

**Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of Findings of the  
Initial Institutional Approval Provisional Site Visit for**

**Las Virgenes Unified School District  
Professional Services Division  
June 2021**

**Overview of this Report**

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at **Las Virgenes Unified 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 with Stipulations** is made for the institution.

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

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

**Program Standards**

<b>Programs</b>	<b>Total Program Standards</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Met with Concerns</b>	<b>Not Met</b>
Teacher Induction	6	4	2	0
Preliminary Administrative Services	9	7	2	0
Clear Administrative Services	5	4	1	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  
Initial Institutional Approval Provisional Site Visit Team Report**

**Institution:** Las Virgenes Unified School District

**Dates of Visit:** May 10-12, 2021

**Accreditation Team Recommendation: Accreditation with Stipulations**

**Rationale:**

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation with Stipulations** 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 administrators, faculty, candidates, completers, and local school personnel. 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 with Stipulations** for the institution was based upon the following:

Preconditions

All preconditions have been determined to be aligned.

Program Standards

All Teacher Induction credential program standards were found to be **met** with the exception of program standards 3 and 6 which were **met with concerns**.

All Preliminary Administrative Services credential program standards were found to be **met** with the exception of program standards 1 and 2 which were **met with concerns**.

All Clear Administrative Services credential program standards were found to be **met** with the exception of program standard 3 which was **met with concerns**.

Common Standards

Common Standards 2 and 4 were found to be fully **met**. Common Standards 1, 3, and 5 were found to be **met with concerns**.

Overall Recommendation

Based on the fact that the team found that two of the Teacher Induction credential program standards were met with concerns, two of the Preliminary Administrative Services credential

(PASC) program standards were met with concerns, one of the Clear Administrative Services credential (CASC) program standards was met with concerns, and three of the common standards were met with concerns, the team recommends **Accreditation with Stipulations**.

The team recommends the following stipulations:

1. That within one year the institution provides evidence.
  - a. that 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.
  - b. that the unit and programs implement coursework and clinical experiences for candidates to effectively support all students in meeting state-adopted academic standards.
2. That within one year, for the Teacher Induction Program, the institution provides evidence
  - a. that the candidates' Individual Learning Plan (ILP) will include professional growth goals and how the candidate will meet those goals with defined and measurable outcomes.
  - b. that the ILP will identify support and learning opportunities for each candidate to refine effective teaching practices through focused cycles of inquiry.
  - c. that the mentoring process will support each candidate's analysis of student and other outcomes data to further inform the repeated cycle of planning and instruction.
  - d. that the program ensures candidates have dedicated time for observations of colleagues and peers.
  - e. that program leaders provide formative feedback to mentors on their work.
  - f. that the program collaborates with affiliated school and district administrators and all members of the induction system to provide a coherent overall system of support.
  - g. that candidates are provided with significant opportunities to experience issues of diversity, including experience in schools reflecting the diversity of California's student population.
3. That within one year, for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential program, the institution provides evidence
  - a. that the design of the program is aligned with principles of adult learning theory.
  - b. that the program establish productive working relationships with affiliated partners (school districts which facilitate field experiences, higher education institutions, community organizations, and other stakeholder groups) in order to share responsibility for program quality; candidate recruitment, selection, and advisement; curriculum development; delivery of instruction; selection of field

- sites; design of field experiences; selection and preparation of field experience supervisors, and assessment and verification of candidate competence.
4. That within one year, for the Clear Administrative Services Credential program, the institution provides evidence
    - a. that demonstrates the clear, consistent, well-defined criteria used in the selection process of coaches.
  5. that quarterly progress reports be provided to the Committee on Accreditation to ensure that appropriate action is being taken in a timely manner.

In addition, staff recommends that:

The institutions response to the preconditions be accepted.

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  
Preliminary Administrative Services  
Clear Administrative Services**

**Accreditation Team**

**Team Lead:**

Kimberly Lilienthal  
Placer County Office of Education

**Programs Reviewers:**

Jason Lea  
Sonoma County Office of Education

**Common Standards:**

Beth Littrell  
San Mateo-Foster City School District

Karen Rock  
Santa Clara Unified School District

**Staff to the Visit:**

William Hatrick  
Michele Williams-George  
Commission on Teacher Credentialing

**Documents Reviewed**

Common Standards Submission  
Program Review Submission  
Common Standards Addendum  
Program Review Addendum  
Course Syllabi and Course of Study  
Candidate Advisement Materials  
Accreditation Website

Organization Chart  
Faculty Vitae and Resumes  
Program Newsletters  
Email Correspondence  
Faculty Training Materials  
Candidate Submissions  
Formative Assessment Materials

Formative Assessment Rubrics  
Candidate Handbooks  
Survey Results  
Performance Expectation Materials  
Program Requirement Checklists

Precondition Responses  
Examination Results  
Accreditation Data Dashboard  
CTC Completer Survey

### Interviews Conducted

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Candidates	36
Completers	48
Employers	6
Institutional Administration	6
Program Coordinators	3
Faculty	10
Support Providers	24
Field Supervisors	19
Credential Analysts and Staff	1
Advisory Board Members	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>164</b>

*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**

Las Virgenes Unified School District (LVUSD) is a PreK–12 school district located in Calabasas, California near the Santa Monica mountains. The district serves the western section of the San Fernando Valley and the eastern Conejo Valley in Los Angeles County, which includes the cities of Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Westlake Village, and several small portions of the West Hills section of Los Angeles. LVUSD has been named a California Green Ribbon School District, has received the Gold Level Recognition from the California Department of Education, and has twice been named an AP Honor Roll District of Distinction.

LVUSD serves approximately 11,300 students and consists of 15 schools: one preschool, nine elementary schools (TK - 5th), three middle schools (6th - 8th), and two high schools. According to LVUSD Human Resources, for the 2020-21 academic year, the district has a total of 525 teachers, 18 of whom are first year teachers and 10 of whom are second year teachers. The student to teacher ratio is currently 22:1.

Both the student and teacher populations are predominantly White (72% and 91.8% respectively). Of the remaining student enrollment, 12% identify as Hispanic, 7.4% as Asian/Pacific Islander, 2% African American, less than 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, 5% two or more races, and 1% unknown. Other subgroups of the student population are as follows: 12% socioeconomically disadvantaged, 10.5% students with disabilities, and 4.7% English learners.

## **Education Unit**

LVUSD is seeking full approval for three educator preparation programs: Teacher Induction, Preliminary Administrative Services Credential (PASC), and Clear Administrative Services Credential (CASC). LVUSD successfully completed Stage III of the Initial Institutional Approval (IIA) process and received provisional approval from the Commission in September 2017. As part of Stage IV of the IIA process, LVUSD received provisional program approval from the Committee on Accreditation (COA) in November 2017 for the PASC and CASC programs, and May 2018 for the Teacher Induction program (TIP). While the CASC and TIP programs primarily serve educators within LVUSD, the PASC program serves educators from a broader geographical area. Since its first cohort in January 2018, the PASC program has provided educator preparation services for candidates from approximately 10 school districts and charter networks.

The Center for Educator Excellence (Center Edx) was created within the Educational Services Division to house the three educator preparation programs and is overseen by the superintendent and the assistant superintendent of the Educational Services Division. The Center EdX director reports to the assistant superintendent of the Educational Services Division and is responsible for the day-to-day operation of each preparation program.

**Table 1: Program Review Status**

<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Number of Program Completers (2018-19)</b>	<b>Number of Program Completers (2019-20)</b>	<b>Number of Candidates Enrolled (2020-21)</b>
Teacher Induction	0	19	26
Preliminary Administrative Services	12	16	20
Clear Administrative Services	2	4	15

### **The Visit**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this site visit was conducted virtually. The team and institutional stakeholders were interviewed via technology.

#### **Provisional Site Visit in Stage V of Initial Institutional Approval**

During Stage V of the initial institutional approval (IIA) process, a new institution hosts a provisional site visit (PSV). The site visit team is composed of program leaders for that type of program, as well as experienced Board of Institutional Review members. For provisional site visits, the team makes decisions on all common and applicable program standards as well as an accreditation recommendation and any stipulations, if appropriate. In keeping with Commission action to grant provisional approval to LVUSD, its Teacher Induction, PASC, and CASC programs have been operating for approximately 3 years.

#### **PRECONDITION FINDINGS**

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

## PROGRAM REPORTS

### Teacher Induction

#### Program Design

Interviews with program and unit leadership confirmed the LVUSD Teacher Induction program is housed in the Center EdX within the Education Services Department. The program director coordinates with the district leadership team, induction specialists, and mentors through meetings and newsletters to ensure a smooth program delivery. The induction program is open to candidates from partner districts as well as private and charter schools. The program director provides information around enrollment and mentor assignments. Also confirmed in interviews, in 2020 three mentor coordinators, titled induction specialists, were brought onto the team to help ensure that mentors and candidates received programmatic support and for an additional layer of feedback.

The LVUSD induction program facilitates an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) process with reflection on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP), as well as goal setting and reflection on instructional practice. Interviews with candidates, completers, and coaches confirmed that candidates begin by reflecting on the CSTP, record an area of interest, then meet in a triad with their mentor and administrator before choosing a goal for the year. Three times per year, mentors conduct follow-up reflective conversations on the growth toward the candidate's goal and if the goal needs to evolve or be modified. In these conversations, mentors direct candidates toward resources which support the candidate's individual growth. Prior to COVID-19, candidates had induction meetings throughout the year focusing on the ILP in addition to their weekly meetings with their mentors. Based on a review of evidence and data, it was verified that the Teacher Induction program regularly self-assesses and makes modifications annually based on candidate and mentor survey feedback. The program also makes changes to the ILP, ILP rubric, and other induction documentation.

The Teacher Induction program is informed by input from multiple stakeholder groups. Those groups verified that input was gathered formally through surveys and informally through conversations and emails. Interviews with advisory board members, who oversee the Induction, PASC, and CASC programs, verified that the board meets twice a year to review themes/trends from the survey data to suggest changes in the programs. Induction specialists are on the advisory board with other members of the PASC and CASC programs. The program consistently receives informal feedback from administrators, who commented that they felt comfortable reaching out to program leadership as needed.

#### Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

Candidates verified that they begin their induction work by reflecting on the CSTP and recording an area of interest on the ILP. Then they collaborate with their mentor and use this information to choose the goal the candidate wants to work on that year. Currently, there is no clear description of how the candidates will work to meet their goals nor are there consistently defined and measurable outcomes related to candidate's goals. A formal cycle of inquiry is

currently not part of the ILP. A review of evidence showed that parts of the cycle of inquiry are inconsistently found in candidates' reflections. There currently is not a specific area on the ILP for candidates to reflect on the analysis of student and other outcomes data to further inform the repeated cycle of planning and instruction. The missing parts of the cycle of inquiry were found on the previous version of the ILP, but this was removed in order to allow for a more constructivist approach this academic year according to the program director.

Though candidates have the option to attend professional development, it is not a required component of the program. They are informed of the professional development offered in the district and during the summer if they are interested in attending. As part of professional development, candidates are told about observation opportunities in the district and have the option to observe colleagues; again, this is not a required component of the program. Approximately half of the year 2 teacher induction candidates interviewed participated in some type of observation during their time in the induction program.

Interviews and document reviews affirmed the structure of the candidate/mentor relationship. Mentors are matched to their candidates by recommendation of the candidate and/or administrator. Once mentors are recommended, they are asked to fill out an application to ensure they meet the position's qualifications. Once approved, mentors meet with their candidate an average of one hour per week which was confirmed during interviews. These meetings are recorded by mentors in their coaching logs. Mentors are given release days to observe their candidates. In interviews, candidates shared that they valued the time with their mentors and the guidance they received.

According to interviews, the role of the induction specialist is to support the mentors. They provide feedback to mentors on candidate ILPs during the mid-year check. Mentor training is facilitated by the program director with ongoing support for mentors provided by the induction specialists. Currently, there is no formative feedback given to mentors; however, this is an identified area of growth for this coming year.

### Assessment of Candidates

Interviews with program level stakeholders affirmed the structure for candidate assessments. Candidates are formally assessed for program competency at the end of each year. However, the ILP is informally assessed throughout the year. The informal ILP assessment is done by an induction specialist to ensure candidates are making progress toward their growth goal. The formal assessment is done by LVUSD's Documentation Review and Compliance Team (DRCT) which consists of all three induction specialists. The DRCT and documentation reviews confirmed that they use the ILP scoring rubric to score each candidate's portfolio consisting of the CSTP self-assessment, the triad meeting form, and the ILP goal, as well as culminating reflections. Each portfolio is reviewed twice independently by DRCT members. Should there be a disagreement in score, the third DRCT member reviews the portfolio. Candidates and mentors are given the opportunity to apply the feedback provided by the DRCT, should their portfolio not earn a passing score. Receiving a passing score in both Year 1 and 2 of the Teacher

Induction program is required in order for the credential analyst to recommend the candidate for a clear teaching credential.

### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, outcomes data including survey results, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, instructional personnel, administrators, employers, mentors, program director, and advisory board, the site visit team determined that all program standards are **met** for the LVUSD except for the following:

#### **Standard 3: Designing and Implementing Individual Learning Plans within the Mentoring System – Met with Concerns**

While the candidate's ILP includes professional growth goals, a description of how the candidate will meet those goals with defined and measurable outcomes was not evidenced through interviews or documentation. Interviews did confirm that induction candidates are provided a range of professional learning and support opportunities. However, no evidence was found that these opportunities were consistently identified for candidates to help them refine effective teaching practices for all students nor focused cycles of inquiry. A review of evidence found that the analysis of student and other outcomes data was not consistently supported to further inform the repeated cycle of planning and instruction. Though interactions between candidates and mentors was strong as identified through interviews, dedicated time for observations of colleagues and peers by the candidates was not consistently ensured.

#### **Standard 6: Program Responsibilities for Assuring Quality of Program Services – Met with Concerns**

There was not sufficient interview or documentation evidence indicating that the program leaders provide formative feedback to mentors on their work, including the establishment of collaborative relationships. While there was evidence of collaboration and communication within the program, there was inconsistent evidence of collaboration with affiliated school administrators and other members of the induction system.

## **Preliminary Administrative Services**

### Program Design

Interviews and documentation showed that the LVUSD Preliminary Administrative Services Credential (PASC) program is well supported in the district, including support from the program director, the district credential analyst, two coach coordinators, and a staff of course faculty and fieldwork supervisors. Due to the size of the district, communication within the institution is done both informally and formally. Interviews confirmed that informal communication within the program occurs regularly through email involving candidates, program staff, field supervisors, and through program faculty training. Formal communication within the unit occurs through multiple meetings, including one-on-one meetings with the program director and superintendent as well as weekly meetings with program director and district senior leadership. Regular advisory board meetings are also held for the purpose of program improvement.

According to the program director, all instructional activities are analyzed through the lens of understanding the impact of bias and culture, improving student access to the core content standards, and overcoming barriers to learning. The stated goal of the PASC program is for candidates to embark on a transformative journey that prepares them with the knowledge, skills and dispositions required to begin an entry-level leadership position with success.

The structure of coursework and field experiences in the credential program is evaluated by program staff and candidates to ensure the program is meeting the needs of both candidates and the schools being served. Through a review of program documents and interviews, it was confirmed that stakeholder input is gathered through program surveys, end of course surveys, focus groups, district meetings, advisory meetings, and informal conversations. Interviews identified this is an area where the institution has focused its efforts in order to provide a program that meets the needs of candidates and stakeholders. Although this is a program focus, there was insufficient evidence of affiliated school district, higher education institution, or community organization participation in the candidate recruitment and selection process, and the selection and preparation of field experience supervisors.

### Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

Candidates confirmed that they begin the PASC program with an orientation and continue into a coursework sequence that emphasizes supporting diverse learners. The first and last courses are taught by the program director and the intervening courses are co-taught by local and district leaders, including guest speakers from various areas of expertise. As verified by interviews, program completers earn an Adaptive Schools certification which is a recent addition to the course sequence. The PASC program started with five courses in 2018 and expanded to seven courses for the last two cohorts. This was a result of feedback from surveys and focus groups asking to include broader coverage on topics including Special Education law, meeting the needs of unique learners, and promoting innovation. The program has served candidates from approximately 10 different school districts and charter networks since its first cohort in January of 2018.

Candidates have required fieldwork experience, a portion of which must be done outside of the candidate's school and in areas where they can gain experience in diverse educational settings. Candidates have a fieldwork supervisor who provides support, reviews candidates' reflections on their learning, and ensures candidates are working to complete program requirements. The fieldwork supervisors also meet as a group to discuss candidate support and progress as confirmed by interviews. Fieldwork supervisors work within LVUSD or in surrounding districts. The program requires a minimum of sixty hours of fieldwork and has adjusted the process or proposal significantly over the last three years. These aspects of the program were confirmed through interviews with candidates, completers, and mentors.

### Assessment of Candidates

Documentation showed that candidates are assessed through multiple modalities throughout the program including class and capstone assignments. Instructors verified that they work together to ensure a diverse and broad amount of reading (candidates read approximately 20 contemporary leadership and policy texts throughout the program), writing, and collaborative presentation opportunities. Though courses are clearly grounded in current educational research, there was insufficient evidence of the role adult learning theory plays in candidate learning. Candidates are also assessed on the California Administrator Performance Expectations (CAPEs) through class assignments that include written work, presentations of case studies, keystone assignments, a capstone project, and fieldwork. The program works to make direct connections between coursework, and the California Administrator Performance Assessment (CalAPA). This was supported by statements provided in interviews of current and past candidates. Interviews demonstrated that candidates see the connections between coursework, fieldwork, and reflections done as part of their Leadership Growth Plan (LGP).

Candidates confirmed that they are informed of program requirements through the program handbook and course syllabi along with ongoing guidance through meetings with instructors, fieldwork supervisors, and the program director. The program director and the faculty serve as the assessment staff who provide individual feedback through marks and comments in the learning management system and individual advisement meetings which was confirmed during stakeholder interviews.

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, instructional personnel, employers, and mentors/coaches, the team determined that all program standards are met for the Preliminary Administrative Services program except for the following:

### **Standard 1: Program Design and Rationale – Met with Concerns**

Both the digital materials provided by the program director and the interviews demonstrated that the program is grounded in the theories of cognitive coaching, collaborative schools, and change leadership. However, there was inconsistent evidence of the connection to principles of adult learning theory.

## **Standard 2: Collaboration, Communication, and Coordination – Met with Concerns**

The PASC program started within LVUSD to create their own pipeline of leaders and has expanded to include participants from surrounding school districts. Those districts have been brought into the program advisory board, faculty, and other supportive positions within the program. However, there was not clear evidence of affiliated school district, higher education institution, or community organization participation in either candidate recruitment and selection process, or selection and preparation of field experience supervisors.

### **Clear Administrative Services**

#### **Program Design**

Interviews and documentation showed that the LVUSD Clear Administrative Services Credential (CASC) program is well supported in the district, including support from the program director, the district credential analyst, two coach coordinators, and a staff of course faculty and fieldwork supervisors. Due to the size of the district, communication within the institution is done both informally and formally. Informal communication within the program occurs regularly through email involving candidates, program staff, field supervisors, and through program faculty training. Formal communication within the unit occurs through multiple meetings, including one-on-one meetings with the program director and superintendent as well as weekly meetings with program director and district senior leadership. The communication structure of the program was relayed through interviews. A review of evidence and interviews verified that regular advisory board meetings are also held for the purpose of program improvement. All instructional activities are analyzed through the lens of understanding the impact of bias and culture, improving student access to the core content standards, and overcoming barriers to learning.

The formative assessment structure of the CASC program includes a leadership growth plan (LGP) facilitated by the candidate's coach with input from the candidate's evaluator as well as self-assessments on the California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CPSEL). Candidates confirmed that they complete regular reflections on the progress of their LGP. Those reflections are shared with their coaches for feedback. Trained coaches are matched with candidates to provide a minimum of forty hours of support. Program leadership identified that the coaching design is informed by cognitive coaching, adaptive schools, blended coaching, and equity coaching. Candidates attend the coaching trainings as well in order to learn, apply, and reflect on the essential skills of leadership. While interviews identified that support is provided by the program director and two coach coordinators, there was not sufficient evidence to demonstrate the clear, consistent, and well-defined criteria used in the selection process of coaches.

Stakeholder input is gathered through program surveys, end of course surveys, focus groups, district meetings, advisory meetings, and informal conversations which was corroborated during interviews. The program has prioritized integrating this information in order to provide a program that meets the needs of candidates and other stakeholders.

### Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

A review of documentation showed that candidates begin the CASC program in January or August with a program orientation. The review also showed that program requirements are designed to meet the Clear Induction Program Standards, to consider the PASC goals and CalAPA results, to align with district goals and site level School Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA), and to support individual growth areas for each candidate. Coaches conduct follow-up reflective conversations with candidates on the growth toward goals, to determine if the goals need to change, and to direct candidates toward resources which support their growth. This reflective/inquiry process promotes both self-directedness and growth in their LGP and was identified by both stakeholder groups as a supportive component of the program. According to the program director, professional learning is offered as an option to support their LGP goals through a partnership with UC Santa Barbara and locally developed district offerings. The program also offers professional learning opportunities during the year to better serve diverse student populations.

### Assessment of Candidates

Candidates verified in interviews that they are informed of program assessment requirements through a program orientation, handbook, and monthly email communication. The CASC program utilizes the program director and two coach coordinators to assess candidate portfolios using a rubric and two independent scores. In the case that a portfolio receives two different scores, a third reviewer conducts an independent review. If a portfolio does not receive a passing score, candidates, with the support of their coach, are given the opportunity to make changes to their submission based on the coach coordinator's feedback.

Administrative interviews explained that upon completion of all CASC requirements, including passing LGP review scores, a final verification of program requirement completion is conducted by the program director. Names of eligible candidates are forwarded to the credential analyst to complete the recommendation for a Clear Administrative Services Credential.

### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, instructional personnel, employers, and mentors/coaches, the team determined that all program standards are met for the Clear Administrative Services credential program except for the following:

#### **Standard 3: Selection and Training of Coaches – Met with Concerns**

The program demonstrated through both digital materials and interviews that it works diligently to provide consistent and ongoing training to its coaches. However, there was not sufficient evidence to demonstrate the clear, consistent, well-defined criteria used in the selection process.

## INSTITUTION SUMMARY

In response to staff retention challenges, LVUSD leadership began discussions around providing local educator preparation programs which then expanded to the LVUSD Board of Education. These conversations resulted in the formulation of an advisory board to oversee program development. With strong support from the district superintendent and Board of Education, three educator preparation programs were developed, provisionally approved, and implemented with a vision closely aligned to the district vision. The Center for Educator Excellence (Center Edx) was created within the Educational Services Division to house the Teacher Induction, PASC and CASC programs. Center EdX has one director who serves as the program director for each preparation program. The advisory board has 14 members, including credential program candidates and completers who have stayed within LVUSD. The support from district leadership continues, as evidenced in stakeholder interviews, and was identified as a strength of the LVUSD programs.

LVUSD unit operations are overseen by the assistant superintendent, and program operations are led by the program director who oversees staff which includes course faculty, field supervisors, induction specialists, mentors, and coaches. In stakeholder interviews, a common theme was the collaborative nature of district personnel to provide quality preparation programs to new educators in teaching and leadership ranks that are supportive and growth oriented. The willingness and ability of the institution to discuss challenges and needs, self-reflect, and make program changes to improve offerings fortifies all the programs. The site visit team heard overwhelming praise in candidate interviews regarding their relationships with and support they received from faculty, mentors, coaches, and program staff. Mentor and coach training is effective in equipping faculty to facilitate reflection and personal candidate growth.

Areas for growth common to all programs are 1) consistency with recruiting from a broad pool of applicants for faculty positions, 2) collaboration with the broader educational community and all affiliated partners, 3) development of formative assessment tools that meet all standards requirements, and 4) consistency with formative feedback to faculty.

## COMMON STANDARDS FINDINGS

<b>Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>
The institution actively involves faculty, instructional personnel, and relevant stakeholders in the organization, coordination, and decision making for all educator preparation programs.	<b>Inconsistently</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>
Recruitment and faculty development efforts support hiring and retention of faculty who represent and support diversity and excellence.	<b>Inconsistently</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>
The education unit monitors a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements.	<b>Consistently</b>

## **Finding on Common Standard 1: Met with Concerns**

### **Summary of information applicable to the standard**

The LVUSD credential programs are grounded in current theory in education and leadership, and provide coaching, resources, and professional development opportunities which guide educators toward continuously improving teaching and leadership practices through reflection, innovation, whole child education, and reciprocal coaching. All programs seek input from candidates, mentors, fieldwork supervisors from LVUSD and partner districts, supervising administrators, and cabinet-level district administration to engage in what the superintendent called a “structural feedback loop,” resulting in retention of well-prepared teachers and administrators. One institutional leader stated that “The process is illuminating because we had to think about our vision and why we were doing this. As a community of learners, all teachers, administrators, and senior leadership have to self-reflect on our effectiveness as teachers.”

Interviews with program leadership, the superintendent, the advisory board, and candidates in all programs confirmed that the program has the resources and effective operation to meet candidate needs. All stakeholder groups commented on the collaborative nature and excellence of the program director. One stakeholder noted the remarkable work of the credential analyst, who advises each candidate individually, and works with program leadership to monitor credential recommendation processes. A member of the advisory board stated that the success of the program was evident in classroom teachers, emerging leaders, and new administrators. In several interview groups, representation of the Teacher Induction program was considerably less than that of the PASC and CASC programs. Additionally, the site visit team reviewed less evidence of the involvement of Teacher Induction in relationship to the organization, coordination, and decision-making processes across the unit.

Interviews with Human Resources personnel confirmed that the district and its programs are making efforts to diversify the educator pool. These efforts include opening a dual immersion school that attracted several teachers with bilingual authorizations; opening the PASC and CASC programs to neighboring districts so administrative services candidates have the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues in settings other than LVUSD; and diversifying administrative staff by hiring qualified candidates from outside of LVUSD. Though progress is being made in this area, the site visit team did not have consistent evidence that fieldwork supervisors, mentors, and coaches are recruited and selected through hiring efforts that support diversity.

### **Rationale for the Finding**

The site visit team did not find evidence that the Teacher Induction program had adequate representation from partnering schools or districts.

In general, stakeholders had more knowledge about the PASC and CASC programs than the Teacher Induction program. Across several group interviews, Teacher Induction was rarely mentioned regarding decision making until follow-up questions were asked by site visit team members.

When asked about the process for recruitment of faculty to support diversity and excellence, program leaders, site leaders, coaches, and mentors shared that they were personally invited to apply for their respective positions. An open application process that would support hiring and retaining faculty who represent, and support diversity and excellence could not be identified.

<b>Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>
Appropriate information and personnel are clearly identified and accessible to guide each candidate’s attainment of program requirements.	<b>Consistently</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>

**Finding on Common Standard 2: Met**

**Summary of information applicable to the standard**

The recruitment and support of candidates is consistent in all LVUSD programs. Support in all programs includes weekly mentoring with a one-on-one coach, embedded formative assessment deadlines and communication with program leadership throughout the year to ensure that candidates are on track. Interviews with program leadership, human resources staff, and principals confirm that candidates with a preliminary teaching credential are accepted into the teacher induction program in the first year of employment. Upon hire, the credential analyst advises candidates of the requirements for their clear credential, then confirms that all requirements are met before recommending that credential.

Requirements for enrollment in the PASC program include five years of successful teaching and the requisite letters of recommendation as well as participation in a writing task and group interview. All eligible candidates are admitted to the PASC program after enrollment requirements are met. Many candidates in the PASC program noted that instructors in all

classes hold an asset-based philosophy and provide clarification or resources when a candidate needs extra help.

PASC candidates complete coursework including opportunities to practice parts of the CalAPA. Candidates reported that the staff was readily available, and that cohorts worked closely together to support each other during the year. One institutional leader reported that teaching in the PASC program was rewarding and even caused members of cabinet to reflect on teaching and learning, which made them better teachers, and strengthened their leadership for the district. Many constituents praised the guest speakers, including attorneys, counselors, mental health staff, juvenile detention staff, law enforcement officers, and others who gave insight into many of the issues that face California administrators.

Candidates and staff in the CASC program commented on the job-embedded, practical, yet rigorous nature of the fieldwork. One supervisor noted, “The cohort model is very effective. By the time candidates are finished, they have a strong peer and leadership network so that when something comes up, they know who to call. They are coming with a built-in cheering squad.” Interviews with CASC candidates revealed that the program was relevant to their job, with frequent reflection on their growth on the CPSELs. Reflections allow them to learn and work within the standards and determine areas for growth. Being coached while learning skills like cognitive coaching gave them tools, they could apply immediately to their work.

Across programs, supports are in place for candidates who need additional assistance to meet competencies. In the Teacher Induction program, two specialists review the coaching log and candidate reflections, giving feedback and coaching on progress toward mastery of the candidate’s CSTP goal for the ILP. Principals reported that they often collaborate with the mentor/coach when they see an area of growth for a teacher candidate so that the candidate has an opportunity to learn and change practice instead of being confronted with a negative comment from their evaluator.

<b>Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
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.	<b>Inconsistently</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>

<b>Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
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.	<b>Inconsistently</b>
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.	<b>Inconsistently</b>
Site-based supervisors must be certified and experienced in teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential.	<b>Consistently</b>
The process and criteria result in the selection of site-based supervisors who provide effective and knowledgeable support for candidates.	<b>Consistently</b>
Site-based supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.	<b>Consistently</b>
All programs effectively implement and evaluate fieldwork and clinical practice.	<b>Consistently</b>
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.	<b>Inconsistently</b>

**Finding on Common Standard 3: Met with Concerns**

**Summary of information applicable to the standard**

Coursework in all programs is clearly defined, yet flexible enough to meet the individual needs of candidates and is based on a meta-analysis of instructional practice, leadership assessment, and effective teaching practices. In the Teacher Induction program and through the Individual Learning Plan, candidates focus on foundational skills and practices in year one, and then develop and deepen those them in year two. The site visit team noted that in response to feedback from the prior year, the program removed evidence of professional development, student data analysis, and cycles of inquiry from the teacher induction ILP. The site visit team was unable to determine that all candidates demonstrate the knowledge and skills to educate and support P-12 students in meeting the state-adopted content standards.

In the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential program, candidates complete 60 hours of fieldwork in a variety of settings, which are logged and shared in a presentation and portfolio. The CASC program is based on individualized mentoring that is documented in the LGP and weekly coaching logs, along with coursework in the Coaching Training class. Candidates

reported that reflection of growth on the California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CPSEL) allowed them to learn and work within those standards in a practical way.

Site-based supervisors and candidates reported that the relationship between the mentor/coach and candidate was strong. Candidates, program leaders, and senior leadership commented on the excellent service provided by site-based coaches and fieldwork supervisors but could not point to consistent criteria or a selection process for the site-based supervisors or mentor/coaches. Coaches and mentors commented on their appreciation of the opportunity to engage in ongoing training. Each program evaluates clinical fieldwork and practice in a variety of ways, including survey and focus group data, evaluation of the reflections facilitated by the mentor or coach, and individual coaching from induction specialists, teachers in PASC, and a consultant in CASC.

Candidates in the PASC and CASC programs reported that they experience diversity by working in schools or districts with significantly different demographics than their own schools. The Teacher Induction program offers the opportunity but does not require candidates to visit schools with different demographics. Evidence did not show that all candidates experienced diverse settings.

Human Resources leadership noted that the retention of teachers and administrators is much better since the beginning of the TIP, PASC, and CASC programs. They stated, “We are building relationships and creating professional learning that helps not only new teachers and administrators but can be personalized for any teacher needing help. The relevant, rigorous learning by these educators is a gift to both the candidates and the students they serve.”

### **Rationale for the Finding**

While the coursework for the PASC and CASC programs follow standards for those programs, the Teacher Induction program had no evidence in the ILP that clinical experiences for candidates develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support P-12 students in meeting state-adopted content standards.

Neither documentation nor interviews with stakeholders showed that any of the programs consistently collaborate with affiliated partners regarding the criteria and selection of clinical personnel (instructors in the PASC program) or site-based supervisors.

Except for the fact that LVUSD offers teacher induction candidates an opportunity to experience diversity by visiting another school, there is no consistent evidence that the unit provides all candidates with opportunities to experience issues of diversity that affect school climate. Further, since the district has a smaller percentage of students with racial and language diversity, and without documentation that candidates analyze data and complete cycles of inquiry called for in the Teacher Induction program standards, there was inconsistent evidence that the program ensures that candidates have significant experience in school settings that reflect the diversity of California’s students and the opportunity to work with the range of students identified in the program standards.

The Induction program was also lacking evidence that candidates effectively implement research-based strategies for improving teaching and student learning.

<b>Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>

#### **Finding on Common Standard 4: Met**

##### **Summary of information applicable to the standard**

Interviews with candidates, mentors, coaches, advisory board, site and district leaders, and program leadership revealed a continuous improvement process. The program director shared that the three teacher preparation programs were started because the district was having an ongoing shortage of teachers and administrators due to high housing prices. Institutional leadership stated that the programs have succeeded far beyond simple retention as teachers and administrators now have the tools and dispositions to be successful and shared that the district leadership has adopted that same mindset of continuous improvement.

The advisory committee analyzes mid-year and summative data, noting patterns and trends, and brainstorming “ways to make the programs stronger.” Leaders from partnering districts shared that the program is gaining momentum because of the “word of mouth” sharing from educators who have participated in this program. Candidates of PASC, who are currently administrators in the district, shared that they are still connected with the program and share the successful strategies they learned and now apply as a site or district administrator.

Program leadership concluded that, “If a survey shows anything less than stellar, I reach out to see what is working and what needs improvement. I work with the coach, with the candidate, and with program staff to make changes that make our program stronger.”

<b>Common Standard 5: Program Impact</b>	<b>Team Finding</b>
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.	<b>Inconsistently</b>
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.	<b>Consistently</b>

**Finding on Common Standard 5: Met with Concerns**

**Summary of information applicable to the standard.**

The teacher induction program focuses on the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP). Candidates reflect on their growth toward their CSTP goal three times each year, and induction specialists reach out to mentors to review those reflections and help mentors design their content for the next few weeks of coaching. However, the site visit team could not find evidence in the ILP that candidates completed data analysis and cycles of inquiry called for in the Teacher Induction program standards that would provide evidence that teacher candidates demonstrated knowledge and skills necessary to support all students in meeting academic standards.

Interviews with stakeholders and data reviewed by the team revealed that PASC program candidates were highly successful in completing the CalAPA. Program leadership and human resource leaders shared that PASC candidates were well-prepared and highly sought-after for administrative positions in the district. Program leaders, district leaders, and school board members talked about the significant impact of the PASC and CASC programs on leadership. District leadership noted that involvement in these programs has improved and increased professional development opportunities across the district. One district leader noted that participating in the leadership classes has caused district cabinet members to view educational practices in a new way and be self-evaluative about their own teaching and leading practices. Program leadership discussed the benefits that the coaches have by mentoring a candidate and learning more about effective coaching. Candidates in the programs said, “I had opportunities I would not otherwise be able to do.” “The program improved morale among our cohort and moved me into a growth pattern.” “Reflections helped me ask questions.”

One Board member commented that the programs have impacted the Board itself and said, “Everything we do as Board members ends up in the classroom.” This Board member went on to explain that they are invited to speak to leadership candidates in both the preliminary and clear administrative services programs, and that being tied to those groups has given the Board a better understanding of the needs of the district. She continued, “There are a lot of shiny

pennies in education, and we can't do them all, but this one has flourished and taken root, and ultimately serves the students, which is why we are here.”

**Rationale for the Finding**

While there was ample evidence that candidates in PASC and CASC programs were prepared to serve as professional school personnel who know and demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting state adopted academic standards, the site visit team could not find sufficient evidence in the ILP that TIP candidates completed data analysis and cycles of inquiry that would provide evidence that teacher candidates demonstrated knowledge and skills necessary to support all students in meeting academic standards.