

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

Dominican University of California

Professional Services Division

May 2024

Overview of this Report

This agenda report includes the findings of the accreditation visit conducted at **Dominican University of California**. The report of the team presents the findings based upon a thorough review of all available and relevant institutional and program documentation as well as all supporting evidence including interviews with representative constituencies. On the basis of the report, a recommendation of **Accreditation with Major Stipulations** 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 with Concerns
2) Candidate Recruitment and Support	Met
3) Course of Study, Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	Not Met
4) Continuous Improvement	Not Met
5) Program Impact	Met

Program Standards

Programs	Total Program Standards	Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
Preliminary Multiple/Single Subject	6	2	3	1
Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs	6	3	2	1

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: Dominican University of California

Dates of Visit: March 17 - 20, 2024

Accreditation Team Recommendation: Accreditation with Major Stipulations

Previous History of Accreditation Status

Accreditation Reports	Accreditation Status
February 2016	Accreditation with Major Stipulations
February 2017	Accreditation

Rationale:

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation with Major Stipulations** was based on a thorough review of all institutional and programmatic information and materials available prior to and during the accreditation site visit including interviews with administrators, faculty, candidates, completers, and local school personnel. The team obtained 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 except for the Preliminary Multiple/Single Subject and Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs programs, Intern Precondition (5) Supervision of Interns (a) which was found to be **not met**: In all intern programs, the participating institutions in partnership with employing districts shall provide 144 hours of support and supervision annually and 45 hours of support and supervision specific to teaching English learners pursuant to California Code of Regulations §80033.

Program Standards

Preliminary Multiple Subject and Single Subject Programs Standards 4 and 6 were **met**, Standards 1, 2, and 5 were **met with concerns**, and Program Standard 3 was **not met**.

Preliminary Education Specialist Program Standards 1, 4, and 6 were **met**, Standards 2 and 5 were **met with concerns**, and Standard 3 was **not met**.

Common Standards

Common Standards 2 and 5 were **met**, Common Standard 1 was **met with concerns**, and Common Standards 3 and 4 were **not met**.

Overall Recommendation

Based on the team's findings on Preconditions, Program Standards, and Common Standards, the team recommends **Accreditation with Major Stipulations**:

The team recommends the following stipulations:

- 1) That within 30 days, the institution provide evidence for the Preliminary Multiple/Single Subject and Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs programs, Intern Precondition (5) Supervision of Interns (a): In all intern programs, the participating institutions in partnership with employing districts shall provide 144 hours of support and supervision annually and 45 hours of support and supervision specific to teaching English learners pursuant to California Code of Regulations §80033.
- 2) For Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation, the institution will provide evidence that:
 - a) programs within the unit (the Department of Education) receive sufficient resources to allow for effective operation of each educator preparation program. The resources must enable each program to effectively operate, including, but not limited to, coordination, admission, advisement, curriculum, professional development and instruction, field-based supervision and clinical experiences.
 - 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.
- 3) For Common Standard 3: Course of Study, Fieldwork, and Clinical Practice the institution will provide evidence that:
 - a) 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, to ensure that all programs track every candidate and have confirmed assigned site-based supervisors and support that is monitored by the programs and unit.
 - b) the process and criteria for site-based supervisors result in the selection of individuals who provide effective and knowledgeable support for candidates specific to their respective program standards.
 - c) all programs effectively implement and evaluate fieldwork and clinical practice.
- 4) For Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement, the institution will provide evidence that:
 - a) 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) the education unit and its programs regularly assess, and consistently document, their effectiveness in relation to the course of study offered, fieldwork and clinical practice, and support services for candidates.
 - c) 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. The analysis and use of the program completer data must include data relevant to the TPA across programs and delivery models.
 - d) the continuous improvement process includes multiple sources of data including
 - 1) an explicit, documented delineation of the extent to which candidates are prepared in all required program-relevant competencies to enter professional practice; and
 - 2) explicit, documented, systematic feedback from key constituencies such as employers and community partners about the quality of the preparation.
- 5) For the Multiple/Single Subject Program Standards and Education Specialist Program Standards, the institution will provide evidence that:
- a) candidates, regardless of pathway, receive the minimum amount of district-employed supervisors' support and guidance of 5 hours per week.
 - b) all district-employed supervisors complete a 10-hour initial orientation including the program curriculum and effective supervision approaches.
 - c) they systematically collect and review aggregate TPA data for program improvement.
- 6) For the Multiple Subject and Education Specialist Program Standards the institution will provide evidence that:
- a) the program aligns literacy instruction with Commission-adopted Literacy TPEs*
- *Note: The institution, along with all other institutions in the state, will have to respond to the 2022 Literacy certification process by October 4, 2024. It is proposed that the results of that certification review, along with any other documentation as determined, be considered in determining whether Stipulation 6 has been met by the institution.*
- 7) For the Single Subject Program Standards, the institution will provide evidence that:
- a) candidates receive content specific pedagogy support and experiences for the range of content credentials offered.
- 8) For the Education Specialist Program Standards, the institution will provide evidence that:
- a) candidates receive the minimum amount of district-employed supervisors' support during 200 hours of early fieldwork.
 - b) candidates are engaging in guided fieldwork with a variety of ages, as is appropriate for a credential ranging from PK-12.
- 9) That the institution provides quarterly reports to the Committee on Accreditation on actions taken to address stipulations. Specifically, for the first quarterly report, provide:
- a) evidence of a clear and consistent tracking process of candidates and completers in the Commission-approved credential programs, including integrated candidates and post-baccalaureate candidates across all program pathways and

- b) a clear plan for providing district employed supervisors for all candidates across all program pathways.
- 10) That the institution not be permitted to propose new programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- 11) That within one year of this action, the institution will host a focused re-visit in which a team will focus on interviews and evidence around the stipulations noted above.

In addition, staff recommends that:

- Dominican University of California continues in its assigned cohort on the schedule of accreditation activities, subject to the continuation of the present schedule of accreditation activities by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

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

Preliminary Multiple/Single Subject, with intern
Preliminary Education Subject, with intern

Accreditation Team

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Documents Reviewed

Precondition Responses
Common Standards Submission
Program Review Submission
Common Standards Addendum
Program Review Addendum
Course Syllabi and Course of Study
Accreditation Website

Program Handbooks (Candidate, University Supervisors, Resident Mentors)
Assessment Materials
Intervention Plans
Induction Individual Development Plans
Dominican University Website (DEI Strategic Plan)
Student Teaching Placement Spreadsheet

Interviews Conducted

Constituencies	TOTAL
Candidates	52
Completers	20
School Site Administrators	4
District Administrators	15
Institutional Leadership	4
Program Leadership	5
Program Directors	9
Program Staff	4
Adjunct Faculty	7
CalTPA Coordinator	1
Field Placement Coordinator	2
University Supervisors	8
Mentor Teachers	3
Credential Analyst	1
TOTAL	135

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

Background Information

Dominican University of California (Dominican) is in San Rafael, in the Bay Area of California, roughly 12 miles north of San Francisco. The institution was founded by the Dominican Sisters of San Rafael in 1890 and is one of California's oldest universities. In 1917, Dominican became the first Catholic college in California to grant baccalaureate degrees to women. In 1924, the State Board of Education authorized Dominican to recommend candidates for public school teaching credentials, enabling graduates to teach in California public schools.

Dominican's mission is to educate and prepare students to be ethical leaders and socially responsible global citizens who incorporate the Dominican values of study, reflection, community, and service into their lives. Dominican offers over 60 programs of study and has a 10:1 student-to-faculty ratio with an average class size of 16. There are over 2,000 students enrolled across the university's graduate and undergraduate degree programs. There are three schools in the university: the Barowsky School of Business, the School of Health and Natural Sciences, and the School of Liberal Arts and Education. The Deans of these three colleges report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs who reports to the University President who reports to the Board of Trustees. Dominican has been named a Minority Serving Institution by the U.S. Department of Education and is both a Hispanic Serving Institution and an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution.

Education Unit

As noted above, Dominican has had an education program for the past 100 years. The School of Education and Counseling Psychology (SECP) was the institution's fourth school until 2017 when the School of Education became the Department of Education within the School of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (which became the School of Liberal Arts and Education). The Dean oversees the School of Liberal Arts and Education. The Chair of the Department of Education reports to the Dean. Reporting to the Chair are five full-time faculty members who serve as program directors – one who oversees the master's program and four who oversee the three credential programs: Multiple Subject (graduate pathway), Education Studies (Multiple Subject undergraduate integrated pathway), Single Subject, and Education Specialist. Additionally, there are 11 adjunct faculty, one credential analyst, a field placement coordinator (who also works in recruitment/admissions), and a budget specialist, although everyone in the department assumes multiple roles and responsibilities. At the time of the site visit, there were roughly 115 candidates enrolled in the 2023-2024 academic year, which is nearly a six-fold increase from the 19 completers who finished in the 2022-2023 academic year and nearly four-fold increase from the roughly 28 candidates who were enrolled in that same academic year. The exponential increase in enrollment is elaborated in detail later in the report.

Table 1: Enrollment and Completion Data

Program Name	Number of Program Completers (2022-23)	Number of Candidates Enrolled (2023-24)
Preliminary Multiple Subject	5	61
Preliminary Single Subject	6	31
Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs	8	23

The Visit

This site visit was conducted virtually. Institutional and program constituencies were interviewed via technology.

The visit proceeded in accordance with all normal accreditation protocols.

PRECONDITION FINDINGS

After review of all relevant preconditions for this institution, all have been determined to be met except for the following:

For the Preliminary Multiple/Single Subject and Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs programs, Intern Precondition (5) Supervision of Interns (a) is **not met**: In all intern programs, the participating institutions in partnership with employing districts shall provide 144 hours of support and supervision annually and 45 hours of support and supervision specific to teaching English learners pursuant to California Code of Regulations §80033. Given the finding that intern candidates are not consistently matched by the institution with a district-employed supervisor, there was not clear evidence that the hours of annual support required to be provided by the institution in partnership with employing districts are being provided. Additionally, the tracking sheets provided were those monitored by a separate entity rather than being monitored by the Department of Education at Dominican.

PROGRAM REPORTS

Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject (with intern)

Program Design

The Preliminary Multiple Subject and Preliminary Single Subject Credential programs are offered within the Department of Education housed within the School of Liberal Arts and Education. Dominican offers two options for earning a Multiple Subject Credential: (1) candidates may earn a Preliminary Multiple Subject Credential in an integrated pathway in which they complete a Bachelor of Arts in Education Studies and credential in four years; or (2) candidates may earn a Preliminary Multiple Subject Credential by completing an additional year, post-baccalaureate, as a student teacher, resident, or intern to earn both a credential and the option of a master's degree. In the integrated pathway, the Education Studies major integrates a Commission-approved Elementary Subject Matter program. During junior year, candidates have the option to apply to the Master of Science in Education program. If accepted, candidates may begin taking education specialist credential program coursework as an undergraduate and complete preparation for the Education Specialist credential in one more semester as a graduate student. In the post-baccalaureate pathway, a part time option enables candidates to complete the credential and/or master's degree in two years. Several candidates and completers highlighted this as a draw to attending Dominican to maintain other employment while working towards the credential.

The Single Subject Credential program is offered as a post-baccalaureate program and can also be taken as either full-time in one year, or part-time over two years. Candidates also have the option to earn a master's degree. Single Subject credentials are currently offered in the areas of Music, Art, English Language Arts, History/Social Science, World Languages, Science, and Physical Education.

Both the Multiple Subject and Single Subject programs offer fieldwork as either a student teacher, a resident, or an intern. Several program completers mentioned they worked as classified staff at school sites before applying and were able to apply to the credential program as part-time candidates to continue working at these sites while completing their credentials. Completers also highlighted “the flexibility and adaptability” of the pathway offerings as a benefit.

The coursework and fieldwork experiences for both programs are grounded in a social justice perspective and are designed to address the diverse needs of 21st century students that include skills development in communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. In both programs, students complete 48 units for the credential, over a developmental coursework and fieldwork sequence divided into three categories: (1) foundation courses; (2) pedagogy and reflective practice; and (3) supervised fieldwork. Each course in the sequence is aligned to specific TPEs and has a fieldwork component. Candidates have opportunities to understand, practice, and apply pedagogical competencies at school sites from the very first course. Current candidates find the programs to be “positive, with a welcoming, respectful climate,” and emphasize feeling “seen as an individual, rather than a number.”

For the multiple subject program, there is one director for the Education Studies program (integrated), and another director for the post-baccalaureate program. Both directors are also faculty and advisors in the program. Directors meet monthly to discuss program successes and needs, and to plan faculty meetings which are held once each month. Full time and adjunct faculty in these programs meet at the beginning and end of each semester, and the program directors lead monthly meetings for supervisors of student teachers.

A third program director for the Preliminary Single Subject Credential program meets regularly with fellow faculty in the program, with the directors of the multiple subject programs, and with university supervisors hired to mentor preservice teachers in the field. The single subject’s program director also supervises all adjunct faculty hired to teach in the single subject program, and teaches and advises in the program as well.

The four directors of the three credential programs report directly to the chair of the Department of Education, who also teaches in the single subject program. Interviews suggest a strength of Dominican’s leadership team at the program level is that it is “small and mighty,” to allow for “close, continuous contact and collaboration,” as well as “one-to-one support” for students. These four program directors were highly praised in interviews with candidates and completers as “compassionate, approachable, available,” and as “the reason someone would want to be a teacher.” Two of the directors brought their scholarly research on lesson study and instructional rounds to their respective programs of the multiple and single subject programs.

Part of Dominican’s programs reflection process includes valuable input from various constituencies. Faculty are guided by course evaluation ratings and comments from candidates to revise course content and delivery as needed. University supervisors meet monthly with the

program directors to discuss fieldwork experiences of student teachers, as well as what changes might be beneficial to coursework to ensure success in the field. This was corroborated by a resident coach (a mentor teacher who works with a candidate in the residency pathway) who stated that the Dominican team is always open to “hearing what is novel in the field that needs to be addressed in coursework.” At the end of every year, the department collects surveys from all constituencies involved in supervised fieldwork, though interviews could not confirm that there was any input from district supervisors for intern teachers. There was also inconsistent evidence to corroborate that an advisory board has been meeting to share input on preservice teacher education. However, interviews with superintendents, assistant superintendents, employers from the local county office of education and directors of partnership organizations, all provided testimonies of the excellence of the Dominican programs. One interviewee shared that Dominican is “one of the best preparers of credentialed teachers who come into our schools.” Another cited Dominican completers as having significant experience with equity, and knowledge of the local neighborhoods and communities of color. A district employer stated being impressed by the curiosity and the level of questions asked by educators prepared by Dominican, adding that the professionalism of the completers is “tremendous.”

Over the past year, the programs have experienced significant increases in enrollment. Interviews with the Director of School and Community Partnership and the Graduate Admissions Counselor attribute this to Dominican’s now completely online course model for both the Single Subject Credential as well as the graduate pathway for the Multiple Subject Credential. Current candidates suggest this online model weighed heavily in their decision to attend Dominican. The online model has allowed the programs to cast a much wider net across the Bay Area to recruit teachers from areas such as Alameda, the East Bay, South Bay, and West Contra Costa, along with offering more scholarships. A growing scholarship, the “Teachers of Color Scholarship,” provides 50% of tuition, and the La Vida Dominican grant-funded program focuses on recruitment of postbaccalaureate Hispanic/Latinx students. Together, these monies have enabled more students of color to join the Dominican programs. Another stated reason for the growth in enrollment was stated to be the generous uptake of students following the closure of HNU in 2023.

Over the past year, community partnerships have grown and enhanced instruction. One such organization has partnered with the single subject program candidates to explore pathways for K-12 engagement in STEM using immersive reality and innovative technologies. Other partnerships with local schools have expanded to include a Lesson Study program for elementary teacher candidates. In Spring 2022, secondary credential faculty began to explore local and global international partnerships (in Switzerland, Thailand specifically), through the expansion of instructional rounds to virtual instructional rounds using Flipgrid, Zoom, and SWItCHtube. Faculty model the use of these new instructional technologies and have deepened their understanding and use of online and hybrid offerings. They have also more explicitly included Social Justice Standards using the Learning for Justice model. The following new courses were created to address changing district needs as well as state credentialing changes: *Differentiated Instruction for Inclusive Classrooms, Applied Instructional Technology, Classroom*

Climate & Curriculum, Complexities of Teaching in Elementary Schools I & II, Early Literacy & Literature, Teaching Science, and Pedagogical Preparation III.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

Multiple subject candidates follow a cohesive, coherent set of learning experiences consisting of the inter-relation of concurrent coursework and fieldwork experiences. Candidates know and understand the foundations of education and the functions of schools in society through intensive experiences in Dominican’s foundation courses in the beginning of the credential program. Every credential course requires clinical practice hours and includes assignments connected to and to be completed within their fieldwork classrooms. Each course has been assigned specific TPEs and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs). In the foundation courses, candidates learn about the complex socio-cultural variables that impact and influence our system of education and are introduced to the state academic content standards. Candidates’ coursework is completely online and a minimum of 140 hours of fieldwork accompanies the first semester coursework in the form of observations and participation hours at a placement site arranged by the Field Placement Coordinator (who is also the Director of School and Community Partnership noted above). Candidates completing the integrated program complete the foundation courses and accompanying fieldwork across their freshman, sophomore, and junior years.

In the second developmental course series of the multiple subject program, students move into their pedagogical and reflective courses. In the pedagogy classes –*Teaching Reading, Teaching Math, Teaching Science, and Early Literacy and Literature* courses—students complete “fieldwork connection” assignments directly related to their work in K-6 classrooms. Candidates learn to teach the content of the state-adopted academic content standards to all students and to use the state-adopted instructional materials as they engage in courses that train them in pedagogy and reflective teaching practices as noted in program documentation.

In the final phase of the program, the balance of fieldwork and coursework shifts. This is the senior year for integrated program students and the final semester for post-baccalaureate students. Candidates engage in a *Multiple Subject Supervised Seminar and Supervised Teaching* courses. The purpose of these courses is to support the experience of a full semester – 15 weeks of two 7.5-week placements – of teaching in a public elementary school classroom with English learners and students with special needs. In the concurrent course seminars, candidates learn to develop pedagogical competence utilizing a variety of strategies as defined by the TPEs and implement inclusive teaching strategies.

In the single subject program, candidates are also provided with instruction and practice in using 21st century skills to meet the needs of all learners. A particularly critical highlight and area of focus in the single subject program is the teaching English language learners course. The *Differentiated Instruction for Inclusive Classrooms* course includes preparation to teach English learners in K-12 classrooms. Candidates learn theories, principles, and instructional strategies that promote English language development (ELD) and support English learners during content instruction. Candidates complete focused field observation of English learners, differentiated

literacy instruction for English Learners, and sheltered content instruction for English learners. Program completers and current candidates report feeling very well prepared to teach multilingual learners and mentioned this as a highlight of the program in interviews.

In the second phase of the program, candidates engage in *Pedagogical Preparation* courses and in a *Literacy Across the Curriculum* course. And in the final phase, candidates complete 15 weeks of supervised student teaching (or internship, residency, or traditional student teaching). Whenever possible, candidates teach under two different directing teachers.

The required 600 hours of fieldwork is completed over the arc of each of the programs. Dominican University education fieldwork requirements vary by program and pathways.

For the integrated multiple subject pathway through the Education Studies major, fieldwork begins immediately in the freshman year. In the fall, candidates complete five to ten observation hours and 20 hours in spring. Sophomore year, candidates complete 20 hours in the fall and 20 hours in the spring. As a junior, candidates are placed in “teams” in an upper grade classroom during science instruction for 20 hours. They participate in a Lesson Study experience where they plan and teach a science lesson. In spring, they complete 20 hours in a lower grade placement to correspond with coursework content. Finally, in the senior year, Education Studies candidates observe/participate for 140 hours of field experience, followed by 15 weeks of full-time student teaching in the spring. Student teaching consists of two placements in any order: seven weeks in a lower grade placement, one week transition, and seven weeks in an upper placement. Fieldwork throughout the four years is supported by coursework at the university.

For candidates in the post-baccalaureate multiple subject program, field work consists of 140 observation/participation hours in the fall, followed by 15 weeks of full-time student teaching in the spring as with the undergraduate model.

In the single subject program, candidates complete 140 observation/participation hours in the fall, followed by 460 hours of full-time student teaching in the spring semester for two periods, though they remain on campus all day. All fieldwork is supported by online coursework. There was inconsistent evidence that single subject candidates receive content-specific pedagogy support for the range of content credentials offered as noted in the standard. The concerns regarding content coaches were also noted back in the 2016 site visit report. Although current evidence noted that candidates take pedagogy courses, they are not specific to their respective content areas. Completers voiced concerns over having to find their own “content pedagogy coach,” which the program identified as supplemental to the general pedagogy course. Completers stated this was sometimes insufficient support to enable teaching sound pedagogy integral to their unique subject discipline.

Field placements are arranged by the Director of School and Community Partnerships, who also advises, and provides support for test preparation, resumés, and career development. Multiple interviews with candidates and completers emphasized the intentional selection of diverse

placement settings, and the accommodating nature of this individual, stating the director would go “over and beyond” to listen to candidate’s life situations, transportation needs, and/or desire to work in a setting that foregrounded a specific feature of instruction. One interviewee cited a passion for creative writing, and that they were placed at a school site that allowed them to explore this niche.

Candidates in student teaching pathways receive daily written or oral feedback from their directing teachers. They are also assigned a university supervisor who works closely with the program director and uses observation templates provided by the university. Candidates who are in a residency pathway are assigned a resident mentor on site and are observed once a week. The team found insufficient evidence that each candidate in every pathway is receiving the minimum amount of district-employed supervisors’ support and guidance of five hours per week as not every candidate has a district-employed supervisor.

Supervision occurs either in person or through virtual real-time Zoom sessions or recordings. A supervision cycle consists of a pre-conference, observation, and post-conference. Supervision is either in person or virtual and occurs through 12 observation meetings per semester. This was corroborated in interviews with the program directors, university supervisors, and one resident coach. Candidates struggling with coursework and/or clinical practice meet one on one with their respective program director and are supported through a plan consistent with the needs of the candidate. Completer interviews with student teachers corroborated the excellence of support from their university supervisors. While the program provided evidence that there are modules for supervisor orientation and training, the team was only able to interview three mentor teachers who corroborated this.

Assessment of Candidates

Dominican’s Department of Education candidates are assessed on the learning outcomes for each course based on the TPEs and program learning outcomes. All candidates are given syllabi detailing assessment of competencies in each class, and the Teacher Preparation Handbook, which further clarifies the evaluation of fieldwork in the program. Students are aware they need to perform at three or higher on a four-point rubric for each assessment. Program completers attested to the four-point rubrics consisting of clear language and expectations. Candidates are also assessed on the TPEs by their university supervisors or resident mentors in conjunction with their directing teachers. Data for the program is collected at three different points: during the programs, at the end of the programs, and after the programs. During the program, data are collected in the areas of coursework and field experiences; at the end of the program, additional data are collected on field experiences; and after the program, data are collected from program completers and identified district-employed supervisors. Specifically, instructors for each course collect student assessment data on midterm and final candidate performance. Then instructors meet to discuss and analyze the data and candidate progress or learning issues, which is recorded on an assessment analysis document twice per semester. There was insufficient evidence to corroborate this at the site visit. Program documents state that some of the data are collected, analyzed, and used by faculty members to make data-informed decisions about curriculum and faculty professional development. Other data are

gathered, reviewed by program deans and chairs, and used to inform program directors. The latter could not be corroborated in interviews or at the site visit.

Faculty members in each program have assigned to each required credential course a selection of TPEs for introduction and practice or application on a course matrix. In this way, each course contains a series of activities and assignments designed to learn about and practice particular TPEs. Faculty members have designed and agreed upon “anchor assignments” within each program that measure the TPEs. All anchor assignments and rubrics have been revised to match a focus on 21st century skills. In 2021, the digital portfolio/ teacher website assignment and rubric were updated to integrate and assess diversity, equity, and inclusion principles across teaching and course artifacts. Candidates in each credential program are required to complete this digital portfolio assignment. Additionally, the new Dominican lesson plan format addresses UDL principles.

Dominican uses CalTPA as the teaching performance assessment. All candidates are informed about the performance assessment tasks via the Dominican website, the admissions office personnel, Director of School and Community Partnerships, credential analyst, and CalTPA Coordinator, and during orientation. Multiple subject candidates also review the tasks and score standards in the multiple subject seminars, which was corroborated in interviews with multiple subject program completers. In both the multiple subjects program pathways, candidates study the Performance Assessment Guide, rubrics, and passing score standards for the CalTPA. Weekly topics for preparation in the *Preparation for Student Teaching* seminar include the Cycle 1 materials; weekly topics for the *Supervised Student Teaching* address Cycle 2 materials. Multiple subject completers stated that the program director provided systems to “meet every teacher where they are” with the TPA, providing time during seminar to share videos, ask questions, and support one another. Completer interviews in the single subject program stated that, while they had the opportunity to learn what is assessed in CalTPA and found the program to be “enriching and supportive,” they wished the TPA could be more formally integrated into their Supervised Student Teaching seminar.

For candidates needing additional support in preparing for assessments and/or who fail the first CalTPA Cycle 1 or 2, Dominican provides remediation support and guidance through one-to-one meetings with the CalTPA Coordinator. Some program completers reported how helpful the program coordinators also were in this process. During meetings, the coordinator and candidate review the score report using the rubrics. The goal of these meetings is for the candidate to create a plan for resubmission that clearly addresses each component of the score report, with a clear focus on the components with the lowest scores.

The site team was unable to find evidence to suggest the maintenance of program level and candidate level TPA data, including but not limited to individual and aggregate results of candidate performance over time. There was insufficient evidence to document the use of data for Commission reporting, accreditation, and program improvement purposes.

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, intern teachers, faculty employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the Preliminary Multiple Subject and Single Subject Programs, with intern, except for the following:

Standard 1: Program Design and Curriculum – Met with Concerns

There was inconsistent evidence that single subject candidates receive content specific pedagogy support and experience for the range of content credentials offered as noted in the standard “In order to prepare candidates to effectively teach all California public school students, key elements within the program’s curriculum include.... subject-specific pedagogy...”. Although evidence was provided that candidates take pedagogy courses, they are not specific to their respective content areas. Completers voiced concerns over having to find their own “content pedagogy coach” which the program identified as supplemental to the general pedagogy course. Evidence from interviews suggests this was insufficient support to enable teaching sound pedagogy integral to unique subject disciplines.

Standard 2: Preparing Candidates toward Mastery of the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) – Met with Concerns

There was insufficient evidence that the single subject Program provides Subject-Specific Pedagogy for the range of content credentials offered by the institution to meet the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs). As noted in the standard, “The scope of the pedagogical assignments (a) addresses the TPEs as they apply to the subjects to be authorized by the credential ...” and as noted under Program Standard 1 above.

Multiple subjects candidates and program completers expressed concerns regarding literacy coursework which they reported does not align with current instruction and literacy practices they were seeing at their school sites which indicates a misalignment with the Commission-adopted literacy TPEs. As required in this program standard: “The program’s organized coursework and clinical practice provide multiple opportunities for candidates to learn, apply, and reflect on each Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE).”

The requirement of programs to align to current literacy practices is also noted in Part 2 of the TPEs - Subject-Specific Pedagogy: “Literacy Practices in Relation to Subject-Specific Pedagogy” and “Teaching English Language Arts in a Multiple Subject Assignment.” How candidates “demonstrate foundational knowledge of identifying, assessing, and supporting struggling readers, including students with dyslexia, with research based effective reading strategies” was an area of concern.

Standard 3: Clinical Practice: - Not Met

Standard 3A: Organization of Clinical Practice Experiences

The minimum amount of district-employed supervisors’ support and guidance must be 5 hours per week.”

The team found insufficient evidence that candidates, particularly those who are teachers of record, are receiving the minimum amount of district-employed supervisors' support and guidance of five hours per week as not every candidate has a district-employed supervisor.

Standard 3D: Criteria for the Selection of District-Employed Supervisors

The program provides district employed supervisors a minimum of 10 hours of initial orientation to the program curriculum, about effective supervision approaches such as cognitive coaching, adult learning theory, and current content-specific pedagogy and instructional practices.

There is inconsistent evidence that district-employed supervisors engage with the program's 10-hour initial orientation to program curriculum and effective supervision approaches. While the program provided evidence that there are modules for supervisors, the team was only able to interview three mentor teachers who corroborated this point.

Standard 5: Implementation of a Teaching Performance Assessment - Met with Concerns

Standard 5A: The program maintains program level and candidate level TPA data, including but not limited to individual and aggregate results of candidate performance over time. The program documents the use of these data for Commission reporting, accreditation, and program improvement purposes.

The team found insufficient evidence that aggregate TPA data are systematically reviewed for program improvement.

Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs (with intern)

Program Design

The Education Specialist program is located within the Department of Education within the School of Liberal Arts and Education. The program emphasizes development in communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, content knowledge, and technology. Both traditional student teachers and teachers of record (including interns) follow the same sequence of courses, discussed later in this report. Through coursework, candidates have opportunities to understand, practice, and apply pedagogical competencies as defined by the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs). Candidates in the Education Specialist program take pedagogy and content courses with Multiple and Single Subject candidates, and they take their foundation and fieldwork courses with only their fellow Education Specialist candidates.

Program credential pathways include both traditional and intern pathways for Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild to Moderate Support Needs (MMSN). Additionally, the program offers a dual pathway in which candidates can earn a Preliminary Education Specialist (MMSN) with a Multiple or Single Subject Credential. There is also a pathway for adding an Educational Specialist Credential to existing Multiple or Single Subject Credentials. After earning a credential

at Dominican University, completers have the option of completing 16 additional units to earn a Master of Science degree with a concentration in Leadership.

All education specialist candidates are advised by the Director of Special Education Programs. The director is the only full-time faculty in the Education Specialist program and also serves as the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) Coordinator for the Department of Education. Dominican has adopted the CalTPA for their performance assessment and the director supports all candidates enrolled across the three credential programs in completing the assessment. The director's approach to working with faculty and students is highly collaborative. The director is in regular contact with university supervisors, adjunct faculty, and candidates, in addition to program completers, for ongoing TPA support.

The director and faculty meet monthly and have regular phone and email contact. The director works in close collaboration with adjunct faculty that teach and supervise teacher candidates in their fieldwork. The director is also in consistent communication with faculty in the multiple and single subject programs to address challenges in courses and fieldwork. The faculty across all three preliminary teacher preparation programs that Dominican offers meet once per year in the spring to discuss anchor assignments and improvements needed for course syllabi.

Interviews were conducted with constituencies including faculty (full-time, adjunct, and university supervisors), staff (credential analyst, field placement coordinator), program directors, candidates, completers, the department chair, the dean, the university president, the vice president for academic affairs, the vice president for finance and administration, the university's director of assessment – who is also the accreditation liaison officer – and employers. Those who were interviewed reported that Dominican's education specialist program is strong and addressed key skills for education specialists. All constituencies felt that they had a voice in the ongoing improvement of the program. In particular, internal communication is very strong. Notably, candidates in the education specialist program attend classes alongside their multiple and single subject peers, and courses are designed to foster collaboration between special and general educators, mirroring the professional relationship in schools. Current candidates and completers were pleased with the collaborative themes in courses and were often paired up in classes for partner or group work. Instructors from the three credential programs work in close collaboration and provide substantive feedback to each other to improve candidates' experience.

Dominican also requests input from external constituencies through informal discussions at school sites with mentors and administrators, through email, and by phone. However, the program lacks a reliable and systematic vehicle for open discussion on topics of import. Additionally, according to interviews, the education specialist program has not held an advisory meeting in the last four years, dating back to before the pandemic. The education specialist program recognizes the importance of community input and is making efforts to restore community advisory specific to special education topics and concerns.

Despite the absence of a community meeting, the Director of Special Education is knowledgeable about each of the candidates, their field placements, supervisors, and school administration. While this has been feasible within a small program, Dominican’s enrollment has increased significantly – including the integration of candidates from nearby Holy Names University (HNU) which closed at the end of spring 2023. The personal but unsystematic approaches that worked well in a small program may be strained under new demands.

The education specialist program has been modified over the last two years to include an additional emphasis on Universal Design Learning (UDL) and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) content. A new course was designed and added (*Differentiating Instruction for Inclusive Classrooms*). Additionally, content in existing courses addressing UDL and MTSS was revised to create a “continuum of instruction” on these important topics. Course syllabi were reviewed by faculty to ensure that the new literacy program standard and TPE Domain will be fully implemented per the Commission on Teacher Credentialing’s timeline. Finally, the Director of Special Education Programs directly collaborates with members of Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) through work on the California Alliance for Inclusive Schooling, whose mission is to support full implementation of UDL in K-12 systems.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

Dominican education specialist candidates follow a developmental sequence of courses, which are divided into three categories: (1) foundation courses; (2) pedagogy and reflective practice courses; and (3) supervised fieldwork. As noted earlier in this report, education specialist candidates take some courses together with multiple subject candidates, including pedagogy classes in reading, writing, and mathematics, but take their foundation courses with only other students in the education specialist program. Each course in this sequence has been assigned specific TPEs (Universal and MMSN). Through this sequence of courses, candidates in both the student teaching and internship pathways have opportunities to understand, practice, and apply pedagogical competencies as defined by the TPEs. Candidates and completers of the program shared that classes fully prepared them, and they were especially pleased with how applied the assignments were. They also shared in interviews that they felt very positive about their coursework and learning. They reported they felt adequately prepared in most early career teacher competencies, including case management, planning and designing instruction, differentiation, working with families, professional collaboration, and writing IEPs. Candidates reported they felt less prepared for classroom management, however. As shared by a school site administrator in an interview, this is a particularly challenging area that many candidates, from a variety of programs, struggle with. Overall, the school site administrators interviewed reported that new teachers from Dominican were well-prepared and favored applicants.

In foundation courses, candidates are introduced to current state academic content standards. Candidates develop pedagogical competence utilizing a variety of strategies, including meeting linguistic and academic needs of culturally diverse students and English learners. They are provided with the initial competencies for teaching students with disabilities, as well as media and technology, to engage all students. Candidates are provided with instructional and assistive technologies through two courses (*Using Technology in Classrooms* and *Applied Instructional*

Technology) and practice using instructional technology in K-12 classrooms to meet the needs of all learners. Embedded in these foundation courses are opportunities for candidates to participate in focused observations and assignments in public school classrooms.

Coursework is described by the director as a “field-oriented” approach to teacher preparation and certification with an emphasis on authentic assignments that are conducted in public school classrooms. Each course requires a field-based assignment that integrates course instruction with practical application. For example, candidates taking *Behavioral Interventions and Support* complete an observation of a student in a district classroom and develop a Behavior Support Plan based on that child, then present their plan to their instructor through role play. Mentor teachers (district-employed supervisors) working with student teachers contribute through guest lectures in the student teaching seminars and coordinate directly with the program director to share resources. Through assignments, candidates connect with and interview key community and related services providers including the Department of Rehabilitation, and the Department of Mental Health. Candidates work with school nurses, speech and language therapists, school psychologists, adapted physical education instructors, and other related services providers through fieldwork assignments. Themes are also woven throughout classes, including working with English learners using culturally responsive methods, working with families, and collaboration. Current and former candidates described excellent relationships with faculty and reported feeling very supported in most areas. They shared that upon program completion they felt prepared to enter the workforce.

In interviews, candidates and completers expressed concerns regarding literacy coursework, which does not align with the current Commission-adopted literacy TPEs. They reported difficulty passing RICA (Reading Instruction Competence Assessment), and that largely they were provided resources to prepare on their own (corroborated by program leadership). Resources included preparation books and videos. Candidates reported that they did not feel sufficiently prepared to pass the RICA after coursework and had to learn how to teach reading on the job.

Education specialist candidates complete fieldwork in all four semesters of their two-year program. In their first year they complete early fieldwork in semesters one and two. Traditional candidates are placed with a mentor teacher and candidates mostly observe the teacher providing instruction and complete coursework assignments in their first year. No university supervisor is assigned to traditional candidates in the first year. University supervision is only provided through graded, field-oriented coursework assignments that receive feedback from the instructor. Candidates also complete self-reflections on field assignments. In their second year, traditional candidates continue early fieldwork spending 140 hours in classroom settings. They are assigned a university supervisor in semester three. The supervisor meets with the candidate three times over 14 weeks, helping them orient to the classroom and school and make connections to the TPA that they will complete in their final semester. However, there is no evidence that candidates are receiving at least 200 hours of supervised early field work that includes guided observations and initial student teaching (e.g., co-planning and co-teaching, or guided teaching) in general education and special education settings prior to final student

teaching as required by the program standards. While this is an improvement over the first two semesters, and candidates are receiving 200 hours of intentionally planned early fieldwork, it is questionable whether or not these experiences are guided in semesters one through three.

There is no clear evidence that candidates are assigned a district-employed support provider for guidance in their fieldwork. The team found, through interviews and documentation, that candidates are inconsistently assigned an on-site support provider in schools. Although this condition is stipulated in documentation, such as the intern MOU between Dominican and the local education agency, there does not appear to be a consistent system to ensure each candidate has a district-employed supervisor. While university supervisors do support the candidates through observations and in seminar in their fourth semester as they complete their TPA, the absence of a district-employed support provider is problematic as it conflicts with the requirement to have one as per the clinical practice program standards.

The team found insufficient evidence that candidates, regardless of pathway, are receiving the minimum amount of district-employed supervisors' support and guidance of five hours per week, as not every candidate has a district-employed supervisor. The program is required to support interns throughout their program per clinical practice program standards which state that early field experience for interns would take place in experienced mentor classrooms in both the general education and special education settings.

Teacher candidates are evaluated at the end of semester three by the Professional Standards Committee before they are formally recommended for a student teaching placement. Placements are arranged by the field placement coordinator. Per the coordinator, Dominican seeks placements that demonstrate a wide range of learners, a diverse student body, and institutions serving low-income families. While this is sometimes challenging as the university resides in a wealthy area, the field placement coordinator shared her efforts, including new scholarship opportunities in the neighboring East Bay.

Traditional candidates participate in 15 weeks of full-time student teaching (minimum 400 hours), culminating in student teaching in a special education setting with access to general education. Intern teacher candidates are expected to complete eight weeks of student teaching in the same setting described above. Non-public schools are not considered appropriate settings for traditional student teachers as there is no access to general education. Also, candidates complete a survey for the age they most want to work with, and that is the main factor taken into consideration when placements are established. The candidates work only with the age group they prefer.

In the final, fourth semester, candidates complete the remaining 400 hours of culminating student teaching in the same classroom they were introduced to in semester three. Candidates at Dominican get to know their placement, students, and professional colleagues very well. They experience a depth of experience that is not possible to achieve in a single semester, and they can meet the students closer to the beginning of the year, helping them develop rapport before they begin their TPA (which includes videotaping).

As education specialists are teaching under a PK-12 credential, candidates must work with children of various ages and grades and be placed in sites that offer this opportunity for candidates. Education specialist candidates at Dominican are not provided with opportunities to spend some of their fieldwork in settings that meet with this requirement of the program standards (i.e., different age and grade levels).

There is inconsistent evidence that district-employed supervisors received orientation training specific to TPA, TPEs, and Dominican procedures and expectations for providing support and guided feedback. While the program provided evidence that there are modules for supervisors covering topics such as adult coaching and mentoring techniques, the team was only able to interview three mentor teachers who corroborated this point. Programs are required to provide district-employed supervisors with an orientation to the program's expectations and ensures that supervisors are knowledgeable about the program curriculum and assessments, including the TPEs and TPA model chosen by the program. This element of the standard is also conflated with the point that not all candidates in the program have an assigned district-employed supervisor.

University supervisors (many of whom work as classroom teachers or coaches as their primary employment) are provided materials and resources to fieldwork seminars. During interviews, they described a collaborative and positive relationship with the program director and field placement coordinator at Dominican. They shared that they felt they could reach the director at any time, with any issue, and knew the director would be responsive and timely. This strong partnership results in frequent guest lectures and co-taught curriculum in a seminar that is directly applicable to fieldwork as noted above.

Candidate support is an area that the education specialist program shines. As the lead of a small program, the director is highly involved with supporting candidates directly, supporting adjunct faculty, and supporting site mentors working with candidates. The director gathers feedback both on courses and fieldwork through Google surveys and evaluation data through TaskStream. The director meets with candidates at the midterm of the semester to discuss pathways to successful completion and is in direct contact with university supervisors and on-site mentors to discuss candidate issues and support. Candidates, staff, faculty, and administrators all described how responsive the director is and is always available for support. The director shared that there is a process for developing and monitoring candidates in jeopardy either in courses or the field. The department has procedures for student support, including a co-constructed support plan. For program completers who have not yet passed the TPA, they are supported by the CalTPA coordinator (who is the education specialist program director) on an individual basis. The CalTPA coordinator has resources that they share with candidates and also meets with candidates to support them on their tasks. As noted above, the department's enrollment has grown significantly in the last year, and these efforts to support candidates on an individual basis may not be sustainable as the number of candidates increases. The personal attention was highly appreciated by completers, and they felt well

supported. There is not a system of tracking non-passers who have completed their program, however, to ensure they have a road to completion for their program.

Interviews and provided data demonstrate that internal communication within and across the preliminary teacher preparation programs at Dominican is solid. However, communication from the program to the unit level and from the education unit to the university leadership is infrequent. While data is collected at various points of the program, including TPA pass rates, formal evaluations from fieldwork, and student evaluation of their field experiences, these data are not housed in a central digital space, and are infrequently analyzed and used for program improvement by university leadership. Dominican faculty and staff were united in sharing in interviews the breadth and scope of work completed at the course level for continuous improvement. The Learning Management System (Moodle) is used effectively to gather student data, and advisors and instructors use this data formatively, meeting with candidates before they are in jeopardy and providing support. The faculty have ample opportunity to work together on program improvement and candidate issues in the monthly faculty meetings.

Assessment of Candidates

Candidates in the education specialist program are assessed on a common set of program learning outcomes (PLOs) by the Department of Education's master's degree and teacher preparation programs. All candidates are expected to meet the PLOs by the end of the program. PLOs are all aligned with current TPE guidelines, which are embedded and assessed in each course. Data is collected on candidates' performance and achievement at three time points:

1. During the program (coursework and fieldwork)
2. End of the program (fieldwork evaluations)
3. Maintenance data after the program (data collected from employers)

Data are reviewed and analyzed within the department to determine how faculty can continue to improve overall programming, curriculum, and faculty professional development, to engage in program-wide decisions.

Candidates are assigned an advisor at the start of their program, and they regularly meet with their advisor, who holds regular office hours. Advisors coordinate with other faculty and site mentors as needed to support candidates through coursework and fieldwork. Currently, the program directors for each of the credential programs serve as candidate advisors.

The education department has adopted the CalTPA for its performance assessment. The CalTPA coordinator coordinates the TPA for all teacher candidates within the department and tracks progress through the CalTPA instructor database. These results are shared with faculty through department meetings, and individually with advisors, adjunct faculty as needed, and the department chair. The chair then shares data with university administration. In interviews, education unit leadership and institutional leadership asserted the system is efficient and effective. Candidate TPA passing scores are shared monthly with the Vice President of Academic Affairs, who reviews them in timely manner and discusses them with the department

chair. The type of data shared is restricted to passing/non-passing, however, rather than including data about portions of the assessment that are particularly difficult for candidates that might lead to program improvement. The team found that, while data is being shared, it is not sufficiently in-depth to make substantive changes to the program as required by the program standards.

Teacher candidates are provided a copy of the Teacher Preparation Handbook and course syllabi at the beginning of the program, which include course expectations, and CalTPA practice assignments. The handbook includes policies and procedures for fieldwork, including preconditions. Syllabi include program learning outcomes aligned with TPEs and core TPA assignments.

Dominican's education specialist program has a high pass rate for CalTPA at above 80%. Candidates who have not yet passed CalTPA but otherwise finished their program during the COVID-19 pandemic (when deferments were allowed) are supported in their Induction program. The director/CalTPA coordinator meets regularly with Year 3 interns, who are at risk of losing their position due to non-passage. For those candidates who need more support for passing RICA, the director/CalTPA coordinator shares an electronic folder with RICA resources to help candidates prepare.

Program completers shared in interviews that there used to be a dedicated course for TPA preparation. While there was only a small number of education specialist completers interviewed, two completers noted that the TPA class was helpful in successfully passing the CalTPA. Current candidates shared that passage of the TPA was of great concern. While there are practice activities embedded in courses, there is no dedicated class time for working exclusively on the CalTPA, including the opportunity for peer review, which candidates shared would be very helpful. While the TPA class is no longer offered, it is still listed in the course catalog, and faculty have discussed bringing it back perhaps as an optional summer class to avoid increasing the length of the program.

Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with administrators, faculty, candidates, completers, and local school personnel, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the Preliminary Education Specialist, with intern program, except for the following:

Standard 2: Preparing Candidates toward Mastery of the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) – Met with Concerns

Education specialist candidates and program completers expressed concerns regarding literacy coursework which does not align with current Commission-adopted literacy TPEs. As required in this program standard: *The coursework and fieldwork/clinical experiences provide multiple opportunities for candidates to learn, apply, and reflect on each teaching performance expectation. As candidates progress through their preparation scope and sequence, pedagogical*

assignments are increasingly complex and challenging. The scope of the pedagogical assignments (a) addresses all of the TPEs as they apply to the subjects to be authorized by the credential, and (b) prepares the candidate for course-related and other assessments of their competence with respect to both the Universal TPEs and the Education Specialist TPEs.

Standard 3: Clinical Practice - Not Met

Standard 3A: Organization of Clinical Practice Experiences

There is no clear evidence that candidates, such as those who are teacher of record, are receiving the minimum 200 hours of supervised early field work that includes guided observations and initial student teaching (e.g., co-planning and co-teaching, or guided teaching) in general education and special education settings prior to final student teaching.

There is no clear evidence that all candidates across all pathways are engaging in guided fieldwork with a variety of ages, as is appropriate for a credential ranging from PK-12. This is discussed in Standard 3A: *Candidates must have a range of experience that reflects the diversity of age and grade levels, the range of federal disability categories, and the continuum of special education services” and “Fieldwork/Clinical experiences are designed to provide candidates with a developmental set of activities integrated with coursework that extend the candidate’s learning through application of theory to practice with students in California’s education settings.*

Standard 3A also states that: *The minimum amount of district-employed supervisors’ support and guidance must be 5 hours per week.* The team found insufficient evidence that every candidate is receiving the minimum amount of district-employed supervisors’ support and guidance of 5 hours per week as not every candidate has a district-employed supervisor. Also pertinent is the requirement that, for interns, early field experience would take place in experienced mentor classrooms in both general education and special education settings.

Standard 3C: Criteria for School Placements

There is no clear evidence that candidates are engaging in guided fieldwork with a variety of ages, as is appropriate for a credential ranging from PK-12. This is also discussed in Standard 3C: *In addition, these sites should also demonstrate placement of students with disabilities in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), ...and offer the opportunity for candidates to interact with different age groups in both general and special education settings reflecting the continuum of placement options.*

Standard 3D: Criteria for the Selection of District-Employed Supervisors

There is no clear evidence that every candidate is assigned a district-employed support provider for guidance in their fieldwork. This is discussed in Standard 3D: *The matching of candidate and district-employed supervisor must be a collaborative process between the school district and the program.*

There is inconsistent evidence that district-employed mentor teachers, supporting candidates in district classrooms, received orientation training specific to TPA, TPE, and Dominican processes and expectations for providing guided feedback. While the program provided evidence that there are modules for supervisors, the team was only able to interview three mentor teachers who corroborated this point. As noted in Standard 3D, *The program provides district employed supervisors a minimum of 10 hours of initial orientation to the program curriculum, about effective supervision approaches such as cognitive coaching, adult learning theory, and current content-specific pedagogy and instructional practices, as well as to effective supervision approaches such as cognitive coaching and The program provides supervisors with an orientation to the program’s expectations and ensures that supervisors are knowledgeable about the program curriculum and assessments, including the TPEs and TPA model chosen by the program.* As noted above, not all candidates have a district-employed supervisor.

Standard 5: Implementation of a Teaching Performance Assessment – Met with Concerns

Standard 5A, item 4: *The program maintains program level and candidate level TPA data, including but not limited to individual and aggregate results of candidate performance over time. The program documents the use of these data for Commission reporting, accreditation, and program improvement purposes.*

The team found insufficient evidence that aggregate TPA data are systematically reviewed for program improvement. Only TPA passage scores are currently shared and reviewed regularly.

INSTITUTION SUMMARY

Dominican University of California administrators, faculty, and staff are committed to offering high quality educator preparation programs. As a small institution, they can provide individualized support to all of their candidates. Candidates spoke highly of the faculty and staff and frequently spoke about how much they valued the personalized attention and support that they received. Faculty work closely with local school districts and the Marin County Office of Education and are viewed as an important resource for local educational agencies.

In recent years, all of Dominican’s post baccalaureate teacher preparation programs transitioned from face-to-face instruction to online instruction. This has allowed the institution to broaden its reach and serve candidates beyond Marin County and now has candidates across the East Bay. The online delivery, in addition to accepting candidates from Holy Names University when it closed, has led to an enrollment of 115 candidates which is multi-fold compared to previous academic years. Candidates reported that they appreciate the online instruction as they can continue to work and take courses in the evening without needing to commute to Marin. As the institution continues to grow, however, they will need to develop systems to track candidates and to aggregate and disaggregate data in order to evaluate their effectiveness and build a continuous improvement system. Throughout the visit, anecdotal evidence was readily available, but it was difficult to obtain summary data regarding current enrollment by pathway. Due to the small size of the Department of Education, faculty and staff

take on multiple roles to support teacher candidates throughout their programs, but as the programs continue to grow, this model will not be sustainable.

COMMON STANDARDS FINDINGS

Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	Team Finding
Each Commission-approved institution has the infrastructure in place to operate effective educator preparation programs. Within this overall infrastructure:	<i>No response needed</i>
The institution and education unit create and articulate a research-based vision of teaching and learning that fosters coherence among, and is clearly represented in all educator preparation programs. This vision is consistent with preparing educators for California public schools and the effective implementation of California’s adopted standards and curricular frameworks.	Consistently
The institution actively involves faculty, instructional personnel, and relevant constituencies in the organization, coordination, and decision making for all educator preparation programs.	Consistently
The education unit ensures that faculty and instructional personnel regularly and systematically collaborate with colleagues in P-12 settings, college and university units and members of the broader educational community to improve educator preparation.	Consistently
The institution provides the unit with sufficient resources for the effective operation of each educator preparation program, including, but not limited to, coordination, admission, advisement, curriculum, professional development/instruction, field based supervision and clinical experiences.	Inconsistently
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.	Inconsistently
Recruitment and faculty development efforts support hiring and retention of faculty who represent and support diversity and excellence.	Consistently
The institution employs, assigns and retains only qualified persons to teach courses, provide professional development, and supervise field-based and clinical experiences. Qualifications of faculty and other instructional personnel must include, but are not limited to: a) current knowledge of the content; b) knowledge of the current context of public schooling including the California adopted P-12 content standards, frameworks, and accountability systems; c) knowledge of diversity in society, including diverse abilities, culture, language, ethnicity, and gender orientation; and d) demonstration of effective professional practices in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service.	Inconsistently

Common Standard 1: Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation	Team Finding
The education unit monitors a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements.	Consistently

Finding on Common Standard 1: Met with Concerns

Summary of information applicable to the standard

The Dominican University Education Department’s research-based vision for teaching and learning states that candidates will “[l]earn to teach and reach all students in diverse school settings through the lens of social justice.” This vision is clearly represented in all programs as evidenced in interviews with candidates and community partners. During interviews, candidates frequently commented that social justice was embedded across coursework. When asked about the strengths of Dominican, program completers and community partners regularly stated that it was their ability to work with diverse student populations, in particular English learners.

Dominican is viewed as an important partner across schools in Marin County and has a strong reputation. The Marin County Office of Education (MCOE) and local school districts rely on Dominican for professional development and partnerships. As an example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, when candidates were allowed to complete their TPA as part of the induction program, Dominican worked with MCOE to provide professional development for teachers and their mentors, even those who received their preliminary credential from different institutions. This was confirmed across interviews with MCOE administrators and program completers. While there was inconsistent information regarding which programs had active Advisory Boards, interviews with site and district administrators confirmed that faculty regularly collaborate with colleagues in P-12 settings and members of the broader educational community to improve educator preparation. One example of this collaboration is a current project with XR Marin to offer their candidates opportunities to use virtual and augmented reality experiences in their courses and in their fieldwork. Department of Education faculty collaborate with colleagues across the college and university units through various committees such as the Assessment Committee, the Diversity Action Group, and the Core Curriculum Committee.

Dominican offers Multiple Subject, Single Subject, and Education Specialist credential programs administered through the Department of Education in the School of Liberal Arts and Education whose dean is responsible for oversight. Each credential program is led by a program director who is a full-time faculty member. Program directors receive release time; their responsibilities include program curriculum and management, faculty, and student supervision. The Education Department chair organizes the work of the program chairs and acts as a liaison with the dean. Program directors meet at least once each semester with faculty and instructional personnel

teaching in their departments. As confirmed through interviews with faculty and program leadership, program directors also meet monthly with each other and with the dean. The dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Education reports to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and is charged with program development and oversight, supervision, and faculty employment and development, among other responsibilities.

The team did not find consistent evidence that the institution provides the unit with sufficient resources for the effective operation of each educator preparation program, or that the unit leadership has the authority and institutional support required to address the needs of all delivery models and pathways as evidenced in the findings. This finding was also present in the 2016 site visit report. Over the last year, enrollment in credential programs has increased roughly fourfold. Part of the increase in enrollment was due to accepting candidates from Holy Names University (HNU), which closed in spring 2023. Dominican accepted HNU candidates carte blanche and worked with each candidate to develop a plan to meet the credential requirements, some only needed one or two additional courses. In interviews with candidates and program faculty, it appears that not all candidates are receiving the appropriate support from district personnel as required during clinical practice.

The Department of Education recently lost their data manager, and the position had not yet been filled by the time of the site visit. Many of the data manager's duties have fallen on the shoulders of the credential analyst. The increased workload comes at the same time as the department has had a large increase in enrollment as stated above. In addition, the credential analyst is responsible for the Basic Skills Requirement (BSR) and Subject Matter Competency (SMC) review processes. While the department chair recognizes the need to hire new staff to take on some of these responsibilities, the current plan is to review all department staff job descriptions and duties and determine whether the responsibilities can be shared among current staff.

Recruitment and faculty development efforts support hiring and retention of faculty who represent and support diversity and excellence include the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan. There are two new faculty Collective Bargaining Agreements, one for Full-time faculty and one for adjunct faculty. Faculty professional development opportunities are provided through the university. In addition, faculty are provided an annual stipend for professional development including travel and registration fees for conferences. Candidates confirmed that they evaluate faculty each semester, and faculty and administration confirmed that the evaluations are used as part of the tenure and promotion review process.

The Department of Education at Dominican University tracks the progress of teacher credential candidates with a checklist report that outlines all the non-coursework requirements for credential candidates as they move through the program. Each semester, the credential analyst attends *Student Teaching Seminar* courses and reviews outstanding requirements for the candidates in the course. This was confirmed in interviews with the credential analyst and candidates.

Rationale for the Finding

After interviewing institutional and program administrators, faculty, and staff, the review team felt that faculty and staff current workloads were not sustainable.

The review team was unable to confirm that there are sufficient resources for curriculum, specifically as related to: single subject content specific pedagogy; multiple subject pedagogy related to English language arts instruction; and field-based supervision and clinical experiences for all candidates. Additional instructional personnel are needed to address knowledge of the California adopted P-12 content standards and frameworks for all content areas and to provide the required fieldwork support. In addition, there was insufficient evidence that there was institutional support required to address the needs related to the requirements for data management and reporting and developing a system of continuous improvement as defined in Common Standard 4.

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

Finding on Common Standard 2: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard

Dominican's Department of Education ensures that candidates are supported throughout their experience within their credential programs. The consistency and quality of support provided by the programs was identified as a key factor in candidate success in interviews with current candidates and recent program completers. Candidates pointed out the amount of personalized attention, prompt follow-up, and encouragement they received during the

admissions process and how this level of support continued without interruption throughout their time in the program.

The commitment to diversifying the California educator pool is evident in the Department of Education's approach to recruitment, admission, and support for their program candidates. The multiple scholarship opportunities offered by the programs intentionally and explicitly target recruitment of candidates that represent the diversity of California public school children. School and district administrators highlight the impact that Dominican's scholarship opportunities have had on their ability to, not only develop existing paraeducators at their own sites into credentialed teachers, but also to attract and retain individuals who are local to their school communities into the teaching force. A common phrase used to describe Dominican's teacher education programs is that "they walk the talk" of their mission and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Given the historically affluent and homogenous demographic landscape of Marin County, the Department of Education's work in successfully diversifying their candidate pool is truly admirable.

Review of candidate-facing documents and internal program tracking systems evidence that individualized and clear support is offered throughout the program. Current candidates and completers alike referred to checklists, email reminders, and document submission updates as a staple of their experience in the program. Along with program-provided support and information, candidates are also held responsible for tracking their progress throughout the program as a way to ensure they are literate in their credentialing journey. It is evident that all the individuals who make up a students' support team, both staff and faculty alike, are well-versed in how to ensure the candidates are on track with completion of their credential.

If and when candidates struggle, there is an almost immediate (if not anticipatory) response from the program. A portion of monthly department and program meetings is dedicated to candidate progress tracking and updates. Should concerns be raised about a candidate's progress or challenges they are experiencing, all faculty and staff members of the candidate's support team openly discuss a plan for support and development. Candidates who were struggling with placement site challenges spoke to the clear and deliberate advice they received from their faculty and placement team to ensure they could address the challenges themselves, and resulted in a positive outcome. In the rare occasions when further intervention of support is required for a candidate, there is a clear and documented contract that is co-constructed with the candidate to ensure they can meet expectations and progress successfully in the program.

Candidate recruitment and support is a key area in which the Department of Education excels. Interviewees consistently shared how the personalized support offered by the programs was not only compassionate towards every individual's unique circumstance, but also passionate about their holistic development and success.

Common Standard 3: Fieldwork and Clinical Practice	Team Finding
The unit designs and implements a planned sequence of coursework and clinical experiences for candidates to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills to educate and support P-12 students in meeting state-adopted content standards.	Consistently
The unit and its programs offer a high-quality course of study focused on the knowledge and skills expected of beginning educators and grounded in current research on effective practice. Coursework is integrated closely with field experiences to provide candidates with a cohesive and comprehensive program that allows candidates to learn, practice, and demonstrate competencies required of the credential they seek.	Consistently
The unit and all programs collaborate with their partners regarding the criteria and selection of clinical personnel, site-based supervisors and school sites, as appropriate to the program.	Inconsistently
Through site-based work and clinical experiences, programs offered by the unit provide candidates with opportunities to both experience issues of diversity that affect school climate and to effectively implement research-based strategies for improving teaching and student learning.	Consistently
Site-based supervisors must be certified and experienced in teaching the specified content or performing the services authorized by the credential.	Inconsistently
The process and criteria result in the selection of site-based supervisors who provide effective and knowledgeable support for candidates.	Inconsistently
Site-based supervisors are trained in supervision, oriented to the supervisory role, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.	Inconsistently
All programs effectively implement and evaluate fieldwork and clinical practice.	Inconsistently
For each program the unit offers, candidates have significant experience in California public schools with diverse student populations and the opportunity to work with the range of students identified in the program standards.	Inconsistently

Finding on Common Standard 3: Not Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard

The sequential design of the credential courses is intended to establish candidates’ foundational knowledge, which is built upon in pedagogy and classroom practice when candidates move into their focused clinical practice as student teachers or teachers of record. Interviews with candidates and program completers indicated that the curriculum is extremely

practical and built candidates' confidence to work in classrooms. Early field experiences were described as "not simply observations" or assignments in courses by faculty and fieldwork staff, but rather opportunities in which candidates are encouraged to actively participate to strengthen their experiences in classrooms even before they begin their later semesters of clinical practice.

It is clear that the Department of Education leverages their strong, existing relationships with school and district leaders, which includes program completers, to build their pool of clinical practice support personnel. Indeed, the team noted that the unit's ability to intentionally establish and develop long-standing relationships with local community schools as a key strength. School and district administrators referenced the helpful materials, communication, and streamlined processes the programs used to engage their assistance in identifying clinical practice support personnel for their candidates.

While evidence provided by the programs indicates an awareness of support needs for their varying program tracks and candidate populations, there was a notable disparity in the implementation and monitoring of site-based supervision for candidates, particularly those who are serving as teachers of record. Additionally, it was not evident that early clinical experiences required for intern or education specialist credential candidates were supervised.

The Department of Education seeks to prioritize a strong clinical practice experience and practical curriculum for their candidates. The department has a foundational base from which they can leverage their existing relationships and processes to work towards ensuring an even and consistent implementation of all fieldwork and clinical practice standards for each program and its multiple pathways. Addressing the nuances in the differentiated needs of each program pathway's clinical experience standards will help the unit meet all currently listed "inconsistent" standard findings.

Rationale for the Finding

The team was unable to corroborate that portions of this standard are implemented across all multiple subject, single subject, and education specialist program tracks due to interviewing only a small number of site-based supervisors (three mentor teachers in total). Additionally, there is no evidence to support that candidates, especially those serving as teachers of record, have confirmed assigned site-based supervisors which led to a finding of "inconsistently" across the following elements that comprise this Common Standard:

It was not evident that the unit and all programs collaborate with their partners regarding the criteria and selection of clinical personnel for education specialist program candidate mentors and single subject content coaches given that not every candidate has a district-employed supervisor.

While all programs collect formal observation, hours log, and candidate feedback data, it is not clear when and where this data is analyzed to evaluate each programs' fieldwork and clinical practice.

It is evident that candidates in each program have significant experience in California public schools with diverse student populations, however for the Education Specialist program the team was unable to find evidence that candidates have the opportunity to work with the range of students identified in the program standards, specifically in relation to age and grade levels.

Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement	Team Finding
The education unit develops and implements a comprehensive continuous improvement process at both the unit level and within each of its programs that identifies program and unit effectiveness and makes appropriate modifications based on findings.	Not Evidenced
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.	Inconsistently
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.	Not Evidenced
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.	Inconsistently

Finding on Common Standard 4: Not Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard

Based on review of written responses to the Common and Program Standards and based on interviews with a broad range of constituents, it was evident that Dominican’s Department of Education is making efforts to collect data on the experience of candidates in their programs.

Individual program directors are assigned the responsibility to interpret available data on the adequacy of course content and candidate performance, including candidates’ passing rates on state-required tests.

An annual survey of candidates provides data on perceived effectiveness of academic advising, perceived effectiveness of directing teachers and university supervisors, and the overall quality of field experiences. (The completed candidate surveys available to the team did not include respondents representing all three credential programs.) A survey of university supervisors provides data on individuals’ sense of their preparation for their role, including university expectations and on-going communication throughout their experience. The department also surveys identified district-employed supervisors with respect to candidates’ professional preparation. The team did not find aggregated data on the extent to which the university supervisors or district-employed supervisors evaluate candidates.

The program provided samples from 2022 and 2023 of documented reflection by faculty, within one or more credential programs, on candidate performance on identified assignments in particular courses. Such assignments included (for example, within the single subject program) candidate unit plans, practice lessons, lessons using technology, and strategy toolkits. The faculty in each program documented their reflection on implications for course procedures or the design of particular assignments and rubrics in the future.

A graphic representation of Dominican’s annual assessment cycle provided to the team indicated points in each semester where different components of the assessment process were completed. This process includes reflection on anchor assignments within individual courses, as referenced above, as well as a consideration of data on enrollment and passing rates on state-required tests.

The department indicated that advisory groups, in addition to informal professional networking with employers and community partners, provided opportunities to elicit feedback on the quality and extent to which Dominican’s program completers are prepared to enter professional practice. The team heard inconsistent evidence as to the regularity of advisory group meetings over the course of recent years. In any case, the limited minutes available to the team did not provide detailed evidence of analysis of data by specific program.

The team found strong anecdotal evidence that faculty and staff sought to understand the professional and academic strengths or weaknesses of candidates. The team found, further, that there is a strong collaborative spirit within programs and within the Department of Education as a whole, and that there was much routine, informal sharing of impressionistic data. The isolated analysis of data, rather than the systematic analysis of data, was also noted in the 2016 site visit report. Given the nature of an institution with historically smaller number of candidates in its credential programs, informal structures allow for areas of improvement to still be shared; however, the formal structures, systemization, and documentation of these processes as required by this Common Standard are not yet in place.

From all of the above, it was evident to the team that Dominican has in place components of data collection and processing that hold the potential for the development of a robust and comprehensive improvement process at both unit levels and within individual programs.

Written materials made available to the team and extensive subsequent interviews, however, did not provide persuasive evidence of a system currently in place that regularly examines trends in available data over time. Documentation of data collected did not provide to the team evidence of a comprehensive continuous improvement process at the unit and programmatic level that identifies program and unit effectiveness and, in particular, makes appropriate modifications based on findings. Demonstrated *analysis* of data at both unit and program level was extremely limited. For example, analysis of candidate performance on the TPA and RICA available to the team was limited to which candidates had passed. The team found insufficient evidence of using available data, particularly data on the acquisition of candidate competencies, for purposes of systematic improvement of unit operations and the quality of individual programs. There was no program completer data available for the team’s review

through the Commission’s Accreditation Data Dashboard due to lower candidate enrollment numbers in previous academic years.

Rationale for the Finding

While individual programs have documented group reflection on the effectiveness of coursework and on patterns of candidate success on particular assignments, the team found insufficient evidence of a systematic, comprehensive, continuous improvement process currently in place at either the unit or program levels. Some relevant and potentially actionable feedback on program and unit effectiveness is collected from multiple sources. The team found extremely limited evidence, however, of robust and continuous analysis of the data available, or of the systematic use of such data in informing on-going program improvement or unit effectiveness. Aggregated candidate performance on the TPA within and across programs is not documented, analyzed, and utilized effectively for continuous unit and program improvement. These findings mirror the findings of the 2016 site visit team which noted that there was no evidence of a unit-level assessment and evaluation system.

Common Standard 5: Program Impact	Team Finding
The institution ensures that candidates preparing to serve as professional school personnel know and demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting state adopted academic standards. Assessments indicate that candidates meet the Commission adopted competency requirements as specified in the program standards.	Consistently
The unit and its programs evaluate and demonstrate that they are having a positive impact on candidate learning and competence and on teaching and learning in schools that serve California’s students.	Consistently

Finding on Common Standard 5: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard.

Institutional responses to Common and Program Standards indicated, and interviews with relevant constituents subsequently confirmed, that programs within the unit have processes in place to ensure individual candidates preparing to serve as professional school personnel know and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students in meeting state-adopted standards.

The site team’s interview with the credential analyst, among other interviews, and a review of the unit’s Credential Checklist used prior to recommendation, demonstrated that candidates recommended by the institution meet competency requirements specified in the relevant Commission standards for each program. Programs within Dominican’s Department of Education provided evidence of carrying out appropriate interventions for candidates still

struggling to demonstrate all competencies, including evidence in at least one case of needing to withhold recommendation for a candidate unable to meet relevant competencies.

Although the team had a relatively limited number of opportunities to interview employers, those who were available spoke appreciatively of Dominican’s program completers relative to completers of programs at other institutions of higher education. The rigor of completers’ professional preparation at Dominican, their reflective disposition, openness to collaboration, and their practical classroom management skills were four of the qualities that these few employers highlighted.

School and district administrators, including principals, superintendents, and county office personnel, who were available to be interviewed, spoke gratefully of being able to hire program-completers who “understood its unique neighborhoods,” “often...already have established roots in the community,” and who were likely to remain in the area long-term. School and district administrators referred more than once to the collective impact of recent program completers on their professional peers and overall school climate with respect to building awareness of issues surrounding diversity, equity, and social justice.

An administrator representing the Marin County Office of Education (COE) noted that members of Dominican’s Department of Education were active partners in vision-casting and implementing local programs for teacher induction, regularly partnered in the COE’s annual job fair, and had been helpful to the COE in exploring options for hard-to-fill vacancies in special education and in transitional kindergarten. During the pandemic, Dominican teacher education faculty played a key role in equipping K-12 teachers to offer long-distance and/or more digitally-based instruction.

Beginning in 2019 and continuing since then, Dominican University, its Department of Education, and generous donors have partnered to boost the number of teachers of color in Marin County. Scholarships for underrepresented students, with preference given to African American and Latinx candidates, have underwritten tuition costs, as well as expenses for such academic supports as preparation for state-required tests. Scholarship funds at Dominican have supported several Marin-area public school paraprofessionals who wished to advance their education and become credentialed teachers. At least 14 candidates as of December 2022 had benefited from the Teachers of Color scholarship candidates and completed their teaching credentials. Aside from the benefit to these candidates themselves, Dominican faculty noted that having more ethnically and socio-economically diverse candidates has enriched the learning and professional preparation of many of their traditionally more mainstream candidates.

The closing of Holy Names University in spring 2023 has provided a unique one-time opportunity to impact affected candidates pursuing credentials in education, including a number of candidates from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The site team heard from several such candidates who expressed heartfelt gratitude for the blanket agreement that had allowed them to complete their final requirements through Dominican and for the support they had received from the Department of Education. In addition to Dominican’s immediate impact on these

candidates, the closing of Holy Names University has led to new partnerships with schools in the West Contra Costa School District across the bay and the exploration of opportunities for geographically extending Dominican’s impact on K-12 schools.

The team learned that Dominican, as a whole, and students within the Department of Education, have helped to raise educational aspirations for local high school students through their participation in the Dominican Scholarly and Creative Works Conference, and through serving as mentors in a Summer Bridge program. Dominican candidates have also partnered with local educators in developing K-12 curriculum resources focused on local history, and the local history of African Americans in particular, in conjunction with the Marin City Historical and Preservation Society. Within Dominican University itself, members of the Department of Education have offered professional development to their instructional peers.

Faculty in the Department of Education have published professionally on such topics as the experience of underrepresented groups in college, modeling current skills for preservice teachers, the experience of Latinx middle-schoolers, internalized racism, among other topics with the potential for impact far outside the immediate geographic area.

Summing up the impact in the words of district administrators, “We’re proud to partner with [the Dominican faculty and staff] and are really fortunate to have them in our own backyard” and “...we are very lucky. I wish we had more Dominicans near us.”