
3D

Action

Educator Preparation Committee

Initial Institutional Approval – Stage III: Consideration of Provisional Approval for Napa Valley Unified School District

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents, as part of the Initial Institutional Approval process, Napa Valley Unified School District's responses to the Common Standards for consideration and possible Provisional Approval by the Commission.

Recommended Action: That the Commission grant Provisional Approval to Napa Valley Unified School District and set the Provisional Approval period to be three years.

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 III: Consideration of Provisional Approval for Napa Valley Unified School District

Introduction

This agenda item presents, as a part of Stage III of the Initial Institutional Approval (IIA) process, Napa Valley Unified School District's (Napa Valley USD) responses to the Common Standards for consideration of Provisional Approval by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission). All Common Standards responses have been reviewed by a team of Board of Institutional Review (BIR) members and have been determined to be aligned. If granted Provisional Approval, the next step in the IIA process would be the review of Napa Valley USD's responses to the Teacher Induction Program Standards by a BIR team. When these reviewers determine that the program standards are aligned, the proposed program will be considered for Initial Program Approval by the Committee on Accreditation (COA). Then, at that time, if approved, the institution may offer the program for the three-year provisional period as specified by the Commission.

Background

California Education Code section 44372(c) 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. The Commission has established the IIA process whereby an institution seeking to offer educator preparation program(s) in California must satisfactorily complete five stages to be approved as a program sponsor.

The submission of Common Standards and Preconditions is Stage III of the five-stage process, as indicated in the highlighted column of the chart on the following page. Completion of this stage of the process results in a determination by the Commission of whether to grant the institution Provisional Approval. Provisional Approval permits the institution to offer an educator preparation program once the program standards are found to be aligned by a BIR team and the proposed program is approved by the COA in Stage IV.

Five Stages of the Initial Institutional Approval Process

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

IIA Process	Stage I - Prerequisites	Stage II – Eligibility	<i>Stage III – Provisional Approval</i>	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	Ensures that institution has capacity to sponsor effective programs	<i>Ensures institution meets all Common Standards</i>	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	Submit responses to: • 12 Eligibility Criteria • Initial Program Preconditions • General Precondition #9	<i>Submit responses to:</i> • <i>Common Standards</i>	Submit responses to: • Program-Specific Preconditions • Program Standards	Institution Must: • Collect data • Host provisional site visit
Reviewed By	Staff	Staff	<i>BIR</i>	Preconditions: Staff Program Standards: BIR	Site Visit Team & COA
Authority	Staff	Commission	<i>Commission</i>	COA	Commission
Decision	Determine Eligibility for Stage II	Eligibility: 1. Grant 2. Deny	<i>Provisional Approval:</i> 1. <i>Grant</i> 2. <i>Deny</i>	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	Not Approved	<i>Provisional Approval**</i>	Provisional Approval***	Full Approval

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

Napa Valley Unified School District

Napa Valley USD completed Stages I and II of the IIA process and was approved as an eligible institution by the Commission at its [April 2026](#) meeting. This action allowed Napa Valley USD to move forward to Stage III in which responses to the Common Standards were submitted, as linked in this item. Currently, Napa Valley USD seeks Provisional Approval from the Commission. If approved, Napa Valley USD will seek COA approval of their proposed Teacher Induction program. Napa Valley USD serves over 16,000 students in grades TK-12 across 27 schools in the communities of Napa and American Canyon.

Stage III: Review to Determine Alignment with Common Standards

In keeping with the Commission's process for IIA, Napa Valley USD submitted its responses to the Common Standards. Two BIR members reviewed the Common Standards and have found them to be aligned.

Summaries of Napa Valley USD's responses to the Common Standards are included in this agenda item. Napa Valley USD's complete [Stage III Common Standards submission](#) is available on their website.

It is an important reminder that although the responses to the Common Standards in this agenda item can provide some indication of the design of the program the institution proposes to offer, detailed program information will be provided in the institution's responses to the Teacher Induction Program Standards in Stage IV of the IIA process. The responses to the program standards will be reviewed by a team of BIR members to determine alignment. Once the review team has determined that the responses are aligned to the program standards, an item will be brought to the COA for consideration of Initial Program Approval for the proposed program. If approved, the Provisional Approval period will begin, and the institution may begin offering the program.

Common Standards Responses

All responses to the Common Standards have been deemed, by a team of BIR reviewers, to be aligned. Beneath each Common Standard is information and excerpts from Napa Valley USD's Common Standards submission. The [2015 Common Standards](#) are provided here as a reference.

Common Standard 1 – Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation

The vision of Napa Valley USD's proposed Teacher Induction program is "a unified system of support focused on continuous professional growth, empowering educators to ignite a culture of curiosity, confidence, and academic excellence." This vision was co-developed in partnership with district and union leadership. The proposed Teacher Induction program will align mentor support with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession, apply adult learning principles such as modeling, and develop Individual Learning Plans (ILP) that will serve as the primary working document and guiding framework for educators' professional growth. Additionally, a Candidate Portfolio will serve as the collection of evidence documenting candidate growth throughout the induction experience.

Napa Valley USD will actively involve district leadership, instructional personnel, mentors, credentialing staff, site administrators, and higher education partners in the organization and coordination of the proposed Teacher Induction program. The Advisory Committee will meet three times annually to review program data and provide feedback to identify trends, celebrate strengths, and recommend program improvements. Surveys will be collected regularly from candidates, mentors, and administrators to provide ground-level feedback on program implementation. Napa Valley USD will ensure that program leaders regularly and systematically collaborate with colleagues from institutions of higher education, such as the district's ongoing collaboration with Sonoma State University through the North Bay Teacher Residency Partnership.

Napa Valley USD will provide the proposed program with sufficient resources for effective operation. The Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources will serve as the Unit Head and holds the authority to allocate fiscal resources and assign personnel. Resources allocated to support the program will include meeting spaces, mentor stipends, and release time for classroom observations. Napa Valley USD will allocate three fully released Peer Support Specialists (PSS) to provide field-based support for mentors, facilitate professional learning, and monitor candidate progress. A dedicated credential analyst will manage admission, eligibility verification, and the credential recommendation process, ensuring that all candidates receive timely advisement regarding their credential status and program completion timelines.

Napa Valley USD serves a diverse student population and maintains a strategic commitment to recruiting, developing, and retaining educators who reflect and support the cultural, linguistics, and instructional needs of the community. Napa Valley USD employs and retains only qualified personnel to provide professional learning, mentoring, and supervision of clinical experiences within the proposed Teacher Induction program. Mentors will be selected based on demonstrated instructional mastery, coaching disposition, and data literacy and will engage in

ongoing professional learning to stay current in evidence-based practices to support the effective mentoring of beginning teachers.

Common Standard 2 – Candidate Recruitment and Support Preparation

Napa Valley USD will utilize a transparent recruitment and admission process to identify and admit eligible candidates. The proposed Teacher Induction program will accept candidates who are employed in Napa Valley USD; hold a California Preliminary PK-3 Early Childhood Education Specialist Instruction, Multiple Subject, Single Subject, or Education Specialist credential; are employed in a TK-12 teaching assignment aligned to their credential area; and, meet all Commission requirements for induction participation. The proposed program will offer an Early Completion Option for experienced candidates.

Recruitment efforts to purposefully recruit and admit candidates to diversity the educator pool in California will include statewide employment postings through the EdJoin website, current partnerships with educator preparation programs, district recruitment materials, and ongoing collaborations with the North Bay Bilingual Teaching Residency Partnership. Candidate onboarding will begin upon admission to the program, and a required orientation will establish program expectations and support systems. Within 30 days of enrollment, candidates will be paired with an experienced mentor who will provide individualized coaching, classroom-based support, and guidance aligned with the candidate's teaching assignment and professional growth areas.

Candidates will also have access to Peer Support Specialists, the induction program lead, and the credential analyst. The induction program lead will advise candidates, monitor candidate progress, coordinate support, and assist with questions regarding program requirements, timelines, and criteria for successful completion of the program. Multiple resources will be available to candidates, such as a program handbook, website, and required orientation meetings at the beginning of Year 1 and Year 2.

Common Standard 3 – Course of Study, Fieldwork and Clinical Practice

Napa Valley USD's proposed Teacher Induction program will provide a planned sequence of job-embedded clinical experiences, documented through the ILP, that allows candidates to develop and demonstrate effective teaching practices. As teachers of record, candidates will work daily with California's diverse student population in the context of their own classrooms, which will provide authentic opportunities to examine how culture, language, identity, ability, and other aspects of diversity influence school climate and equitable access to learning and student success. Candidates will engage in inquiry cycles to implement, study, and refine research-informed instructional strategies.

Candidates will be provided with ongoing supervision and support through qualified mentors and Peer Support Specialists who will provide individualized guidance aligned to candidates' credential areas, teaching assignments, and instructional contexts. All mentors will hold California Clear Credentials matching candidates' credential areas and be selected through a collaborative process, including principal recommendation and recruitment by the program. Mentor effectiveness will be evaluated through an ongoing cycle of observation, feedback,

reflection, and program review. Mentors will be provided with training, including orientation, ongoing professional learning, individualized feedback, coaching and support, and formal recognition of their contributions to candidate growth and program success.

The quality of fieldwork will be evaluated through multiple measures, including ILP checkpoints, inquiry cycle documentation, portfolio evidence, mentor observations, and candidate reflections. Findings from these measures will be collected and reviewed with the Advisory Committee to identify strengths, emerging needs, and opportunities to strengthen professional learning and overall program implementation.

Common Standard 4 – Continuous Improvement

Napa Valley USD is committed to continuous improvement through systematic collection, analysis, and use of constituent feedback and program implementation data. Program data will be collected from multiple sources, including professional learning reflections, constituent feedback, and clinical practice data. For example, survey data collected from candidates and program completers, mentors, and site administrators will provide information regarding effectiveness of mentor assignments, communication systems, candidate-facing documents, and program processes. Data such as enrollment trends, mentor assignments, candidate progress, program completion and retention rates will be used to evaluate overall program effectiveness. The Advisory Committee, district leadership, and Executive Board will provide feedback to inform program modifications, resource allocation, and ongoing refinement of the program, ensuring that continuous improvement remains responsive to candidate needs, constituent feedback, and district priorities.

Common Standard 5 – Program Impact

The Napa Valley USD proposed Teacher Induction program is committed to preparing candidates to support all students in meeting state-adopted academic standards. The program will provide a seamless transition from preliminary preparation to clear credentialing by utilizing the Individual Development Plan (IDP) from candidates' preliminary programs. Triad meetings between candidates, mentors, and site administrators will inform the development of the ILP. Through reflection and collaboration with mentors and site administrators, candidates will identify growth areas, engage in inquiry cycles, and document progress toward program completion. The ILP serves as the record of candidate growth over time, allowing program leadership to evaluate candidates' ability to engage in cycles of learning to improve professional practice and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to educate and support effectively all students.

The impact of Napa Valley USD's proposed teacher induction program will be demonstrated by the extent to which candidates grow as educators, strengthen their instructional practice, and improve learning opportunities for their students. Candidate growth will be demonstrated by deeper professional reflection over time, thoughtful use of student data to inform instructional decisions, increased awareness of personal bias and its influence on teaching and demonstrated commitment to equitable learning opportunities for all students. Improved instructional practice will be demonstrated by candidates' frequent analysis of student learning,

implementation of research-informed instructional practices, and refinement of instruction in response to student needs. Inquiry cycle artifacts, such as analysis of student work and assessment data, will be used to demonstrate improved instructional practice. Finally, program impact will be demonstrated through candidate completion and credential recommendation rates, educator retention, annual constituent surveys, employer feedback, and program completer feedback. Collectively, these multiple measures will demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed program in developing educators who make informed instructional decisions that improve student learning and build instructional capacity across the district.

Staff Recommendation

The Board of Institutional Review (BIR) team has found the Common Standard responses to be aligned. Therefore, staff recommend that the Commission grant Provisional Approval to Napa Valley Unified School District.

Granting Provisional Approval would allow Napa Valley Unified School District's proposed Teacher Induction program to be reviewed by the Committee on Accreditation for Initial Program Approval in Stage IV. The Provisional Approval period would begin once the COA grants Initial Program Approval for the proposed program at the conclusion of Stage IV.

Staff recommend that if Provisional Approval is granted to Napa Valley Unified School District by the Commission, the period of Provisional Approval be set to three years because Napa Valley Unified School District's Teacher Induction program is designed to be two years in length. After three years, Napa Valley Unified School District will have had an opportunity to have a cohort complete the program, and the institution will have accumulated three years of data, including completers of the program. A Provisional Site Visit would occur and the report from the Provisional Site Visit will be brought to the Commission for consideration of full approval for Napa Valley Unified School District in Stage V.

Next Steps

Staff will take appropriate next steps based on the Commission's action.