

# Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of Findings of the Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at

## Azusa Pacific University Professional Services Division May 2023

### Overview of this Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at **Azusa Pacific University**. 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
Preliminary Multiple Subject with Intern	6	6	0	0
Preliminary Single Subject with Intern	6	6	0	0
Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs with Intern	6	6	0	0
Preliminary Education Specialist: Extensive Support Needs with Intern	6	6	0	0
Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology with Intern	5	5	0	0
Pupil Personnel Services: School Counseling with Intern	5	5	0	0
Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work with Child Welfare and Attendance	5	5	0	0
School Nurse	9	9	0	0
Added Authorization: Adapted Physical Education	13	13	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:** Azusa Pacific University

**Dates of Visit:** February 12-15, 2023

**Accreditation Team Recommendation:** Accreditation

**Previous History of Accreditation Status**

<b>Accreditation Reports</b>	<b>Accreditation Status</b>
<u>March 29, 2015</u>	<u>Accreditation with Stipulations</u>
<u>March 11, 2016</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 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 status of the institution was based upon the following:

Preconditions

All preconditions have been determined to be **aligned**.

Program Standards

- Preliminary Multiple Subject with Intern program standards are **met**.
- Preliminary Single Subject with Intern program standards are **met**.
- Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs with Intern program standards are **met**.
- Preliminary Education Specialist: Extensive Support Needs with Intern program standards are **met**.
- Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology with Intern program standards are **met**.
- Pupil Personnel Services: School Counseling with Intern program standards are **met**.
- Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work program standards are **met**.
- Pupil Personnel Services: Child Welfare and Attendance program standards are **met**.
- School Nurse program standards are **met**.
- Added Authorization: Adapted Physical Education program standards are **met**.

Common Standards

All Common Standards are **met**.

Overall Recommendation

Based on the fact that the team found that all standards for the credential programs were met and that all common standards were met, the team recommends **Accreditation**.

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

Preliminary Multiple Subject with Intern  
Preliminary Single Subject with Intern  
Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs with Intern  
Preliminary Education Specialist: Extensive Support Needs with Intern  
Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology with Intern  
Pupil Personnel Services: School Counseling with Intern  
Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work  
Pupil Personnel Services: Child Welfare and Attendance  
School Nurse  
Added Authorization: Adapted Physical Education

In addition, staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
- Azusa Pacific University be granted full approval 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.
- Azusa Pacific University continue in its assigned cohort on the schedule of accreditation activities, subject to the continuation of the present schedule of accreditation activities by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

## Accreditation Team

### Team Lead:

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### Programs Reviewers:

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### Staff to the Visit:

William Hatrick  
Commission on Teacher Credentialing

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## Documents Reviewed

Common Standards Submission  
Program Review Submission  
Common Standards Addenda  
Program Review Addenda  
Course Syllabi and Course of Study  
Candidate Advisement Materials  
Accreditation Website  
Faculty Vitae  
Candidate Files  
Assessment Materials  
Candidate Handbooks  
Course Catalog  
Survey Results  
Performance Expectation Materials

Precondition Responses  
TPA Results and Analysis  
Examination Results  
Newsletters  
Recruitment Materials  
Meeting Agendas and Minutes  
Credential Checklist  
Memoranda of Understanding  
Course Roadmap  
Completion Checklist  
APU Annual Performance Report  
APU Annual Program Review Reports  
Accreditation Data Dashboard

**Interviews Conducted**

<b>Constituent Groups</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Candidates	103
Completers	58
Employers	37
Institutional Administration	7
Program Coordinators/Directors	13
Department Chairs	7
Faculty	26
Adjunct Faculty	24
TPA Coordinator	1
Fieldwork Coordinators	5
University Supervisors	21
District-Employed Supervisors	33
Credential Analysts	2
Advisory	12
Accreditation and Assessment Committee	5
Administrative Support	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>355</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**

Azusa Pacific University (APU), a private, Christian university was founded in 1899 and began with a teacher preparation program that has now expanded to their current program offerings. APU is located in Azusa, California, about 25 miles northeast of Los Angeles, serving over 7,000 undergraduate and graduate students across seven locations in southern California including regional campuses in the High Desert, Inland Empire, Murrieta, Orange County, and San Diego. The university includes 8 schools and colleges to support over 200 in-person and online programs with a small student/faculty ratio (13:1). APU's diverse undergraduate and graduate student population is comprised of: 37.4% Hispanic/Latinx (of any race), 26.7% White, 14.3% Asian, 9.4% unknown, 6.6% Black or African American, 0.9% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and 0.3% American Indian or Alaska Native. APU is designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution and as an Asian American and Native American Pacific-Islander Serving Institution.

APU has received accolades from several organizations. Most recently, APU has been recognized by the *Princeton's Review 2023* guide as one of the 126 "Best Western Colleges". Furthermore, the 2023 edition of *U.S. News & World Report's America's Best Colleges* names APU on several lists as one of the nation's top universities, including First-Year Experiences and Top Performers on Social Mobility. The School of Nursing, which also hosts the School Nurse credential, was named as a top nursing school in California by College Factual and Niche in 2023. Azusa Pacific University remains a vibrant faith and learning community, preparing difference makers through Christ-centered academic excellence to serve and influence the world.

## **Education Unit**

Of APU's 8 schools and colleges, three offer educator preparation programs, the School of Education, School of Behavioral and Applied Science, and School of Nursing. Nine programs are offered across most of the regional campuses. Seven programs offer hybrid options, and the School Counseling, School Psychology, and School Social Work and Child Welfare and Attendance programs offer both hybrid and in-person options. The School of Education hosts the Multiple Subject, Single Subject, Mild to Moderate Support Needs, Extensive Support Needs, School Counseling, and School Psychology programs. The School Social Work & Child Welfare and Attendance and Adapted Physical Education programs are hosted in the School of Behavioral and Applied Sciences. Lastly, the School Nurse program is within the School of Nursing. In the 2021-22 academic year, APU's educator preparation programs had 322 completers, and currently have 735 candidates enrolled. These candidates are supported by 35 full-time and 38 adjunct faculty.

## **The Visit**

This site visit was conducted virtually. The team and institutional constituent groups were interviewed via technology.

The visit proceeded in accordance with all normal accreditation protocols. The visit occurred concurrently with the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) accreditation site visit.

## **PRECONDITION FINDINGS**

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

## **PROGRAM REPORTS**

### **Preliminary Multiple Subject with Intern Preliminary Single Subject with Intern**

#### Program Design

APU's teacher education programs are housed within the Division of Teacher Education (DTE), which is one of two divisions within the School of Education (SOE). Within the DTE, there are two areas: 1) the Multiple Subject (MS) and the Single Subject (SS) credential programs; and 2) the Special Education (SPED) credential programs. MS and SS candidates share three options for obtaining a California credential: 1) embedded within the Master of Arts in Education: Learning and Technology degree program; 2) embedded within the Master of Arts in Education: Teaching degree program; or 3) as a credential only, post-baccalaureate program. Single Subject candidates also have the option for obtaining a California credential embedded within the Master of Arts in Physical Education, the Bachelor of Science in Allied Health with Integrated Single Subject (Science) Teaching Credential, or the Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics with Integrated Single Subject (Math) Teaching Credential. Regardless of pathway, both MS and SS candidates complete 32-units across 12 classes to meet the credential coursework requirements. Courses are taught in a 16-week semester system, with each semester being divided into two 8-week sessions. The credential coursework is designed to be completed over three semesters, but can be extended to meet the candidate's needs.

All classes are held in the evenings and are taught either in-person or synchronously online. When possible, APU has been very intentional to have at least one in-person and one online synchronous class during each term. The candidates have enjoyed the flexibility of the online synchronous classes due to their busy schedules, while also still benefiting from the opportunity to meet with fellow classmates in-person. APU shared the value they have experienced with having candidates from across their five regional campuses taking classes together, creating a geographically wider professional learning community, where candidates can learn from one another beyond their immediate communities. There are some occasions when the single subject classes are not taught in person due to enrollment sizes. However, because of APU's five regional campuses, they are able to still offer these classes because they have candidates from the various campuses feeding into them.

The DTE is led by a division chair, and the Multiple Subject and Single Subject programs are led by a single director. The Special Education program is led by a separate director within DTE. Faculty are led and supported by the MS and SS director. Candidates are assigned to one of two coordinators in the division who support candidates with tracking credential requirements, course registration, documentation, sending communications, and being a general resource, to name a few of the ways they support candidates. The MS and SS programs also have a director



of clinical experience, who is also a professor in the SS program. This individual oversees the intern program and the Office of Student Placements, which works with clinical placements, school districts and schools, and university supervisors, which APU refers to as coaches. The TPA Coordinator is also a professor in the SPED program, and supports faculty and MS, SS, and SPED candidates with TPA information.

The DTE has regular and organized communication structure that includes: monthly meetings, one-on-one meetings with the chair and MS/SS director, DTE leadership meetings, and full faculty meetings. The DTE faculty serve on one of three committees: Curriculum, Teacher Competencies, or Diversity and Disposition. All of the meetings have taken a data-driven approach this year. For example, CalTPA and RICA results are shared and discussed, along with solutions as to how to support candidates. Extensive involvement by faculty, both full-time and adjunct instructors, was evident in the MS and SS programs. Adjunct faculty, most who currently work in the field, reported being included in curriculum design and felt their input to the MS and SS program was valued.

The DTE holds monthly meetings with local educational partners through PIECE which stands for: Partners Involved in Engaging Collaborative Expertise. Their tagline is: “you are a piece of the puzzle”. This is DTE’s equivalent to an advisory board and serves as a way for the program to be connected to the districts and schools. It also is a place for districts and schools to come together to share about current trends in the field and needs in the schools. Finally, DTE also uses it as a way to provide professional development to the districts and schools. The PIECE meetings are open to various levels at the district schools beyond leadership roles, and meetings with district partners reported being invited to them.

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

The MS and SS programs, as well as the SPED program, begin with four foundational courses covering schools and educational systems, the art of teaching, the science of teaching, and the soul of teaching. The science of teaching course includes content on English Learners. Candidates from all three credential programs (MS, SS, SPED) enroll in the foundational classes together, providing opportunities for candidates to take classes with others beyond their specific credential area, which creates a space for candidates to form professional relationships/connections beyond their area of study. Interns must complete two specific foundational courses and two specialization courses within their credential area, before being eligible for an intern credential recommendation. Other courses in the program include instructional design, assessment, and teaching methods. Usually, the final two courses in the MS and SS program are the clinical experience courses, where candidates complete their student teaching experience. During the site visit, both current candidates and completers shared how they were trained to work with diverse student populations as part of their preparation. This was shared with the site visit team prior to inquiring about this topic, which speaks to the impact and effectiveness in this area.

The Office of Student Placements within the DTE has created a comprehensive website for university coaches and cooperating teachers with extensive resources, including training

modules, sample lesson plans, policies, CalTPA information, and surveys. All training sessions are recorded for later viewing. Cooperating teachers receive weekly communication from the university supervisors (coaches). The current cooperating teachers interviewed by the team reported receiving weekly communications from the university coach, provided to them as a template from the director of clinical experience which has aided with consistent messaging. Both the director of clinical experience and current university coaches shared that this has been an area of focus this year and they are already receiving positive feedback. A number of full time and adjunct faculty members also serve as university coaches, which in part, helps to bridge the coursework to the clinical experience. University coaches reported receiving an abundance of resources, training materials, and support from the director of clinical experience. One university coach shared how much the director goes out of her way to support the mentors so that candidates can be successful. “She cares so much about the candidates’ success and that’s really what is important.”

Beginning in fall 2022, the MS and SS programs piloted the use of mixed reality simulation into their foundational courses through a grant from BranchEd. Topics include classroom management and social emotional learning. While APU is still gathering and assessing data of its effectiveness, the initial feedback has been positive, as it is an opportunity for candidates to dip their toes into various situations without the “risk of doing any harm”, and APU shared it is also beneficial to faculty who have not recently been in the field to provide them with scenarios to use in their classes.

### Assessment of Candidates

The programs assess candidates through signature assignments in courses and the California State University, Fresno CREATE rubric for observations during the clinical practice section of the program. Taskstream (transitioning to Student Learning & Licensure) is used to collect and track the signature assignments and the CREATE rubrics and is used to inform the program about the candidate’s progression towards meeting competencies. All California Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) were found to be covered throughout the course sequences for the MS and SS programs. Candidates and completers also reported being introduced to the TPEs in their classes. Faculty reported, and students and completers confirmed, that the MS and SS programs introduced candidates to the Individual Development Plan (IDP) at the beginning of the program, and it was part of their final class.

All clinical experience takes place in-person, with all university supervisors’ observations being completed virtually using the Sibme tool. Candidates record themselves teaching, upload videos, annotate the video, and provide a personal reflection. University supervisors are then able to review the videos, annotations, and reflections in Sibme. This is also what guides 1) the one-on-one meetings between candidate and university supervisor; 2) triad meetings between the candidate, university supervisors, and cooperating teachers; and 3) the Community Practice Learning Team where a university coach meets every other week with the candidates they are supporting that term, and they come together to support one another as a team. The MS and SS programs consist of 60 hours of early field experience, and 540 hours of clinical practice during the final semester. University supervisors complete six formal observations during the

clinical practice courses. Candidates are assessed at around the eight-week mark, and then again at the 15-week or 16-week mark by university supervisors and cooperating teachers. Training resources and workshops were provided by DTE on how to use the CREATE rubric.

APU uses the CalTPA to meet the teaching performance requirement. Candidates and the TPA coordinator confirm that both cycles of the CalTPA are completed in the final semester of the program while they are completing their student teaching experience or last semester of their clinical experience as an intern. Completers mostly felt that they were supported with the CalTPA in their classes, and some reported that they could see the connection between coursework and clinical practice before submitting the CalTPA.

The overall feedback during interviews with employers, university coaches and faculty, candidates, and completers suggests that the MS and SS programs are very supportive and effective. This also aligns with the CTC completer surveys from the last two years for both MS and SS, in that completers reported that programs were “very effective” or “effective” with a 91% rating or higher; Multiple Subject: 94.9% (2021) and 95.2% (2022); Single Subject: 91.1% (2021) and 96.9% (2022).

It was very clear from the evidence provided and the site visit interviews that APU has embraced a reflective and continuous improvement approach in the execution of their MS and SS programs, and that they themselves are continually assessing what is working for their candidates and taking steps to better the programs and candidate effectiveness. Some examples include using feedback from their candidates and coaches to restructure their lesson plan template and including a series lesson plan approach or using RICA and TPA data to inform adjustments to course content. These modifications are all done with intentionality to better support candidates, and in turn, their K-12 students.

### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, outcomes data including assessment and survey results, the completion of interviews with the MS/SS Program Director, current candidates, completers, district-employed supervisors, director of clinical experiences, full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, university supervisors, the TPA coordinator, and district partners, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject with Intern programs.

### **Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs with Intern Preliminary Education Specialist: Extensive Support Needs with Intern**

### Program Design

The Mild to Moderate Support Needs (MMSN) and Extensive Support Needs (ESN) Education Specialists Credentials can be obtained via one of four pathways: (1) embedded within the Master of Arts in Education: Learning and Technology degree program, (2) embedded within the Master of Arts in Education: Special Education degree program, (3) as a credential only, post-baccalaureate program, or (4) as part of the Integrated Bachelor’s/Credential program.

Candidates complete the same 34-semester units of coursework, assessments, and clinical experiences, regardless of which program option they complete. Additionally, graduate candidates may complete clinical practice within the MMSN and ESN programs as a student teacher or intern. Both MMSN and ESN programs are offered in a hybrid modality across five Southern California locations.

Leadership within the credential programs is distributed among several individuals. Although the programs are offered in different locations, the leadership and oversight of the program are managed from the main campus. Evidence from interviews and meeting agendas confirms that leadership teams regularly meet and provide opportunities to discuss university, school, and program updates as well as clinical experiences, placements, data, program improvement, and future goals. Communication is abundant, and expectations, announcements, and updates are communicated via weekly newsletters, meetings, and recorded modules.

The MMSN and ESN credentials are interconnected with the Multiple Subject and Single Subject credential courses through four foundational courses. In addition to the 12 units of foundations courses, the MMSN and ESN programs require 18 units of specialization courses and 4 units of clinical practice in MMSN or ESN placements.

The structure of fieldwork experience includes 60 hours of guided observations, 187.5 hours of early fieldwork (prior to solo teaching), and 487.5 hours of clinical practice (solo teaching). Candidates are required to divide fieldwork experiences between a variety of settings under the supervision of a cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and for interns, a site administrator/school mentor. Within clinical practice, the candidate is either placed as a student teacher or intern. Candidates are observed six times over the clinical practice semester and receive follow-up feedback via their clinical practice team (university supervisor and fellow candidates) as well as their clinical triad (university supervisor and cooperating teacher).

Evidence from interviews and clinical practice artifacts demonstrate that candidates are placed in diverse settings and have the opportunity to work with a variety of disabilities, support needs, and age ranges. Candidates reported an establishment of clear expectations of this requirement. Further, interns were provided the appropriate release time to observe different settings and age and disability groups. Interview with K-12 partners also showed that diversity expectations are maintained via an annual review of MOUs, program oversight of fieldwork locations, orientations with cooperating teachers, and principal acknowledgment letters for interns.

Three main modifications have recently been implemented. To address lower enrollment at some locations, specialization courses are now offered synchronously online. Similarly, clinical practice support and supervision have transitioned from in-person to occurring via an online video platform, Sibme. A third modification was the reduction of the number of foundation courses from six to four. Two previous foundation courses became specialization courses in order to support the transition to the new MMSN and ESN program standards.

There is a strong emphasis on eliciting feedback and working with constituent groups, particularly on how to best support fieldwork/clinical experiences and expectations, and producing candidates who are prepared to teach a multitude of diverse student needs. Evidence from interviews and document review demonstrate that constituent groups' input is solicited in a variety of ways through advisory boards and the PIECE initiative as well as research partnerships, campus walk-throughs, grants (e.g., BranchEd Alliance), and annual hiring fairs/webinars with district partners.

Interview evidence also demonstrates that constituent groups feel supported by their relationship with the MMSN and ESN programs. The programs supported their district partners by creating modules to aid in the process of learning the TPA process and how to best support program completers. Interviewed constituents felt there were abundant opportunities to collaborate, as well as opportunities to contribute their input.

Further evidence from interviews and the Azusa Pacific University website for cooperating teachers confirmed a strong collaborative process among leadership, K-12 partners, program faculty, and university employed coaches/supervisors. There were demonstrated opportunities for cross-collaboration with curriculum and course design, co-teaching opportunities, and data reviews for continuous program improvement.

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

Candidates in all four pathways complete the same four foundations and specialization coursework. Although the semester timing varies slightly, there is a lock-step sequence to both programs (e.g., order of course, prerequisites before entering clinical practice). The programs use syllabi templates and course leads to ensure consistency of program delivery across its five locations. Course leads are responsible for the course, creating Canvas course shells inclusive of timelines, learning modules, PowerPoints, rubrics, and assignment exemplars. Course leads hold meetings at the beginning and mid-point of each term to support the consistency of candidates' curricular experience and are available throughout the semester for faculty mentoring and support. One adjunct professor expressed their appreciation for the course lead stating, "I would never have been able to survive without a course lead while working full time."

Candidates have exposure to the common trunk via the four foundations courses, one of which is co-taught with both a general education and Education Specialist faculty member. Evidence from interviews confirms that this is a valuable experience for candidates as they learn about all the different parts of education and collaboration. Specialization coursework covers such topics as IEP development, working with a variety of students with language needs, and student assessment and self-assessment. CTC completer survey data demonstrate that candidates feel *well prepared* and *very well prepared* to demonstrate the TPEs as a teacher.

Evidence from interviews highlights how two recent grants have impacted coursework. A recently obtained dyslexia grant is generating faculty conversations regarding how to include more information related to dyslexia in courses from foundations through the Master's courses.

The Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity has allowed the use of mixed reality simulations with candidates to strengthen their teaching skills before they enter clinical practice.

Fieldwork is coordinated with coursework throughout the programs. The 60 hours of initial fieldwork observations are included in the two foundations courses (15 hours each) and two specialization courses. The faculty member teaching the course serves as the coach for these observations, provides advisement, and conducts the evaluation of the assignments completed based on fieldwork experiences. Candidates are required to use their clinical practice settings to complete signature assignments within the specialization courses. While the faculty teaching these courses are responsible for assessing candidate performance on the signature assignment, candidates also receive support and guidance from their university coach/supervisor and cooperating teacher/site mentor.

Evidence from interviews demonstrates the interconnectedness of coursework with fieldwork. Candidates expressed an appreciation for the strong associations made between theory and practice. Course syllabi further demonstrated the successful integration of coursework in critical areas across the program. Evidence from candidate interviews and CTC completer survey data showed that the MMSN and ESN programs adequately prepared candidates to teach in critical areas such as Specially-Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies, differentiation, and assessment considerations for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Both student teachers and interns are mentored and supervised during the programs by a university coach/supervisor. Candidates who are student teachers are also supervised by a cooperating teacher while interns are additionally supervised by their site. The university coach/supervisor has regular contact with the candidate and cooperating teacher or site mentor. Intern candidates enroll in a candidate support and supervision course to ensure appropriate support and supervision occur in semesters in which they hold an intern credential but are not enrolled in clinical practice.

Evidence from interviews and CTC completer surveys reinforces the occurrence of a high level of support from university coaches/supervisors and site mentors. Candidates reported easy access to their coaches/mentors and highly rated their mentoring on integrating theory and practice and executing specific instructional practices.

#### Assessment of Candidates

Assessment of candidates consists of signature assessments, the CREATE Observation Rubrics for clinical practice, and CalTPA. Taskstream (transitioning to Student Learning & Licensure) is used to track the successful completion of coursework and candidates' performance across key assignments. Both signature assignment rubrics and the CREATE observations rubrics have been calibrated across faculty and university coaches/mentors.

For clinical practice, the university coach/supervisor conducts six formal observations via video that include an evaluation of the candidate via the CREATE observation rubrics. The cooperating

teacher or site mentor provides regular feedback to the university coach/supervisor about the candidate's performance and completes a mid-point and final evaluation via the CREATE rubric. The university coach/supervisor also completes a dispositional evaluation of the candidate and reviews the teacher candidate's ePortfolio of their fieldwork and clinical practice experiences.

Interviews with candidates reported both formal and informal assessments are conducted throughout the program in both coursework and fieldwork. Interviews also corroborated that faculty and university coaches/supervisors regularly assess candidates, providing opportunities for them to resolve and revise challenges that arise.

### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, outcomes data including assessment and survey results, the completion of interviews with faculty, departmental leadership, candidates (current, intern, and completers), university mentors, cooperating teachers, and district partners, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate and Extensive Support Needs with Intern programs.

## **Pupil Personnel Services: School Psychology with Intern**

### Program Design

The PPS School Psychology program is housed within the School of Education. The dean of the school oversees all programs in the School of Education and the department chair for School Psychology and School Counseling reports to the dean. The director of School Psychology reports to the department chair and collaborates with 8 full-time faculty and 17 adjunct faculty. There is also a faculty member who serves as the fieldwork and internship coordinator. The department chair and the program directors in School Psychology and School Counseling meet monthly in addition to holding monthly meetings with the entire department, including full-time faculty, senior adjuncts, and department staff. Faculty reported in interviews that the monthly meetings are productive in disseminating information. The program also holds a meeting once a year for the adjunct faculty where all faculty meet in person and learn about the new program changes and plans for the coming year. Adjunct faculty spoke highly about this process and felt the stipend they received for participating was well worth the information and collaboration that they obtained through the process. Additionally, the program indicated that they hold advisory meetings annually, and interviews with all groups indicated that feedback from key constituents was beneficial to program improvement, including the exit survey information provided by students anonymously at the end of the program.

The School Psychology Program is designed to be completed in three to four years depending on the added specializations, if desired. The program is currently a National Association of School Psychology (NASP) conditionally approved program and is aligned with NASP standards and domains. All candidates are required to complete 450 hours of practicum and 1200 hours of fieldwork/internship, regardless of any additional specialization. Over the past two years, the program transitioned to the new state standards and performance expectations and is currently transitioning all documents to reflect those new standards. The program is currently helping

candidates under the old standards to finish the program and is phasing out older material as the students complete their programs. Additionally, the department has had several changes in leadership over the past two years, including a change in department chair and program director.

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

The School Psychology program utilizes a cohort model, and the first-year candidates take most of their courses with the school counseling candidates. These courses include school psychology history, law and ethics, and core counseling courses. Candidates reported an appreciation for the courses in counseling, with completers stating in interviews that “the counseling component of our program was important, especially after the difficulties produced in the schools because of COVID.” Site supervisors also talked about an appreciation for the candidates to be able to perform basic counseling-type activities in their internship and practicums. In the second year, candidates complete their 450-hour practicum experience and take courses on psychoeducational assessments. Additionally, candidates work on a master research project which is also a requirement for the NASP process. In the third year, candidates complete their 1200 hours of fieldwork/internship and prepare for the Praxis II School Psychologist exam which is required for program completion and NASP certification.

Throughout their practicum and fieldwork/internship experiences, candidates take courses with a university supervisor and on the field site are overseen by a site supervisor. Both supervisor groups indicated in interviews that they “welcomed APU candidates because they are well prepared and open to learning.” Supervisors and faculty appreciated the attention in courses to “professional dispositions and self-care” and believed it helped candidates become more prepared to work in the school and navigate the many changing relationships in a school setting. The current candidates in practicum and fieldwork indicated that the courses “lined up nicely” in that their assignments were designed to be completed at a school site, and the process enhanced their experience at the site.

### Assessment of Candidates

The candidates in the PPS School Psychology program are assessed every year throughout program courses, which are aligned with the California performance expectations, and throughout their practicum and fieldwork experiences. Additionally, candidates are assessed on professional dispositions every year, first through coursework by faculty and then in practicum and fieldwork by their university and site supervisors. In relation to the professional dispositions, site supervisors noted in interviews that their candidates from APU were “very conscientious.”

When a candidate has a difficulty in a class or in practicum/fieldwork placement regarding a professional disposition, faculty and supervisors all reported that they would initially handle the concern. Also, they expressed confidence that they could get support from program leadership if the need arose. However, supervisors also noted that “this never happens, because it's really never needed.” The supervisors stated that they would follow the same process for candidates that might have difficulty related to learning, with the exception that they would utilize the



Office of Accessibility and Disability Resources as needed. Program leadership and program documents corroborated this process, and leadership indicated that they are always ready to contact any candidate for advisement and remediation.

A final candidate assessment is a passing score on the Praxis II, which is required of all candidates to meet all the requirements for a credential recommendation and NASP certification. In the most recent score reports, 2019-2021, the program had a 100% pass rate in those two years, with a higher mean score, 163.15, compared to the state's 161.98 in the latter year.

#### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, outcomes data including assessment and survey results, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, adjunct faculty, program faculty, program leadership, employers, university supervisors, and field site supervisors, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the PPS School Psychology Program.

### **Pupil Personnel Services: School Counseling with Intern**

#### Program Design

The PPS School Counseling program is within the School of Education. The dean of the school oversees all programs in the School of Education and the department chair for school counseling and school psychology reports to the dean. The director of school counseling reports to the department chair and collaborates with 8 full-time faculty and 17 adjunct faculty. There is also a faculty member who serves as the fieldwork and internship coordinator. The department chair and the program directors in school counseling and school psychology meet monthly in addition to holding monthly meetings with the entire department, including full-time faculty, senior adjuncts, and department staff. Faculty reported in interviews that the monthly meetings are productive in disseminating information, with one faculty stating that the "bi-directional" aspect of the monthly meetings is always evident. As evidence of this, another faculty member indicated that the self-care and personal wellness embedded in the program began before it was mandated in the new CTC standards and performance expectations, because of faculty feedback to leadership in these meetings. Additionally, the program indicated that they hold advisory meetings annually, and interviews with all groups indicated that feedback from key constituents was beneficial to program improvement, including exit survey information provided by students anonymously at the end of the program.

The School Counseling Program is designed to be completed in two years and consists of 50 units for the master's degree and PPS credential, or 62 units if a candidate wants a master's degree that leads to California Board of Behavioral Sciences for Licensed Professional Counselor (LPCC) eligibility as well as a PPS credential. Both master's degrees share the same core 50 units and require 100 hours of practicum and 800 hours of fieldwork as per state standards. Over the past 2 years, the program transitioned to the new state standards and performance expectations, including the increase in the number of fieldwork hours required from each

candidate. However, the program is still helping candidates under the older standard to finish the program and has several documents that contain older information that is being phased out as the students complete the program. Additionally, the department has had several changes in leadership at all levels, including the department chair of the program.

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

The School Counseling program documentation states the program focuses on equity, diversity, college and career access, prevention and intervention services, and social domains. This was corroborated by interviews with current and former candidates. One group of candidates spoke highly of the program's ability to prepare them for school sites specifically with regard to college and career transition. The candidates and the site supervisors reported that they “were prepared well to provide services during fieldwork.” This last point was also evident in the program documents including the fieldwork logs where course material is aligned with tasks required in fieldwork settings.

The program stresses the importance of professional dispositions to all candidates prior to field experience and also heavily stresses the importance of self-care throughout the program which was also corroborated by interviews with candidates, faculty, and supervisors.

Although there are current changes taking place with regard to the manner in which candidates log their fieldwork hours, several candidates stated that “the program required us to specify our hours in several performance expectations sub-categories” which they indicated was unique to APU’s School Counseling program, but “in the long run gave us a better understanding of what we do as school counselors.” Additionally, completers and current candidates indicated that their coursework was relevant to the field and that they were able to use much of their training in their field sites, with one candidate stating that they were “more prepared in the field site with regards to BIPs (Behavior Intervention Plans)”. The completer survey also adds evidence to this area, and although data is not disaggregated per PPS program, the overall APU scores related to fieldwork were a few percentage points higher than the state average.

The university and site supervisor are both required to evaluate the candidate in the field settings, and through the evaluation, the candidate is able to make adjustments as needed to their practice. All parties reported that this process was effective and assisted in providing the structure needed to support all candidates.

#### Assessment of Candidates

The candidates in the PPS School Counseling program are assessed throughout the program in their courses, which are aligned with the California performance expectations, and throughout their fieldwork experiences. The fieldwork assessments measure skills related to 28 competencies, which are also correlated with the California School Counseling Performance Expectations. Additionally, candidates are introduced and assessed on professional dispositions prior to, and after their fieldwork courses, including with an assessment from the fieldwork site

supervisor. In relation to the professional dispositions, site supervisors noted in interviews that their candidates from APU were “very conscientious.”

When a candidate has a difficulty in a class or in fieldwork placement with regard to a professional disposition, faculty and supervisors all reported that they would initially handle the concern. Also, they all expressed confidence that they could get support from program leadership if the need arose. The same was stated about candidates that might have difficulty related to learning, with the exception that they would utilize the Office of Accessibility and Disability Resources as needed. Program leadership and program documents corroborated this process, and leadership indicated that they are always ready to contact any candidate for advisement and remediation.

A final candidate assessment is a passing score on the Praxis II, which is required of all candidates to meet all the requirements for a credential recommendation. In the most recent score report, 2021-2022, the program had a 100% pass rate, with a higher mean score, 164.88, compared to the state mean of 163.29.

#### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, outcomes data including assessment and survey results, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, adjunct faculty, program faculty, program leadership, employers, university supervisors, and field site supervisors, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the PPS School Counseling Program.

### **Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work**

#### Program Design

Azusa Pacific University’s School Social Work (SSW) and Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) program is offered as a specialization within the Department of Social Work (DSW), which is within the School of Behavioral and Applied Sciences. The Pupil Personnel Services Credential (PPSC) program has a designated coordinator who, in cooperation with the Social Work graduate director, provides oversight of all aspects of the program for both the Azusa and Inland Empire regional campuses. The Coordinator of the SSW and CWA program and the graduate director report to the chair of the Department of Social Work, who reports to the Dean of the School of Behavioral and Applied Sciences.

To ensure regular communication, the DSW holds monthly meetings of department leadership, department faculty, and program faculty to ensure information is being disseminated and shared. The chair also participates in monthly meetings with the dean and chairs to stay informed of university policy and changes. Additionally, the graduate program director and Inland Empire site director meet monthly to ensure consistency between program options. The chair, graduate program director, and PPSC program coordinator also meet monthly, and with the director of field education as needed.

The PPSC coordinator also holds one meeting a semester with PPSC field site supervisors to update them on program policies and changes. Additionally, all field supervisors, including the PPSC supervisors, participate in annual training provided by field education faculty to stay current on field education supervision and program policies. The field education team also sends out emails and newsletters to field sites to provide program updates, announcements, and news.

The APU PPS, SSW, and CWA credential are structured as an advanced specialization within the MSW program. Candidates can pursue the credential as part of a full-time MSW program, enter through Advanced Standing or through a Post MSW PPSC program. In all of these pathways, credential-specific coursework is pursued after the candidates have completed the MSW foundation coursework and field experience. School-based field internships are completed in the last year of the program.

The most significant change made to the program since its approval in October 2019 was to develop two field seminar courses specific to SSW. The MSW program determined a specialized seminar focused specifically on SSW and CWA would allow more in-depth training for the SSW and CWA candidates. These revised courses were implemented in the 2021-22 academic year. When program completers were asked about whether the program was responsive to their concerns, a few of them mentioned that they had suggested that APU have a seminar focused on school-based social work. The quickness with which this suggestion was heard, developed, and implemented was recognized.

The DSW has developed and maintained a SSW and CWA community group that meets at least twice during an academic year to gain input into the program. Meetings typically offer program updates and seek input from active practitioners related to trends in the field, learning needs of interns in the school setting, and recommended curriculum content adjustments. The constituent group reports that their advice was sought out and used to develop the program from the beginning of its inception such that two of the constituents, who were field instructors in nearby school districts, were invited to teach classes for the credential as adjunct faculty.

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

All candidates completing SSW and CWA option complete foundation coursework specific to meeting Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) foundation competencies for Social Work. In the foundation coursework, candidates complete 12 courses including fieldwork. Coursework focuses on skills for practice with individuals and families, understanding the impact of diversity and culture on the lived experience, theoretical models, group work skill, policy practice, and community and organization practice, with an associated field internship and field seminar (480 hours) to apply skills.

Building on this foundation, candidates complete a specialized coursework sequence in year two emphasizing practice with individuals, children, and families; research; and applied leadership development with an emphasis in school-based practice. Candidates completing the credential program are also required to take two additional courses in year two emphasizing

learning theory, school-based interventions, and educational policy. Candidates engage in a minimum of 600 hours of supervised fieldwork/internship in the specialization year, in an approved school-based field site.

In the field seminar course, content is focused on assisting candidates to bridge course content to fieldwork. As part of this course, candidates complete specific learning agreements embedded in the skills evaluation to ensure content is bridged to the field education experience and performance expectations. Candidates are assigned a field liaison from APU who provides oversight and coordination with the field education setting and field supervisor and coordinates with the field instructor/supervisor.

The targeted field education hours are tracked in the field time log and in the required activities checklist, which includes learning activities in each category which are monitored by the field liaison. Field instructors interviewed indicate that the field liaison visits regularly, have clear and reasonable expectations, and are very responsive to feedback on how to support field activities through classroom learning. For example, based on feedback from the field, APU has enhanced their focus on trauma-informed care and added a unit of field instructor training focused on trauma-informed supervision.

Candidates complete two different field experiences. In the foundation year (year one), candidates complete 480 hours of field work in an agency site focused on the development of generalist foundation social work skills for work with children, youth, and families. In the specialization year (year two), candidates are assigned to a school-based setting to complete the remaining minimum of 600 hours of supervised field work or internship in an approved school-based field site. 150 of the 600 hours are designated for CWA experience.

During the PPSC school-based internship in year two, candidates are supervised in the field for a minimum of one hour per week by a qualified, credentialed MSW within the assigned school district. Candidates meet monthly with the program coordinator as a cohort for advising, support, and supplemental training. Similarly in year one, all students receive one hour of supervision each week by the qualified supervisor.

Field liaisons evaluate each field placement twice a year on their ability to provide a safe and consistent learning environment and their ability to address learning competencies and performance expectations. If there are concerns, they are most often addressed through a conversation between the field liaison and field instructor or coordinator. If there are ongoing patterns of concerns, then field placements can be terminated and/or no longer utilized.

Field evaluation data is collected and analyzed in aggregate by the program staff and this information has been shared with the field instructors as a way to guide continuous learning and improvement. A review of the PPS program data for APU, although not disaggregated by individual PPS program, indicated that over 95% of candidates either agreed or strongly agreed the faculty fostered respectful and inclusive learning environment, were effective at engaging and motivating students; were knowledgeable about the subject matter; and effectively

communicated course expectations. Furthermore, over 90% of candidates either agreed or strongly agreed that the coursework was rigorous and challenging and that it provided knowledge and skills required for the profession.

Program completers report that the program supported their ability to work with a wide diversity of needs and stressed the concept of cultural humility in both word and deed. It is important to note that the program was launched in the midst of the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and that faculty, students, and field placements needed to adapt to changing circumstances and heightened needs for services simultaneously during that time. Program completers felt that the faculty were very supportive and flexible while maintaining learning expectations and modeled the professional social work process very well to their students. Candidates were actively engaged in finding alternative means to address the needs of their students and communities and such processes as remote learning and telehealth were quickly adopted to meet the needs of the moment.

#### Assessment of Candidates

As a CSWE accredited program, the MSW with PPS SSW and CWA option has assessments that are aligned to the CSWE competencies. In the foundation year (year one), candidates complete three key assessments. In year two, candidates complete six key assessments: an exit exam, a field comprehensive skills evaluation that occurs at the candidate's field work/internship setting, a capstone leadership paper, a health/behavioral health policy final integrative paper, a final case-based paper, and an organization behavior and management faith integration paper.

Candidates are advised by faculty who review performance expectations and competencies at the beginning of each course. Candidates also attend an orientation to the program at which time they receive information about how and when they will be assessed and how information is used for program improvement. Assessment information is also included in the Field Education Manual and in the Auxiliary Student Handbook.

#### Findings on Standards

After a review of the program documentation and surveys of program completers; interviews with candidates, program completers, program faculty, field instructors, field program director, department chair, program coordinator, and constituent advisers, the team determines that the program standards are **met** for the Pupil Personnel Services: School Social Work and Child Welfare & Attendance programs.

### **School Nurse**

#### Program Design

The Azusa Pacific University (APU) School Nurse Services Credential (SNSC) program is a post-graduate program that prepares registered nurses who hold a Bachelor of Science in Nursing to be effective practitioners of school health. The goal of the SNSC program at APU is to provide educational experiences based on the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) standards of quality and effectiveness for programs of professional school nurse preparation.

The SNSC program is housed in the School of Nursing (SON) as a nursing specialty within its graduate nursing program. Graduates of the SNSC program at APU are prepared to effectively meet the School Nursing Competencies adopted by the Commission.

Candidates may select the non-degree SNSC credential program option or elect to complete the SNSC program embedded within a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree program. Candidates earning a School Nurse Services Credential must apply for admission to both APU and the SON, selecting one of four program options: SNSC credential-only, a SNSC with an MSN, a SNSC with an MSN Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, or a SNSC with an MSN Family Nurse Practitioner.

The SNSC program director supervises the SNSC adjunct faculty member who also serves as the university field supervisor. The SNSC adjunct faculty member who serves as the university supervisor directs and supports the volunteer fieldwork preceptors from partner districts and school sites. The SNSC program director is responsible for all administrative aspects of the program including program outreach and visibility, course content, candidate advising and recruitment, candidate assessment, and review of candidate files to ensure completion of all requirements for credential recommendation. Candidates and completers report that the program director is very responsive and supportive and works to ensure that each candidate has met all requirements.

The School of Education (SOE) partners with the SON to support the SNSC program by offering one course (Development, Revision and Evaluation Process-EDUC 537) within the program and by providing oversight of the credential process. The SOE Dean's Office and Office of Credentials support the SNSC program by coordinating the Commission's annual data submission process, informing the SNSC program director of changes to Commission regulations or program expectations, and coordinating the credential recommendation process.

The SOE went through a curriculum revision and replaced EDUC 571 *Curriculum Foundations* with EDUC 537 *Curriculum Development, Revision, and Evaluation Procedures*. The course change provides candidates with the necessary knowledge to provide "health education, ... and planning and coordination of healthcare services and programs" (Program Standard 7). The second change involved Child-Bearing Family Practicum with a redesign of learning activities and the title of the theory and practicum for candidates based on their school nursing specialty. There is an increased emphasis in applying the principles of health education and disease prevention, case management, and inclusion of case studies specific to School Nurse practice. Candidates and completers report that the clinical practicum activities emphasize an evidence-based approach to care aimed at improving health outcomes for children, promoting their success in the educational setting, and enabling family and child to adopt lifestyle behaviors that promote physical and mental health.

Candidates are provided opportunities to give feedback on their courses and program through the Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) course evaluations, the SNSC End-of-Program Evaluation Survey, self and preceptor evaluations, and during required

program planning with the SNSC program director during each semester and through individual appointments. Preceptors provide written evaluations of candidates and can dialogue at any time with the SNSC adjunct faculty member who serves as the university supervisor.

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

The SNSC Program at APU is a 29-semester unit program, consisting of online and face-to-face coursework delivered at the graduate level, except for one post-baccalaureate course, a California-approved audiometry course. The SNSC program requires candidates to complete seven identified APU courses for a total of 26 semester units and a State of California approved audiometry course (typically 3 semester units) that leads to a School Nurse Audiometrist Certificate. Generally, candidates complete HSCI 374 Basic Audiometry and Hearing offered at CSU San Bernardino. A total of 16 units are combined didactic and clinical-field experience courses where theory is applied to the practice of school nursing.

Candidates may enroll as part-time or full-time candidates and are not necessarily admitted as part of a cohort. The SNSC program director develops an individualized program of study for the candidate based on the candidate's position, schedule of classes and modalities, and the candidate's personal commitments. Candidates usually are employed as school nurses on a preliminary credential while completing the School Nurse preparation program and earning the Clear credential. Candidates and completers reported that the program director meets with them at least once each semester and often more frequently.

Theory and content taught in classroom lectures are applied during practicum/field experiences under the supervision of an APU nursing faculty member and/or as part of a mentorship with an onsite qualified preceptor who meets rigorous criteria. Classroom learning uses CANVAS as the learning management system. Course assignments focus on expected learning outcomes linking theory, evidence-based research, and nursing practice together. Candidates complete a curriculum development course in the School of Education that provides an opportunity to work with teacher credential candidates and offers a beneficial interdisciplinary experience for both groups of candidates.

The SNSC adjunct faculty member who serves as the university supervisor verifies that the candidate's preceptor holds a Clear Credential as a School Nurse. She reviews and approves the plan of supervised experiences in elementary and secondary school settings and verifies the candidate will have opportunities to effectively apply concepts of health and wellness within the school setting as stipulated in Program Standard 9. Candidates benefit from the supervisory collaboration between their preceptor and the SNSC university supervisor. Candidates typically complete all course assignments in the district where they are employed; however, if a required experience is not available in that district, arrangements are made for the candidate to complete the activity in another district. Completers shared that their preceptors were extremely supportive.

#### Assessment of Candidates

SNSC candidates are assessed to ensure that each completer can communicate in a scholarly



fashion in both written work and oral presentations and demonstrate excellence in school nursing practice. They initially enroll in core coursework that requires oral presentations using PowerPoints and other strategies to enhance their professional presentation skills. Rubrics are used to assess these assignments. The two theory and practice courses have a combined theory and an applied clinical practicum structure. Theory content is assessed through scholarly oral presentations, an open book legal test, a health education paper and related oral presentation of the health topic to children or staff at their district, together with an oral and poster presentation using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention School Health Index (SHI) project. Candidates use the SHI online self-evaluation and planning tool to identify one health aspect of their school (e.g., nutrition services) and then assess their school site for strengths and weaknesses of its health and safety policies related to the topic chosen. This activity requires interviewing staff, seeking data, and coming up with an action plan. All of the activities are outlined in the assessment rubric for this assignment. APU's School Nurse fieldwork evaluation tools list the mandated School Nurse competencies. The candidate's ability to perform the competencies in elementary and secondary school sites is assessed by the preceptor and also verified by APU faculty. The EDUC 537 assessment criteria require candidates to demonstrate competency in developing and evaluating a curriculum in their field of studies, a health topic for School Nurse candidates.

Theory and practicum evaluation criteria for School Nurse coursework are outlined in rubrics that identify all component parts that must be addressed in the assignment and include a rating scale for awarding points. Candidates and completers report that the assignments and fieldwork expectations are very clear and that the feedback on their work is detailed. Fieldwork assessments occur at the end of the semester with a mid-semester formative assessment. Results are posted in CANVAS and discussed with candidates during office hours or after class. Candidates are required to review the fieldwork evaluations with their preceptor face-to-face, and the candidate must also complete a self-evaluation that is shared with the preceptor and faculty.

A completer reported that she did not expect to learn much from the School Nurse program since she had been a school nurse for a couple of years on her preliminary credential. She shared that the APU program provided her with such a depth of understanding and the knowledge to research questions that she feels empowered to advocate for her students' and families' health needs.

#### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, faculty, employers, and preceptors, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the School Nurse Services Preparation Program.

## **Added Authorization: Adapted Physical Education**

### Program Design

The Adapted Physical Education Added Authorization (APEAA) is in the School of Behavioral and Applied Sciences which houses the Department of Kinesiology and Graduate Physical Education (GPE) Programs. The APEAA provides an inclusive and adapted physical education program design for their candidates. The professional preparation program is a blended delivery model with a graduate pathway for candidates who currently hold a Single Subject credential in Physical Education, an Education Specialist credential, or a Multiple Subject credential. The program also accepts candidates without the approved teaching credential. The APEAA has a program coordinator who oversees the organization and design of the program. The organizational structure of the program forms a logical sequence between the instructional components and fieldwork. The APEAA program has a newly formed advisory board that consists of mentor teachers and administrative personnel in special education that reported their intent to address program design and evidence-based practices for candidates.

There is an exchange of communication among the assistant dean of academic planning and accreditation in the School of Education, GPE director and the APEAA program coordinator to ensure collaboration of institutional policies for accreditation. New applications undergo a rigorous process for future graduate candidates to be accepted into the cohort. Also, the program is well supported with sufficient resources, such as budget, designated facilities, and equipment. Communication related to credentials (i.e., those held by program applicants as well as sign-offs for program completers) flows directly between the program coordinator and office of credentials.

Interviews with recent completers of the program provided comments that the program design was successful in producing well-prepared professionals for the discipline. The roadmap provided by the academic advisor was clear to accomplish the coursework in one year typically. The completers had unanimous positive comments about the support of the faculty and their progress during the program. Time was taken to listen to their concerns and challenges and to find solutions. For example, one completer mentioned changes in the assessment class to expand tools to evaluate a myriad of students with disabilities and to sharpen skills for writing assessment reports. Opportunities are available to provide input to modify the program and comments are readily accepted by the faculty. Completers stated that the program provided the skills to make them effective teachers and capable of meeting the needs of a wide range of learners, not only students with a disability, but also students with different sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, or religion. The completers believed that an amicable relationship still exists with the faculty of the program, as the faculty continues to check up on completers after the program, assisting with interview strategies, and sharing knowledge about types of placements for employment.

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

The program prepares quality candidates with sound evidence-based practices for the APE discipline. The course of study focuses on program preparation for full-time and part-time candidates. Completers noted this format was effective to meet their professional or personal

schedules to pursue the APEAA authorization. The courses are sequentially aligned in subject matter to provide a strong curriculum. The added authorization has a total of 15 semester units which consists of 12 units for core coursework and 3 units for fieldwork.

The program provides ample service delivery options for supervised field experiences, including asynchronous and synchronous classrooms. The coursework requires 90 hours minimum of field experiences across four eight-week terms. Candidates must engage in service delivery on the elementary and secondary levels. Feedback comments are placed on a standardized form by the candidate for self-evaluation, mentor teacher evaluation, and university supervisor evaluation. The program coordinator approves all placement options; reviews logs, journals, and evaluation forms; responds to any concerns of the candidate or mentor teacher; and finalizes all field experiences for credit. During the interviews the mentor teachers noted the high caliber of skills that the candidates possess from the program.

#### Assessment of Candidates

During the program the academic advisor provides students with an updated suggested degree completion form and highlights all courses completed. The core coursework must be completed to demonstrate mastery of skills and standards. Upon completion of the final field experience with a grade of 'credit' the program coordinator reviews the candidate's record to verify passing of all coursework. The credential analyst double-checks the satisfaction of the program requirements.

Interviews with completers and candidates reported both formal and informal assessments are conducted throughout the program. Verification across all interviews confirmed that the faculty assess the candidates regularly and provide opportunities to resolve and correct challenges for the understanding of concepts, theories, and practices. Candidates noted that faculty are willing to assist with future employment recommendations which provide support after the program is completed.

#### Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation and completion of interviews with the program coordinator, graduate director, advisory board members, faculty, completers, candidates, academic advisor, and mentor teachers, the team determined that all program standards for the Adapted Physical Education Added Authorization are **met**.

### INSTITUTION SUMMARY

Azusa Pacific University (APU) is a comprehensive Christian with its main campus located about 25 miles northeast of Los Angeles with educator preparation programs offered across five regional campuses located in the High Desert, Inland Empire, Murrieta, Orange County, and San Diego. While programs are offered across the regional campuses, the administration of the programs occurs centrally from Azusa. The Credential Programs are offered across three schools: the School of Education houses the preliminary teaching credentials (Multiple Subject, Single Subject, Mild to Moderate Support Needs Education Specialist, and Extensive Support Needs Education Specialist), School Psychology, and School Counseling programs; the School of Behavioral and Applied Sciences houses the School Social Work and Child and Welfare Attendance, and the Adapted Physical Education Added Authorization programs; and the School of Nursing houses the School Nurse program. The School of Education Assistant Dean for Academic Planning and Accreditation works with program leaders across the three schools on accreditation and other credential program activities.

APU has had recent budget cuts and the university leadership is in a time of transition with a new President, an interim Provost, a new Vice President of Finance, and a new Vice President of Enrollment Management. While these budget cuts and changes have required some structural changes and reductions in faculty and staff, the educator preparation programs continue to hold high standards. Program completers and current candidates report that they are happy with the support that they receive throughout their time at APU and employers indicated that they are well prepared to begin careers as educational professionals.

### COMMON STANDARDS FINDINGS

For each row, enter either: “Consistently”, “Inconsistently”, or “Not Evidenced” as determined by the team.

<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:	<b><i>No response needed</i></b>
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 constituencies in the organization, coordination, and decision making for all educator preparation programs.	<b>Consistently</b>

<b>Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation</b>	<b>Team Finding</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>Consistently</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**

**Summary of information applicable to the standard**

The School of Education at APU has developed a research-based vision that includes three learning goals - preparing ethical, responsive, and informed educators. After a review of the documents and interviews with candidates, program completer, faculty, employers, and other constituencies, it is clear that this vision is represented in all educator preparation programs. In interviews with candidates and program completers they showed themselves to be ethical practitioners concerned with meeting the needs of all students, responsive educators who reflect on how they can improve practices, and informed educators who are able to apply the methods that they learn in coursework to their practice in the schools.

Both full-time faculty and part-time adjunct faculty are involved in the organization, coordination, and decision making for all educator preparation programs through formal meetings and informal collaborations. At the start of every academic year, all program faculty meet to review the program design and course requirements to ensure that they all understand the requirements of the program and individual courses. In interviews, faculty spoke about these annual meetings and the value of the time spent reviewing the courses with the other instructors. Many of the adjunct faculty are current educational professionals and they reported that they have input on program and course design.

Collaboration between faculty and their P-12 partners occurs regularly. Each program has an advisory board which includes faculty, candidates, current educators, and school administrators. A review of the agendas and meeting notes showed that these meetings include both time for APU to share information about their programs and for P-12 partners to share their current needs. In addition, the members of the Superintendents Collaborative stated that they regularly communicate with APU about the needs of their districts and report feeling supported by APU.

Though APU has had financial difficulties and has had to make budget cuts recently, during interviews, program leaders stated that they had sufficient resources to ensure that candidates were able to meet standards and get the support they need to be successful. During interviews with candidates, they reported feeling well supported by faculty and staff. While faculty reported feeling overwhelmed at times, they also felt that they were supported by the administration and that they had the resources to ensure that candidates received the instruction and experiences required to become strong professionals.

The faculty recruitment process includes steps for ensuring a diverse, qualified pool of applicants. Once hired, faculty receive continued support to develop their instructional skills through the Center for Teaching, Learning and Assessment and the Center for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence. Faculty have annual reviews with their department chairs where they review course evaluations, service and engagement, and set goals for the year. The annual goals include plans to engage with P-12 colleagues, and engagement with colleagues in P-12 settings is one of the criteria for faculty evaluations. During interviews, faculty confirmed that these annual reviews take place and are valuable time to set goals for the upcoming year. Examples of how faculty engage with the P-12 community shared during interviews include offering professional development, doing research in classrooms, and serving as university supervisors. A review of faculty CVs as well as interviews with candidates indicate that faculty are well qualified to teach courses, provide professional development, and supervise field-based and clinical experiences.

There are 3.5 FTE credential analysts in the unit. Candidates are divided alphabetically by last name. The credential analysts work with individual candidates from application to completion. Each credential program has a Candidate Progress Monitoring Document that is used by the Program Director and Credential Analyst to ensure all requirements have been met prior to recommendation. A review of the credential recommendation process and interviews with the

credential analysts provided ample evidence that the credential recommendation process ensures that candidates have met all program requirements before they are recommended for their credentials.

<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**

APU is a federally designated Hispanic Serving Institution and Asian American and Native American Pacific-Islander Serving Institution and recruits locally within its main and regional campuses’ diverse communities. The educator preparation programs engage in many recruitment activities, mostly online, to encourage diverse individuals to consider the professional education opportunities at APU. Given the success of these remote information meetings, the graduate admissions director spoke to continuing remote recruiting events given the increased accessibility to APU programs that remote recruiting provides. Interviews with key department and admissions personnel verified that the recruitment and admissions processes join in their work to support applicants as they make program decisions. Once the application is submitted, there is a clear process to determine the applicant's eligibility. A continuing School Psychology student reported their application email questions fielded quick program responses that detailed not just program requirements but a schedule which gave the impression that the program was well organized.

The unit has developed attractive recruitment materials for each of their credential programs. Flyers for each program provide prospective candidates with a clear description of the program, various options for pathways within programs, tuition cost, application checklists, and assorted resource websites or contact information. Alumni and continuing candidates reported receiving clear and detailed information on program requirements during the admission process and continually through program completion and credential recommendation.

Once admitted and enrolled, the unit provides a continuum of services to support and advise candidates to ensure their successful progress and retention towards program completion. A review of documents and interviews confirmed program coordinators and credential analysts are assigned to each candidate to welcome them to the program and support candidates throughout with advice and guidance as it applies to course sequence enrollment, fieldwork and clinical practice requirements, and state mandated credential specific tests. This information is cataloged in their Canvas system which serves as the repository for candidates' easy access to requirement deadlines, test dates, academic and testing support meetings, etc. Additionally, continuing students speak clearly about the accountability that is expected of them in meeting program requirements and competencies for their professions. Faculty and program administrators also confirmed the ongoing advisement and comprehensive "high touch" support candidates receive throughout their program.

<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>Consistently</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>
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>Consistently</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>Consistently</b>



<b>Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice</b>	<b>Team Finding</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 <i>program</i> the <i>unit</i> offers, candidates have significant experience in <i>California public schools</i> with diverse <i>student</i> populations and the opportunity to work with the range of <i>students</i> identified in the <i>program</i> standards.	<b>Consistently</b>

**Finding on Common Standard 3: Met**

**Summary of information applicable to the standard**

Through interviews and document analysis, it is evident that the unit and its programs offer a course of study integrated with field experiences. Programs allow candidates to learn, practice, and demonstrate competencies required by the credential they seek as evidenced by data reported on the accreditation data dashboard and interviews with various constituent groups. Survey data from academic year 2021-2022 across the Preliminary Multiple Subject, Single Subject, Education Specialist, and Pupil Personnel Services Credential Programs showed that APU candidates indicated that field experiences helped them integrate and apply what was learned or practiced in coursework at higher rates than respondents across the state. Clinical experiences are monitored by the unit as part of the APU Quality Assurance System.

In interviews, faculty, candidates, and directors indicated that location has a primary role in placement across satellite campuses. To ensure that there are opportunities for candidates to experience diverse school placements across many external partners, the unit sets goals for the majority of placements to meet specific demographic criteria. Utilizing statewide data as a benchmark, the unit determines percentages for each of the following student criteria to define and measure diversity of school placements: ethnicity and race, free and reduced-price lunch, designation as English learners, and reception of special education services. Interviews confirmed that data is tracked and reported per academic year to ensure that candidates work with a range of students aligned to each program’s standards. Candidates indicated in interviews that they have implemented research-based strategies to build upon the assets and learning needs of the diverse student populations served. Faculty also indicated in interviews that they are continuously adapting assignments within coursework based on their interactions with schools and feedback from university supervisors.

Site-based supervisor certifications are confirmed for each program through the collection and review of forms by program coordinators and directors. For some programs, the coordinator interfaces directly with site-based supervisors to confirm qualifications and additional program requirements for site placements. Within interviews, it was explained that site-based supervisors are selected based on meeting the qualifications and oftentimes principal recommendations. Document analysis of presentations and interviews indicated that site-based supervisor training varies per program. For the Preliminary Multiple Subject, Single Subject and Education Specialist Credential Programs, site-based supervisors view an orientation module, meet with university supervisors to debrief, and complete an exit ticket for the office of student placements. Site-based supervisors are then provided with the Professional Development and Training Survey to determine whether they will need continued training through the Intersegmental Professional Development modules. Additional training includes the CalTPA training module, and a co-teaching module which is in development. For other programs, site-based supervisor training is delivered in multiple ways, including personal orientations held by the candidate’s university supervisor or videos that can be viewed asynchronously. Site-based supervisors are recognized for their service differently per program. Recognition may be in the form of stipends, free additional training, networking events, and further invitations to be a part of the APU community. APU may want to explore ways that programs or the unit can collectively recognize site-based supervisors to further build community with their external partners.

Programs evaluate the effectiveness of clinical practice support through clinical experience surveys that capture candidate feedback on the effectiveness of site-based and university supervisors. The APU Clinical Experience Survey Report showed that at least 88.51% of candidates indicated that the support that they received was good, very good or excellent across the education unit. Interviews with faculty and directors confirmed that the surveys are used to determine continued placements with site-based supervisors and development of university supervisors.

Additionally, APU engages with an external partner, Hanover Research, to collect qualitative data from partner districts on clinical experience processes and collaborations. Findings from fourteen interviews conducted in Spring 2021 indicated that districts and schools would like more information about candidates and more time to find the best fit site-supervisor for each candidate. This qualitative inquiry will continue to be conducted, showing the unit’s continued commitment to ensuring processes support effective clinical experiences for candidates.

<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>

<b>Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement</b>	<b>Team Finding</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 constituencies 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**

The School of Education (SOE) Quality Assurance System (QAS) fosters a sustainable and evidence-based assessment environment to support continuous improvement. As evidenced within the graphic depiction, one assessment cycle is utilized across the unit programs for national, regional and CTC accreditation. Within the cycle, data is collected and analyzed annually. The multiple sources of data include admissions, enrollment, and credential completer reports, as well as degrees conferred which include demographic data. Candidate performance data is disaggregated by program and location. Performance data from proprietary assessments received from Praxis and Evaluation Systems of Pearson are collected. Lastly, outcome and survey data are aggregated and disaggregated by program.

Within the cycle, data is sent to or exported by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA). After initial analysis, leadership conducts a deeper analysis of data to determine whether unit or program targets have been met. As confirmed in interviews, the leadership, including program directors and chairs, determine what steps should be taken to engage in improvement and annual program review. Data and findings are then shared with program faculty during department meetings, and faculty indicated in interviews that they have opportunities to provide additional feedback and contribute to continuous program improvement. Each department includes P-12 partners within decision making, formally within meetings and/or informally through field-based interactions. Regular meetings with P-12 partners were confirmed by the review of meeting agendas, minutes, and/or presentations. Additionally, in interviews, faculty and directors indicated that the Superintendents’ Collaborative was a space in which data is presented to P-12 partners to inform decision making. Lastly, the SOE leadership reviews program reports to examine trends at the unit level and approve changes. The SOE Accreditation and Assessment Committee consists of a small group of faculty members with representation from each department. As confirmed in interviews, the committee reviews data and analysis before broader dissemination to ensure

that data is packaged in ways that are useful to inform program improvement activities. Committee and leadership members report on accreditation and assessment activities at monthly faculty meetings. The cycle both ends and begins with the submission of reports for accreditation and the planning and implementation of data collection and reporting process improvements.

To evaluate candidate readiness, professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions, programs collect data at transition points to ensure candidates sufficiently demonstrate competencies such as the TPEs prior to program completion. These transition points include admission to the program, progression to clinical practice, program completion/credential recommendation, and retention in the profession. Signature assignments are submitted by candidates within teacher preparation programs during the first two semesters and evaluated by instructors utilizing rubrics which are currently housed within Taskstream but are being moved to Watermark Student Learning and Licensure. Prior to credential recommendation, as appropriate per program, CalTPA, Continuum of Reflective, Engaging, and Accessible Teaching (CREATe) observation rubrics, and Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) passing results are confirmed. The CREATe rubric is completed by university supervisors and cooperating teachers during the midpoint and final transition points of clinical practice. At each transition point the unit has specified benchmark or target performance requirements for each program.

The final transition point, retention in the profession, is measured by completer satisfaction, employment information, teaching effectiveness, and employer satisfaction. APU conducts their own completer and employer satisfaction surveys, in addition to utilizing data collected by CTC surveys to determine benchmarks based on meeting or exceeding state performance. Throughout the year, employment information is collected through self-report by candidates, website searches, and requests for information from district partners. Review of APU's Completer and Employer Satisfaction report that provides an analysis of data collected from 2018-2021 includes response rates, data analysis and key findings from a qualitative inquiry conducted by Hanover Research.

Information regarding Annual Program Review has moved to a Google site that details how data has been used by all programs in improvement efforts. Each program has an Annual Program Review report that includes an introduction, timeline of changes, standing requirements, assessment cycle data reported per academic year, and plans for continuous improvement provided per data point. Through interviews and document analysis, it is evident that a comprehensive continuous improvement process is implemented. Data is systematically collected from multiple sources, analyzed, shared with constituent groups for feedback, and utilized to improve programs and unit level processes.

<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>Consistently</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**

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

APU’s candidates consistently demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to effectively educate and support all students in meeting state-adopted academic standards prior to recommendation for their credentials. Ongoing course and completer surveys, interviews with continuing candidates and completers, program coordinators, district partners, and faculty showcase ways candidates are prepared to meet the needs of all TK-12 students they serve. Program administrators, credential analysts, advisors, and assessment data confirm that candidates meet the Commission-adopted competency requirements, as specified in the program standards, prior to being recommended for the appropriate certification.

Information gathered from interviews with principals, employers, and district partners includes evidence that the candidates have a positive impact on teaching and learning. Multiple superintendents and district employed supervisors commented that they prefer and pursue APU graduates because they are well prepared; able to work with diverse students, have a high level of professionalism, are reflective, receptive to feedback, collaborative, and engage in continuous learning. One employer remarked that a significant number of teachers hired this year were from APU and none were being released at the end of this academic year.

APU has created additional long-term collaborations and grant opportunities that have shown to have a positive impact on teaching and learning in schools that serve underrepresented communities. The Superintendents’ Collaborative, Next Generation Leadership Cohort, Keeping History Alive and Bringing STEM To Life, Partners Involved in Engaging Collaborative Expertise (P.I.E.C.E.), and College Headed and Mighty Proud (C.H.A.M.P.) all focus on mentorship, professional development, and access to academic positions and fields typically unavailable to students, teachers, counselors, and administrators of color. One member of the Next Generation Leadership Cohort stated that being invited to participate in the cohort gave him access to mentorship and a belief that he belongs and will be prepared for future leadership opportunities.