Accreditation Team Recommendation: Accreditation

Previous History of Accreditation Status

Accreditation Reports	Accreditation Status
<u>June 2012 Team Report</u>	<u>Accreditation</u>

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 administrators, professional development providers, mentors, candidates, completers, local school personnel, and external stakeholders. The team 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 recommendation of **Accreditation** for the institution was based upon the following:

Preconditions

All general preconditions and preconditions for all credential programs were **Met**.

Program Standards

All program standards for the Teacher Induction credential program were **Met**.

Common Standards

All Common Standards were **Met**.

Overall Recommendation

Given the above findings on preconditions, common standards and program standards, the review team recommends an accreditation status of **Accreditation**.

In addition, staff recommends that:

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

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.

Teacher Induction

Accreditation Team

Team Lead:

Gail Calhoun
San Gabriel Unified School District

Programs Reviewers:

Jessica Kachaenchai
Chaffey Joint Union High School District

Common Standards:

Kimberly Lilienthal
Placer County Office of Education

Staff to the Visit:

Jake Shuler
Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Documents Reviewed

Common Standards Submission
Program Review Submission
Common Standards Addendum
Program Review Addendum
Mentor training materials
Candidate Advisement Materials
Accreditation Website
Advisory group presentation
School board presentation materials

Candidate ILP samples
Candidate Handbook
ILP Portfolio Score sheets
Survey Results
Performance Expectation Materials
Preconditions Responses
ILP template and samples
Mentor Log document
Professional development materials

Interviews Conducted

Stakeholders	TOTAL
Candidates	33
Completers	7
Employers	20
Institutional Administration	5
Program Directors	2
Mentors	18
Credential Analysts and Staff	2
Advisory Board Members	8
District Curriculum Leads	8
TOTAL	103

Note: In some cases, individuals were interviewed more than once due to multiple roles. Thus, the number of interviews conducted exceeds the actual number of individuals interviewed.

Background Information

Redwood City is located in the middle of the San Francisco peninsula, otherwise known as Silicon Valley. The Redwood City School District ("RCSD") serves 8,000 students in grades preschool through eighth grade. The district's mission of "Educating every child for success" drives the common goal of providing the very best preschool-8th grade education to all students. The district is comprised of twelve different campuses: 2 sixth-eighth grade middle schools, 1 third-eighth grade school for high achieving and gifted students, 5 preschool-eighth grade schools, and 4 preschool-fifth grade elementary schools. The demographics of the district's student population are diverse. Hispanic/Latino students make up the largest ethnic group at 68%; 22% of students are white; 6% are Asian/Pacific Islander; and 1% are African-American. 32% of RCSD students are English learners.

The RCSD Induction Program serves 34 new teachers in their first and second years of induction, supported by 20 mentors. The RCSD Induction program follows the models of typical Induction programs across the state of California with an emphasis on coaching/mentoring that guides new teachers through their first two years of job embedded experiences. The program is guided by an Induction Leadership Committee consisting of 10 members representing preschool-8th grade, higher education, and the School Board.

Table 1: Program Review Status

Program Name	Number of Program Completers (2019-20)	Number of Candidates Enrolled (2020-21)
Teacher Induction	9	34

The Visit

The visit proceeded in accordance with all normal accreditation protocols. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic this site visit was conducted via technology. The team and institutional stakeholders were interviewed via technology.

PRECONDITION FINDINGS

After review of all relevant preconditions for this institution, all have been determined to be met.

PROGRAM REPORTS

Teacher Induction

Program Design

The RCSD Induction Program is directly overseen by the deputy superintendent and an Induction director whose responsibility it is to align the major components of the program, the program's direction, and communication between the program and the district. The program is advised by a group called the "Induction Leadership Team" that is comprised of teachers, mentors, site administrators, a school board member, and a field supervisor from a local institution of higher education. All teachers hired within RCSD who hold a preliminary credential are eligible and admitted to the induction program.

The program demonstrates a robust system of communication with the district-at-large. The director provides an annual report to site and district administration on the program effectiveness data, the direction for the program for that year, timelines for teacher candidate coursework completion, and any areas of focus or growth for the program, as verified by site administration and the staff development committee. The director further provides weekly induction newsletters to keep staff current on the process for teacher candidates. Mentors regularly correspond with site administration and both mentors and site administration report a strong collaborative system of support to provide direction in teacher candidates' professional growth and goal development.

To monitor the quality of the program and the services provided, the team gathers feedback from a variety of stakeholders and collects data points through the Sinclair Group, which surveys participants throughout the year. Further data is collected following professional development workshops and trainings through an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) feedback survey and mid- and end-of-year survey data. Finally, monthly office hours are provided to allow for ongoing informal feedback from candidates and mentors to the Induction director on an as-needed basis. Evidence of the extensive reports was provided. Additionally, site administration reports an established practice of sharing input with the director as to needed direction and support for the program and teacher candidates.

The data and feedback gathered are reviewed by the RCSD leadership team, which meets twice annually, in order to assess program quality, effectiveness, and directed areas of growth. Additionally, there is regular reflection and communication between the deputy superintendent and the director to establish program goals and areas for growth, as communicated by the deputy superintendent and director.

Induction mentors within RCSD's induction team are full-time teachers who provide mentorship after instructional hours. The district provides substitutes for the mentors so that they can observe teacher candidates during the day, but weekly mentor meetings and professional development are provided after a teacher's instructional day. Induction mentors provide

support for teacher candidates and mentorship aligned to their ILP goals and use the Program Sequence Meeting Log as a guide for direction of the meetings throughout the year; evidence of a sample completed log was provided.

Teachers interested in becoming induction mentors apply in June of the prior year. They must demonstrate subject/grade-level knowledge, have at least three years of teaching experience, and a willingness to engage in professional growth opportunities. Their application is complemented by a recommendation from a principal or assistant principal. The director assesses the needs for the year based upon the teacher candidate hires for the upcoming year and actively recruits new mentors as-needed. The director begins the mentor recruitment process in May by reaching out to site administrators and asking for strong candidates who should apply. Mentors are selected based upon their expertise and the teacher candidate needs for the upcoming year. The program demonstrates a strong commitment to pairing teacher candidates with induction mentors who are either in the same specialty, the same grade level, or on the same campus. Teacher candidates and mentors articulate a shared belief in how well candidates and mentors are matched.

Induction mentors train throughout the year in a range of professional development opportunities, including an orientation in August and a collaborative book study on *The Art of Coaching* by Elena Aguilar. They meet with the director throughout the year to reflect upon their own growth in coaching skill development. The director further observes mentors in meetings with the candidates. The mentor and director then debrief and reflect upon areas for growth and development. Induction mentors are observed twice per year by program leadership, coupled with reflective post-observation conversations.

Finally, the program has evolved over the last two years in key areas. The program has refocused teacher candidate reflection to view data through the lens of equity, a priority of focus for the entire district. The program has also begun to implement an online learning path that teacher candidates can complete in alignment with their identified areas for growth.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

The ILP is the guiding document for RCDSD teacher candidates' experience throughout their time in induction. It is collaboratively developed between the teacher candidate, the induction mentor, and the site administrator at the triad meeting in the beginning of the year. The ILP highlights areas of growth, related to the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP), which the candidate will then use as their professional growth goals. They engage in weekly meetings with their mentors following the Induction Program Sequence/Meeting Log developed by the program. A sample completed log was provided as evidence of its structure and process throughout the year.

The ILP is comprised of two inquiry cycles focused on a problem of practice. The candidate's professional growth goal is the catalyst for the cycles of inquiry. The mentor/candidate weekly meetings focus on the cycle of inquiry where candidates identify a problem of practice, review

data and set goals aligned to that problem, develop an action plan, take action and collect evidence aligned with the plan, and reflect, evaluate and share their results. The ILP requires teacher candidates to select research and professional learning opportunities from a menu of options as part of their action plan to address their professional growth goals and their inquiry cycles. Teacher candidates gather data to support the rationale behind their problem of practice and gather evidence of their research in action as part of the inquiry process. Site administration believed that overall the ILP served to help candidates become more reflective, more knowledgeable about how data can impact their instruction, and more comfortable in understanding the school community and culture.

Induction mentors are trained to support teacher candidates to complete the ILP and prepare the documents for evaluation by a portfolio reader – a former mentor or staff member from the district who now serves as an outside reader for candidate work on ILP reflections. Teacher candidates all verified throughout the interviews the value of the induction mentor in helping them complete the required elements of the ILP. Teacher candidates additionally highlighted the support provided by the director in clarifying the expectations outlined in the ILP and the ongoing office hours provided as a weekly support to teacher candidates as they complete their coursework.

Some candidates did express the overwhelming requirements embedded throughout the ILP and the language required to complete it. They expressed slight frustration with the perceived feedback process, that too much focus was on details not relevant to their practice. A number of them further expressed their sincere appreciation of their mentor in being able to help them translate the complex requirements and helping them know how to phrase responses so as to receive a passing score on the rubric. Mentors who have been in place for a number of years appreciated the ongoing direction of decreasing the expected amount of work required.

The site visit team recognizes the fine balance between meeting the standards and allowing for authentic and meaningful inquiry without the tasks required to complete the requirements becoming burdensome or undermining the individualized spirit of the standards. The program should continue to evolve the ILP document so that it maintains its integrity and commitment to reflection and inquiry but alleviates some of the rigidity of mandates outlined in the document.

Assessment of Candidates

The ILP is the driving evaluation tool of a teacher's mastery of the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. Teacher candidates are monitored throughout their time in the induction program to ensure they are meeting deadlines and expectations outlined in the ILP. Evidence of their reflection and growth are collected four times throughout the year. Candidates, mentors, and program leadership analyze the work via a shared Google folder. Portfolio readers analyze the ILP using a rubric, and candidates are assigned a rubric score and detailed feedback as to how thoroughly and accurately they have completed the document. Candidates are allowed to

revise their work and submit for improved scores one time if the feedback they receive is not a passing score.

Candidates who receive a passing score on the ILP are recommended for the clear credential at the close of their second year. The induction program director reviews each final ILP and accompanying scoresheet to determine that the candidate has completed the program requirements. The program should continue to gather qualitative and informal feedback from exiting candidates about the relevancy of the ILP as it relates to their growth as an educator and whether the scoresheet evaluation process gives them appropriate qualitative feedback needed to continue to grow in alignment with the CSTPs.

The director compiles the information and completes the Commission's Clear Credential Verification Form that is then uploaded to the Commission website in June.

Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with program administrators, professional development providers, mentors, candidates, completers, local school personnel, and external stakeholders, the team determined that all program standards are **Met** for the Teacher Induction credential program.

INSTITUTION SUMMARY

The Redwood City School District (RCSD) Teacher Induction Program is a single-district program that serves all eligible, preliminary credential holders. The superintendent, the chief business officer, and multiple Leadership Committee members confirmed through interviews that the unit holds the induction program in very high regard, is consistently proud of measurable program outcomes, and fully funds the program, even in times of economic challenge. This high degree of unit support ensures that induction candidates receive a comprehensive, mentor-based program that is fully aligned to California Content Standards, district goals and academic priorities.

Further, the RCSD Teacher Induction Program has ensured quality outcomes for teacher candidates and relevant training for mentors, in spite of changes in unit-level administrators over the last two years, as was verified by survey data and teacher interviews. Outgoing, and incoming leaders have worked collaboratively to ensure a rigorous, individualized program. Mentors participate actively in the continuous improvement cycle, particularly in regard to the development and revision of the Individual Learning Plan. One mentor added that she “enjoyed the process of data review and feedback,” noting specifically that “the current Teacher Induction co-directors have both been helpful this year.”

There is a process in place to ensure that only qualified and eligible candidates are recommended for the clear credential. District exit interviews confirm that there is a high degree of satisfaction from program completers.

COMMON STANDARDS FINDINGS

Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	Team Finding
Each Commission-approved institution has the infrastructure in place to operate effective educator preparation programs. Within this overall infrastructure:	<i>No response needed</i>
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.	Consistently
The institution actively involves faculty, instructional personnel, and relevant stakeholders in the organization, coordination, and decision making for all educator preparation programs.	Inconsistently

Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	Team Finding
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.	Consistently
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.	Consistently
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.	Consistently
Recruitment and faculty development efforts support hiring and retention of faculty who represent and support diversity and excellence.	Consistently
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.	Consistently
The education unit monitors a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements.	Consistently

Finding on Common Standard 1: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard

The Redwood City School District (RCS D) Teacher Induction Program supports a research-based vision of teaching and learning that is consistent with California’s adopted standards and curriculum frameworks. Program leaders are actively involved in the broader P-12 educational community, and the faculty represent the district’s prioritization of equity and inclusion. The unit should, however, continue to increase the involvement of relevant stakeholders and define their role in continuous improvement. The unit maintains an exceptional fiscal commitment to the effective operation of the induction program by ensuring that resource allocation and staffing remains consistent, sufficient, and well coordinated.

The unit monitors the credential recommendation process through a strong partnership between the human resources staff and the Induction Program leader to ensure that only candidates that have met all requirements are recommended for the clear credential.

Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support	Team Finding
Candidates are recruited and supported in all educator preparation programs to ensure their success.	<i>No response needed</i>
The education unit accepts applicants for its educator preparation programs based on clear criteria that include multiple measures of candidate qualifications.	Consistently
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.	Consistently
Appropriate information and personnel are clearly identified and accessible to guide each candidate’s attainment of program requirements.	Consistently
Evidence regarding progress in meeting competency and performance expectations is consistently used to guide advisement and candidate support efforts. A clearly defined process is in place to identify and support candidates who need additional assistance to meet competencies.	Inconsistently

Finding on Common Standard 2: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard

Candidates are recruited and supported through the RCSD. The district has invested in a Teacher Induction program to provide a significant component of support to candidates. Interviews confirmed the board and district have a goal to provide a diverse teaching force that mirrors the district demographics. Bilingual programs in the district as well as strong relationships with international partners and area universities allow for recruitment of teachers from Spain and other diverse backgrounds. Those candidates are supported individually by a member of the Human Resources team to assist them in the physical transition to a new area, new state and new country. This is in addition to the support they receive from the Induction Program, the instructional coaches, and their site.

New hires qualify for the Induction program if they hold a preliminary credential and are enrolled in the program upon hire with the assistance of the human resources team and the district credential analyst. The Induction program is led by a director with oversight from the deputy superintendent. The program director along with the human resources team identify

and assist candidates with program and other credential requirements. Progress monitoring of candidates with induction requirements is done through the ILP and CSTP self-assessments. Interviews conveyed that program leaders and mentors have frequent contact in which challenges and candidate concerns are shared. In addition, monthly office hours are held to provide individualized support. Despite these consistent practices, the team recommends a more clearly defined process to identify candidates who need additional assistance.

Confirmed through interviews with the district credential analyst and authorized submitter, the human resources team monitors credential requirements outside of Induction through spreadsheets and secure candidate files. As shared in an interview with district leadership, each employee who leaves the district participates in an exit interview. These exit interviews have not revealed that induction or lack of support is a reason for an employee leaving and not being retained by RCSD.

Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	Team Finding
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.	Consistently
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 demonstrate competencies required of the credential they seek.	Consistently
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.	Consistently
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.	Consistently
Site-based supervisors must be certified and experienced in teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential.	Consistently
The process and criteria result in the selection of site-based supervisors who provide effective and knowledgeable support for candidates.	Consistently

Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	Team Finding
Site-based supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.	Consistently
All programs effectively implement and evaluate fieldwork and clinical practice.	Consistently
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.	Consistently

Finding on Common Standard 3: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard

The induction activities integrate the state content standards, CSTPs, and current research-based practices and resources through the inquiry cycles in the ILP, coaching support from the district instructional coaches, and the professional development menu of options as evidence in documents reviewed and stakeholder interviews. Mentors are matched based on credential, grade level expertise and/or site context. Field work is linked to the specific context for teaching and learning for each individual teacher. Site-based supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.

The district is situated in the South Bay Area, which has a diverse student population. Candidates engage in activities to explore the diversity of their students, complete cycles of inquiry based on problems of practice, access research-based strategies and resources to assist them with reaching their inquiry goal, and are provided professional learning from the district with a focus on equity. The induction team is utilizing Coaching for Equity as a resource for mentor training to develop the skills of mentors in this area.

A review of submitted evidence and interviews with program leadership and mentors indicated that mentor training includes an overview of the confidential, supportive role of the mentor. Mentoring skills are introduced as an extension of the back to school district kick off day. Additionally, mentors engage in an ongoing book study to support their understanding of the fundamentals of the skills required for effective coaching and mentorship. Finally, mentors are observed by the Induction director during meetings with teacher candidates and then participate in reflective conversations with the director, as confirmed in interviews with the director and the mentors. The district leadership and program leadership take pride in their mentors and recognize them through acknowledgement of national coaching day, colloquia, and annually at board meetings with a follow up thank you email from a board member.

Candidate professional practice is evaluated through a thorough review of each candidate ILP by a team of reviewers using a rubric and providing specific feedback.

Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement	Team Finding
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.	Consistently
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.	Consistently
Both the unit and its programs regularly and systematically collect, analyze, and use candidate and program completer data as well as data reflecting the effectiveness of unit operations to improve programs and their services.	Consistently
The continuous improvement process includes multiple sources of data including 1) the extent to which candidates are prepared to enter professional practice; and 2) feedback from key stakeholders such as employers and community partners about the quality of the preparation.	Consistently

Finding on Common Standard 4: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard

The RCSD induction program utilizes locally-designed data collection tools in conjunction with formal data collection through an outside consultant to identify program effectiveness, measure candidate satisfaction and determine candidate growth. Locally collected data is synthesized by program staff and shared with stakeholders to contribute to program modifications. Formal data collection consists of surveys collaboratively developed with an outside consultant, administered and synthesized by the consultant into formal reports, then reviewed with stakeholder groups. A review of submitted evidence included data tools such as CSTP self-assessments and completer, candidate, mentor advisory and site leader surveys. Interviews across stakeholder groups further confirmed the administration of these tools and use of the data generated. The program relies most heavily on the comprehensive quantitative data collected by an outside consultant. Changes are made to the program or additional supports are provided based on this collection of data. Two recent examples of program changes based on data collected were shared in interviews: the development of a Program Sequence/Meeting Log and an additional overview of the candidate professional development options and requirements at a mentor meeting.

Common Standard 5: Program Impact	Team Finding
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.	Consistently
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.	Consistently

Finding on Common Standard 5: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard.

The institution ensures that candidates are prepared to serve as professional school personnel with the demonstrated knowledge and skills necessary to educate and effectively support all students in meeting state adopted academic standards. Interviews with induction candidates, mentors, professional development providers and program leaders indicate that the program participants have access to rigorous professional learning opportunities, and are able to effectively support all students in meeting the state adopted content standards. Candidates’ frequent assessments on the continuum of teaching practice, their ILPs, the candidates’ inquiry cycles, and interviews with candidates and mentors provide evidence that candidates meet the Commission adopted competency requirements as specified in the program standards.