
3C

Action

Educator Preparation Committee

Initial Institutional Approval – Stage II: Eligibility Requirements for Hemet Unified School District

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents, as part of the Initial Institutional Approval process, Hemet Unified School District's responses to the Eligibility Requirements for consideration and possible approval by the Commission.

Recommended Action: That the Commission review the responses to the Eligibility Requirements and determine if the institution may move forward in the Initial Institutional Approval process.

Presenter: Elizabeth de los Santos, Consultant, Division of Standards, Accreditation, and Workforce Investment

Strategic Plan Goal

Educator Preparation and Advancement

- **Goal 1.** Educator preparation programs hold candidates to high standards and adequately prepare them to support all students by using culturally and linguistically responsive and sustaining practices in equitable, inclusive, and safe environments.
 - A. Set and uphold rigorous standards for educator preparation programs
 - C. Enact a rigorous accreditation process that ensures programs meet standards and are effective in preparing educators for public schools

Initial Institutional Approval – Stage II: Eligibility Requirements for Hemet Unified School District

Introduction

This agenda item presents for consideration one local education agency (LEA) seeking to become a program sponsor through the Initial Institutional Approval (IIA) process. Hemet Unified School District (Hemet USD) seeks IIA in order to offer Teacher Induction and Administrative Services Clear Induction programs. Hemet USD has submitted responses to the Eligibility Requirements and relevant Preconditions for consideration and possible approval by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission). Hemet USD covers 650 square miles in Riverside County, including Hemet, East Hemet, Valle Vista, Anza, Winchester, and Idyllwild. The district enrolls approximately 22,700 PreK-12 students and operates 29 schools.

Approval of an institution for Stage II does not permit the institution to offer an educator preparation program that leads to a credential or license. Approval in Stage II allows an institution to move forward to Stage III in which Common Standards will be submitted for review and the institution brought before the Commission again at that time. In addition, although there is important information about the proposed program contained in the submission for Stage II, review of the Common Standards and applicable program Preconditions and standards will occur in subsequent stages. Please see the table on page three of this item for more information about the five stages of the IIA process.

Background

California law provides the Commission with the authority to accredit institutions to offer programs that lead to a credential to serve as an educator in California's public schools. Among other responsibilities, Education Code section 44372(c) sets forth the Commission's responsibility to rule on the eligibility of an applicant for initial accreditation for the purpose of offering a program of educator preparation.

The Commission requires that an institution seeking to offer new educator preparation program(s) must first be approved for initial accreditation as a new program sponsor and must do so by completing the Commission's IIA process. A table detailing the five stages of the IIA process is provided on page three of this item.

Hemet Unified School District

Hemet USD seeks Initial Institutional Approval to offer two programs:

- Teacher Induction
- Administrative Services Clear Induction

Summaries and excerpts of Hemet USD's responses to the twelve [Eligibility Requirement Criteria](#) and two [Initial Program Preconditions](#) are provided in this item. Hemet USD's full

response is also available on the [Hemet USD accreditation website](#). Criteria 1 through 9 have been reviewed by staff and a recommendation has been provided. Criteria 10, 11, and 12 have been summarized for the Commission's review and consideration. All relevant Preconditions have been reviewed by Commission staff and have been determined to be met.

Five Stages of the Initial Institutional Approval Process

Hemet USD is seeking approval of Stage II in order to be eligible for Stage III as highlighted and italicized in the chart below.

IIA Process	Stage I - Prerequisites	Stage II – Eligibility	Stage III – Provisional Approval	Stage IV – Initial Program Approval	Stage V – Full Approval
Purpose	Ensures legal eligibility of institution in California Ensures institution understands requirements of Commission's accreditation system	<i>Ensures that institution has capacity to sponsor effective programs</i>	Ensures institution meets all Common Standards	Ensures all proposed programs meet all relevant program standards and program-specific preconditions	Program operates for 2-4 years and hosts a provisional accreditation site visit
Institutional Requirements	Must: 1. Have legal eligibility 2. Attend Accreditation 101 with institutional team	<i>Submit responses to:</i> • <i>12 Eligibility Criteria</i> • <i>Initial Program Preconditions</i> • <i>General Precondition #9</i>	Submit responses to: • Common Standards	Submit responses to: • Program-Specific Preconditions • Program Standards	Institution Must: • Collect data • Host provisional site visit
Reviewed By	Staff	<i>Staff</i>	BIR	Preconditions: Staff Program Standards: BIR	Site Visit Team & COA
Authority	Staff	<i>Commission</i>	Commission	COA	Commission
Decision	Determine Eligibility for Stage II	<i>Eligibility:</i> 1. <i>Grant</i> 2. <i>Deny</i>	Provisional Approval: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Program(s): 1. Approve 2. Deny	1. Grant Full Approval 2. Grant Full Approval & Remand to COA to Address Stipulations 3. Continue Provisional Status for 1 Year to Address Stipulations 4. Deny Approval
IIA Status*	Not Approved	<i>Not Approved</i>	Provisional Approval**	Provisional Approval***	Full Approval

*At conclusion of stage **Institutionally approved but cannot offer programs ***May begin offering approved program

Criterion 1 through 9

In accordance with the Commission's adopted process for determining eligibility for Initial Institutional Approval, Eligibility Criteria 1-9, as follows, includes a staff review and recommendation.

Criterion 1: Responsibility and Authority

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- Hemet USD is proposing to offer Teacher Induction and Administrative Services Clear Induction programs.
- Hemet USD has submitted a complete organizational chart that indicates the induction programs will be housed within the Educational Services Division.
- Ekko DePriest, Induction Programs Coordinator, will be the program coordinator who will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the program.
- Ekko DePriest will report to Kristen Anderson, Assistant Superintendent of the Educational Services Division, who reports to the Superintendent. Kristen Anderson, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, will be the Unit Head responsible for ongoing oversight of all educator preparation programs.
- Hemet USD assures that the duties related to credential recommendations will be performed only by employees of Hemet USD and that these individuals will take part in the Commission training related to the recommendation process.
- Hemet USD has identified Leah Armstrong, Credential Analyst Coordinator, as the individual who will be responsible for credential recommendations.

Criterion 2: Lawful Practices

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- A non-discrimination policy for the institution's **employees** is provided on the district website, Board policy manual, and collective bargaining agreement.
- A non-discrimination policy for the institution's **candidates** is provided on the district's proposed induction programs website.

Criterion 3: Commission Assurances and Compliance

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- Hemet USD provided a statement of assurance signed by Kristen Anderson, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, that states the institution:
 - a) Will comply with all preconditions,
 - b) Will submit all data reports and accreditation documents,
 - c) Will cooperate in an evaluation of the program by an external team or monitoring of the program by Commission staff,
 - d) Will participate fully in the Commission's accreditation system and submission timelines, and

- e) In the event the program closes, Hemet USD will offer the program and meet all adopted standards until the candidate completes, withdraws, is dropped, or is admitted to another program.

Criterion 4: Requests for Data

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- Ekko DePriest, Induction Programs Coordinator, is identified as the qualified officer responsible for reporting and responding to all requests for data within timeframes specified by the Commission.

Criterion 5: Grievance Process

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- Hemet USD has provided a grievance process which will be accessible to all candidates on the program website.
- Candidates will be informed of the grievance process during initial program orientation, program handbooks, and periodic reminders in regular communications with candidates.

Criterion 6: Communication and Information

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- Hemet USD's webpage will be accessible to the public without the requirement of login information.
- Hemet USD will include the mission, governance, administration and admission procedures on their program website.
- Information will be made available through the program website and digital and paper flyers.

Criterion 7: Student Records Management, Access, and Security

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- Candidates will have access to their transcripts and program documents at any time through the district office for the purpose of verifying academic units and program completion.
- Candidate records will be maintained and stored securely in the Hemet USD Human Resources office to ensure confidentiality and accessibility. Candidates may request their records from the Human Resources office at any time.
- Candidate digital records will be stored securely on password-protected servers and paper records will be kept in secured file cabinets. Access to records will be limited to authorized program staff, including the induction programs coordinator, authorized human resources credential personnel, and credential analyst.

Criterion 8: Disclosure

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- Hemet USD proposes a hybrid delivery model that combines in-person and virtual learning opportunities with the support of on-site teacher mentors and administrative coaches. Direct instruction, including seminars and quarterly meetings, will be conducted face-to-face. For schools in outlying areas during the winter months, candidates will be permitted to join sessions virtually.
- The primary location for meetings will be the Hemet USD main district office located in Hemet, California. Program activities may occur at school district sites.
- The primary providers of professional learning will be Hemet USD personnel, including the Induction Programs Coordinator, induction teacher mentors, administrator coaches, and expert staff from departments across the district, such as Special Education and English Learner. To enrich professional learning offerings, Hemet USD plans to partner with Riverside County Office of Education, Corwin, Solution Tree, and regionally accredited institutions of higher education, such as University of the Pacific.

Criterion 9: Veracity in all Claims and Documentation Submitted

Staff Recommendation: Aligned

- An assurance signed by Kristen Anderson, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, has been submitted attesting to the veracity of all statements and documentation submitted to the Commission. The letter also attests to Hemet USD's understanding that a lack of veracity is a cause for denial of Initial Institutional Approval.

Criterion 10, 11, and 12

In accordance with the Commission approved process for determining eligibility for Initial Institutional Approval, [Eligibility Criteria 10-12](#) include a staff summary of the institution's submission, but do not include a staff recommendation.

Criterion 10: Mission and Vision

- The mission of Hemet USD's educator preparation programs is "to embrace, educate, and empower preliminary-credentialed educators as they transition into long-term career mastery. Through job-embedded learning and comprehensive, standards-based mentoring, we cultivate reflective practitioners dedicated to designing equitable learning environments that drive success for every student, every day."
- The vision of Hemet USD for educator preparation is "to build an immersive induction framework that transforms early-career challenges into a seamless pathway toward professional excellence. By hardwiring continuous inquiry and collective efficacy, we foster a thriving professional community where empowered teachers and administrators stay, excel, and lead an equity-centered education for all HUSD students."
- Hemet USD's teacher and administrator induction programs will be explicitly designed to ensure alignment with California's adopted standards and frameworks and commitment to

Hemet USD's core vision of "Embrace, Educate, and Empower." The programs will be grounded in a philosophical foundation that views educator development as an ongoing, inquiry-driven journey, including evidence-based principles from Jim Knight (collaborative adult relationships to drive classroom-level change and student-centered goals), Janet Pilcher (organizational alignment and continuous improvement cycles), and Laura Lipton (mentoring matters and structured learning-focused conversations). To promote continuous growth and mitigate educator burnout, the programs will integrate program components into ongoing, predictable district support structures. Recognizing that adult learners have unique characteristics and motivations, professional growth in Hemet USD is relevant, practical, and logistically embedded into the workday. Finally, recognizing that new teachers and administrators possess diverse strengths and needs, support pathways will be differentiated to maximize individual leadership and instructional capacity.

Criterion 11: History of Prior Experience and Effectiveness in Educator Preparation

- Hemet USD's proposed teacher and administrator induction programs will be led by a team of leaders with more than 25 years of experience partnering with the Riverside County Office of Education (Riverside COE) to provide beginning teachers and administrators with a pathway to earning clear credentials. Kristen Anderson, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, has served as an Administrator Induction Coach with Riverside COE's administrator induction program and supported educator development through her previous roles as Hemet USD Director of Instructional Development, Director of Literacy, site principal, teacher on special assignment, and classroom teacher. Ekko DePriest, Induction Coordinator, has served as an agency representative with Riverside COE's induction programs, a site administrator and classroom teacher, and adjunct professor in the University of Redlands credential programs. Today, Hemet USD has approximately 100 mentors and coaches who have been trained through the Riverside COE Center for Teacher Induction program. Hemet USD has developed a district Aspiring Administrator Academy to strengthen the district's internal leadership pipeline, including professional learning in topics such as human resources, instructional leadership, business and operational leadership, and improvement and analytics.
- Hemet USD's current and prior partnerships with local institutions of higher education and approved program sponsors include Riverside COE, University of Massachusetts Global (UMass Global), National University, California State University San Bernardino, University of Redlands, Azusa Pacific University, and University of the Pacific. Additionally, Hemet USD maintains ongoing partnerships with local tribal communities to inform implementation of their Title VI Indian Education Program.
- Hemet USD has posted the third-party invitation for comments on Hemet USD's proposed induction [programs website](#) where the public and all constituencies can access it. No comments have been received at this time.
- As required by this criterion, staff researched the possibility of any additional available information relevant to the institution's application for IIA and found none.

Criterion 12: Capacity and Resources

- As evidence of capacity and resources, Hemet USD has provided a copy of its most recent 2025-2026 audited budget. The proposed teacher and administrator induction programs will be structurally embedded within the district's comprehensive annual budget, including all funding streams, resource allocations, and operational expenditures.
- Hemet USD has also detailed within its submission the facility resources that will be available for its candidates. These include integrated classroom technology and hardware/software such as Google Classroom.
- Additionally, within the submission, Hemet USD has identified the job responsibilities and minimum qualifications for program personnel and instructional support. Hemet USD's personnel and instructional support will consist of the following:
 - Coordinator of Instructional Support
 - Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services/Instructional Development
 - Certificated Support Teacher Mentor
- For the purposes of job-embedded fieldwork, Hemet USD serves approximately 22,700 PreK-12 students. The student population includes 87.3% socioeconomically disadvantaged students, 17.5% students with disabilities, 13.5% English learners, 2.3% Homeless, and 1.2% Foster Youth. The student racial and ethnic demographic includes 70.0% Hispanic, 15.5% White, 7.7% African American, 4.2% Two or more races, 0.9% Filipino, 0.7% Asian, 0.6% American Indian, and 0.3% Pacific Islander.

Initial Program Preconditions

(1) Demonstration of Need

To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program sponsor must demonstrate the need for the type of program in the service area in which it will operate or a need for educators prepared through the specific program delivery model. Proposals must include data on the number of individuals currently serving on less than full credentials, where available, in the service area of the proposed program, projected need based on a needs analysis, and affirmations from employers with their anticipated hiring need for individuals with the planned credential.

Meets Precondition: Yes

How Hemet USD Meets the Precondition:

Hemet USD has a demonstrated and sustained need for developing its own Teacher and Administrator Induction programs. This need arises from the district's consistently large population of beginning educators, number of educators on less-than-preliminary credentials, anticipated retirements and resignations, and unique geographic and organizational context. At the same time, Hemet USD has developed the infrastructure, mentor capacity, and leadership expertise necessary to support educator preparation programs.

During the 2025-2026 school year, Hemet USD supported 66 Year 1 and 77 Year 2 teacher induction candidates, for a total of 143 candidates. The district supported 11 Year 1 and four

Year 2 administrator induction candidates. Based on current projections, Hemet USD anticipates continuing to serve a significant number of induction candidates in the coming years, including 76 projected Year 1 and 66 projected Year 2 teacher induction candidates in 2026-2027. For administrator induction, 5 candidates are projected in Year 1 and 12 candidates are projected in Year 2.

Hemet USD also has a consistent need to support educators who enter the district before obtaining a preliminary credential. Over the past several years, the district has regularly hired educators with Intern Credentials, Short-Term Staff Permits (STSP), Provisional Intern Permits (PIP), and waivers. In 2025-2026, the district employed 29 interns and 18 educators serving under STSP, PIP, or waiver authorizations. Therefore, Hemet USD requires a coherent continuum of support that begins with pre-induction and continues through teacher induction as educators progress toward a clear credential. Furthermore, Hemet USD anticipates ongoing needs to recruit and retain new educators due to the projected number of retirements as the number of current employees approach retirement eligibility. For example, up to 88 teacher retirements are projected for 2026-2027.

Furthermore, Hemet USD's geographic context underscores the value of a district-based induction program. Serving more than 650 square miles, Hemet USD is one of the largest districts geographically, and educators in the district serve across a wide range of school communities, grade levels, instructional settings, and specialized programs. District-based induction programs would allow Hemet USD to maintain a strong network of trained mentors and coaches while providing flexibility in response to the specific contexts of candidates and schools across this expansive geographic area. Hemet USD has intentionally developed capacity to support educator preparation programs with approximately 100 trained mentors and coaches and extensive experience in educator development, coaching, and induction.

(2) Collaboration in Program Design and Implementation

To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program sponsor must demonstrate evidence of collaboration between institutions of higher education, employers of credentialed educators, and TK-12 practitioners in the design of the program. This evidence must include verification that the partners will share authority and responsibility for the implementation and continuous improvement of the proposed educator preparation program as negotiated in the partnership agreement.

Meets Precondition: Yes

How Hemet USD Meets the Precondition:

Hemet USD has established an Induction Advisory Committee to ensure shared leadership and responsibility for the design, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement of its proposed Teacher and Administrator Induction programs. The committee brings together individuals from Hemet USD district leadership, institutions of higher education, experienced TK-12 practitioners, and other professional education partners, such as Corwin, and has met once in August 2026 to provide input on developing the induction programs according to

Commission guidelines. The committee will review data related to candidate progress and completion, educator retention, and program evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the programs and identify opportunities for continuous improvement. Hemet USD's existing relationships with institutions of higher education will provide an important foundation for collaborative decision-making. These relationships provide opportunities to consider the continuum from initial teacher preparation through induction. Hemet USD has established formal agreements to clarify these shared responsibilities. Partner agreements identify the expectations for district leadership partners, institution of higher education partners, and other professional education partners. Induction Advisory Committee meetings, recommendations, and decisions will be documented through meeting agendas, minutes, evaluation instruments, and program review records and provide evidence that partner perspectives are incorporated into program implementation and continuous improvement.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend that the Commission consider the responses to the Eligibility Requirements and relevant Preconditions submitted by Hemet Unified School District and grant eligibility.

Granting eligibility would allow Hemet Unified School District to move forward to Stage III of the IIA process in which responses to the Common Standards are submitted for review. Approval of Stage II will not authorize Hemet Unified School District to offer educator preparation programs that lead to a credential or license, such as the proposed Teacher Induction and Administrative Services Clear Induction programs.

If the Commission grants eligibility, it may identify topics that it will be looking for in Stage III.

If the Commission denies eligibility, it may identify what it sees as missing in the current submission in the event the institution decides to continue to work toward institutional approval.

Next Steps

Based on the Commission's action, staff will take appropriate next steps related to the option chosen.