

**Recommendations by the Accreditation Team and Report of Findings of the
Accreditation Visit for Professional Preparation Programs at
San Mateo County Office of Education**

Professional Services Division

May 2024

Overview of this Report

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

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

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

Program Standards

Programs	Total Program Standards	Met	Met with Concerns	Not Met
Clear Administrative Services Program	5	5	0	0
Preliminary Administrative Services Program	9	8	1	0
Teacher Induction	6	6	0	0

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

- Preparation for the Accreditation Visit
- Preparation of the Institutional Documentation and Evidence
- Selection and Composition of the Accreditation Team
- Intensive Evaluation of Program Data
- Preparation of the Accreditation Team Report

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

Institution: San Mateo County Office of Education

Dates of Visit: April 22-24, 2024

Accreditation Team Recommendation: Accreditation

Previous History of Accreditation Status

Accreditation Reports	Accreditation Status
Date: June 2016	Accreditation

Rationale:

The unanimous recommendation of **Accreditation** was based on a thorough review of all institutional and programmatic information and materials available prior to and during the accreditation site visit including interviews with administrators, faculty, candidates, completers, and local school personnel. The team obtained sufficient and consistent information that led to a high degree of confidence in making overall and programmatic judgments about the professional education unit's operation. The decision pertaining to the accreditation status of the institution was based upon the following:

Preconditions

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

Program Standards

All Program Standards for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credentials, Clear Administrative Services Credentials, and Teacher Induction Programs have been **met** with the exception of Standard 8 of the Preliminary Administrative Services Credentials Program which has been **met with concerns**.

Common Standards

All Common Standards have been **met**.

Overall Recommendation

Based on the fact that the team found that all standards for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential, Clear Administrative Services Credential, and Teacher Induction Programs have been met with the exception of Standard 8 of the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential Program which has been met with concerns, the team recommends **Accreditation**.

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

Teacher Induction
Preliminary Administrative Services Credential
Clear Administrative Services Credential

In addition, staff recommends that:

- The institution's response to the preconditions be accepted.
 - San Mateo County Office of Education be permitted to propose new educator preparation programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
 - San Mateo County Office of Education continue in its assigned cohort on the schedule of accreditation activities, subject to the continuation of the present schedule of accreditation activities by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.
- Accreditation Team

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Common Standards:

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Staff to the Visit:

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Documents Reviewed

Common Standards Submission
Program Review Submission
Common Standards Addendum
Program Review Addendum
Course Syllabi and Course of Study
Candidate Advisement Materials
Accreditation Website
Faculty Vitae
Candidate Files
Mentor Feedback
Portfolio Examples

Assessment Materials
Candidate Handbooks
Sinclair Research Group Survey Results
Performance Expectation Materials
Precondition Responses
Individual Learning Group Plans
Performance Assessment Results and
Analysis
Examination Results
Accreditation Data Dashboard

Interviews Conducted

Constituencies	TOTAL
Candidates	72
Completers	37
Employers	18
Institutional Administration	4
Program Coordinators	5
Faculty	4
Mentors	29
Field Supervisors	6
Credential Analysts and Staff	4
Advisory Board Members	10
TOTAL	189

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

Background Information

San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) consists of 23 school districts, 14 charter schools, and seven county-run special education, juvenile court, and community schools. Established in 1861, SMCOE serves nearly 85,000 students in the San Francisco Bay Area. SMCOE is home to a population of pupils in which 34% represent unduplicated populations, 39% are Hispanic/Latinx, 24% are white, 18% are Asian, and 8% are multiracial.

Booming population growth and demographic diversity have characterized the area in recent decades. Families from all parts of the world are attracted to the local climate, employment opportunities in Silicon Valley, and nearby institutions of higher education. SMCOE's role is to ensure that all students within its borders are enrolled in schools that meet state and local requirements. Their mission and vision include inspiring students, investing in teachers, invigorating leaders, and involving communities and families to ensure excellence and equity in education for every student and every teacher in every school. SMCOE aims to put their values into practice through the daily core practices of having a growth mindset, being trauma-informed, and exhibiting cultural humility that lead to sustainability and accountability.

Education Unit

San Mateo County Office of Education is a local education agency that sponsors a teacher induction program as well as Preliminary and Clear Administrative Services Credential (PASC and CASC) programs. The unit serves aspiring administrators as well as novice teachers and administrators from within the county's boundaries and beyond. The unit is housed within the educational services department and boasts of tight alignment to SMCOE's strategic plan. The day-to-day operations of the programs are run by the Teacher and Administrator Development Team, or TAD for short. TAD is staffed by a team of ten, nine of which manage the operations of the three programs accredited by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. An executive director is supported by five coordinators and three administrative assistants who all report directly to her. Together, the coordinators monitor candidate progress, design mentor and coach training, communicate with all constituents, collaborate with local leaders, and work with the administrative assistants to recommend qualified program completers for their preliminary and clear credentials. The PASC program has the additional support of guest speakers and local experts who visit class sessions to instruct candidates. SMCOE also serves CASC candidates from Santa Cruz County of Education. Santa Cruz COE employs their own program manager who is responsible for coach selection and training. TAD staff from SMCOE meet regularly with the Santa Cruz COE program manager, monitors the program, and ultimately recommends Santa Cruz COE CASC candidates for the Clear Administrative Services Credential. Last year, in 2022-23, SMCOE recommended four candidates for preliminary administrative services credentials, 45 clear administrative services credentials, and 110 clear teaching credentials. Currently, for the 2023-24 academic year, the SMCOE PASC program is serving 16 candidates, CASC has 86 candidates enrolled in three cohorts (37 first year SMCOE, 26 second year SMCOE, and 23 Santa Cruz COE candidates), and the induction program is supporting 207 candidates (105 first year, 88 second year, and 14 ECO). These candidates are supported by four PASC mentors, 36 CASC coaches, and 87 teacher induction mentors.

Table 1: Enrollment and Completion Data

Program Name	Number of Program Completers (2022-23)	Number of Candidates Enrolled (2023-24)
Clear Administrative Services Credential	45	56
Preliminary Administrative Services Credential	11	16
Teacher Induction	110	207

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.

PRECONDITIONS FINDINGS

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

PROGRAM REPORTS

Preliminary Administrative Services Credential

Program Design

The Teacher and Administrator Development (TAD) team at the San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) offers the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential (PASC) program and the Clear Administrative Services Credential (CASC) program. These programs are designed to support candidates in their journey toward credentialing and professional development as an administrator. There are two members of the TAD team that oversee the PASC program, the executive director and the PASC coordinator. Candidates in the PASC program are paired with fieldwork supervisors who are matched based on similarities in philosophy and learning style. The matching process also takes into account the particular job role that each candidate might be seeking in the future. They spend eight full days observing their fieldwork supervisor at their school site, gaining valuable insights from administrators who have cleared their credentials and have at least three years of experience in urban educational settings. These settings ensure that candidates have diverse experiences in culture, ethnicity, and language. The program starts mid-year in February for a 13-month accelerated course, to provide ample opportunities for job-embedded practice. This not only offers a pathway to other regional programs but also enriches and deepens learning experiences. All 15 courses are conducted in person, supplemented by additional support sessions via technology.

The SMCOE PASC program caters to the entire county, including public, private, and parochial schools. A dedicated four-person team oversees the design, delivery, and monitoring of both California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) accredited administrative services programs. Leadership Administrator Services, led by the executive director and coordinator, spearheads these efforts. Regular communication is maintained with the Associate Superintendent of the Educational Services Division through weekly meetings. A faculty advisor within the Leadership Administrator Services department collaborates with the PASC team on program review, course alignment, assessment revision, and recruitment of guest instructors. Fieldwork supervisors maintain frequent contact with program leadership and candidates through various channels, including meetings, emails, informal conversations, and phone calls, as confirmed by candidate and coach interviews. Candidates attest to the responsiveness and supportiveness of program leadership, confidence in reaching out to program leadership, and coaches for assistance or additional support. Additionally, each PASC program candidate is assigned a faculty advisor who provides just-in-time support and conducts four structured one-on-one meetings annually. These advisors assist candidates in navigating fieldwork experiences and provide guidance on various aspects of the program.

Course of Study (Curriculum and Field Experience)

The coursework within the PASC program spans from PASC 101 to PASC 114 which consists of five to ten sessions each held in person at the SMCOE. Additionally, there is a two- to four-hour CalAPA technology assisted support option available. Fieldwork mirrors the model utilized by the Teacher's College of San Joaquin, focusing on the complex setting of a school and the role of a school principal as the central component of candidate learning. Program leadership meticulously matches candidates with fieldwork supervisors, who may be retired administrators, employed administrators, or county office staff members. While fieldwork typically occurs on the candidate's home site, an alternative supervisor is assigned if the principal has less than three years of experience in the district.

Course content centers on the six California Administrator Performance Expectations (CAPEs), with particular emphasis on the program's three focuses of the required CAPEs: equity and access, professional learning communities, and instructional leadership. Guest speakers enrich the coursework experience, providing real-life examples of on-the-job problem solving and inspiring candidates. The program underscores the role of administrators as agents of change and advocates for anti-racism, with a specific focus on equity for marginalized student groups. Data-driven scenarios and simulations address the needs of English learners, students with disabilities, Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Pacific Islander, and foster youth populations. Reflection and discussion on equity are integrated into coursework through CAPE reflections and focused discussions, garnering appreciation from program completers and current participants. Testimonials from candidates highlight the transformative impact of the program, with one student noting how it has prompted reflection on biases and altered their perspective on student interactions. Document reviews and interviews with various program constituencies affirm the quality and effectiveness of the program's design, emphasizing its candidate-centered approach, focus on self-reflection, and community building.

The cohort model fosters meaningful relationships and strong camaraderie among participants, cultivating collaboration and partnership. Fieldwork experiences are strategically positioned to support reflection and hands-on learning, with candidates attending eight shadow days during release time or school breaks. The employers appreciate the communication process and the opportunity to offer input. One employer noted, "the triad meetings are a wonderful opportunity to discuss the program deliverables and the discussions are so helpful." This sentiment was echoed by others in the employer group interviewed.

Many candidates express enthusiasm for this program, recognizing its profound impact on their development as administrators. Overall, satisfaction with the program is high, with completers attributing their current success directly to the program's focus and structure. One completer indicated that her program was "so meaningful" that it became a key factor in applying to the CASC program.

Assessment of Candidates

Throughout the program, candidates undergo regular assessments aligned with the California Administrator Performance Expectations (CAPE). These assessments often involve scenario-

based tasks or draw upon real data and problems of practice from candidates' school sites. Observational assessments occur within learning hubs, where weekly assignments serve as extensions of current courses, supported by faculty advisors. Candidates engage in self-assessment of their CAPE competencies twice during the program, initially at the program's onset and again upon completion. These self-assessments inform personalized growth plans, tailored to each candidate's needs.

The California Administrator Performance Assessment (CalAPA) is integrated into the program, with coursework designed to prepare candidates for submission and success. Course content is aligned to the three cycles and candidates are able to practice using new skills during class sessions. Candidates are encouraged to attend additional workshop-style support sessions to assist them in navigating the CalAPA cycles. Despite the challenges of balancing coursework, professional responsibilities, and personal commitments, candidates credit the support of program leadership and colleagues for their success in passing all three cycles of the CalAPA. Many candidates appreciated the introduction to the CalAPA, finding it instrumental in understanding the assessment's expectations and overarching purpose. However, a majority of candidates in 2022-2023 did not complete coursework and/or either did not attempt or pass all three cycles by the expected completion date, hindering them from being recommended for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential. Candidates from this cohort articulated that they are not currently seeking administrative positions and will complete their work once they plan to do so. Some program completers and current candidates expressed a desire for additional support and suggested in-class opportunities for step-by-step practice and feedback in order to chunk the learning as well as providing other learning modalities such as video tutorials and graphic organizers to facilitate comprehension and retention. Although content was rich for the topic of each cycle, support for the logistical parts of preparing and completing the CalAPA were missing, such as tips on writing and using the templates, and how to use the ePortfolio and annotation tool on the examination agency's website. Candidates also expressed a desire for working collaboratively to read each other's work and offer feedback related to the rubrics. For candidates who encounter difficulties in passing a cycle, individualized plans are devised to facilitate resubmission and eventual success.

Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, faculty, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential except for the following:

Standard 8: Guidance, Assistance, and Feedback – Met with Concerns

Reviewers did not see evidence that the institution has systematically implemented the CalAPA into the program design such that all staff providing instruction or support to candidates are knowledgeable about the assessment cycles, rubrics, and scoring. Interviews indicated that not all program staff understand how to appropriately prepare candidates for the assessment. As a result, various constituencies were unclear which staff members are responsible for implementing, supporting, and documenting the processes of the CalAPA.

Clear Administrative Services Credential

Program Design

The Clear Administrative Services Credential (CASC) program in the San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) partners with Santa Cruz County Office of Education (SCCOE) to offer a cohort to that region with recommendation by SMCOE. Two members of SMCOE's Teacher and Administrator Development (TAD) team directly oversee the program, the executive director and the CASC coordinator. Cohorts commence a two-year program in mid-February with approximately 30 participants and provide candidates with exposure to rich learning experiences. Two cohorts run concurrently at the SMCOE, with one cohort being placed at the SCCOE. Candidates are matched with a coach within 30 days of enrollment who supports them through their two-year program. Coaches and candidates work together 40 hours per year which includes observations of education leaders in action. All sites are urban educational settings in the greater San Francisco Bay Area and Santa Cruz County and assure that candidates will have experiences that are diverse in culture, ethnicity, and language.

The SMCOE CASC program is available to eligible candidates in the entire region including public, private, and parochial schools. SMCOE serves SCCOE CASC candidates. SCCOE employs a CASC program coordinator who is responsible for coach selection and training of coaches as well as the oversight of candidates. SMCOE coordinates a ten-person team responsible for the design, delivery, and monitoring of its Commission-accredited CASC program which is led by an executive director and two coordinators – one coordinator for the SMCOE CASC program and one for the SCCOE CASC program. The Associate Superintendent of the Educational Services Division of SMCOE maintains regular communication with the Teacher and Administrator Development (TAD) team through weekly meetings. In interviews with CASC leadership from both counties, it was evident that SCCOE communicates regularly via Zoom or email with the SMCOE to discuss enrollment, how the cohort is progressing and issues of misalignment. Coaches reported frequent contact with program leadership and candidates through regular meetings, emails, informal conversations, and phone calls. This was confirmed through candidate and coach interviews. Current candidates verified that program leadership were very attentive and responsive to their requests for assistance and provided support in problem solving on issues related to mentorship and personal issues impacting coursework. Both current and past candidates shared that they felt comfortable reaching out to program leadership and coaches to answer questions or request additional support.

The coaching process serves as a vital channel for on-the-job learning, reflection, and practical application. In the 2022-2023 academic year, a total of 28 coaches, comprising retired administrators, employed administrators, and county office staff, were engaged in this role. These coaches undergo training sessions during onboarding and throughout the year, which includes best practices for mentoring from Elena Aguilar's The Art of Coaching. To facilitate coaching effectiveness, resources are provided through the Mentor Homepage document. This document encompasses a handbook, sample forms, pacing guides, portfolio support materials, and goal-setting resources. Additionally, a Reflection Toolkit is available to assist coaches in guiding candidates through regular reflection following each professional learning session and

throughout the portfolio development process. Candidates have emphasized the critical importance of their relationship with their coach in acquiring practical administrative skills. They have expressed appreciation for the valuable feedback received, noting its significant role in their growth and development as administrators.

Course of Study (Mentor/Coaching System)

The SMCOE Clear Administrative Services Program (CASC) is comprised of three main components: individual coaching, professional learning, and inquiry cycles that culminate in learning demonstrated through a digital portfolio presentation. Candidates' efforts are centered around their individual professional goals, which are established through an initial self-assessment and a review of the California Professional Standards for Educational Leadership (CPSEL). All coursework directly addresses the specific needs of the candidate's school campus. The culmination of the program is the portfolio presentation, which showcases leadership practices aligned with each of the six CPSELs. Each year, candidates set three goals as part of their Individual Induction Plan (called Individual Leadership Growth Plan (ILGP) in SMCOE's program), focusing on leadership for equity, theory of action, and alignment with district/organization goals. Candidates' goals are identified through their initial self-assessment and CPSEL review. Throughout the year, coaches and activities included in professional learning sessions guide candidates through multiple reflection points so they can identify and articulate their growth. Completers of the CASC program noted in interviews that the self-assessment process significantly impacts their learning journey, informing goal setting for their ILGP and guiding the focus of their portfolio. One candidate stated, "I really enjoyed the readings which helped me reflect. I've passed them on and find myself talking to others about them. They've helped me grow as an educator." Another candidate shared that "the reflection required by the program made me take time to slow down and look at the biases I bring into my leadership." A review of the Commission's Accreditation Data Dashboard confirms these sentiments with 92% of completers agreeing that the program was effective or very effective at supporting them with developing the skills and tools they needed to become an educational leader.

The program emphasizes the crucial role of administrators as agents of change and advocates for anti-racism, with a focus on fostering equity for the students they serve. In a 2022-2023 candidate survey, 83.3% of candidates said that the CASC program focuses on equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for all. Candidates corroborated this in interviews expressing that this emphasis is integrated into their CASC experience through CPSEL reflections and focused discussions on equity within their school environment. Many program completers and current participants conveyed their appreciation for the inclusion of this focus in their development. For instance, one current student, in only her third month of the program, shared how her perspective on equity has prompted her to reflect on biases and adopt a new lens when interacting with students. She noted that this shift has already significantly influenced her work and interactions with others. Document reviews and interviews with program coordinators, coaches, candidates, and employers have confirmed the overall quality and effectiveness of the program's design. The program is centered around the candidate, placing a strong emphasis on self-reflection and community building. Candidates reported that early in the program, they were encouraged to reflect on their own identities to better understand their potential as

future leaders. Candidates also expressed appreciation for the requirement of an empathy interview at the beginning of the program, which allowed them to establish a deeper connection with their coach. One candidate mentioned that this interview provided valuable insights into the purpose and beliefs of administrators, which in turn, offered context for their actions during the required eight days of shadowing their coach. 76% of program completers said that a supportive climate of professional community was created in their CASC program. This was corroborated by candidates who expressed the importance of the community that is built within their cohort. Many candidates shared that these relationships were a critical aspect that contributed to their success. Overall, candidates confirmed their satisfaction with the program during interviews, with completers attributing their success at their workplace on site directly to the program's focus.

Assessment of Candidates

The Clear Administrative Services Credential (CASC) program employs four types of candidate assessments to evaluate program competencies: the CPSEL Self-Assessment, completed three times during the program; the ILGP, used for goal setting and reflection on all six CPSELS program surveys; and a final CPSEL portfolio. The self-assessment serves as a driver for goal setting within the ILGP, with a focus on three CPSEL each year. Survey data, collected through the external evaluator, Sinclair Research Group, is meticulously analyzed and utilized for program improvement through weekly meetings with the executive director and program coordinators. Through this process, the program maintains the flexibility to intentionally redesign or pivot, as dictated by data or candidate engagement/disengagement. Candidates have acknowledged the direct implementation of improvements based on their feedback, evidencing the program's responsiveness to candidate needs. The portfolio represents the culminating activity, enabling candidates to present their work and growth over the two-year program, with each CPSEL serving as a basis for reflection and demonstration. Coaches work with CASC program leadership to review portfolios and determine if they are eligible for recommendation of the clear credential. Candidates present their portfolios to a panel comprised of SMCOE and SCCOE coordinators and mentors. Candidates who are not on track to meet the passing standard are identified and contacted by program leadership as soon as possible and are offered a support system individualized to meet their circumstance. Once program leaders verify that candidates have met all induction requirements, candidate names are forwarded to the credential analyst and ultimately recommended for their clear credential.

Findings on Standards

After review of the institutional report, supporting documentation, the completion of interviews with candidates, completers, employers, and supervising practitioners, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the Clear Administrative Services Credential.

Teacher Induction

Program Design

The San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) is the lead agency for the San Mateo County consortium that serves over 23 public districts across San Mateo County as well as 29 individual private/parochial or charter school programs. The SMCOE induction team consists of the Teacher and Administrator Development (TAD) executive director, three coordinators, and three administrative assistants. The director oversees the unit, while the three coordinators facilitate the program by working with districts, mentors, candidates, and the advisory group.

The induction team collaborates to provide support for candidates and mentors across both general education and special education job assignments. Candidates indicated that they receive the proper support needed to become a successful beginning teacher. Verified by interviews, the program assigns a lead coordinator to facilitate and support all aspects of the mentoring system, including assisting the mentor with any additional resources necessary to successfully support their candidate. Interviews confirmed both the mentors and the candidates in the program consistently emphasized the availability, responsiveness, and support provided by leadership and that all constituency groups highly value the members of the leadership team. A seasoned mentor shared a “glowing” review, praising the “stellar” communication, comprehensive support for mentors and candidates, and an “overall fantastic experience with the program.”

The induction mentor plays a foundational role in the overall system of support for the candidate, as the mentors are the primary support to candidates and the connection to district administrations. Selection of a mentor is a critical component of SMCOE’s program delivery. Potential mentors apply for the role via EdJoin and are interviewed by program leadership. SMCOE and individual district leaders work together to confirm eligibility and to formalize the mentor/candidate pairings. Verified by mentor interviews, SMCOE has a combination of SMCOE employed mentors, matched by program leadership and onsite district-employed mentors, matched by district partners. Program documentation and interviews confirmed that the induction leadership team consults with district leaders when matching district-employed mentors. For all mentors, the program seeks to recruit and select individuals who not only serve as exemplary professional role models but also fully support a commitment to equity-centered schools and classrooms. A first-year mentor appreciated how the “focus on equity comes through the program.”

A document review confirmed that SMCOE’s mentor training prioritizes equity and utilizes research-based strategies to facilitate growth and development of their mentors. The training includes effective mentoring strategies based on engaging in direct practice with coaching models such as the [Art of Coaching](#) by Elena Aguilar, the National Equity Project, and Cognitive Coaching. The mentor training explores how personal identity shapes a mentor’s perspective, utilizing resources grounded in anti-bias education. Reviewers confirmed that new mentors are trained through three initial new mentor training seminars focused on the mentor’s role and responsibilities, building rapport and trust, coaching stances, and conversations, and examining personal beliefs to support effective partnerships. Interviews confirmed mentors found these

seminars extremely valuable, especially when navigating challenging conversations with their mentees. Each year all mentors then continue their learning through attending six mentor seminars. Mentors confirmed that the emphasis on equity is consistently conveyed through ongoing mentor sessions. One mentor shared that the training “provided insights into navigating issues of social justice and positionality, considering how our backgrounds influence our relationship with mentees and how their backgrounds affect their relationships with school.” The mentor training focuses on building capacity as a professional educator through continual reflection and learning. Mentor effectiveness is further underscored by program completers. A review of the Commission’s Accreditation Data Dashboard confirms that 91% of teacher induction program completers found their mentor feedback as helpful or very helpful in improving their instructional practices.

The program assesses the quality of the induction services through constituent input. The SMCOE employs the Sinclair Research Group to administer two surveys per year to gather feedback from candidates and mentors on the effectiveness of the program. Interviews confirmed that candidates attending professional learnings and mentors present for seminars are asked to complete session evaluations to assess effectiveness and needs. These survey data support the program in modifying future seminar offerings. In addition, the Teacher and Administrator Development (TAD) advisory is held two times a year. Invitations are sent to the advisory board group and program leadership confirmed that for this current school year, the teacher induction program held a program specific advisory and encouraged all members of the induction system, including district partners to attend. Leadership noted that while attendance from district partners was minimal, site administrators regularly acknowledge that opportunities for feedback are accessible through mentors. Candidates, mentors, and district partners confirmed that program leadership is accessible for informal feedback to support in all aspects of the program.

The 2022-23 mid-year surveys, analyzed by Sinclair Research Group, indicated that candidates and mentors agree that SMCOE’s program design promotes mentor skill and effectiveness. Survey responses included sentiments such as: “My mentor demonstrates the ability, willingness and flexibility to meet my support needs;” “My mentor understands this program, its process, documents, and the requirements for clearing my credential;” “My mentor provides timely support that addresses my immediate needs;” and, “My mentor works with me on my ILP, my plans for professional learning, and helps me implement these plans.”

The induction leadership team reviews the Sinclair data to make program improvements, specifically modifying program requirements and the Individual Learning Plan (ILP). Mentors shared that they have observed various “iterations” of the ILP aimed at incorporating mentor feedback to “streamline” the process.

Course of Study (Mentor System)

A review of SMCOE’s program sequence shows that the candidates’ induction participation begins with orientation. Candidates confirmed that the orientation provides a comprehensive overview of the program and its requirements. The program calls for a total of four hours of candidate support each month, documented on the system of support log, which includes

support provided by the mentor as well as instructional coaches. Candidates, mentors, and site administrators confirmed that in addition to mentor support, candidates are supported by instructional coaches that are assigned to each school site. The mentors play a critical role in supporting candidates to develop and complete their Individual Learning Plan (ILP) that chronicles their participation in the induction program. Review of programmatic materials confirmed that the ILP consists of two inquiry cycles that are guided by student learning and teaching practice. Following a self-assessment on the six California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTPs), candidates use the CSTP to inform the development of ILP goals, which are collaboratively developed among the candidate, mentor, and site administrator. There are several possible data sources candidates may use to inform their ILP and CSTP focused goals such as observations of colleagues/veteran teachers and analysis of student work. The SMCOE teacher induction program offers flexible prompts that guide candidates to analyze evidence of student learning and encourages reflection on student-centered practices that challenge systems perpetuating racism and bias. The program requires professional learning to support the progress of candidates' professional goals as stated in their ILPs. Some of the professional learning required is offered through the SMCOE, while other hours can come from observations of colleagues, district offerings, conferences, college courses, or other opportunities, as approved by the program.

During interviews, candidates shared that the inquiry process was “enlightening.” One completer of the program stated that they “enjoyed the ILP and doing metacognition during the program so much that [they are] still using it as [their] ‘continuous learning plan’ each year.” This sentiment is reflected in the completer survey results posted on the Commission’s Accreditation Data Dashboard with 81.8% of completers agreeing that their ILP goals were strongly aligned to candidate professional growth goals, teaching context, and progress toward mastery of the CSTPs. Many candidates appreciated the flexibility in deadlines, as well as opportunities for choice in professional learning options and reflection assignments. Some candidates shared that the professional development opportunities were very personalized, with a variety of options and learning formats to choose from, while other candidates expressed a desire for more targeted offerings, including opportunities to attend sessions with individuals holding similar credentials and teaching at the same grade levels. Candidates found the Padlets shared at professional learning seminars to be highly valuable for accessing information and engaging in meaningful learning experiences.

Assessment of Candidates

A review of program documents shows that candidate growth toward mastery of the CSTP is measured through a variety of formative assessments throughout the inquiry cycles. Mentors work closely with candidates to monitor progress on the ILP checkpoints and communicate with the induction leadership team if a candidate is not making successful progress. Mentor interviews confirmed that the induction leadership team “jumps in” to offer support to candidates if needed. Support examples included sharing feedback and resources with mentors, working directly with a candidate who needed additional support, and candidate observations. Program leadership also shared that they are willing to work directly with candidates who need additional support by offering “whatever is needed” to assist candidates throughout the inquiry

cycle. Candidates shared in interviews that program leads were always available, offering individualized options when needed. Document review and the induction leadership verified that the ILP checkpoint assignments are submitted to Canvas and monitored by program leadership on a spreadsheet throughout the year. Program leads provide personalized qualitative feedback on areas of strength and growth for each candidate. Candidate interviews confirmed that feedback was “quick,” and one candidate shared that they appreciated the “feedback and accolades about how [they were] doing.”

Program leaders and support staff verified the process for the recommendation of the clear credential includes ensuring candidates have met all program requirements through thorough review of their ILP, including meeting their professional learning requirements. Program leaders verify that candidates have met all induction requirements before candidate names are forwarded to the credential analyst and ultimately recommended for their clear credential.

Findings on Standards

After review of all available information including interviews with candidates, program completers, program personnel, mentors, and other constituencies, the team determined that all program standards are **met** for the San Mateo County Office of Education Teacher Induction Program.

INSTITUTION SUMMARY

The San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE) embraces their mission “to support excellence and equity in every school and every classroom every day” throughout all their programs. In the Teacher and Administrator Development (TAD) team, professional development is grounded in discussions of equity throughout all programs that include the teacher induction, Preliminary Administrative Services Credential (PASC), and the Clear Administrative Services Credential (CASC) programs. Collaboration within TAD allows the unit to ensure that there is clarity and focus that is united. Having this singular vision has allowed the SMCOE to reflect continually on their practices and to move forward with their goal of diversification of their workforce. The SMCOE considers the communities that they serve through an equity index; they are able to provide support according to varying needs of the communities and districts with which they partner. Reviewers confirmed that candidates are experiencing a well-organized, individualized, and integrated preparation experience and that the programs are highly valued by all participants and partners.

The unit has demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement. Through recent feedback from candidates in the PASC program, the unit became aware of and began to revise the support for CalAPA cycles for its current cohorts. To further support candidates, the visiting team recommends special attention to PASC Program Standard 8 so that all PASC staff are knowledgeable about the APA cycles, rubrics, and scoring, and how they can appropriately prepare candidates for the assessment, including remediation when needed. The strength of SMCOE is its strong commitment to equity and collaboration, which is seen throughout the unit. Reviewers found evidence, particularly through interviews with program staff, mentors, and coaches, that the TAD team functions as a cohesive unit. While each program

manager/coordinator is assigned to a specific program, they support one another's programs regularly. Interviews with candidates indicated that the unit provided and allowed for capacity building from one program to the other. All constituencies expressed that the leadership team intentionally embeds structures into each program to promote the development of robust learning communities.

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.	Consistently
The Unit Leadership has the authority and institutional support required to address the needs of all educator preparation programs and considers the interests of each program within the institution.	Consistently
Recruitment and faculty development efforts support hiring and retention of faculty who represent and support diversity and excellence.	Consistently

coordinators indicated the data collected from participants is intended to lead to changes in their individual credentialing programs as evidenced by changes in the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for teacher induction and the support for the CalAPA for PASC. The effectiveness of creating an equitable environment in the classroom can be captured by one candidate who indicated “the exercises and the assignments taught me how to look at my students with a different lens.”

Members of the superintendent’s cabinet indicated that the SMCOE provides sufficient resources for the effective operation of each educator preparation program based on the alignment of the individual programs to the strategic plan. Interviews confirmed that the collaboration between the TAD executive director and the associate superintendents, administrative services division, and educational services division is ongoing and ensures that all TAD programs are supported in the areas of growth, improvement, and fiscal support.

Reviewers found evidence, in the form of calendars and meeting minutes, that the unit regularly and systematically collaborates with various colleagues in the P-12 and higher educational systems. Evident throughout the interviews and examination of documents, unit leadership and the TAD team are dedicated to providing “a just and equitable society” through their continuing support of county schools. SMCOE leadership has formalized their commitment to this goal by developing a strategic plan that drives all county initiatives and programming. An equity index is used to determine the needs of each partner district so that the SMCOE can provide the appropriate targeted services and support. The collaboration within and outside the unit is evident in all of their work. The unit functions as a team, continually working together to “create equitable and inclusive communities for all students.”

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

Common Standard 2: Candidate Recruitment and Support	Team Finding
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:

As a result of a comprehensive review of the documents and the interviews with current candidates and past candidates across all three programs, as well as mentors, field supervisors, and school site support personnel, it was determined that admission and tracking of candidates is clearly articulated and anchored to multiple measures. Unit leadership work to personalize each program in a way that has resulted in a comprehensive and well-integrated educator preparation program.

Interviews substantiated the commitment of the SMCOE to support candidates’ pursuit of their desired program outcomes, unit wide. Program memorandums of understanding (MOUs) are specific in terms of program expectations, and the role and function of each constituent group. In the Preliminary Administrative Services Credential (PASC) program, for example, the MOU clarifies the importance of assisting a candidate in self-reflection on their fieldwork and the program has developed an effective tool for capturing those reflections in a manner that is specific, time-bound, and CAPE-focused. Teacher induction candidate interviews confirm similar clarity in the MOUs they sign.

In the Clear Administrative Services Credential (CASC) program, the handbook offers comprehensive guidance for navigating the program, leading up to the credential recommendation. Interviews with current CASC candidates and completers of the program further validated the efficacy of program execution, as delineated in the written evidence reviewed by the accreditation team. Across all three programs, candidates, past and present, expressed satisfaction with the qualifications and commitment of staff in supporting roles, including program staff, mentors, supervisors, and coaches. In the CASC program the coaching model is exemplary in terms of the structure and support available to the candidates. The coaches who were interviewed are qualified and appear to be vetted by the program to ensure that their skill sets matched the expectations of the program. The CASC coaches applauded the program structure and provided feedback such as, “I love the ‘aha’ moments when candidates see their own growth”; “the logs are critical to help the candidate measure and self-reflect on their own growth”; and “I have watched my candidates come from being doers to leaders.”

Throughout the program there was direct evidence in the course work, and especially in the assessments designed to monitor candidate progress, that equity and social justice were

important themes that are emphasized across all programs. Candidate interviews across all three programs captured the essence of how important this focus is to candidates and how relevant it is to their daily work. Program materials provided clear evidence that expectations are communicated to personnel responsible for candidate advising, fieldwork placement, and the support systems aimed at fostering candidate success. Lastly, documents demonstrate evidence of the processes the unit uses to identify and provide support to candidates who need additional support. Candidates interviewed from all three programs clearly articulated that they felt very supported and knew they could reach out to program staff for support if they ever needed additional assistance. The coaches in the CASC program and the mentors in the teacher induction program were especially identified as being exceptional support personnel.

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

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

Finding on Common Standard 3: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard:

The commitment to designing a high-quality course of study across all three educator preparation programs is evident. Many of the candidates in the CASC program stated that they were drawn to the program because of their experience in PASC. Candidates affirmed that both programs consistently utilize the same structures to implement program standards. Programmatic materials reflect a commitment to teaching candidates how to implement research-based strategies in their leadership to improve both teaching and learning for the students they impact on school sites. Coursework is integrated, blending theory and practice with field experiences, which provides a rich experience for candidates as reflected in the candidate interviews across all three programs. Self-reflection exercises are intentionally designed to promote an equity focus through an equity lens that is intentionally embedded into all programs in the unit. The equity and diversity training of staff, mentors, fieldwork supervisors, and employers is comprehensive. Interviews confirm that the program leadership is successful in their intent to design training modules and structures that make an impact on mindsets in the field, as to the importance of understanding the critical need for equitable leadership in education.

The documents, abundance of tools presented on the website, and interviews substantiated the impressive qualifications of all site supervisors, coaches, and mentors. In the teacher induction program, the individual learning plan (ILP) was designed to engage candidates in robust inquiry around addressing the needs of diverse groups of students. Mentors expressed the program’s positive impact on candidate mastery of standards and that the ILP was a critical tool to promote mastery.

The PASC program has as its centerpiece an in-depth fieldwork experience that is anchored to a variety of observations at the school site and in the community. Interviews with current candidates and completers indicated that they see value in these experiences and that they are an integral component to program outcomes. Current PASC candidates offered feedback about the “angst” they were feeling regarding the CalAPA and the lack of connection to PASC coursework. As indicated in the PASC section of this report, their feedback suggested that there is an opportunity for the program staff to more closely link the CalAPA cycle work to the coursework, since the candidates find the coursework so useful.

CASC program candidates and completers are appreciative of their experience and particularly pleased with their coaches and their level of support provided. Coaches shared how rewarding the coaching experiences have been both professionally and personally. One coach said: “As a coach I am honing my own skills and learning so much from my candidates.” The CASC candidates indicated that the focus on equity has been very effective.

Candidates across the unit indicated that they value the learning community they have formed with their cohorts and fellow candidates and that the focus on equity has taught them how to create healthy school climates. Across all three programs, the documents reviewed, and interviews conducted by the accreditation team emphasized the foundational importance of research-based practices and opportunities to experience issues around diversity. The coursework and field experiences are sequenced in such a way as to help candidates not only master state standards but to develop habits to promote lifelong learning.

Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement	Team Finding
The education unit develops and implements a comprehensive continuous improvement process at both the unit level and within each of its programs that identifies program and unit effectiveness and makes appropriate modifications based on findings.	Consistently
The education unit and its programs regularly assess their effectiveness in relation to the course of study offered, fieldwork and clinical practice, and support services for candidates.	Consistently
Both the unit and its programs regularly and systematically collect, analyze, and use candidate and program completer data as well as data reflecting the effectiveness of unit operations to improve programs and their services.	Consistently
The continuous improvement process includes multiple sources of data including 1) the extent to which candidates are prepared to enter professional practice; and 2) feedback from key constituencies such as employers and community partners about the quality of the preparation.	Consistently

Finding on Common Standard 4: Met

Summary of information applicable to the standard:

Interviews with candidates, unit leadership personnel, and clinical practice support staff from all three programs affirmed that the program regularly assesses program effectiveness through extensive use of surveys. It was evident that the unit uses these surveys to promote programmatic changes and that they are an integral part of the continuous learning cycle for each program. There was substantial evidence to indicate that program leadership has designed communication loops to ensure that staff roles are clearly understood by personnel filling these roles. The website was comprehensive, and it was evident from the interviews that there is consistency across the unit regarding the execution of various roles. This consistency is attributed to the ongoing efforts to enhance continuous improvement at both the unit level

and within each program. Additionally, in their monthly meetings, the SMCOE Teacher and Administrator Development (TAD) team involves the Santa Cruz County Office of Education CASC coordinator in data review to inform program modifications and other continuous improvement efforts.

SMCOE felt that the pandemic impacted their ability to build system collaborations with P-K institutions, and there was much evidence to document that the unit is collecting multiple sources of data to rebuild the collaborative systems across all three programs that had been adversely affected by the pandemic. The employer groups validated that the work is becoming much more challenging for educators, so across all three programs there was agreement that collaboration with educational partners can contribute greatly to the continuous improvement process. In fact, the various constituencies interviewed pointed out that they were impressed by the dedication of the staff, the intentional efforts made to offer robust programs that thoroughly prepare candidates for entry into professional practice, and that the work within each program provides opportunities for real life experiences. Such focus on continuous improvement has resulted in educator preparation programs that candidates feel are relevant and inspiring. One candidate captured this sentiment by stating, “the professional development was phenomenal and included practitioners from my county.” Another candidate commented that: “the program was very responsive to my needs and my experience in my program related to my job.”

Each program provides a tracking document regarding candidate progress which is used to analyze not only the candidates’ strengths and identified areas for growth, but also progress towards the desired credential. The evidence provided for the program review clearly indicated that the assessment cycle was a multi-year process across all three programs. There was evidence to support that data was being continuously gathered through surveys, including surveys across all constituent groups. The credential unit provided evidence that progress towards the credential is monitored carefully, and it was clear both from the interviews with the leadership team and the credential unit, that the communication was continuous and used to inform the strategic planning for program improvement.

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:

Evidence across the three educator preparation programs and the interviews clearly supported that candidates are assessed based on mastery of the adopted standards. The program exhibits a growth mindset in terms of staff efforts to constantly assess the experiences their candidates undergo. There was clear evidence to support that the staff use the data they collect to inform and reflect on best practices across the three programs. Unit leadership pays particular attention to the reflections submitted by candidates in their individual plans and the comments submitted with surveys to confirm that candidates understand and are becoming more competent with their impact on teaching and learning in the schools they serve. What was particularly unique about this unit is the focus on aligning all three programs into a cohesive educator preparation program that is having an impact not only on candidates but on the students they serve. The interviews and the work completed in each program revealed extraordinary effort by the program staff to ensure that candidate mastery of adopted standards is demonstrated in the fieldwork and job assignments executed by candidates across all three programs.

A cornerstone of these programs is the robust communication between the credential unit and mentors, coaches, and supervisors which result in support for candidates as they navigate the credentialing process. A member of the credential arm of the unit was so enthusiastic about the cross collaboration with the leadership and expressed that the leadership team is “awesome” and that the credential unit communicates continuously with the leadership team. It was also noted that the credential website is user friendly and designed to help candidates access immediate assistance, and according to the credential unit, “that is important to us.”

It was evident that the SMCOE is passionate about their education preparation program and that the unit, along with their partners, are dedicated to developing candidates who can serve in diverse and challenging school communities. Throughout the unit there was direct evidence in the programs’ work, and especially in the assessments designed to monitor candidate progress, that equity and social justice were important themes that are emphasized across all programs. The candidate interviews across all three programs captured the essence of how important this focus is to candidates and how relevant it is to their daily work. This is underscored by the number of teacher induction program completers that return to the program as mentors and the PASC and CASC completers that return as fieldwork supervisors or coaches. During interviews, candidates stated that they have recommended TAD programs to colleagues or plan to pursue the next step in their educational journey by enrolling in SMCOE’s PASC or CASC program.

Lastly, the program materials provided clear evidence as to detailed information regarding the personnel positions responsible for candidate advising, placement in program components like fieldwork, and the support systems aimed at fostering candidate success and candidate impact on the community and the schools. Candidates across the unit clearly articulated that they felt

supported, and they felt they could reach out to program staff for support if they ever needed additional assistance.