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Commissioner

**Rhode Island College**

**Educator Preparation Program Approval**

**2007 Visiting Team Report**

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## Overview

On October 28-31, 2007 a visiting team representing the Rhode Island Department of Education conducted an on-site review at Rhode Island College of the following educator preparation programs:

- ART EDUCATION
- EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
- ELEMENTARY EDUCATION
- MUSIC EDUCATION
- SECONDARY EDUCATION – ENGLISH, MODERN LANGUAGE (FRENCH, SPANISH), HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE (BIOLOGY,CHEMISTRY,GENERAL SCIENCE, PHYSICS), AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION<sup>1</sup>
- SPECIAL EDUCATION – EARLY CHILDHOOD, MILD AND MODERATE DISABILITIES– ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE, MILD AND MODERATE DISABILITIES- MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL, SEVERE AND PROFOUND DISABILITIES PK-12
  
- ◆ THE ENDORSEMENT PROGRAM: MIDDLE SCHOOL
  
- EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP- ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL AND SECONDARY PRINCIPAL
- READING SPECIALIST
- SCHOOL COUNSELOR

The visiting team was chaired by Linda Houser from Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis. The team included: Margot Alfano from the Bristol Warren Regional School District, Gerard Buteau from Plymouth State University, Joann Canales from Texas A&M University, Nancy Hoffman from Central Connecticut State University, Lady June Hubbard-Cole from Allen University, Lynda Irvin from the Edinburgh, Illinois School District, Carol Michaud from the Lincoln School Department, Christine Mullen from Bristol Warren Regional School District, Donna Olsen from the Smithfield Public Schools, Carlotta Parr from Central Connecticut State University, Stephanie Shields from Warwick Public Schools, Marjory Stevens from Warwick Public Schools, Susan Toohey-Kaye from RIDE and Lynne Weisenbach from the University of Indianapolis. Paulajo Gaines, Lisa Foehr, Andre Audette, and Hilda Potrzeba represented the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The team was also assisted by Irving Richardson, Consultant to RIDE.

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<sup>1</sup> Technology Education is a PK-12 certificate, but it is grouped with secondary certificates for the purpose of the Rhode Island Program Approval process.

Based upon a review of the Institutional Report, a review of institutional exhibits, interviews with administrators, education faculty members, arts and science faculty members, cooperating teachers, principals, and Rhode Island College candidates, a review of work completed by prospective teachers, visits to schools where candidates complete field experiences, and an analysis of other documents, the team recommends that the Rhode Island Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education grant the programs at Rhode Island College the following approvals:

- the preparation programs in Art, Early Childhood, Elementary, Music, Secondary, Special Education for a period of four (4) years;
- the advanced preparation programs in Reading Specialist, and School Counselor for a period of four (4) years;
- the advanced preparation program in Elementary and Secondary School Principal for a period of two (2) years<sup>1</sup>

The approvals noted above are conditional upon the following:

- Art, Early Childhood, Elementary, Music, Secondary, and Special Education programs will submit an action plan due on September 15, 2008 and an interim visit from RIDE will occur in the spring of 2009
- Reading Specialist and School Counselor programs will submit an action plan due on September 15, 2008 and an interim visit from RIDE will occur in the spring of 2009

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<sup>1</sup> As a new program, the maximum approval for the Educational Leadership program is two (2) years.

The following summary chart details the overall findings by program, the time frames for approval, and the overall rating for each standard. The summary chart is followed by text that details each Rhode Island Program Approval Standard indicating the overall rating, individual indicators for each standard and the rating for each indicator by program, and comments with recommendations where appropriate.

## Initial Programs

<b>Program</b>	<b>Number of Years</b>	<b>Standard 1 Assessment</b>	<b>Standard 2 Curriculum</b>	<b>Standard 3 Field Experiences</b>	<b>Standard 4 Diversity</b>	<b>Standard 5 Resources</b>	<b>Standard 6 Program Renewal</b>
Art Education	4 years through 2011	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching
Early Childhood Education	4 years through 2011		On Standard	On Standard			
Elementary Education	4 years through 2011		On Standard	Approaching			
Music Education	4 years through 2011		Approaching	Approaching			
Secondary Education	4 years through 2011		Approaching	Approaching			
Special Education	4 years through 2011		Approaching	Unacceptable			

## Advanced Programs

<b>Program</b>	Number of Years	Standard 1 Assessment	Standard 2 Curriculum	Standard 3 Field Experiences	Standard 4 Diversity	Standard 5 Resources	Standard 6 Program Renewal
Educational Leadership-Principal	2 years through 2009	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching
Reading Specialist	4 years through 2011	On Standard	On Standard	On Standard	Approaching	On Standard	Approaching
School Counselor	4 years through 2011	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching

# Program Approval Report for the Initial Programs in

**ART EDUCATION  
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION  
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION  
MUSIC EDUCATION  
SECONDARY EDUCATION – ENGLISH, MODERN LANGUAGE (FRENCH,  
SPANISH), HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, MATHEMATICS, AND SCIENCE  
(BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, GENERAL SCIENCE, PHYSICS), TECHNOLOGY  
EDUCATION  
SPECIAL EDUCATION: EARLY CHILDHOOD, MILD AND MODERATE  
DISABILITIES; ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE, MILD AND MODERATE  
DISABILITIES; MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL, MILD AND MODERATE  
DISABILITIES; SEVERE AND PROFOUND DISABILITIES PK-12**

◆ **THE ENDORSEMENT PROGRAM: MIDDLE SCHOOL**

at Rhode Island College

October 28-31, 2007

# Standard 1

**1. Prospective educators recommended for licensure by Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs are proficient in the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards or the appropriate Professional Standards.**

## *Approaching Standard*

### *1.01 Assessment, Advisement, Feedback, and Counseling Throughout the Program.*

**Prospective educators are assessed through an ongoing process that begins with admission to the program and continues through recommendation for licensure. The results of these assessments are used to monitor candidates' progress toward meeting the standards and to provide academic and professional advisement throughout the program.**

## *Approaching Standard*

Page 26 of the Institutional Report (IR) 2007 states that candidates in initial teaching preparation programs are assessed using a 3-tiered portfolio system. The portfolios document a candidate's progress as a reflective practitioner from the first professional course to the culminating student teaching experience and seminar. The materials in the portfolio are intended to document the development of a teacher who plans instruction in a learner-centered classroom, implements lesson plans while adapting them to context, and who reflects on the learning that results from instructional decisions. The portfolios also demonstrate how well content knowledge and respect for diversity are integrated with skillful pedagogy and action-oriented professionalism. The content of these portfolios show instructional uses of technology, as well as the use of formal and informal assessment of knowledge and performance. The Institutional Report (IR) indicates four goals for the assessment system:

1. Representing evidence of candidate's professional development with respect to the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development Conceptual Framework, the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards, FSEHD Unit Dispositions, and relevant content standards;
2. Enabling candidates to reflect on their need for further professional growth with respect to the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards, FSEHD Unit Dispositions, and relevant content standards, and the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development Conceptual Framework;
3. Providing college faculty and their partner PK-12 practitioners with evidence to make the judgment that candidates are ready to enter the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development, that candidates are prepared to student teach, and that candidates are prepared for licensure; and,

4. Providing college faculty and administration with data that can be aggregated and analyzed for program evaluation and improvement.

The visiting team found that candidates complete three portfolios as outlined in the IR but that the results from these assessments are not always used to counsel candidates about their progress. The assessments points at the “preparing to student teach” phase and at the “completion of student teaching” phase are a check for the presence of previously completed and scored artifacts rather than a review of candidate competencies that provides a strong connection between candidate assessment results and feedback to candidates about their progress through the program.

A review of the candidate portfolios in the exhibit room indicated some inconsistencies in the way the assessment system was implemented. In the case of the elementary exit portfolio, there was not clear alignment between the artifacts required on the portfolio cover page and the chart on page 30 of the Institutional Report.

In some cases, the terminology for the different artifacts was not consistent. For example, the directions for the student teaching exit portfolios indicated to the student teachers that they needed to complete a professional development reflection essay. The Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor Review and Sign Off sheet used the general term “reflective essay.”

Not all of the tasks in the elementary portfolio had clear definitions for the different performance levels. It was also not clear how the scores on these individual artifacts were combined to evaluate the candidate. For example, the cover sheet for one artifact indicated that an exemplary performance was worth 25 points. It was not clear whether or not there was a scoring guide that provided information about how these points were applied and to what they were applied. The Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor Review and Sign Off sheet evaluates candidates’ proficiency on each artifact with “weakness,” “developing,” “competence” and “strength.” It is expected that student teachers recommended for satisfactory completion of program will achieve predominantly ratings of 3 or higher on each rubric. In some cases, candidates were allowed to proceed with ratings of “2” on some artifacts.

Some candidates’ preparing to teach portfolios did not have all of the required artifacts and yet the candidates were recommended for student teaching. One candidate’s exit portfolio indicated that they were not observed in the field until a month after graduation.

Visiting team members’ interviews with candidates completing the student teaching phase of their preparation indicated that candidates perceived the assessment process as being “in flux” during the time they have been enrolled in the program. It appeared to the visiting team that candidates had this perception because of the changes and revisions that the programs have made in the assessment system since the last program approval visit in 2004. These same candidates also reported that program expectations are now clearer to them which could be a result of the programs refining their expectations or candidates’ experience in the program.

During interviews, some candidates expressed the perception that program expectations sometimes rapidly change and such changes then affect what candidates must do to successfully

complete the program. One group of candidates reported that they were recently informed of an immediate rule change in their program when a sheet of paper was recently distributed in a class notifying them of a revised expectation that all artifacts had to be rated with at least a “2” or they could not proceed to the next phase of the program.

Candidates reported during interviews that communication in the programs was an area in need of improvement, although the visiting team found that communication with candidates varies across programs and advisors. Candidates reported that they receive information about program requirements and expectations through a variety of methods and people and that the accuracy of the communication is inconsistent. Some candidates indicated their advisors were excellent sources of information while another group of candidates reported they had to inform an adjunct professor about program requirements. Another group of candidates indicated that flyers are sometimes posted to notify candidates of changes.

While candidates must complete an “Admission” portfolio and a “Preparing to Teach” portfolio, there was no evidence that progress and attrition is attributable to the counseling candidates receive on the quality of their performance. Many of the artifacts contained little or no standards-based feedback which candidates could use to improve their performance.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the programs review and revise their systems for assessment, advisement, feedback and counseling to ensure that there is a strong connection between candidate assessment results and candidate feedback and progress through the program.

***1.02 Admission into the Program. Prospective educators are admitted to certification programs based upon clearly articulated criteria that address the students’ potential to meet the standards for licensure.***

#### ***Approaching Standard***

Table 1.1: FSEHD Assessment System for Initial and Advanced Programs on page 21 of the Institutional Report 2007 states that, in addition to an application, prospective candidates seeking admission to the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development must submit: transcripts, evidence of successful completion of FNED 346 with a minimum grade of “B-“; completion of at least 24 semester hours with a GPA of 2.5 in all college level courses; successful completion of the RIC writing and math requirements; successful completion of the Reading and Math sections of the Pre-Professional Skills Test of the Praxis I; proof of technology competency and an acceptable career commitment essay.

The visiting team found that programs have established clear criteria for admission that attend to candidate proficiency in basic skills through the GPA and grade requirements, the successful completion of the Rhode Island College writing and math requirements, and successful completion of sections of the Praxis I. The rubric for evaluating the career commitment essay indicates that the essay is evaluated for content/purpose, expression/voice, organization, and conventions. In some programs, the essays are scored by a single rater from the faculty. Some candidate “Admission” portfolios indicated that the students were admitted without the required “3” on the essay. One candidate reported that he received a letter indicating that he did not pass

the career commitment essay and had to visit several offices to find a person who could explain the consequences of not passing the essay. He subsequently learned that he had been admitted to the program conditionally and had to rewrite the essay. The Rhode Island College website contained instructions for candidates for completing the career commitment essay dated 9/14/07 and the accompanying rubric was last revised on 8/21/07 so many of the candidates who were interviewed may have entered the programs under a different set of instructions and evaluation rubric.

The criteria for admission address candidates' basic skills and the candidates' dispositions. It was not clear how or if the two required confidential disposition reference forms are taken into consideration for admission into the programs. It also was not clear how the admissions requirements relate to a potential candidate's success in the educator preparation programs.

The visiting team did not see any evidence of potential candidates who were not admitted to the program and the reasons why any potential candidates were denied admission.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the programs monitor the criteria used for admission to determine if they are predictors of program success.

The visiting team also RECOMMENDS that the programs provide potential candidates with information about how the required artifacts will be evaluated to make a determination about admission to a program.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program applies the admissions criteria consistently to all candidates.

***1.03 Determination of Readiness for Student Teaching or Supervised Internship. Prospective educators demonstrate their readiness for student teaching or supervised internship through an evaluation of their performance with respect to the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards.***

***Approaching Standard***

Table 1.1: FSEHD Assessment System for Initial and Advanced Programs on page 21 of the Institutional Report 2007 indicates that in order to be accepted into student teaching, candidates have to prepare a "Preparing to Teach" portfolio that includes: evidence of a GPA of 2.5 in all undergraduate work; passing scores on required PLT, Praxis II, and/or content tests; an implemented lesson plan; a reflective essay; a self-disposition evaluation; community service and other program specific requirements. The visiting team did not find clear evidence of the relationship between the criteria in the portfolio and the potential for success as a student teacher. For example, it was not clear how candidates' experience with students during their early field experiences is included in determining readiness to student teach, except for items 5,6, and 7 of the faculty disposition evaluation.

The criteria by which some artifacts are evaluated are not clearly articulated and are not always consistently applied. In the secondary program, the document "Preparing to Teach Portfolio Guidelines Secondary Education Program" contains information about the preparing-to-teach

portfolio. The instructions for the Reflective Essay artifact in the portfolio provide information to candidates about characteristics of quality essay responses. These characteristics are grouped into three scoring points: “Exceeds Standard”, “Meets Standard”, and, “Below Standard.” The rubric by which the reflective essay is scored indicates that the essay is scored on a four point scale the categories of “weakness”, “developing”, “competence” and “strength.” The visiting team could not find documentation for how the three scoring points in the instructions to candidates translate to the four scoring points used by raters. In the History Program, the reflective essays are reviewed and scored by a practitioner and a faculty member. In some other programs, the essay was only scored by one instructor.

Table 1.2 on page 29 of the Institutional Report 2007 provides a chart of the required artifacts for the “Preparing to Teach Portfolio” in each program. Visiting team members found that the artifacts identified as required in the table were not always present in the portfolios. Several candidates’ “Preparing to Teach Portfolios” were missing the faculty disposition evaluation and others were missing the candidate disposition self-evaluation. Most portfolios did not have cover sheets or information about whether or not the candidate was recommended for student teaching. Many portfolios only had a small adhesive note attached to the cover of the portfolio noting whether the candidate was recommended for student teaching rather than a cover sheet indicating that the portfolio had been reviewed. The website for the Early Childhood and Elementary Programs had a portfolio cover sheet but this was not always included in the candidates’ portfolios.

The following is one example of potential inconsistency. One candidate portfolio included a comment on the Reflection Essay Scoring Rubric that read, “[Candidate] did not yet complete a reflective essay as outlined in the portfolio guidelines – the chapter is missing.” The same instructor commented that the “essay is brief and to the point but short,” with a note on the sheet that the candidate is clearly ready for student teaching. On the Implemented Unit Plan Scoring sheet reviewed the same day, the comments on the sheet noted that the unit section is incomplete. On the portfolio cover sheet completed the same day, the unit section is rated as a “2” but the candidate was recommended as clearly ready for student teaching. The reflective essay was in the portfolio but it was not evident that the essay had been evaluated by the reviewer.

The visiting team could not find evidence that the candidates’ “Preparing to Teach” portfolios were evaluated on any clear scoring guide that determined minimal readiness to student teach. The determination seemed to be a checklist of whether or not previously-submitted artifacts were present in the portfolio. Two portfolios had very similar ratings of the individual artifacts yet the recommendations from the instructor about the candidates’ readiness to student teach varied greatly. For the Elementary Program, the Preparing to Teach Portfolio Checklist contained places to record ratings for program course artifacts and scores on FSHED rubrics. It was not clear how the scores from these individual artifacts were aggregated to make the determination that the portfolio indicated preparedness to student teach.

Page 33 of the IR indicated that “candidate attrition is primarily due to the inability of a candidate to submit an acceptable Preparing to Teach Portfolio.” The visiting team could not find evidence that the programs had explored the reasons for some candidates’ inability to submit an acceptable portfolio.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that programs reexamine the criteria they are using to determine readiness to student teach to ensure the criteria are clearly aligned with the RIBTS or professional standards and candidates' potential for success.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the programs articulate the relationship between criteria and the potential for success as a student teacher.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the programs work with the Director of Assessment and other appropriate personnel to ensure the "Preparing to Teach Portfolio" provides clear evidence of a relationship between criteria and potential for success as a student teacher.

***1.04 Assessment at the Completion of Clinical Experiences and as a Basis for Recommendation for License. Prospective educators demonstrate their performance with respect to the standards for the completion of student teaching or supervised internship through an evaluation process that is shared by the college or university supervisor and the cooperating teacher or internship supervisor. Programs recommend prospective educators for licensure based on performance with respect to the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards.***

#### *Approaching Standard*

Table 1.1: FSEHD Assessment System for Initial and Advanced Programs on page 21 of the Institutional Report 2007 indicates that candidates must prepare an "Exit" portfolio that includes: a school analysis; an implemented unit plan with lesson plans and assessments of student learning; professional development reflection; a student teaching final evaluation; and other program-specific requirements.

The visiting team found that the programs have articulated criteria for recommendation for licensure through establishing the artifacts required in each program's exit portfolio. The number of required artifacts varied among programs. In some cases the information provided to candidates about how their artifacts would be evaluated was different than the actual criteria used by instructors to review the artifact. For example, in the secondary program, page 3 of the document "Exit Portfolio Guidelines" provides information about the "School Commentary" piece completed by candidates. The information provided to candidates indicates that the commentary provides evidence of ways in which candidates address RIBTS Standards 7, 9 and 11 as well as diversity and professionalism from the conceptual framework. The following page in the guidelines contains a scoring rubric for the school analysis artifact. The rubric scores the school analysis on four criteria that align to RIBTS 3, 4, 6 and 7. During the interviews, some faculty members indicated they were aware of this discrepancy but the information provided to candidates and the criteria by which their artifacts were scored remained out of alignment.

The Elementary Exit Portfolio Rubric Cover Sheet contains the expectation that "student teachers recommended for satisfactory completion of the program will achieve predominantly ratings of 3 or higher on each rubric (School Analysis, Implemented Unit Plan, and Professional Development Reflection.)" The wording on the cover sheet does not indicate clear criteria for

evaluating the exit portfolio and whether candidates must score at least a “3” on each artifact or if candidates can successfully complete the program with one artifact scored lower than a “3”. Page 31 of the IR indicates that candidates’ exit portfolio must “be assessed overall as either “exemplary” or “acceptable” before a candidate is permitted to graduate.” The Exit Portfolio Rubric Cover Sheet did not provide any options to indicate the rating of the portfolio. The Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor Review and Sign Off of the portfolio indicates that the options for the overall rating of the portfolio are “Strength”, “Competence”, “Developing” and “Weakness.”

The requirements for “Exit” portfolio do not appear to be consistently applied to all candidates. One candidate’s spring 2007 exit portfolio review indicated that the candidate portfolio had been reviewed and approved by a faculty member on May 7th. The line on the exit portfolio review for the observation of the student teacher was blank. Additional paperwork in the portfolio indicated that the observation of the student teacher was completed by the college supervisor on June 20.

Interviews with faculty members and cooperating teachers indicated that in some programs the cooperating teacher and program personnel evaluate student teacher portfolios but this did not appear to be the case in all programs.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that programs review and revise the criteria by which candidates are recommended for licensure to ensure there is evidence between the required criteria and the educators’ potential for success.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the programs review and revise the criteria for scoring the portfolios and the supporting documentation to ensure the performance levels are consistent.

The visiting team also RECOMMENDS that the system for evaluating candidates be applied consistently to all candidates.

***1.05 Validity of Assessment System. Assessment systems are aligned with educator standards and with instructional processes, use multiple assessments and various methodologies, and have expectations that are clearly communicated to prospective educators.***

***Approaching Standard***

The visiting team found through interviews with candidates that the programs have communicated the requirements of the assessment system to candidates through a variety of methods. Interviews with candidates revealed that some candidates have a limited understanding of the purposes, processes and outcomes of the assessment system. Additionally, some candidates indicated that changes to the assessment system were communicated through a variety of different methods including distributing information in class and posting information. The Rhode Island College website contained information about admission to the programs, the “Preparing to Teach” portfolios, and the “Exit” portfolios. The visiting team found variation

among the programs with regard to the information provided to candidates. The Elementary and Early Childhood Programs were quite detailed with prompts and rubrics for artifacts posted on the website. The Secondary Programs did not provide as much detailed information. The Special Education Program had developed specific guidelines for their portfolios that differed from the unit assessment system. These theoretically supplemented the unit assessments but the Special Education faculty appeared to have no feedback on their candidates' performance on the unit assessments. The fall 2007 newsletter did include an item relating to secondary portfolios in which candidates were informed that "Secondary Ed students need to pass a portfolio requirement before student teaching (in the practicum semester). Details are available from your advisor or from the English Department office. This portfolio includes papers, so PLEASE do not discard any of your returned essays. The deadline for portfolio submission this term is November 27." Information on the Secondary Programs homepage (<http://www.ric.edu/educationalStudies/secondary.php>) does not include any reference to the portfolio requirements.

The documentation provided in the exhibit room and the Rhode Island College website indicates that some of the documents used in the assessment system were recently revised. If these documents were recently revised, it may take time for program faculty and candidates to become familiar with the documents and for the program to collect evidence about the validity of the system.

Two requirements of candidates' "Preparing to Teach" portfolios are the inclusion of a Candidate Disposition Self-Evaluation Form and a Candidate Disposition Evaluation Form. The folder labeled "1.05/1.06" in the exhibit room contained information about a "scholarly conversation" that was held on April 17<sup>th</sup>. The document included an analysis of the candidates' dispositions as measured by the disposition evaluation form. The questions raised in the "lingering questions/comments" section are important questions and concerns regarding the validity of the assessment of candidate dispositions. The paper included the comment that "reliability and factor analyses indicate that some items are ambiguous to both students and faculty" and that, "factor analyses do not support the construct validity of the dispositions assessment." While assessing candidate dispositions is an important part of the assessment system, the concerns raised through the scholarly conversation require that program personnel re-assess the use of the instrument.

Other than the investigation of the disposition self-assessment, the visiting team could not find evidence that other attempts had been made to investigate and reduce possible sources of bias in the assessments. Page 37 of the IR indicates that, beginning in fall 2007, "investigations of the performance of different gender groups and ethnic groups on the assessments and the effects of the use of such assessments on the education of disadvantaged groups will be initiated. Unit stakeholder groups will also examine all the assessment tasks for possible bias." The visiting team commends the programs for these efforts.

As noted in some of the earlier sections of this report, the criteria used for evaluating the portfolios are sometimes applied inconsistently and the review of the portfolios is a check to ensure that all of the required artifacts are present. The inconsistent application of the assessment criteria affects the validity of the assessment system.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that all programs provide candidates with timely and accurate information about the assessment system.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the appropriate program personnel work with the Director of Assessment to redesign the dispositional assessments to increase the validity of the inferences made from the artifact.

The visiting team also RECOMMENDS that the programs continue to implement plans to investigate and review possible bias in the assessment system and differing performances of different gender groups.

***1.06 Reliability of Assessment System. Assessment systems yield fair, accurate, and consistent evaluation of prospective educators.***

***Approaching Standard***

Page 38 of the IR indicates that “reliability is further strengthened through the establishment of inter-rater reliability on portfolio review. Artifact and portfolio reviewers work together in teams to ensure that inter-rater reliability is achieved in portfolio review.” The IR also indicates that research on evaluating the reliability, or consistency, of performance assessments and rating scales began in the spring of 2007. Since this research only began last spring, the programs will need to continue this research to monitor the reliability of the assessment system.

The visiting team commends the programs for exploring the research questions outlined on page 38 of the IR. Further research on those questions will help to provide evidence about the reliability of the assessment system.

After reviewing the evidence provided in the exhibit room, the visiting team concluded that currently there is variation in the scoring of some artifacts both within and across programs. In some programs, the dispositional artifact essays are being scored by only one person. Documentation in the exhibit room indicated that one person had scored over half of all of the dispositional essays. In other programs, the essays are scored by two raters. It was not clear from the materials in the exhibit room what training the raters receive to score the dispositional essays and the other artifacts.

In many programs, the career commitment essay is scored by a single rater which raises questions of the reliability of the scoring of the essay. The visiting team could not find evidence that the ratings of the essays from different programs are compared to ensure the consistency of scoring among programs. The research questions cited on page 38 of the IR will help to provide information about the consistency of reviewing.

Page 38 of the IR states the programs’ belief that “reliability is enhanced through the unit’s development of rubrics that score each artifact according to each RIBT and Conceptual Framework element it addresses, rather than as a whole.” Using analytic rubrics can result in greater reliability if the levels of performance have been clearly articulated and the raters have

had training in recognizing the characteristics of the different performance levels. Some of the rubrics used to evaluate artifacts contain descriptions of proficiency levels that changed the criteria that were being evaluated from one category to the next. For example, in the “Exit” Portfolio artifact on the implemented unit plan, the description for “Competence” for item 3 includes knowledge of students’ developmental characteristics and activities that demonstrated an awareness of cultural influences on learning during the lesson. The description for “Strength” does not include any reference to the candidates’ knowledge of how children learn and develop.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that programs clarify the evaluation criteria for artifacts to further clarify the distinctions among the various performance levels.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that programs review and revise their scoring rubrics to ensure that the characteristics being evaluated in the rubric remain consistent across the performance levels.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the programs continue to develop and implement procedures that ensure that key assessment artifacts are rated by more than one rater.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that all raters have training in how to reliably score artifacts.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the programs continue with the implementation of activities to monitor the reliability of the assessment systems.

## Standard 2

**2. Prospective educators in Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, develop the dispositions, and practice the skills that are encompassed in the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards**

*Art Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Early Childhood: On Standard*  
*Elementary: On Standard*  
*Music Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Secondary: Approaching Standard*  
*Special Education: Approaching Standard*

**2.01 Professional and Pedagogical Studies. Prospective educators follow a well-planned scope and sequence of courses and experiences to develop the knowledge, dispositions, and skills encompassed in the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards**

*Art Education: On Standard*  
*Early Childhood: On Standard*  
*Elementary: On Standard*  
*Music Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Secondary: Approaching Standard*  
*Special Education: On Standard*

Interviews with candidates in the Early Childhood Program revealed that the candidates experience a well-planned curriculum that affords candidates opportunities to learn and demonstrate critical aspects of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions encompassed in the RIBTS. For the Elementary Program, the documentation in the exhibit room and conversations with faculty members and candidates indicated that the curriculum the Elementary Program provides candidates is appropriately sequenced and provides candidates with opportunities to learn the critical aspects of all RIBTS. The visiting team reviewing the Music Program found that candidates in the Music Education Program have opportunities to learn many of the critical aspects of the RIBTS. The visiting team found that music candidates do not have sufficient opportunities to learn the knowledge, skills and dispositions encompassed in RIBTS Standard 4 surrounding diverse learners and RIBTS Standard 2 surrounding the use of technology for instruction. During interviews with candidates, they expressed the desire to have more preparation on strategies for teaching students with disabilities. In the Art Education Program, the visiting team found that the candidates in the Art Program experience a curriculum that provides them with the opportunities to learn and demonstrate critical aspects of the knowledge, skills and dispositions encompassed in the RIBTS. Although some graduates expressed the desire to have more coursework on effective strategies for teaching art to students with disabilities, recently added required readings indicate that the curriculum is now addressing this need. In the Secondary Program, the visiting team found that candidates in the Secondary

Programs had opportunities to experience many of the critical aspects of RIBTS but not all of the RIBTS. The visiting team did not find evidence of some indicators for RIBTS 5, 9, and 10. The visiting team also found there were some inconsistencies in how course content aligned to RIBTS for similar courses offered for different programs. The Ed Psych 315 for English and Modern Languages had the same elements of the syllabi aligned to different RIBTS. In the Math Program, the only syllabus in the exhibit room was for calculus. Other courses contained only the course dates along with the chapters that would be covered and the number of weeks to be spent on each chapter without clear alignment to the RIBTS. A notable exception to these comments was the Science Program in which all candidates clearly had opportunities to learn about all of the critical aspects of the RIBTS.

The Middle Level Program at Rhode Island College consists of 3 courses for certified teachers returning for a middle level endorsement and 6 courses for undergraduate candidates. The team questioned why RIC would require more courses for the undergraduate track to this endorsement and wonders if this becomes a deterrent for undergraduate candidates who might pursue a middle level endorsement. The curriculum shows clear alignment to the 8 competencies outlined in RI regulations and to the RIBTS. The courses are appropriate for the preparation of middle level educators. The team believes that the establishment of an Advisory Board, that includes representation from all constituent groups, is a positive improvement and helps the program to maintain currency in the field of middle level education. In reviewing the course syllabi for MLED 310 and 320 it was not clear that the assessment of field service and research are aligned to the 8 competencies. While the 8 competencies were included in the course objectives and curriculum maps, it was not clear how the candidates were evaluated against those competencies. For example, the rubric provided as evidence does not show what competencies were met. Course information for MLED 330 did not show objectives therefore the team was unable to determine if there was an alignment of the work to the competencies. Rubrics for this course were not provided as evidence, and the assessments provided did not appear to align with the required competencies. The same variations in the alignment of the course objectives and assessments to the competencies exist for the graduate sequence of courses.

In the Special Education Program, the visiting team found that candidates in the Special Education Program had opportunities to learn and demonstrate the depth and breadth of the CEC standards. Two elements of CEC standard 6 that program faculty should consider strengthening are the elements that address how candidates can use assistive technology and how candidates can implement appropriate strategies for working with ELL students.

***For the Music Education Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program faculty revise the curriculum in the music program to include aspects on using technology to teach music and to include more strategies on using technology as an instructional tool.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program faculty review the scope and sequence of the curriculum in the music program to ensure that candidates have appropriate pedagogical components of music instruction prior to candidates beginning to provide instruction in their practicum experiences.

***For the Secondary Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that program faculty revise the program of studies to ensure that candidates have opportunities to learn and demonstrate critical aspects of RIBTS 5, 9 and 10.

***For the Middle Level Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the middle level program design assessments that would evaluate candidates' proficiency and performance of the 8 required competencies.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the middle level program examine the required courses for undergraduate vs. graduate candidates to determine whether the inequity is a deterrent and make appropriate changes.

***2.02 Subject Matter Knowledge. Prospective educators develop a deep understanding of the subject matter of their area of certification.***

***Art Education: On Standard***  
***Early Childhood: On Standard***  
***Elementary: On Standard***  
***Music Education: On Standard***  
***Secondary Education: On Standard***  
***Special Education: N/A***

The visiting team found that the Early Childhood Program has established acceptable subject matter standards that are addressed through the program's curriculum. The sequence of courses that candidates must complete is clear. Candidates consistently have opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge in their work in courses and field sites. In the Elementary Program, the visiting team found that the Elementary Program has established appropriate content standards for candidates in the program. The candidate portfolios provided in the exhibit room and interviews with candidates and cooperating teachers revealed that candidates in the elementary program are well prepared in this area. In the Music Education Program, the visiting team found that the program has established an acceptable set of subject matter standards with assessments to determine whether or not candidates can demonstrate these standards. The music faculty should consider whether or not adding an additional course in conducting would benefit candidates by strengthening their knowledge in this area. Faculty might also consider reviewing the opportunities that candidates have to learn how to use technology to assist them with teaching music. Candidates currently have an option of attending Saturday technology infusion strategy workshops, but attendance at these workshops is not required. The visiting team found that candidates in the Art Program showed strong subject matter knowledge. Candidates must complete 24 credit hours in art courses prior to taking ARTE 404. The curriculum maps provided in the exhibit room clearly mapped the course requirements to the appropriate art content standards. Candidate interviews and exit portfolios provided evidence of substantial breadth and depth of knowledge in art content. For the Secondary Programs, interviews with Arts and

Science faculty members, a review of the available syllabi in the exhibit room, and interviews with candidates and cooperating teachers indicated that candidates are well prepared in their content areas. Candidates' content portfolios also provided evidence that candidates have opportunities to learn and demonstrate their content knowledge.

**2.03 Technology. Prospective educators develop an understanding of the role of technology in education and learn how to use technology as an instructional and administrative tool.**

*Art Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Early Childhood: Approaching Standard*  
*Elementary: Approaching Standard*  
*Music Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Secondary Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Special Education: Approaching Standard*

The exhibit room contained a listing of the required candidate technology competencies. These competencies include requirements for word processing, spreadsheets, copyright and ethics, and using the World Wide Web. Candidates are provided with options for fulfilling the technology competencies that include: independently learning the required skills and then passing the Technology Competency Test; participating in one- or two- credit computer workshops and passing the Technology Competency Test; and completing INST 251 – Introduction to Emerging Technologies, with a minimum grade of C.

The visiting team believes that the intent of this indicator is for programs to adopt or develop a set of technology standards to direct candidates' learning to use technology as an instructional tool with their students as well as learning to use technology for personal productivity. The programs have done a commendable job of ensuring that candidates are personally proficient in the use of technology. The visiting team could not find evidence that the preparation of candidates to use technology as an instructional tool has been articulated through a set of identified technology standards. Adopting such technology standards might be accomplished by expanding the current competencies surrounding the personal use of technology to include instructional uses of technology as well or by adopting/adapting national technology standards.

The team reviewing the Early Childhood Program found that candidates in the program were able to speak about the opportunities they had to learn and demonstrate the articulated competencies. However, the visiting team did not find evidence that the program had articulated candidates' use of technology as an instructional tool or had provided candidates with opportunities to learn to use technology to help students learn. Interviews with candidates indicated that many of the placement sites did not have technology available for the candidates to use. The team reviewing the Elementary Program found that using technology was a strength of the candidates although the reviewers could not find that a set of technology standards had been adopted and that instruction was aligned to these standards. The evidence in the exhibit room indicated that candidates are exposed to educational resources provided through technology including websites, Mapquest, and Google searches. In ELED 422 and ELED 435, candidates conduct a webquest in which they link four websites related to reading. These sites are critiqued based on the content of the websites and for website effectiveness. Candidates also locate and

critique one piece of educational software related to literacy. In ELED 437, candidates design PowerPoint presentations although a traditional paper can be substituted for the PowerPoint. Technology is also integrated into ELED 438 and 504 as candidates view websites and critique software. In ELED 439, candidates communicate with their college supervisor via email and a listserv. Interviews with candidates and cooperating teachers indicated that candidates do use technology as an instructional tool. For the Music Education Program, the exhibit room contained a document that described all of the assignments related to technology. The assignments involved converting audio files and manipulating midi files, composing an eight-measure choral piece, creating lesson plans that implemented some type of technology, and explaining how technology might be used in the classroom. The syllabi did not indicate that candidates were taught how to use technology as an instructional tool with students. The visiting team found that candidates do gain knowledge and skill at basic computer applications but do not have sufficient opportunities to learn to use technology to assist them in their teaching of music to students. The Saturday technology workshops provide an excellent opportunity for candidates to explore technology as an instructional tool but these workshops are optional for candidates. For the Art Program, the visiting team found that the course catalog provides evidence that students have the opportunity to take one of several computer graphics or “new media” courses (Art 224, Art 226, Art 227) in addition to demonstrating required technology proficiency. From interviews with faculty and students the team found that there is poor access to technology (both hardware and Internet connection) in the art building, making integration of instructional technology into art education coursework difficult for faculty and students. In spite of this, the team found excellent use of technology for art instruction and assessment in several student portfolios; however, it is not clear how this knowledge is supported by the required curriculum.

The review team for the Secondary Program found that the folder labeled “2.03” in the exhibit room provided a table explaining the infusion of technology into secondary education. In SED 405, candidates are exposed to PowerPoint, graphics, tables, drawing, HTML documents – hyperlinks, formatting, bookmarks, and digital editing. In SED 410, candidates are exposed to hyperlinks, bookmarks, document formatting, digital photography and video editing, scanning documents, and identification and evaluation of Web-based instructional resources. A review of the syllabi didn’t indicate that these topics were integrated into the 410 syllabi for all subject areas. The course syllabi for Mathematics 410 included the use of a graphing calculator. The visiting team found that technology is minimally addressed in the course SED 405. In the latest version of the course syllabus for SED 405, there was a greater emphasis on the candidates’ use of technology although the syllabus did not address how candidates might use technology for the instruction of students. Only one of the three course syllabi provided for SED 405 included technology. The visiting team found that while the program has not identified a set of technology standards, it is clear that many of the students have developed the ability to integrate technology into the instruction they provide for students. What was not clear was whether or not candidates had developed these skills because of their own personal initiative or because of the requirements of the program. Aligning candidates’ opportunities to learn and demonstrate strategies for using technology in their teaching to a set of technology standards will ensure that all candidates learn to use technology as an instructional tool. The visiting team found that professors in the Special Education Program create WebCT opportunities for each individual course. Professors and instructors do model some use of technology as an instructional tool by using PowerPoint in their instruction to candidates. The documentation in the exhibit room did not provide evidence that

candidates are instructed in the use of technology for instruction (i.e. assistive technology). The emphasis seemed to be on the candidates' use of technology. Interviews with the faculty revealed that they integrate many examples of assistive/instructional technology into their instruction but that students may not connect these examples to their teaching. In interviews with students, they reported that they were unaware of the examples of assistive technology which faculty members had shared. The syllabi rarely documented the integration reported by the faculty.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Early Childhood, Elementary, Music, Art, Secondary and Special Education Programs either develop or adopt a set of technology standards that address the uses of technology for instruction as well as administrative tasks.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Early Childhood, Elementary, Music, Art, Secondary and Special Education Programs align their instruction in the use of technology for instruction and administrative tasks to the standards developed or adopted by the programs.

***For the Art Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program include opportunities for candidates to gain awareness of, and demonstrate knowledge of digital portfolio programs.

***2.04 Additional Rhode Island Certification Requirements. Prospective educators develop any additional knowledge and or skills required by Rhode Island educational law or regulations of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education.***

***Art Education: Approaching Standard***  
***Early Childhood: On Standard***  
***Elementary: Approaching Standard***  
***Music Education: Approaching Standard***  
***Secondary Education: Approaching Standard***  
***Special Education: On Standard***

Table 2.49 on page 102 of the Institutional Report 2007 provides an overview of how the state-wide initiatives are included into the curriculum experienced by candidates. The table indicates that the following state-wide initiatives are integrated into the programs: RI early learning standards; GLE/GSE; NECAP; personal learning plans, reading policy, high school regulations, IEP, SALT, educational organizations, and I-Plans. The chart does not include "The New Diploma System" which is based on high school graduation proficiency requirements (PBGRs) in all core subjects and is a major paradigm shift that has implications for all levels of education. This system places new requirements for the awarding of all diplomas starting in 2008, these requirements include authentic learning through performance based tasks. Information in the folder labeled "2.04" in the exhibit room indicated that the Rhode Island College faculty members have engaged in regular informational sessions about RIDE initiatives. The visiting team found that documentation in the exhibit room indicated that candidates in the Early Childhood Program learn about GLE's and GSE's in ECED 301. In ECED 423 and ECED 425,

candidates receive copies of Rhode Island's Literacy policy. ECED 419 addresses IEP's and discusses ways to meet the needs of all learners. Educational organizations devoted to the education of young children are introduced to candidates in ECED 420 and 425. During interviews, candidates in the Early Childhood Program were able to speak about state literacy and other appropriate initiatives. For the Elementary Program, documentation provided in the folder labeled "2.04" in the exhibit room provided information about how state-wide initiatives are integrated into the course of studies for candidates in the Elementary Program. RI Early Learning Standards: GLE/GSE's are introduced in ELED 300. In ELED 300 candidates also have class discussions on testing children and that GLE's need to be addressed through candidate coursework. Candidates are required to connect their lesson plans to GLE's. Candidates learn about NECAP in ELED 300 and learn more about the NECAP in ELED 437 and in ELED 438 in which candidates must examine released NECAP items. In ELED 538 candidates take a practice NECAP mathematics exam and discuss the history, purpose, and administration of the test. Personal literacy plans are addressed in ELED 422 and in the case study assignment in ELED 435. Information from the RIDE website on personal literacy plans is addressed in ELED 508. Rhode Island's literacy policy is provided to candidates in ELED 422 and ELED 424. The use of Individual Education Plans is addressed in ELED 438. Candidates learn about RIDE's Infoworks and about SALT visits during ELED 300, 437, 528 and 537. They learn about educational organizations appropriate for elementary education in ELED 436, 438 and ELED 518. They learn about I-Plans in ELED 500. During interviews with candidates, the visiting team found that there seemed to be pockets of awareness with some candidates quite knowledgeable about statewide initiative while other candidates only possessed a superficial awareness of statewide initiatives.

The visiting team reviewing the Music Program found that the documentation in the folder labeled "2.04" in the exhibit room indicated that music education candidates learn about state initiatives through: newspaper articles and journal reviews; internet searches; Rhode Island Music Educators Association Listserv; class discussions; and through the collegiate Chapter of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) when they met with the Governor's public policy spokesperson. The evidence in the exhibit room provided minimal evidence of a connection between coursework and state initiatives. After reviewing the candidates' portfolios and interviewing candidates, the visiting team concluded that candidates did not have sufficient knowledge of the high school proficiency-based graduation requirements and other appropriate state initiatives. During interviews with candidates in the Art Program, the visiting team found there was limited candidate awareness of The New Diploma System, and proficiency-based graduation requirements. During faculty interviews, one faculty member also seemed unaware of the proficiency-based graduation requirements for high school students. One of the candidate portfolios in the exhibit room contained evidence of high school proficiency graduation requirements, however the other portfolios did not contain any evidence of state initiatives. During interviews with Secondary Program candidates, the visiting team found that candidates were not aware of some of the most recent statewide initiatives such as the proficiency-based graduation requirements and other appropriate state initiatives. In the Science Program, the visiting team could not find evidence of SED 410 being linked to state initiatives or to IDEA. In the Math Program, the visiting team found no information about how the coursework linked to state initiatives. The visiting team found that the syllabi did not indicate links that ensured that candidates were properly informed of the pertinent state initiatives. Candidates in the Special

Education Program learn about Rhode Island’s Early Learning Standards, GLE’s and GSE’s in SPED 312 and SPED 412 and about NECAP in SPED 312. Personal learning plans for students are covered in SPED 312 and issues surrounding Rhode Island’s reading policy are addressed in SPED 405. Candidates are exposed to the high school regulations in SPED 424 and 427 and learn about IEP’s in SPED 433. The visiting team found that candidates in the Special Education Program were very knowledgeable about RIBTS, SALT visits, NECAP and other appropriate statewide initiatives.

***For the Art Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that program faculty revise the curriculum to ensure that candidates in the Art Program have sufficient opportunities to gain awareness of, and demonstrate knowledge of The New Diploma System, and proficiency-based graduation requirements which include authentic learning through performance based tasks that emphasize depth of knowledge.

***For the Elementary Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program faculty revise the curriculum to ensure that candidates in the Elementary Program have sufficient opportunities to gain awareness of, and demonstrate knowledge of the statewide initiatives.

***For the Music Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that program faculty revise the curriculum to ensure that candidates in the Music Program have sufficient opportunities to gain awareness of, and demonstrate knowledge of The New Diploma System, proficiency-based graduation requirements and other appropriate state initiatives.

***For the Secondary Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that program faculty revise the curriculum to ensure that candidates in the Secondary Education Program have sufficient opportunities to gain awareness of, and demonstrate knowledge of The New Diploma System and the proficiency-based graduation requirements.

**2.05 Coherence. Prospective educators pursue coherent educational studies that are grounded in research and theory.**

***Art Education: Approaching Standard***  
***Early Childhood: On Standard***  
***Elementary: On Standard***  
***Music Education: Approaching Standard***  
***Secondary Education: On Standard***  
***Special Education: Approaching Standard***

Page 102 of the Institutional Report 2007 states that the “skills and understandings embedded in the FSEHD Conceptual Framework, RIBTS, and SPA standards are woven throughout each program. The focus of the Conceptual Framework, RIBTS, and the SPA standards provides a structure of coherence as each course instructor uses these frameworks to guide instruction, specify outcomes, and assess candidate performance.” The visiting team found that the courses in the Early Childhood Program are appropriately sequenced providing candidates with theory and then with opportunities for candidates to apply theory to their teaching. The visiting team found that coherence is one of the strengths of the Elementary Program. The program of studies is well-sequenced. During interviews, candidates expressed the desire to have more experience working with the whole class before student teaching. In the Music Program, the visiting team found that candidates in the Music Program begin their work in the field very early in their course of studies. While early field work is important, spending so much time in the field so quickly may limit the opportunities that candidates have to learn appropriate skills and theory to bring to their field experiences. During interviews, candidates reported that they feel they lack knowledge of how to best teach music to students with disabilities. Sending the candidates into the field with the expectation that they will quickly assume teaching responsibilities creates a lack of coherence between candidates’ preparation to teach and the expectations for candidates in their early field placements. From reviewing the documents about the Art Program in the exhibit room and interviews with candidates, graduates and faculty members, the visiting team concluded that the sequencing of coursework is appropriate with one exception. During interviews some candidates reported a need for more strategies to address the needs of students with disabilities. Although the faculty provided many supplemental articles and one text on teaching art to students with special needs in the exhibit room, there does not appear to be coherence across the program on addressing this topic. The lack of specific curricula with regard to teaching art to students with disabilities creates a lack of coherence in the undergraduate program sequence, whereas the graduate program requirements include a special education course. The visiting team found that the coursework in the Secondary Program is appropriately sequenced and connected in a developmental way. Candidates have appropriate opportunities to apply theory and pedagogical knowledge during their field experiences. The visiting team found that because candidates in the Special Education Program are responsible for securing their own practicum placements and because students are not supervised during these placements, the field experiences do not ensure that students have a systematic set of field experience that developmentally build candidates’ knowledge and skill.

***For the Art Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program investigate candidates’ knowledge about and comfort in, teaching students with disabilities and consider adding instruction in addressing the needs of students with disabilities in the art classroom to the course of studies.

***For the Music Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program investigate candidates’ knowledge about and comfort in, teaching students with disabilities and consider adding instruction in addressing the needs of students with disabilities in music to the course of studies.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program faculty reconsider the sequencing of courses and field work to ensure candidates have appropriate theoretical and pedagogical knowledge before beginning to assume responsibilities in the field.

***For the Special Education Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that program faculty work with appropriate personnel at Rhode Island College and with their partnership districts to identify and select practicum sites and placement processes that meet the requirements of the Rhode Island Program Approval indicators 3.02, 3.03, and 3.04.

## Standard 3

**3. Prospective educators have the opportunity to develop their learning in a variety of high quality field sites with professionals who model effective educational practice, assume responsibility for educating prospective colleagues, and are committed to ongoing professional development.**

*Art Education: Approaching Standard*

*Early Childhood: On Standard*

*Elementary: Approaching Standard*

*Music Education: Approaching Standard*

*Secondary: Approaching Standard*

*Special Education: Unacceptable*

**3.01 Extensive Clinical Experience.** Prospective educators complete purposeful and sequenced field experiences, including field experience prior to student teaching or internship periods. Through student teaching or an internship they have the opportunity to experience all aspects of teaching.

*Art Education: On Standard*

*Early Childhood: On Standard*

*Elementary Program: On Standard*

*Music Education: On Standard*

*Secondary Education: On Standard*

*Special Education: Approaching Standard*

Page 103 of the Institutional Report 2007 states that all “FSEHD candidates, in programs leading to certification, participate in a series of field experiences within the partnership districts.” Each program offers a series of sequential courses. For all undergraduate students, the first course in the sequence that introduces candidates to field experiences is Foundation of Education 346; Schooling in a Democratic Society. Candidates complete a minimum of 15 hours of pre-student teaching fieldwork in an urban public school setting. The field experiences provide progressive opportunities for observation, teaching, and reflection as well as growth and development of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions central to the RIBTS and FSEHD’s Conceptual Framework. In the Early Childhood Program, candidates begin their coursework with ECED 301: Developmental Approaches to Teaching and Learning, and proceed through a series of five supervised methods courses. The candidates’ field experiences culminate in student teaching and a student teaching seminar. Early childhood candidates complete a course in special education, Special Education 433: Adaptation of Instruction for Inclusive Education. Candidates’ experiences and artifacts are evaluated by faculty members. The visiting team found that the sequence of courses provides candidates with purposeful, sequenced field experiences. After candidates are admitted to the Elementary Program, they begin the clinical experience with the

introductory course, ELED 300: Concepts of Teaching. Candidates then proceed through a series of six supervised methods courses. The candidates' field experiences culminate in student teaching and a student teaching seminar. Candidates' experiences in the field are linked to coursework and the experiences build appropriately. The student teaching experience provides candidates with opportunities to experience all aspects of teaching. In the Music Program, candidates in the Music Program engage in a sequence of field sites that occurs over four semesters. These experiences are designed to help candidates increase their competence as musicians and teachers of music who are able to teach general music, vocal/choral music, and instrumental music. The evidence reviewed by the visiting team provided evidence that field experiences are a strong component of the program. Candidates complete many guided teaching experiences during their field work. Candidates at the undergraduate and graduate levels in the Art Program participate in a sequence of field experiences. Candidates in the Art Program begin their field work with experiences in an urban school and observations in elementary and secondary schools. Candidates complete secondary and elementary level practica in which they observe, assist and teach a lesson. Candidates complete a student teaching experience at both the elementary and secondary levels during their 14-16 weeks of student teaching. The visiting team found that the field experiences are appropriately sequenced and that the student teaching experiences provide candidates with appropriate experience at elementary and secondary levels. In the Secondary Program, candidates complete a set of field experiences that provide candidates with opportunities to observe, teach, and reflect as well as to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Candidates' experiences in the field begin early in the program although some candidates reported during interviews that they wish their field experiences started even earlier. Other candidates expressed the opinion that the six week practicum experience is too short and that they wished they had more actual teaching opportunities prior to beginning their student teaching.

With the exception of the Severe and Profound Program, candidates in the Special Education Program must select, locate and arrange their own pre-student teaching field experiences. The field work completed by candidates is somewhat linked to the coursework but because the selection of field sites is not carefully monitored, candidates' opportunities to integrate subject matter and pedagogical knowledge into their early field experiences are not assured. During interviews, candidates reported that it can take them a great deal of time to secure entry into a field site. Once admitted, if the field site turns out to be of low quality, candidates are reluctant to change their placement due to time restrictions for assignments.

***For the Special Education Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program develop processes and procedures to ensure that candidates' early field experiences are selected and monitored to provide candidates with opportunities to begin their field work in settings that meet the criteria outlined in Rhode Island Program Approval indicators 3.02, 3.03 and 3.04.

**3.02 Clinical Experience in a Variety of Settings. Prospective educators complete field experiences in a variety of educational settings, including schools which serve culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students and classrooms that serve students with a range of abilities, including students with exceptional needs.**

*Art Education: On Standard*  
*Early Childhood: On Standard*  
*Elementary: Approaching Standard*  
*Music Education: On Standard*  
*Secondary Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Special Education: Unacceptable*

The visiting team found that candidates in the Early Childhood Program complete their field experiences in a variety of educational settings with a range of students. Candidates' experiences in the field are monitored by program faculty. The visiting team found that program faculty members in the Elementary Program are monitoring candidates' placement in districts but not necessarily ensuring that all students have experiences working in schools which serve culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students and in classrooms that serve students with a range of abilities including students with exceptional needs. For example, candidates placed at the Henry Barnard School do not have opportunities to work with students with disabilities. Candidates in the Music Program are placed at suburban and urban field sites. Candidates reported that they have experiences working with a range of students. They also expressed the desire for more instruction in theory and strategies for working with students with disabilities in the music classroom. For the Art Program, the visiting team found that the program is designed to provide students a variety of educational settings. Candidates are required to begin their field experiences in FNED 346 by spending 15 hours over 14-16 weeks in urban classrooms that serve culturally, economically and linguistically diverse populations. Candidates complete observations in K-12 classrooms at 5 different school sites for a minimum of 10 hours. Candidates then spend a minimum of 20 hours observing in an elementary art classroom and a minimum of another 24 hours in a secondary art classroom. For their student teaching experiences, candidates spend 7-8 weeks full time in an elementary art setting and another 7-8 weeks full time in a secondary art setting. Candidates in the Secondary Program begin their field experiences in FNED 346: Schooling in a Democratic Society or FNED 546: Contexts of Schooling during which candidates participate in a field experience in Providence, Pawtucket, or Central Falls tutoring students. During Secondary Education 405, candidates participate in micro-teaching experiences and conduct two observations at Hope High School. In Secondary Education 410, candidates prepare and teach lessons at middle and secondary field sites for two three-week sessions. Candidates work in teams of two with the clinical instructors to plan, develop, and implement daily lesson plans. For student teaching, candidates complete a 14-16, 5 day a week student teaching placement. The visiting team found that candidates' early field experiences provide them with opportunities to observe in urban classrooms. The visiting team did not find evidence that the field sites into which candidates are placed are monitored to ensure that candidates have experience working with a range of students. The candidates reported that they do not feel they have enough experiences working with English language learners, students with differing academic abilities or with students with disabilities. The pairing of candidates during their six week practicum placement may limit the experiences received by

each individual candidate. Candidates in the Special Education Program are responsible for securing their own field sites for their practicum work. Consequently, candidates are not assured of opportunities to work in a variety of education settings which serve culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students and classrooms that serve students with a range of abilities including students with exceptional needs. The visiting team did find that the early field sites of candidates in the program addressing students with severe and profound disabilities were selected and monitored.

***For the Elementary Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program develop processes and procedures for the selection and monitoring of field sites that ensures that call candidates are provided with opportunities to work in a variety of settings with a range of students.

***For the Secondary Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program monitor the placements of students' practicum experiences to ensure candidates have opportunities to work with a range of students including students with exceptional needs.

***For the Special Education Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program develop processes and procedures to ensure that candidates' early field experiences are in a variety of schools which serve culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students and classrooms that serve students with a range of abilities including students with exceptional needs.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program develop processes and procedures for the selection and monitoring of field sites to ensure candidates have opportunities to work with the full range of students for which they will be certified to teach.

***3.03 Effective Field Sites. Prospective educators complete field experiences in settings where they have the opportunity to practice their learning in a way that is consistent with the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards.***

*Art Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Early Childhood: On Standard*  
*Elementary: Approaching Standard*  
*Music Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Secondary Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Special Education: Unacceptable*

Most programs have worked hard to ensure that candidates complete all of their field experiences in settings where they have opportunities to learn and teach in ways that are consistent with the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards. One strategy the programs have used to ensure effective field sites is to have candidates evaluate the field sites. During the interviews with

faculty, the visiting team was informed that the site evaluation forms are constructed so that when they are scanned for data, the data are not able to provide information about the quality of an individual field site (classroom) but can provide information about the quality of a school or district. Since the quality of placement may vary within a school, the forms may need revision to ensure that the quality for individual field sites can be monitored and evaluated.

Program personnel also indicated a desire to track the field sites over time but have been unable to do so because of software problems. The visiting team commends the program for their plans to track field sites.

In the Early Childhood Program, candidates complete their field experiences in settings that assure candidates are placed in districts, schools, and classrooms that are effective sites for candidates to learn practice that is consistent with the RIBTS. Interviews with program faculty members indicated that they carefully monitor the field sites to ensure that the sites chosen have appropriate curricula and are classrooms that promote the use of the RIBTS. The program has identified clear criteria for the selection of field sites, and, if these criteria are not met, the field site is no longer used for candidates' placements. The Elementary Program does not appear to consistently implement the criteria established for field site selection by the FSEHD. While page 26 of the Student Teaching Handbook indicates that cooperating teachers must "understand and model the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards," interviews in the field and with the cooperating teachers revealed that there are many cooperating teachers who have not received RIBTS training beyond the information contained in the packet of materials sent at the beginning of the placement. One principal who was responsible for selecting cooperating teachers in her school indicated that she did not know teacher knowledge of the RIBTS was a requirement. The sample partnership agreement in the exhibit room did not list knowledge of the RIBTS as a requirement for the cooperating teacher. The Cooperating Teacher Application Form does indicate that training in the RIBTS is a requirement for becoming a cooperating teacher. Since cooperating teachers evaluate the student teachers on each of RIBTS, it is important that the cooperating teachers understanding the knowledge, skills, and dispositions on which they are evaluating their student teachers.

Interviews with the program faculty in the Music Program indicated that the program is currently working to develop clear criteria for effective field sites. Additionally, the new program director is personally visiting all of the field sites in order to assure they are sites in which candidates have opportunities to practice their learning in ways that are consistent with the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards.

The visiting team found that current placements in the Art Program are made based upon the program faculty's personal or professional relationships with cooperating teachers or administrators rather than clearly articulated criteria for field sites or cooperating teachers. Interviews with candidates and faculty indicated that the program currently has 37 candidates enrolled. Given the present level of faculty, such a large number of sites in the Art Program is difficult to monitor.

The visiting team found that the Secondary Program does not place candidates into field sites based upon clear criteria that assure candidates' have a chance to learn teaching practices and

strategies that are consistent with the RIBTS. The visiting team found that candidates' first placement is chosen because of the urban nature of the schools. The visiting team could not find evidence that the quality of the field sites used for the two, three week placements and student teaching were monitored or that documentation was provided for the ongoing evaluation of the individual sites. The visiting team found that the current system for collecting data on field placements does collect information about candidates' evaluation of districts and schools but is not able to collect data over time on candidates' evaluation of individual classroom placements.

Special Education candidates in the Mild/Moderate and Early Childhood Special Education Programs find their own field sites with little or no apparent quality control. Rhode Island College does not collect evidence on the quality of the individual site. Candidates expressed difficulty in finding their own sites and then, once they did find the site, it was not always a high quality field site but that they were reluctant to leave that site to find another. Candidates in the Severe and Profound Program do receive assistance that ensures their field sites are ones in which they have the opportunity to practice their learning in ways that are consistent with the CEC standards. The visiting team found documentation in the exhibit room that stated "students are not to be placed in classrooms until the appropriate school department official approves the placement." It was unclear from the documentation whether or not the appropriate school officials approve the individual placements requested by practicum students in the Special Education Program.

***For the Art, Early Childhood, Elementary, Music, Secondary and Special Education Programs:***

The visiting RECOMMENDS that the program implement policies and procedures by which data from candidates' evaluations of cooperating teachers can be kept over time to evaluate the efficacy of placements in individual classrooms.

***For the Art Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program develop clear criteria for selecting field sites that align with indicators 3.02, 3.03 and 3.04.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program review the present level of faculty to determine if the current number of faculty allows for regular, periodic monitoring of the ongoing effectiveness of each site.

***For the Elementary Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program implement the established criteria for all field sites so that these sites align with indicators 3.02, 3.03, and 3.04 of the Rhode Island Program Approval standards.

***For the Music Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program continue to develop clear criteria for selecting field sites that align with indicators 3.02, 3.03, and 3.04 of the Rhode Island Program Approval standards and then select future field sites on the basis of these articulated criteria.

***For the Secondary Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program develop clear criteria for selecting field sites that align with indicators 3.02, 3.03, and 3.04 of the Rhode Island Program Approval standards and that future field sites are selected on the basis of these articulated criteria.

***For the Special Education Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program develop clear criteria for selecting field sites that align with indicators 3.02, 3.03, and 3.04 of the Rhode Island Program Approval standards and that future field sites are selected on the basis of these articulated criteria that include alignment to the CEC standards.

**3.04 Effective Cooperating Teachers and Internship Supervisors. Approved programs place prospective educators exclusively with cooperating teachers and internship supervisors whose practice is consistent with the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards. The cooperating teachers and internship supervisors know how to help prospective educators develop and how to evaluate prospective educators in order to make a recommendation regarding successful performance with respect to the standards.**

*Art Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Early Childhood: On Standard*  
*Elementary: Approaching Standard*  
*Music Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Secondary Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Special Education: Unacceptable*

The visiting team found that not all programs place candidates exclusively with cooperating teachers whose practice is consistent with the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards. Page 26 of the 2007-2008 Student Teaching Handbook indicates that the cooperating teacher is expected to “Understand and model the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards” but this criterion for cooperating teachers is not listed in the generic partnership agreement with PK-12 schools. An interview with one principal responsible for placing candidates indicated that the principal was unaware of this criterion and had not used it to place student teachers.

The criteria for cooperating teachers listed in Appendix A of the 2007-2008 Student Teaching Handbook does not indicate that cooperating teachers “understand and model the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards” but that they have completed a RIDE, school department or college/university sponsored Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards training.

The Partnership Agreement on the Office of Field Placements and School Partnerships’ website does indicate that “individuals selected as clinical instructors and/or cooperating teachers for Rhode Island College pre-service teacher preparation students must demonstrate behaviors reflective of the Feinstein School’s Conceptual Framework and the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards.” Schools must provide Rhode Island College with a copy of the procedures used in the district for identifying and selecting clinical instructors and cooperating teachers. The visiting team did find documentation of these processes in the exhibit room.

The visiting team found that cooperating practitioners working with candidates in the Early Childhood Program were well-versed in the RIBTS. The evaluations of the cooperating teachers by the student teachers showed that cooperating teachers were consistently rated very high.

During a field site visit for the Elementary Program, the visiting team heard a principal comment that candidates from Rhode Island College are placed in at least one classroom in her school where the cooperating teacher’s practice does not reflect the RIBTS. This principal has no role in placing RIC candidates. One principal reported placing candidates by appointing faculty as cooperating teachers while another principal required that cooperating teachers did indeed have

training in the RIBTS. A candidate in the middle of the program reported that the school cooperating teacher “does not look for RIBTS” in her lesson plans or implemented lessons. The Office of School Partnerships and Field Placements maintains data on cooperating teachers. The cooperating teachers are evaluated by the College faculty and the RIC elementary education candidates. The Office of School Partnerships and Field Placements reported that it ensures candidates are not placed in sites where cooperative teachers are not acceptable. However, this conflicts with the principal’s statement above. It appears that there is inconsistent application of criteria for selection and continual monitoring. The visiting team found no evidence that the practicum supervisors are monitored in any consistent way or that the program documented that cooperating teachers met the criteria for selection.

The visiting team found that personnel from the Music Program are currently visiting all of the field sites and working to articulate the criteria by which future cooperating teachers will be evaluated.

The visiting team found that cooperating teachers working with candidates in the Art Program are often active professionally and that these cooperating teachers model exemplary practices for student teachers. In addition, all of the cooperating teachers interviewed have participated in a formal mentoring program based on RIBTS either at their school site or by RIDE. However the system or criteria by which teachers are selected or monitored is not clear.

The cooperating teachers for the Secondary Program who were interviewed by the visiting team were not aware of any criteria by which cooperating teachers were chosen even though page 23 of the Student Teaching Handbook did contain information about the criteria for selecting cooperating teachers and the expectations. The Student Teaching Handbook indicates that cooperating teachers must observe the student teacher at least three times with one of these observations completed jointly with the university supervisor. The handbook does not indicate that the cooperating teachers have a role in evaluating the student teachers although page 29 of the handbook indicates that school principals are expected to conduct at least one evaluation of the student teacher. The visiting team could not find evidence that the candidates evaluate their practicum teachers. Some cooperating teachers reported that they feel the student teachers have too much to do during their student teaching experience. This may indicate that they are not clear about the reasons for the program’s expectations for student teachers.

Except for candidates in the Severe and Profound Program, candidates participating in practicum experiences in the Special Education Program must locate and secure their own placements for these experiences. It is unclear what criteria, if any, candidates use to locate appropriate sites. Some candidates reported that they use the phone book to find sites and then called several schools until they found a site that would allow them to do their required field work. Candidates reported that after securing the sites, they found some to be of poor quality but felt they did not have the time to locate and secure another site because of the demands of the class. The program was not able to provide evidence of the quality of the educators who are serving as practicum supervisors.

***For the Art Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that personnel from the Art Program articulate the criteria by which cooperating teachers are chosen and that these criteria include teachers whose practice is consistent with the RIBTS and then use these criteria for selecting future cooperating teachers and monitoring current cooperating teachers.

***For the Elementary Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program consistently apply the criteria listed in the Student Teaching handbook for selecting practicum supervisors and cooperating teachers.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program implement policies and procedures by which data from candidates' evaluations of cooperating teachers can be kept over time to evaluate the efficacy of placements with individual teachers.

***For the Music Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that personnel from the Music Program articulate the criteria by which future cooperating teachers are chosen and that these criteria include teachers whose practice is consistent with the RIBTS and then use these criteria for selecting future cooperating teachers.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that personnel from the Music Program work with appropriate personnel from the Office of School Partnerships and Field Placement to document the selection of cooperating teachers.

***For the Secondary Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the criteria for selecting practicum and cooperating teachers be shared with practicum and cooperating teachers.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program discuss the program's expectations for placing student teachers with cooperating teachers and the concerns expressed by cooperating teachers to determine the reasons for the concerns about the program's expectations for the student teaching experience.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program implement policies and procedures by which candidates can evaluate the practicum and cooperating teachers with whom they are placed and maintain that data over time to evaluate the efficacy of placements with individual teachers.

***For the Special Education Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program establish clear criteria for practicum supervisors to ensure they model effective practice consistent with the CEC standards and that

the chosen cooperating teachers are committed to supporting the development of prospective educators and are capable of evaluating candidates with respect to the standards.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program consistently use the criteria they establish to evaluate prospective and to monitor current practicum and cooperating teachers and provide documentation of the ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of educators serving in these roles.

***3.05 Recruit and Provide Professional Development for Cooperating Teachers and Internship Supervisors.*** Approved programs recruit cooperating teachers, internship supervisors, or mentors whose practice is consistent with the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards and who are committed to supporting the development of prospective educators. The programs provide professional development opportunities and other incentives to help these educators enhance their effectiveness in these roles.

*Art Education: On Standard*  
*Early Childhood: Approaching Standard*  
*Elementary: Approaching Standard*  
*Music Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Secondary Education: Approaching Standard*  
*Special Education: Unacceptable*

The visiting team found that cooperating teachers in the Early Childhood Program are offered limited incentives to assume the cooperating teacher responsibilities. The program provides some professional development for cooperating teachers but this professional development varies among partnerships. The cooperating teachers interviewed by the visiting team felt valued by Rhode Island College and indicated a desire to know more about the program so they could provide candidates with even more support.

The visiting team found that all of the cooperating teachers working with candidates from the Elementary Program felt valued for their service. The team also found that cooperating teachers are offered limited incentives for assuming the cooperating teacher role. The program doesn't actively recruit cooperating teachers but rather relies on partnership districts to select cooperating teachers. The principal in one partnership district was not aware of the requirement that cooperating teachers be knowledgeable about the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards. The visiting team found that the criteria listed in the partnership agreement for selecting cooperating teachers did not include knowledge of RIBTS. The professional development provided to educators for their role as cooperating teachers is limited. Some cooperating teachers reported that they had never received training in the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards. The visiting team found that cooperating teachers feel valued for their service but that they receive limited incentives for being cooperating teachers. The professional development provided to cooperating teachers for their role is limited.

In the Art Program, the faculty and college have provided the venue for many professional development opportunities for art teachers, resulting in RIC being named as a "Friend of Art Education" by the Rhode Island Art Education Association. Some faculty regularly present at the National Art Education Association conferences and many of the cooperating teachers present or

attend these conferences. To enable teachers to remain current within art practices, RIC offers art teachers the option of taking studio art courses as graduate level courses.

The visiting team found that the educators who serve as cooperating teachers feel valued for their service and have a rewarding professional relationship with the art education faculty. Each year the faculty conducts a workshop with all cooperating teachers to review the RIBTS and the evaluation process and provide cooperating teachers with packets of information. In addition cooperating teachers are invited to a seminar on Literacy and the Visual Arts. The program actively recruits model teachers to serve in the role of cooperating teachers through the art teachers' listserv, the RIAEA Newsletter and art education workshops and conferences.

The visiting team found that cooperating teachers working with candidates in the Secondary Program feel valued for their service. The team also found that cooperating teachers receive only occasional professional development opportunities with which to develop the knowledge and skills required by educators serving as cooperating teachers.

The visiting team found no evidence that the Special Education Program is actively recruiting cooperating teachers or providing cooperating teachers with significant incentives to assume the role. Cooperating teachers are not provided with any kind of orientation to the role of cooperating teacher other than a mailed packet of materials. Interviews with cooperating teachers indicated that none of the interviewees was trained in the CEC standards and how to use these standards to observe student teachers and provide feedback even though several of the cooperating teachers have had a number of student teachers. Principals that were interviewed were completely unaware of the opportunity for professional development.

***For the Early Childhood Program, Elementary, Music, Secondary and Special Education Programs:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the programs engage cooperating teachers in discussions about what professional development would enhance cooperating teachers' knowledge and skill at supervising student teachers then provide this professional development to all cooperating teachers.

**3.06 College/University and School Partnerships. Approved programs establish collaborative and respectful relationships between college and university faculty and their institution and field-based educators, their schools, and their school districts that benefit both the institution of higher education and the K-12 school district for the common goal of preparing prospective educators.**

***Art Education: Approaching Standard***  
***Early Childhood: Approaching Standard***  
***Elementary: Approaching Standard***  
***Music Education: Approaching Standard***  
***Secondary Education: Approaching Standard***  
***Special Education: Approaching Standard***

Page 130 of the IR indicates that Rhode Island College placed approximately 1000 teacher preparation candidates in PK-12 schools during the 2006-2007 school year. The IR also provides information about the 27 school districts with which Rhode Island College has partnerships.

The strength of the partnership relationships varies across the preparation programs. Some programs appear to have very strong partnerships with districts while other programs have partnerships with individual teachers or schools. During interviews, one principal responsible for placing student teachers indicated a desire to have a much stronger partnership with Rhode Island College but reported that she rarely got the opportunity to interact with personnel associated with the program.

The visiting team would like to commend the programs for establishing a community service requirement for candidates. Page 3 of the Community Service Requirement Guidelines indicate that “to satisfy this requirement, candidates must complete 25 hours of community service with at least 13 of those hours occurring in a school-based setting.” These hours of community service provide Rhode Island students with opportunities to interact with college students and provide Rhode Island College candidates with experience working with students.

In addition to the community service requirement, Rhode Island College has established many partnerships that are beneficial to the college and to the communities in which the partnerships are located. One example of such a partnership is the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities. Many of the students in the Severe and Profound Special Education Program talked about the strong partnership that existed. The candidates completed field work and collaborated with the teachers at the center when working on course assignments.

Candidates in the Secondary Program spoke highly of their experiences in Rhode Island College’s partnership with Hope High School. As President Nazarian stated in his July 2006 Management Letter, “The College has turned considerable attention to a new and significant partnership with Hope High School. During the 2005-06 academic year, the College (1) offered two graduate courses on-site to teachers at Hope (a course in classroom management and the first course in the English as a second language certification endorsement program); (2) offered two adult education courses (beginning and intermediate) in English as a second language for parents and families of Hope High School students (these were offered at no cost to participants); (3) provided workshops and faculty consultative services to help the school leadership and faculty redefine its mission and play strategies for achieving the mission; (4) offered an after-school, college-level general education course (Introduction to Theatre) that enrolled both Hope students and their parents; (5) initiated a mentoring program for juniors and seniors to encourage college enrollment; (6) assigned a College faculty member to the Hope High School site to work with teachers on curriculum development; and (7) systematized the placement of undergraduate student interns to achieve benefits of longer-term presences in the school.”

The visiting team found that the majority of student teaching placements in the Early Childhood Program occur in school districts with which Rhode Island College has a partnership agreement but that the relationship appears to be with the individual teachers rather than with the districts.

The visiting team found that the Elementary Program has many strong partnerships but that the strength of these partnerships varies. The partnerships appear to be moving from relationships with individual teachers toward partnerships with districts in some cases. Documents in the exhibit room and interviews with faculty indicated that faculty members from some partnership schools are invited to campus to work with candidates. Interviews with candidates also indicated that the strength of the partnerships varied among sites. The benefits to partnership schools are not a result of clearly defined school/ district needs, but rather are mainly by-products of the program itself. For example, one principal spoke about how the RIC candidates are “positive role models of good teaching” for the school faculty and the RIC students often come back to substitute teach in the school or district. One principal stated that RIC does not provide any PD for school faculty but they would be very interested in developing some with RIC in the future. Another principal stated that the school’s work with RIC had greatly benefited the school and more professional development would be great. The overall direction of the partnerships appears to be moving in a positive direction and the visiting team recognizes the challenges of maintaining high quality partnerships with a large number of districts.

The visiting team found the Music Program faculty has relationships with the individual teachers who serve as cooperating teachers rather than with schools or districts. The Director of the program is working to establish partnerships in which the relationships are mutually beneficial for both Rhode Island College and the districts, schools, and classrooms in which candidates are placed for their student teaching.

The visiting team found that the Art Program’s partnerships with school districts are informal. The program appears to have relationships with individual teachers more than schools or districts. Interviews with school administrators and teachers indicate varying levels of awareness of the partnership agreement.

The visiting team found that the Secondary Program’s partnerships are informal. The program appears to have relationships with individual teachers more than schools or districts. One notable exception to these findings is the strong partnerships that Rhode Island College has with Hope High School and with North Providence. The visiting team found that these partnerships are extensive and have clearly articulated expectations that support learning in both organizations.

The visiting team found that the majority of student teachers in the Special Education Program are placed in districts with which Rhode Island College has partnership agreements. Interviews with faculty members indicated that the partnerships with districts benefit the program by providing student teaching placement for candidates. The benefits to the partners were not clearly articulated although the partnership agreement has a provision for articulating the benefit to schools.

***For the Art Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work within the existing Rhode Island College partnership structure to build stronger partnerships with districts and schools as well as with individual teachers in those districts.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work within the existing Rhode Island College partnership structure to develop better communication with all stakeholders, and to work with partners to identify the ways in which the partnership can support learning in each organization.

***For the Early Childhood Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work within the existing Rhode Island College partnership structure to build partnerships with districts and schools as well as with individual teachers in those districts.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work with partners to identify the ways that learning is supported in each organization.

***For the Elementary Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work within the existing Rhode Island College partnership structure to build collaborative and mutually beneficial partnerships with districts and schools as well as with individual teachers in those districts.

***For the Music Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work within the existing Rhode Island College partnership structure to build partnerships with districts and schools as well as with individual teachers in those districts.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work within the existing Rhode Island College partnership structure to work with partners to identify the ways in which the partnership can support learning in each organization.

***For the Secondary Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work within the existing Rhode Island College partnership structure to build partnerships with districts and schools as well as with individual teachers in those districts. The partnerships with Hope High School and North Providence can serve as models for other partnership agreements.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work within the existing Rhode Island College partnership structure to work with partners to identify the ways in which the partnership can support learning in each organization.

***For the Special Education Program:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work within the existing Rhode Island College partnership structure to build partnerships with districts and schools as well as with individual teachers in those districts.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work within the existing Rhode Island College partnership structure to work with partners to identify the ways in which the partnership can support learning in each organization.

## Standard 4

**4. Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs and their institutions demonstrate a commitment to affirming the diversity<sup>1</sup> of our state, our communities, and our public schools by preparing educators who can work effectively with students, families, community members, and colleagues from diverse backgrounds to create learning communities in which all students succeed.**

### *Approaching Standard*

**4.01 Curriculum.** Prospective educators develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions essential to preparing them to be effective teachers of diverse students. The preparation includes a curriculum that engages all students in issues of diversity in our world and in our schools. The curriculum also expands the socio-cultural awareness of prospective educators by helping them become more aware of how their own world views are shaped by their life experiences. The curriculum helps prospective educators develop affirming attitudes towards individuals from diverse backgrounds and a commitment to making schools places where all students succeed. Throughout their preparation, prospective educators learn about diverse communities and students and learn to teach in diverse communities and classrooms. They learn to create classrooms in which instruction builds from the cultures of their students' communities.

### *Approaching Standard*

The visiting team found extensive evidence in the Institutional Report, in the exhibit room and in interviews with faculty members that the FSEHD has been working diligently on the diversity standard and working to ensure candidates have experiences surrounding diversity. The visiting team found that candidates have some opportunities to explore issues of diversity at the college and in schools. Additionally, the visiting team found evidence that candidates have some opportunities to develop an understanding of other cultures and are beginning to incorporate these understandings into their instruction.

The visiting team did not find evidence that the programs have clearly defined the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are necessary to design instruction that builds from the cultures of their students. The visiting did not find evidence that all candidates are systematically engaged in issues of diversity and taught the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to teach in diverse classrooms.

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<sup>1</sup> Diversity is used throughout this standard to address ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual-orientation, and geographical area.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that all programs articulate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are necessary for designing instruction that builds from the cultures of their students and then ensure that candidates' experiences in the program strengthen candidates' knowledge of the theory and practice of working with diverse students.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that all programs continue to strengthen candidates' knowledge of the theory and practice of working with English Language Learners and how to design instruction that builds from the students' cultures and backgrounds.

***For the Art and Music Programs:***

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Art and Music programs review the course of studies to ensure that candidates have appropriate instruction regarding theories and pedagogical strategies for instructing students with disabilities.

***4.02 Field Experiences that Capitalize on the Diversity of P-12 Schools. Prospective educators successfully complete field experiences that are designed to assure interaction with exceptional students, and students from different ethnic, racial, gender, socio-economic, language, and religious groups. Through these experiences prospective educators examine issues of diversity in teaching and learning. Skilled cooperating teachers and college and university faculty help the prospective educators use these experiences to improve their ability to teach students from diverse backgrounds effectively.***

***Approaching Standard***

The visiting team found that the attention to diversity in the candidates' field experiences varies greatly among programs. The Secondary Program requires a placement to be in urban school and candidates in the Special Education Program find their own practicum sites, which does not always result in a field experience that capitalizes on the diversity of Pk-12 school. However, the visiting team found that the programs have made extensive progress on this indicator since the last program approval visit. The curriculum that candidates experience in most field sites provide them with opportunities to work with exceptional students and students from diverse ethnic, racial, gender, socio-economic, language and religious backgrounds.

The visiting team found that while candidates may improve their ability to teach diverse students, field experiences are not necessarily monitored for diversity and the emphasis on diversity is not always assured in field placements.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that programs develop systems to ensure that every candidate successfully completes field experiences that are designed to assure interaction with exceptional students, and students from different ethnic, racial, gender, socio-economic, language and religious backgrounds and use these experiences to improve their ability to effectively teach students from diverse backgrounds.

**4.03 An Environment that Values Diversity. Colleges and universities and their teacher preparation programs make issues of socio-cultural awareness, affirmation of diversity, and the preparation of culturally responsive teachers central to their mission. Colleges and universities establish a campus environment that promotes and sustains a diverse community. They capitalize on the community's diversity to promote deeper understanding of issues of equity and diversity in our state, our communities, and our schools.**

*Approaching Standard*

The visiting team found that the education programs at Rhode Island College have worked hard to emphasize socio-cultural awareness and the affirmation of diversity. During interviews, one interviewee reported that the FSEHD is ahead of other parts of the campus with regard to diversity. There are innovative efforts to recruit diverse faculty and retain a diverse student body through the ALLIED Program. In some cases, these efforts are supported through grant funds that attest to their importance and innovative nature but raises concerns about long-term sustainability given current funding levels.

Candidates in the Elementary Program indicated during interviews that they felt diversity is valued on campus and that their college experience is enhanced because of the diverse student population.

Candidates in the Secondary Programs indicated that the Unity Center is an importance bridge between student affairs and school affairs. The visiting team found that dialogue regarding issues of diversity on campus is promoted through campus-wide activities such as Diversity Week and the Promising Practices Workshop.

The visiting team found that the focus on diversity varies among programs. The affirmation of diversity is more central to the mission of some programs more than others. In the Art Program required readings include issues of diversity and candidates must develop lessons that include exemplar artists from diverse of cultures. Candidates' development of deeper understanding of issues of equity and diversity is not evident in all programs.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the programs work to ensure consistency among programs so the development of candidates' understanding of diversity is evident throughout their preparation.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that Rhode Island College identify, appoint, or hire a person or persons at Rhode Island College with appropriate authority and access to resources who will ensure that issues of diversity continue to receive the attention and support required for continued progress throughout the institution.

**4.04 Faculty. Colleges and universities and the teacher preparation programs recruit, hire, support, and retain a diverse faculty. Prospective educators have the opportunity to learn from faculty members whose diverse backgrounds enable prospective educators to view their craft through a wide lens.**

*On Standard*

The visiting team found that the college has implemented several creative recruitment strategies in order to recruit a diverse faculty. The college has contacted doctoral candidates to inform them about open positions and has worked to create liaisons with faculty at other institutions. Interviews with faculty members indicated that low salaries and high teaching loads may be impediments to attracting diverse faculty members to campus. Recent faculty hires have been more diverse.

**4.05 Students. Colleges and universities and their teacher preparation programs recruit, admit, support, and retain a diverse student body. The program's admission processes, curriculum, access to student services, and counseling and mentoring programs are designed to support the preparation of a more diverse teaching force. Prospective teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds and with experiences that differ from the other prospective teachers find their participation is elicited, valued, and affirmed throughout the preparation program.**

*On Standard*

The visiting team found that the college has made extensive efforts in this area since the last program approval visit in 2004. The college has a new diversity plan and has implemented strategies and programs to attract a diverse student body to the college and has implemented programs such as the ALLIED Program to support the students once they enroll. Another promising strategy already implemented is the practice of bringing accepted high school students to campus before the beginning of the academic year.

## Standard 5

**5. Rhode Island Educator Preparation Programs are supported by college and university structures that provide the resources necessary to ensure quality programs; a faculty which is engaged in scholarship, demonstrates exceptional expertise in its teaching fields, and is actively involved in PK-12 schools; and coherence within and across preparation programs.**

### *Approaching Standard*

**5.01 *Qualified Faculty Members.* The Professional Education Faculty is composed of individuals with exceptional expertise as teachers and scholars in their teaching fields. They exemplify the qualities of effective instruction including the proficiencies described in the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards.**

### *On Standard*

Folder 5.01.2 in the exhibit room contained sample course evaluation forms. The forms seemed to differ in format and in what was being evaluated by the student. Data was provided on the evaluations for the Elementary Program faculty from the spring of 2007.

The visiting team found evidence in the faculty vitae that faculty members had the appropriate degrees and expertise for teaching in their assigned areas.

**5.02 *Faculty Responsibilities and Professional Development.* The Professional Education Faculty is involved in teaching, scholarship, and service. They are involved with practice in K-12 schools. Approved programs ensure the ongoing professional development of their faculty.**

### *On Standard*

The visiting team found that the faculty members in the programs at Rhode Island College are involved in teaching, scholarship, and service. Many faculty members have been involved with urban schools in the state through support from the Feinstein Endowment, the Dean's Discretionary Fund, Project RITER, and the RI/OHE Title II grants. Members of the FSEHD faculty participated in the school improvement team of the George J. West School. Faculty members also worked on the Hope High School Intensive Partnership and provided education professional development at both the middle school and high school levels.

The exhibit room also provided evidence the faculty members also participate in professional development activities that further their own personal knowledge and skill.

**5.03 Resources. Approved programs assure access to adequate resources to support teaching and scholarship, including the necessary facilities, equipment, library, curriculum resources, educational technology, and financial resources to support quality programs.**

*Approaching Standard*

Visiting team interviews with faculty and administration indicated that recent budget cuts have been distributed across college programs in an equitable manner. The visiting team appreciates the current tight budget situation but found that, while most programs have the resources they need, the Art Program is lacking the necessary resources. Candidates report that they do not have access to appropriate visual technologies. Art Program faculty and candidates expressed the need for more adequate lighting, more space and greater access within the Art building to computers, other digital hardware, and the Internet.

Interviews with faculty members indicated that additional resources are needed for faculty orientation and for the mentoring of new faculty members in order to support their orientation to professional responsibilities and to college policies and procedures.

Since Rhode Island College places approximately 1000 teacher candidates into field settings, many partnerships with local districts and schools are required. The visiting team found that the strength of the partnerships with districts varies. In some partnerships, there is a strong relationship that is mutually beneficial to the districts and to Rhode Island College. In other partnerships, cooperating teachers have been placed on a waiting list for training in the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards. Some cooperating teachers indicated that they feel strong support from Rhode Island College while other cooperating teachers indicated that if they had stronger connections to RIC, the candidates' student teaching experiences would be enhanced.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the resources provided for the Art Program be increased to ensure that the program provides adequate lighting, space, and appropriate candidate access to technology.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that resources be allocated to ensure faculty orientation and mentoring, the selection and monitoring of field sites, the training and support of all practicum supervisors and cooperating teachers, and to ensure strong partnerships with all schools and districts in which student teachers are placed.

**5.04 Professional Community. Approved programs support collaboration among higher education faculty, school personnel and other members of the professional community to prepare new educators and to improve the quality of education of children.**

*Approaching Standard*

Rhode Island College placed approximately 1000 teacher candidates during the 2006-2007 school year. The partnerships that the FSEHD has with partnership districts varies. More human and financial resources may be needed in order to ensure that partnerships with all 27 districts are strong to ensure that practicum and student teaching field sites are appropriately selected and

monitored. Additional resources may be needed to ensure that all practicum supervisors and cooperating teachers receive training in the appropriate standards and in evaluating candidates and their portfolios.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the resources for the development and maintenance of partnerships be reviewed and evaluated in order to determine whether or not they are sufficient to meet the recommendations of this report.

***5.05 Coherence Within and Across Programs. Approved programs ensure that coherence exists between the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards and student outcomes, courses, field experiences, instruction, and assessment, both within and across programs.***

***On Standard***

The FSEHD has established a common structure across programs to demonstrate a coherent approach to educator preparation. The chart on page 29 of the Institutional Report indicates that the FSEHD has developed a unit assessment system with common assessments across programs. This unit assessment system is based upon the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards (with the exception of the Special Education Programs which are aligned to CEC standards) and Rhode Island College's conceptual framework. The chart on page 29 of the IR also shows that individual programs have flexibility for selecting other artifacts for portfolios at the "Preparing to Teach," and the "Exit" portfolios. Exceptions to the common elements can be attributed to the different requirements in certification level, delivery model, or other different program demands.

## Standard 6

**6. Rhode Island Educator Preparation Programs engage in a process of regular evaluation to ensure program improvement.**

### *Approaching Standard*

**6.01 Commitment to High Quality and Improvement.** Approved programs engage in regular and systematic evaluations (including, but not limited to, information obtained through student assessment, and collection of data from students, recent graduates, and other members of the professional community) and use these findings to improve the preparation of prospective educators through the modification of the program.

### *Approaching Standard*

Pages 158 -160 of the Institutional Report 2007 and folder 6.01 in the exhibit room provided information about the significant changes and accomplishments in the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development. Some of the significant accomplishments since the last visit include the creation of an Assessment and Program Improvement Committee; the hiring of a Data Management Coordinator; the hiring of a Director of Assessment; the revision of the initial program's assessment system for greater consistency across programs; the hiring of a new Director for Graduate Programs, a renewed attention to English Language Learners, involvement in a Teacher Quality Enhancement-Partnership federal grant; increased emphasis on and resources to support recruitment and retention of a diverse student body and faculty; support for new faculty and for adjunct faculty instructors to improve their teaching in alignment with the Conceptual Framework and state and national standards; expansion of the School Partnership Committee and the development of intensive partnerships with Providence schools at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels.

Page 160 of the Institutional Report referenced a survey of FSEHD graduates that was completed in the spring of 2007. The report did not indicate what the results of the survey were or how this information was to be used for program improvement. The programs also indicated that they plan to work with the Director of Assessment to develop a follow-up survey for employers of program graduates.

The exhibit room contained data reports which provided descriptive and inferential statistics on candidate performance. While these reports seemed quite detailed, it was unclear how these data reports are used to make inferences about the areas needing improvement.

From faculty interviews, the visiting team found that program personnel are aware of program areas in need of program improvement. In order to make these changes in reasoned and considered ways, program faculty will need data that will be useful in helping them to make accurate inferences about the current programs. The visiting team believes that the program

faculty members intend to continue to engage in program improvement and are oriented toward the collection of data which can be used for program improvement. Interviews with faculty members revealed that few of the data reports provided to them have been helpful for program improvement although there are some exceptions. For example, it was not evident how the calculated standard deviations on the portfolio scores by RIBTS might be used to monitor candidates' progress towards meeting the standards and to provide academic and professional advisement throughout the program.

The visiting team would like to commend the faculty in the History Department for collecting and synthesizing data on the Praxis scores and then using their analysis of the data to revise the program.

The visiting team **RECOMMENDS** that program faculty members collaborate to discern what data will be most helpful for program improvement and then work with the Director of Assessment to develop data collection instruments that will inform faculty members' questions.

The visiting team **RECOMMENDS** that preparation personnel clearly articulate what program personnel want to know about their candidates at each stage of their preparation and beyond and work with each other and the Director of Assessment to develop systems and instruments to collect data that will inform candidates of their progress, instructors about candidate performance, and the administration about program effectiveness.

Program Approval Reports for the Advanced Programs in

**SCHOOL COUNSELOR  
READING SPECIALIST  
EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP-PRINCIPAL**

at Rhode Island College

October 28-31, 2007

# Advanced Program in School Counseling

**1. Prospective educators recommended for licensure by Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs are proficient in the CACREP/ASCA Professional Standards.**

## *Approaching Standard*

### ***1.01 Assessment, Advisement, Feedback, and Counseling Throughout the Program.***

**Prospective educators are assessed through an ongoing process that begins with admission to the program and continues through recommendation for licensure. The results of these assessments are used to monitor candidates' progress toward meeting the standards and to provide academic and professional advisement throughout the program.**

## *Approaching Standard*

The FSEHD has designed and implemented a “common advanced program assessment system” for the advanced unit. In this assessment system, candidates must demonstrate proficiency in the advanced unit’s conceptual framework – knowledge, practice, diversity, and professionalism; professional dispositions – self-reflection, lifelong learning, advocacy for children and youth, respect for diversity, collaboration, and professional work characteristics; and advanced program-specific standards and criteria. The common assessment system also identifies specific assessment points throughout the advanced programs – admission, formative, summative, and post-program completion. The visiting team saw evidence of the unit-wide comprehensive assessment system from program admission to recommendation for licensure. This common assessment system utilizes specific assessment checkpoints each matched to identified criteria.

In addition to the common assessment system, candidates in the school counselor program must complete six hours of psychology or related courses prior to admission and must complete a comprehensive examination after completing twenty-four semester hours and CEP 538.

The School Counseling assessment system is aligned to the CACREP and ASCA standards as identified by the FSEHD in program and course materials. The majority of course syllabi, tasks, and rubrics are aligned to these standards. Program materials detail that candidates are assigned to an advisor upon admission to the program and recently revised School Counseling documents indicate that beginning in the fall 2007 semester, candidates will meet at four points during their course of study to review feedback and gain advisement – orientation, formative assessment, on-site review, and portfolio review.

The visiting team identified that the ASCA performance standards that are used to develop and implement the assessment system are not the National Performance Standards, but modified versions to reflect a “pre-service” level of understanding. As such, the assessment system does not require candidates to meet the full expectations inherent in the ASCA Standards. Certain

rubrics, course tasks, and evaluation forms represent checklists, not standards-based tools that are explicitly aligned to standards or require deep knowledge and application of expected school counseling knowledge, skills and dispositions. Additionally, some program candidates reported inconsistent advisement and access to advisement due to personnel and policy changes in the program.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program review the process and rationale for modifying the ASCA standards and review and revise as necessary the assessment system to ensure that candidates are held to the full expectations of the national standards.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program meet as a faculty to review and revise all course materials, rubrics, and assessments to ensure consistent and rigorous alignment with the CACREP/ASCA standards.

***1.02 Admission into the Program. Prospective educators are admitted to certification programs based upon clearly articulated criteria that address the students' potential to meet the standards for licensure.***

***On Standard***

The IR identifies common assessment criteria for advanced programs. These include official standardized test scores (Graduate Record Examination or Miller Analogies Test), a professional goals essay, a performance-based evaluation, two candidate reference forms, a minimum number of years teaching experience, and other program-specific criteria. The School Counseling Program additionally requires candidates to take a minimum of six credits in psychology or a related field prior to admission. Candidates generally seem to be aware of the admissions process which is communicated through course materials and orientation meetings.

The visiting team suggests that the School Counseling Program examine revisions to the admissions process to emphasize and identify candidate readiness for School Counseling rather than readiness for graduate course work.

***1.03 Determination of Readiness For Supervised Internship. Prospective educators demonstrate their readiness for supervised internship through an evaluation of their performance with respect to the CACREP/ASCA Standards.***

***On Standard***

The FSEHD identifies readiness for Supervised Internship as the formative checkpoint in the advanced programs. The IR identifies common requirements that candidates must meet to achieve the formative transition checkpoint including a minimum GPA of B or better, a performance-based work sample, a self-evaluation, and a faculty evaluation. Individual advanced

programs also require program-specific checkpoints to transition to the readiness for Supervised Internship level.

Readiness for Supervised Internship is defined as the formative checkpoint for the School Counseling Program. This checkpoint occurs after completion of CEP 540, 'Clinical Practicum with Children in Schools,' a pre-internship experience in field sites. To successfully complete this checkpoint, candidates must successfully complete the practicum course, be fully admitted in the School Counseling Program, maintain a minimum B average, receive positive faculty evaluations, and have at least taken CEP 538. Candidates also must successfully complete a practicum portfolio that contains specified entries and is reviewed by program faculty. The majority of course-based assessments used to determine readiness for Supervised Internship align with CACREP/ASCA standards.

***1.04 Assessment at the Completion of Clinical Experiences and as a Basis for Recommendation for License. Prospective educators demonstrate their performance with respect to the standards for the completion of supervised internship through an evaluation process that is shared by the college or university supervisor and the internship supervisor. Programs recommend prospective educators for licensure based on performance with respect to the CACREP/ASCA Standards.***

#### ***Approaching Standard***

The common assessment system identifies several requirements for the summative transition point which serves as the Recommendation for Licensure gate. These include a minimum GPA of B or better in all required courses, successful completion of the advanced program's comprehensive assessment, a capstone performance assessment, a self evaluation and a faculty evaluation of the internship experience.

In addition, School Counseling candidates must successfully complete a comprehensive examination prior to recommendation for licensure. The School Counseling Handbook identifies the purpose of the exam to "measure the students' ability to integrate theory with practice by measuring their skill at articulating a clear theoretical stance and applying their theory in a conceptually clear and concise way to a clinical case." The examination is offered twice a year in November and April and candidates must previously have completed CEP 538 and at least twenty-four semester hours of course work.

The School Counseling Handbook describes specific performances and requirements candidates must complete during the internship experience to be recommended for licensure including keeping a daily log, participating in significant school activities, tape recording counseling sessions, and spending specified times in various counseling activities. Candidate performance is monitored by Internship Supervisors and college faculty staff through observations and evaluation instruments. Successful completion of the internship is determined by successful completion of the internship courses.

The visiting team found that the assessment system, which does not reflect or require full

exposure to all of the ASCA performance standards, limits candidate learning opportunities. Several course assessments and rubrics emphasize process and reflection rather than more challenging and necessary in-depth analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Some of the field-site evaluation tools provided to the visiting team comprise checklists of counseling activities rather than standard-based assessment tools that evaluate performance on a task. While most candidates reported feeling well-prepared for internship experiences, some expressed a further need for opportunities to practice and apply school counseling skills prior to this checkpoint.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program ensure that candidates have opportunities to demonstrate the full range of knowledge, skills, and dispositions of the CACREP/ASCA standards prior to recommendation for licensure.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program review and revise course assessments, rubrics, and evaluation forms to ensure alignment with rigorous standards-based practices and expectations.

***1.05 Validity of Assessment System. Assessment systems are aligned with educator standards and with instructional processes, use multiple assessments and various methodologies, and have expectations that are clearly communicated to prospective educators.***

***On Standard***

As detailed in the IR, the FSEHD specifically designed the common advanced program assessment system to “provide evidence of student achievement of the learning targets” across the advanced programs. The visiting team saw evidence of common assessment points, criteria, and rubrics that serve as elements of the common assessment system which are public and explicitly communicated to candidates.

The School Counseling Program provides a valid assessment system in which what is taught is largely what is assessed. The CACREP/ASCA standards are inherent in most course assessments and tasks. The program and courses use a variety of assessment tools and methodologies including journals, research, case studies, audio-taped counseling sessions, and process journals. Rubrics are regularly used that identify expected performance levels across the courses in the program. The School Counseling Program recently has revised many program documents and manuals to promote clear and explicit communication regarding the assessment system and ongoing changes.

***1.06 Reliability of Assessment System. Assessment systems yield fair, accurate, and consistent evaluation of prospective educators.***

***Approaching Standard***

The FSEHD uses common rubrics and faculty training to ensure consistency of ratings across the components of the common advanced program assessment system. The IR details FSEHD

actions in spring 2007 to analyze data from these common assessments to determine consistency. Exhibits in the team room document that a strong coefficient of reliability was found for graduate programs, although the number of respondents was limited. The School Counseling Program uses multiple reviewers to review the admission process and the comprehensive exam to promote consistency of assessment. The School Counseling Program also uses common rubrics to clarify performance expectations for candidate work.

However, the visiting team found that the program does not provide training or opportunities to ensure inter-rater reliability on common program assessment points. Many of the rubrics examined in the evidence room are similar in style and substance, but emphasize process and product over specified content knowledge and application thus promoting discrepant scoring of assessment tasks. Additionally, while the program has conducted assessment data analysis, the small number of respondents limits the usefulness of this analysis.

The visiting team **RECOMMENDS** that the School Counseling Program conduct inter-rater reliability training for reviewers of program and course assessments to ensure reliable assessment results.

The visiting team **RECOMMENDS** that the School Counseling Program review program and course rubrics to clarify content and application expectations that are grounded in the appropriate CACREP/ASCA standards.

**2. Prospective educators in Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, develop the dispositions, and practice the skills that are encompassed in the CACREP/ASCA Standards.**

*Approaching Standard*

**2.01 Professional and Pedagogical Studies. Prospective educators follow a well-planned scope and sequence of courses and experiences to develop the knowledge, dispositions, and skills encompassed in the CACREP/ASCA Standards.**

*Approaching Standard*

The School Counseling Program provides a scope and sequence of learning experiences that is based upon the CACREP/ASCA standards and delivered through a series of courses, assessments, and field experiences. The CACREP/ASCA standards are embedded in course syllabi, tasks and assessments. The program provides curriculum maps that show alignment of individual standards and indicators across the curriculum sequence. Students are required to complete thirty-nine semester hours including two practicum courses, one lab-based and one field-based, and two supervised internships that total 300 hours. In candidate interviews and through reviewing candidate work provided in sample portfolios, candidates demonstrated an understanding of major issues involved in school counseling.

The visiting team has several concerns regarding the curriculum, its alignment to CACREP/ACSA standards, and candidate's ability to fully develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for school counselor. One concern regards the organization and flow of early courses in the program sequence. A review of course syllabi and candidate feedback indicates that the initial courses provide limited focus and immediate connection to school counseling. Instead the courses focus on wider issues of counseling and human development including adult counseling. Due to the modification of the ASCA standards, the program curriculum does not attempt to engage the full depth and breadth of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions inherent in the standards. A further concern is with some course tasks and assessments that do not reflect clear connections to standards-based expectations and engage issues at a superficial level of knowledge and understanding.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program review and revise the scope and sequence of the curriculum, particularly the early theory-based courses to more fully align with CACREP/ASCA standards and actual knowledge, skills, and dispositions of school counselors.

**2.02 Subject Matter Knowledge. Prospective educators develop a deep understanding of the subject matter of their area of certification.**

*N/A*

**2.03 Technology. Prospective educators develop an understanding of the role of technology in education and learn how to use technology as an instructional and administrative tool.**

*Unacceptable*

As part of the advanced program common assessment system, candidates are expected to demonstrate technology proficiency in a variety of means and applications. CACREP/ASCA standards similarly identify technology expectations for school counselors. While some courses and tasks require products using technology including power point, EZanalyzer, WebCT, and audio/visual communication strategies, such activities are not consistent throughout the program. Either at the program or course level, there does not appear to be clear and explicit expectations for technology proficiency either as an instructional or administrative tool. As such, some candidate work shows satisfactory use of technology while others do not. This dilemma is further compounded by an absence of identified technology standards or any explicit criteria for technology proficiency prior to admission, during field experiences, or at recommendation for licensure.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program develop or identify and adopt a set of technology standards and establish explicit expectations for proficiency in the program.

**2.04 Additional Rhode Island Certification Requirements. Prospective educators develop any additional knowledge and or skills required by Rhode Island educational law or regulations of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education.**

*Approaching Standard*

Evidence provided in the team room exhibits and in candidate interviews suggests that through the practicum and field-based internship experiences and the corresponding seminar courses, candidates for school counseling develop an emerging understanding of important state initiatives. Candidate awareness primarily was of the Rhode Island Framework for Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Programs. Candidates also had awareness of state initiatives such as the NECAP assessment system and GLE/GSEs. However this knowledge was at a teacher level of understanding, not representative of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of school counselors. The IR, the School Counseling Program Student Handbook, and a review of course portfolios prior to practicum and internship demonstrate a lack of attention to state initiatives. In addition to the absence of a purposeful integration of state initiatives that school counselors should know and be able to interact with in most course materials, the revised May 2007 curriculum map makes no reference to any state initiatives.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that School Counseling Program review and revise its curriculum to integrate knowledge and understanding of important state initiatives that are expected of school counselors in a developmental and sequenced manner across the curriculum.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program review early in program syllabi, tasks, and assessments to ensure that candidates for school counselor have access and opportunity to engage important state initiatives to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of school counselors prior to and during their field experiences.

**2.05 Coherence. Prospective educators pursue coherent educational studies that are grounded in research and theory.**

*Approaching Standard*

The May 2007 curriculum map for the School Counseling Program is organized around global statements from ASCA performance standards, RIC adaptations of these standards into pre-service expectations, alignment to CEP courses, course products, and activities. The IR reports School Counseling Program alignment to CACREP/ASCA standards and in some places the NASP standards. Similarly, some course syllabi indicate alignment to CACREP, ASCA, and/or NASP standards.

Candidates in the School Counseling Program begin the program in courses that are primarily theory-based and as a minority of the course participants. As such, candidates report spending significant course time learning about adult counseling rather than primarily school/child counseling. While candidates are fully exposed to school counseling issues in practicum and internship courses, this is at the end of their program. This is complicated by the pattern in which candidates complete the program. As primarily full-time teachers, program completion lasts several years prior to candidates engaging in field experiences that offer more complete exposure to school counseling.

Additionally, while many course portfolios, tasks, and assessments represented grounding in current research and theory, several indicated tasks, assessments, and evaluation forms that were activity-based, rather than standards-based. Similarly, some syllabi contained reading lists and references that reflected current research and theory, while others relied primarily on more dated materials.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program review its curriculum map and program of study to clarify alignment to specified sets of standards across the program and ensure that courses throughout the program are aligned to these expectations in a developmental way to support candidate growth as school counselors.

**3. Prospective educators have the opportunity to develop their learning in a variety of high quality field sites with professionals who model effective educational practice, assume responsibility for educating prospective colleagues, and are committed to ongoing professional development.**

*Approaching Standard*

**3.01 Extensive Clinical Experience. Prospective educators complete purposeful and sequenced field experiences, including field experience prior to internship periods. Through an internship they have the opportunity to experience all aspects of the profession.**

*Approaching Standard*

The IR identifies field experiences for candidates in the School Counseling Program: Practicum, CEP 538 and CEP 540, Clinical Internship I, CEP 541, and Clinical Internship II, CEP 542. The practicum courses are semester-long experiences in which “students observe and practice various strategies for functioning as effective school counselors.” The internship courses require 300 hours of field-based experience in consecutive semesters at a Pk-12 school placement. The School Counseling Student Handbook describes the internship as “the culminating field experience in which prospective school counselors demonstrate their knowledge of subject matter, counseling skills, and child/adolescent growth and development.”

Program and course documents and syllabi detail explicit requirements that candidates are to complete during these field experiences. Interviews with candidates indicate that these are the highlights of the program as knowledge, application, integration, and generation are the primary focus. Candidates also participate in a weekly seminar during the internship as “an adjunctive experience to the internship” in which issues that emerge during field experience are extended and further connected to theory and course-based learning.

The visiting team found that while course work early in the program requires some application of knowledge through projects and assessments, structured field experience occurs only at the end of the course of study. As noted above, due to course taking patterns, this is removed in time from initial learning experiences thus potentially missing opportunities for connecting field-based experiences with new knowledge gained early in the program. A different but equally significant concern is that the School Counseling Program leads to a Pk-12 certification, but most candidates complete their field experiences in their place of employment, thus not engaging in field experiences at all levels in which they will be certified to practice.

Additionally, the School Counseling Program Student Handbook states that “RIC strongly encourages a release from duty one day per week during the internship to experience the full breadth and depth of the school counselors’ day.” Candidates, however, report completing their field-based counseling during their lunch breaks, free periods, or other disparate times. This

prevents them from experiencing the full load and schedule of school counselors.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program review its field experiences to ensure candidates have extensive field experiences throughout the program, including early in the program, at all levels at which they will be entitled to certification, and in meaningful interactions with students that represent a realistic approximation to the day and work of school counselors.

***3.02 Clinical Experience in a Variety of Settings. Prospective educators complete field experiences in a variety of educational settings, including schools which serve culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students and classrooms that serve students with a range of abilities, including students with exceptional needs.***

#### *Approaching Standard*

The School Counseling Program Student Handbook states that “RIC faculty require that students have experience with diverse socio-cultural backgrounds at both the elementary and secondary school levels.” The IR also details expectations for candidates to engage in field experiences in a variety of settings and at a variety of levels as the School Counseling Program leads to a Pk-12 certification. Through interviews with program and field personnel and candidates, it is apparent that candidates do not regularly experience clinical experiences in a variety of settings.

The IR notes that at the formative review checkpoint, candidates’ experience with a variety of field experience settings is monitored. While an interview with a candidate did indicate that some remediation for diverse settings was required, it does not appear that this is standard practice. Rather, the IR notes in several places that RIC faculty can only “encourage,” “recommend,” or “strongly recommend” placements beyond the workplace of the candidate. Thus candidates who work in settings that feature little diversity experience their practicum and internship placements without opportunity to practice counseling with a full range of students. This is further problematic as to level of student as well. Candidates are eligible for a Pk-12 certification, yet due to their workplace may only practice counseling at one of several grade levels for which they will be certified.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program work with the FSEHD to review its field placement requirements and policy to ensure and monitor through policy requirements, innovative means, and clear processes that all candidates engage in field experiences in a variety of settings and grade levels that represent their certification.

**3.03 Effective Field Sites. Prospective educators complete field experiences in settings where they have the opportunity to practice their learning in a way that is consistent with the CACREP/ASCA Standards.**

*Approaching Standard*

The School Counseling Program indicates in the IR and exhibits provided to the visiting team that field experiences are an important part of the development of school counselors. The IR indicates that program personnel emphasize the importance of field settings that align to ASCA standards. Exhibit room documents describe a field site evaluation process that is conducted by school counseling faculty supervisors for appropriateness of settings over the course of three required field site visits. The IR also indicates that RIC faculty “will intervene to advise appropriate alternatives” if a site is deemed unsatisfactory by program personnel. As indicated above, the visiting team learned of at least one instance in which such advisement occurred.

This instance seems to be an exception to standard practice. In several instances in the IR and other documents, the program justifies the standard practice of self-selection of placement site with the statement that: “Due to their teaching schedules, most school counseling candidates generally complete their practicum and internship assignments at their place of employment. As such, school counseling faculty members are limited in the amount of influence they have on field experiences.” The program will not be able to meet indicator 3.03 without exerting some control over candidate field placement. The visiting team recognizes that RIC faculty has made efforts to remediate this dilemma, but observed that these actions have not been sufficient.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program work with the FSEHD to review and revise policies that limit program control over site selection to ensure that all candidates engage in field experiences in effective field sites, not simply their place of employment. As part of this effort, a review of the field-site evaluation process, criteria, and monitoring is necessary to ensure meaningful evaluations and effective field placements.

**3.04 Effective Internship Supervisors. Approved programs place prospective educators exclusively with internship supervisors whose practice is consistent with CACREP/ASCA Standards. The internship supervisors know how to help prospective educators develop and how to evaluate prospective educators in order to make a recommendation regarding successful performance with respect to the standards.**

*Approaching Standard*

Program documents and exhibit room evidence describe the requirements for Internship Supervisors. These include having a Master’s degree in counseling, be a certified school counselor, and have at least three years school counseling experience. The School Counseling Program Student Handbook provides specific expected behaviors and actions on the part of the Internship Supervisor. These include a minimum of one hour of face-to-face supervision weekly,

planning experiences with the intern, providing opportunities for observation, providing accurate assessment of progress, and “establishing a supportive climate of acceptance, enthusiasm, and open communication.” As noted above, candidates indicate that the internship experience is a most valuable experience to integrate theory and practice for critical learning. They also indicated strong support for the Internship Supervisor as a person of support and guidance as they begin to learn the field of school counseling.

The visiting team found that the School Counseling Program again claims little control over the field sites of candidates and thus the choice of Internship Supervisor. Documents provided to the visiting team indicate an expectation of ASCA standards in the field site, but the program has limited means to remediate if the environment is not one conducive to the standards.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program work with the FSHD to review its field placement sites to ensure control over the quality of Internship Supervisors over and above the location of employment by the candidate.

***3.05 Recruit and Provide Professional Development for Internship Supervisors. Approved programs recruit internship supervisors and mentors whose practice is consistent with the CACREP/ASCA Standards and who are committed to supporting the development of prospective educators. The programs provide professional development opportunities and other incentives to help these educators enhance their effectiveness in these roles.***

#### ***Approaching Standard***

The School Counseling Program reports that it makes “outreach efforts to on-site supervisors arranged by the practicum or internship candidate.” The IR indicates that program faculty provides I-Plan support for internship supervisors if they require it. The School Counseling Program also provided evidence of a three course sequence it has developed to lead towards guidance supervisor certification in which five candidates are currently enrolled. However, it appears from the documents provided to the visiting team and through interviews that little effort beyond these are made to recruit Internship Supervisors as the program allows candidates to select their field sites and subsequently their supervisor.

Beyond these efforts, the program provides support for Internship Supervisors through an annual training program and information packet. In a review of records, documents, and interviews, it appears that few Internship Supervisors avail themselves of the training program. In this occurrence, information is mailed and phone calls and emails are made to clarify information or answer questions. It is not clear to the visiting team that these practices provide sufficient recruitment or professional development efforts.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program works with the FSEHD to review its placement policies and as part of this review investigate approaches and opportunities to recruit Internship Supervisors who conduct strong practice aligned to the CACREP/ASCA standards.

**3.06 College/University and School Partnerships. Approved programs establish collaborative and respectful relationships between college and university faculty and their institution and field-based educators, their schools, and their school districts that benefit both the institution of higher education and the K-12 school district for the common goal of preparing prospective educators.**

*Approaching Standard*

Through a review of exhibit room documents provided to the team, there is some evidence of program personnel efforts to interact in purposeful ways with the Pk-12 school community. Curricula vitae show leadership and membership on boards, involvement in school improvement efforts in several districts, and engagement at the state level with RIDE and other agencies with issues in counseling and on education reform. However, these actions do not appear systematic, strategic, or sufficient to represent “collaborative and respectful partnerships” that will significantly support and advance Pk-12 schools and districts. In particular, school sites appreciate the support a candidate engaging in practicum and internship provides, but wish that the program could provide further support and assistance.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program review its approach to partnerships with Pk-12 schools and districts and develop a more systematic and purposeful approach that will support the field with its distinct expertise in addition to using schools and districts as field site placements.

**4. Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs and their institutions demonstrate a commitment to affirming the diversity<sup>2</sup> of our state, our communities, and our public schools by preparing educators who can work effectively with students, families, community members, and colleagues from diverse backgrounds to create learning communities in which all students succeed.**

*Approaching Standard*

**4.01 Curriculum.** Prospective educators develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions essential to preparing them to be effective teachers of diverse students. The preparation includes a curriculum that engages all students in issues of diversity in our world and in our schools. The curriculum also expands the socio-cultural awareness of prospective educators by helping them become more aware of how their own world views are shaped by their life experiences. The curriculum helps prospective educators develop affirming attitudes towards individuals from diverse backgrounds and a commitment to making schools places where all students succeed. Throughout their preparation, prospective educators learn about diverse communities and students and learn to teach in diverse communities and classrooms. They learn to create classrooms in which instruction builds from the cultures of their students' communities.

*Approaching Standard*

The IR details that “Advanced programs assist candidates to further develop positive dispositions toward diversity through a professional sequence that explicitly and implicitly focuses on issues of diversity.” As part of the common assessment system, program candidates are required to meet expectations regarding diversity identified in the advanced program competencies, the PAR (Plan, Act, Reflect) model, and the FSEHD dispositions. These include a systems view of human development, individual differences and cultural diversity, family-centeredness and engagement, and reflective practice.

School Counselor candidates explore issues of diversity in course tasks and assessments such as cultural analysis papers, interviews with recent immigrants, and through case studies. The CACREP/ASCA standards further identify issues of diversity as important learning goals for candidates. However, learning experiences detailed in program and course materials do not provide candidates sufficient opportunities to develop a deeper awareness of their own world view and the experiences of other cultures. Furthermore, due to the self-selection of field placement sites, all candidates do not learn how to practice in diverse communities and classrooms. As such, candidates miss opportunities to fully explore and apply the program learnings and counseling standards.

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<sup>2</sup> Diversity is used throughout this standard to address ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual-orientation, and geographical area.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program and the FSEHD work to develop systems and strengthen the curriculum to ensure that all candidates are prepared to practice and apply the curriculum and demonstrate the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions identified in the program and FSEHD assessment system in diverse settings.

**4.02 Field Experiences that Capitalize on the Diversity of P-12 Schools. Prospective educators successfully complete field experiences that are designed to assure interaction with exceptional students, and students from different ethnic, racial, gender, socio-economic, language, and religious groups. Through these experiences prospective educators examine issues of diversity in teaching and learning. Skilled cooperating teachers and college and university faculty help the prospective educators use these experiences to improve their ability to teach students from diverse backgrounds effectively.**

#### *Approaching Standard*

The School Counseling Program recognizes the importance of field experiences that engage diverse learners and allow candidates opportunities to practice school counseling that is supportive of various groups of students. The IR and additional exhibit room evidence clearly articulate that the program and program faculty strongly encourage candidates to learn and gain practice as counselors through diverse settings. Specifically, the School Counseling Program recommends that candidates experience practicum at sites beyond their employment, and encourages candidates to seek release time to “experience the full breadth of the school counselor’s day.” While the program provided evidence that a few candidates have responded to such invitations, there is no evidence that the program requires or assures field experiences that capitalize on diversity.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program examine and revise its requirements for field experiences to ensure that all candidates have opportunities to develop their practice in diverse settings.

**4.03 An Environment that Values Diversity. Colleges and universities and their teacher preparation programs make issues of socio-cultural awareness, affirmation of diversity, and the preparation of culturally responsive teachers central to their mission. Colleges and universities establish a campus environment that promotes and sustains a diverse community. They capitalize on the community’s diversity to promote deeper understanding of issues of equity and diversity in our state, our communities, and our schools.**

#### *Approaching Standard*

The School Counseling Program appears to recognize the importance of diversity. Issues of diversity are apparent in course and program materials, assessments based on national standards, and in strong recommendations to participate in field experiences within diverse contexts. As part of the FSEHD and the RIC community, numerous efforts have been conducted to promote and develop an environment that values diversity including conferences that feature promising

practices for the teaching of diverse learners, outreach and support groups for diverse students, and an emphasis on college-wide program and course materials offerings. While the visiting team recognizes that progress has been made in this area throughout the College, it did not see sufficient success within the School Counseling Program. School Counseling policies and practices promote diversity, but actual implementation lags and have met with limited success to more fully develop a School Counseling Program environment that values diversity.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program review its policies and practices in regards to establishing an environment that values diversity to make specific and substantial changes to better realize this goal.

**4.04 Faculty. Colleges and universities and the teacher preparation programs recruit, hire, support, and retain a diverse faculty. Prospective educators have the opportunity to learn from faculty members whose diverse backgrounds enable prospective educators to view their craft through a wide lens.**

*Unacceptable*

Rhode Island College has provided evidence in the IR that efforts have been made at the college level and within and across certain departments and programs to recruit, hire, support, and retain a diverse faculty. The School Counseling program did not provide evidence that similar efforts have been made within the program. Minimal diversity exists within the program faculty.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program work with the RIC community and other stakeholders to develop effective means to promote a more diverse faculty presence within the program.

**4.05 Students. Colleges and universities and their teacher preparation programs recruit, admit, support, and retain a diverse student body. The program's admission processes, curriculum, access to student services, and counseling and mentoring programs are designed to support the preparation of a more diverse teaching force. Prospective teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds and with experiences that differ from the other prospective teachers find their participation is elicited, valued, and affirmed throughout the preparation program.**

*Unacceptable*

As with the indicator 4.04 for faculty, the IR and evidence collected during the course of the visit suggest that Rhode Island College and the school-wide community are making progress in the area of recruiting, admitting, supporting, and retaining a diverse student body. This effort was further evident in the increasing diversity apparent across the campus. However, the School Counseling Program did not provide evidence that similar efforts have been made at the program level. Minimal diversity exists within the school counseling student body. Data provided to the team reveal that from 2002 – 20007, the college graduated 207 school counselors. Of these two were Asian, four were Black, five were Hispanic, thirty-two were not specified, and 164 were

white.

The visiting Team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program work with the RIC community and other stakeholders to develop effective means to recruit, admit, support, and graduate a more diverse student body.

**5. Rhode Island Educator Preparation Programs are supported by college and university structures that provide the resources necessary to ensure quality programs; a faculty which is engaged in scholarship, demonstrates exceptional expertise in its teaching fields, and is actively involved in PK-12 schools; and coherence within and across preparation programs.**

*Approaching Standard*

**5.01 Qualified Faculty Members. The Professional Education Faculty is composed of individuals with exceptional expertise as teachers and scholars in their teaching fields. They exemplify the qualities of effective instruction including the proficiencies described in the CACREP/ASCA Standards.**

*On Standard*

Based upon a review of exhibit room evidence including: curricula vitae, statements of professional development and partnerships, course syllabi, and assessments, the education courses within the School Counseling Program are taught by faculty who demonstrate academic preparation that prepares them for their role within the FSEHD. While the visiting team was satisfied with quality of faculty based upon an evidence review, there was minimal evidence of a comprehensive evaluation system or of the use of data to track faculty performance and effectiveness for ongoing improvement.

**5.02 Faculty Responsibilities and Professional Development. The Professional Education Faculty is involved in teaching, scholarship, and service. They are involved with practice in K-12 schools. Approved programs ensure the ongoing professional development of their faculty.**

*Approaching Standard*

Based upon a review of exhibit room evidence including curricula vitae, statements of professional development, and partnerships, the visiting team saw evidence that the majority of faculty members in the School Counseling Program are actively engaged in teaching, scholarship, and service to the College and Pk-12 schools. Examples include presentations, publications, affiliations, memberships, office holding, and partnerships. Curricula vitae and other documents also provided evidence of professional development for some faculty members. However, not all faculty members appear to engage in each of the identified criteria to achieve this standard – teaching, scholarship, and service. Furthermore, while some faculty engage in delivering or receiving professional development, exhibit room evidence suggest that other members do not avow themselves of this opportunity.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that program faculty ensure that they meet each of the expectations identified in this standard to promote and improve teaching, scholarship, and service.

**5.03 Resources. Approved programs assure access to adequate resources to support teaching and scholarship, including the necessary facilities, equipment, library, curriculum resources, educational technology, and financial resources to support quality programs.**

*Approaching Standard*

Based upon document review, interviews, and observations, the visiting team found strong evidence that the level of available resources for the School Counseling Program is limited and impacts the program design, learning outcomes, and potential of faculty members to conduct scholarship or develop helpful partnerships. Limited facilities and technology, insufficient fiscal resources for program improvement and instructional materials, and heavy teaching loads produce real challenges. These challenges force many faculty members to either work through or around them to best serve their students, program, and school. Members of the school community relate a representative unfortunate incident in which a professor in an advanced program wanted to use computer technology but did not have access to technology in the assigned room. Subsequently the professor was forced to instruct using overhead transparencies rather than the intended and more appropriate power point format. A specific resource limitation of the School Counseling Program is school visits that are conducted during the internship by college personnel, rather than the facilitator of the internship seminar as the facilitator is only funded to conduct the seminar.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling faculty, other members of the college community, and other stakeholders continue to work to maximize available funds, seek additional funding sources, and prioritize actions that match available funds.

**5.04 Professional Community. Approved programs support collaboration among higher education faculty, school personnel and other members of the professional community to prepare new educators and to improve the quality of education of children.**

*Approaching Standard*

Curricula vitae, records of professional development, and other exhibit room evidence suggest that the School Counseling Program has developed several helpful collaborative relationships to prepare new educators and to improve the quality of education. These include officer and membership positions in state and local professional organizations, presentations at conferences and workshops, consultant support to Pk-12 school districts, and other similar activities. The visiting team did not see, however, clearly defined partnerships that indicated substantial or program-wide collaborative efforts.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program explore and engage in targeted collaborative partnerships to further improve the quality of education of children.

**5.05 Coherence Within and Across Programs. Approved programs ensure that coherence exists between the CACREP/ASCA Standards and student outcomes, courses, field experiences, instruction, and assessment, both within and across programs.**

*Approaching Standard*

The School Counseling program provides a partially coherent program of study for program candidates. Although candidates express concerns about early courses in the program in which school counseling is not singularly featured, through the practicum and internship experiences, major emphasis is given to the essential learnings contained in the CACREP/ASCA standards. Additionally, recent and ongoing efforts to revise documents, tools, and tasks for better alignment to the standards and courses are reflected in increasing familiarity and understanding of the program organization and outcomes.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling program continue its efforts to align and communicate the program design and implementation to ensure greater coherence within and across the program.

**6. Rhode Island Educator Preparation Programs engage in a process of regular evaluation to ensure program improvement.**

*Approaching Standard*

**6.01 Commitment to High Quality and Improvement.** Approved programs engage in regular and systematic evaluations (including, but not limited to, information obtained through student assessment, and collection of data from students, recent graduates, and other members of the professional community) and use these findings to improve the preparation of prospective educators through the modification of the program.

*Approaching Standard*

The School Counseling Program has made significant progress since the last program approval visit. Courses, tasks, and learning outcomes better align with the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions contained in the CACREP/ASCA standards. Interviews with college personnel and program candidates also relate continuing efforts to revise program materials, process, and expected outcomes. Additionally, the program has developed and implemented a survey instrument to assess progress. However, these surveys have produced limited helpful information to support the ongoing efforts at program improvement.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program examine its goals in data collection and then focus on developing appropriate data gathering and analysis tools for ongoing improvement.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the School Counseling Program explore and use data points from students, recent graduates, and other sources such as this Program Approval Report to assess current effectiveness and plan for necessary improvements.

# Advanced Program for Reading Specialist

**1. Prospective educators recommended for licensure by Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs are proficient in the IRA Professional Standards.**

*On Standard*

## ***1.01 Assessment, Advisement, Feedback, and Counseling Throughout the Program.***

**Prospective educators are assessed through an ongoing process that begins with admission to the program and continues through recommendation for licensure. The results of these assessments are used to monitor candidates' progress toward meeting the standards and to provide academic and professional advisement throughout the program.**

*On Standard*

The FSEHD has designed and implemented a “common advanced program assessment system” for the advanced unit. In this assessment system candidates must demonstrate proficiency in the advanced unit’s conceptual framework – knowledge, practice, diversity, and professionalism; professional dispositions – self-reflection, lifelong learning, advocacy for children and youth, respect for diversity, collaboration, and professional work characteristics; and advanced program-specific standards and criteria. The common assessment system also identifies specific assessment points throughout the advanced programs – admission, formative, summative, and post program completion.

The visiting team saw evidence of the unit-wide comprehensive assessment system from program admission to recommendation for licensure. This common assessment system utilizes specific assessment checkpoints each matched to identified criteria. The visiting team also saw extensive evidence of the International Reading Association Standards (IRA) as the foundational element of the Reading Specialist Program. The Reading Program Guidebook, program courses, tasks, and assessments are appropriately aligned to the IRA standards. Candidates complete seven common course-based assessments that include lesson plans, diagnosis tasks, and possible interventions and must complete an exit portfolio with identified artifacts organized around specified standards prior to recommendation for licensure.

Task and assessments are assessed using consistent rubrics that provide feedback as to performance to candidates. Candidates are aware of the assessment system prior to admission and are assigned a faculty advisor who can answer questions about expectations. The program faculty meets on a regular basis to review the curriculum and candidate performance. Assessments are scored in detail and results conveyed in a timely manner to candidates. The assessment system identifies candidate performance that meets appropriate standards and provides feedback and guidance to help them continue to progress throughout the program.

**1.02 Admission into the Program. Prospective educators are admitted to certification programs based upon clearly articulated criteria that address the students' potential to meet the standards for licensure.**

***On Standard***

The IR identifies common assessment criteria for advanced programs. These include official standardized test scores (Graduate Record Examination or Miller Analogies Test), a professional goals essay, a performance-based evaluation, two candidate reference forms, a minimum number of years teaching experience, and other program-specific criteria.

The Reading Specialist Program additionally requires candidate interviews prior to admission. Reading Program faculty conduct these interviews with standardized questions. The interview process is organized by written guidelines and rubrics for scoring candidate responses to ensure consistency in process and ratings. The written statement of interest, as well as the interview process, seeks to ensure candidate commitment to the program and interest in a deeper understanding of effective reading instruction.

**1.03 Determination of Readiness For Supervised Internship. Prospective educators demonstrate their readiness for supervised internship through an evaluation of their performance with respect to the IRA Standards.**

***On Standard***

The FSEHD identifies readiness for Supervised Internship as the formative checkpoint in the advanced programs. The IR identifies common requirements that candidates must meet to achieve the formative transition checkpoint including a minimum GPA or B or better, a performance-based work sample, a self-evaluation, and a faculty evaluation. Individual advanced programs also require program-specific checkpoints to transition to the readiness for Supervised Internship stage.

Reading Specialist candidates must successfully complete (B- or higher) in the following courses prior to Supervised Internship – ELED 534, ELED 501, ELED 685, and ELED 686. Candidates also must earn exemplary or acceptable levels on specified performance-based tasks, develop an approved Plan of Study, and receive acceptable scores of mid-program evaluations.

Program courses, materials, and student work demonstrate that candidates are well-prepared to successfully participate in ELED 686, the Summer Reading Clinic that serves as the Supervised Internship for the Reading Specialist Program. Previous courses and performance-based tasks are appropriately aligned with IRA standards and allow candidates the opportunities they need to succeed in the field experience. Within these learning experiences candidates are grounded in reading strategies, research-based best practices, various assessment strategies, how to administer and interpret assessments, and how to develop interventions based on student performances.

***1.04 Assessment at the Completion of Clinical Experiences and as a Basis for Recommendation for License.* Prospective educators demonstrate their performance with respect to the standards for the completion of supervised internship through an evaluation process that is shared by the college or university supervisor and the internship supervisor. Programs recommend prospective educators for licensure based on performance with respect to the IRA Standards.**

***On Standard***

The common assessment system identifies several requirements for the summative transition point which serves as the Recommendation for Licensure gate. These include a minimum GPA of B or better, successful completion of the advanced program's comprehensive assessment, a capstone performance assessment, a self evaluation and a faculty evaluation.

The Reading Specialist Program does not require a comprehensive examination, and instead requires successful completion of the Supervised Internship, an exit portfolio, and an exit interview. The supervised internship and case study tasks submitted as part of the clinic experience are designed to demonstrate candidates' ability to implement successful reading practice performance consistent with the IRA standards. The exit portfolio is described to candidates in a detailed and well-organized exit portfolio guidebook that provides requirements, directions, rubrics, and sample work. The exit portfolio is read by at least two faculty readers using a common rubric to ensure reliable assessments. The exit interview is conducted by at least two faculty members following a specified protocol. For both the portfolio and the exit interview, candidates must identify connections between their work, appropriate IRA standards, and their understanding and application of them and be rated on all work at acceptable levels. Candidate work in the sample portfolios provided demonstrate an understanding of the IRA standards across a variety of tasks and in a variety of learning domains including reflective writing, case studies, genre studies, and research methodologies.

***1.05 Validity of Assessment System.* Assessment systems are aligned with educator standards and with instructional processes, use multiple assessments and various methodologies, and have expectations that are clearly communicated to prospective educators.**

***On Standard***

As detailed in the IR, the FSEHD specifically designed the common advanced program assessment system to "provide evidence of student achievement of the learning targets" across the advanced programs. The visiting team saw evidence of common assessment points, criteria, and rubrics that serve as elements of the common assessment system which are public and explicitly communicated to candidates.

Validity is maintained in the Reading Specialist Program through course-embedded assessments that are aligned to the IRA standards. As the same faculty tends to teach the same courses, validity is further ensured through the use of established rubrics and criteria. Course syllabi and

program expectations are clear, public, and explicitly communicated. Candidate knowledge is assessed through a variety of strategies and approaches including genre and case studies, interviews, video tape analysis, and literature review papers. Candidates noted that they felt the assessment system was a valid and authentic approach to evaluate their knowledge and performance throughout the program.

***1.06 Reliability of Assessment System. Assessment systems yield fair, accurate, and consistent evaluation of prospective educators.***

***On Standard***

The FSEHD uses common rubrics and faculty training to ensure consistency of ratings across the components of the common advanced program assessment system. The IR details FSEHD actions in spring 2007 to analyze data from these common assessments to determine consistency. Exhibits in the team room document that a strong coefficient of reliability was found for the common assessment system for graduate programs although the number of respondents was limited.

Reliability in the Reading Specialist Program is ensured through the use of common rubrics, multiple scorings of common assessments and tasks, and by the consistent scoring of course-embedded tasks by faculty who regularly teach the same courses. Program courses are taught by a cohesive faculty who meet regularly to review the assessment system and candidate work. Adjunct faculty supervise the Summer Clinic and they understand and are committed to the expectations of the program and the IRA standards.

As the Reading Specialist Program works to improve its performance in the area of reliability it should consider reviewing its follow up survey both in process, content, alignment with standards, and delivery method (e.g., consider electronic survey tools) to increase response rates to generate more helpful information.

**2. Prospective educators in Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, develop the dispositions, and practice the skills that are encompassed in the IRA Standards.**

*On Standard*

**2.01 Professional and Pedagogical Studies. Prospective educators follow a well-planned scope and sequence of courses and experiences to develop the knowledge, dispositions, and skills encompassed in the IRA Standards.**

*On Standard*

The Reading Specialist Program provides a well-planned curriculum that is developmentally appropriate and aligned to the IRA standards. The courses are sequenced to ensure that candidates experience both the depth and breadth of content aligned to IRA standards and build the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to serve as reading specialists. Appropriate IRA standards and indicators are detailed in the reading program handbook, course materials, and rubrics. The exit portfolio and interview serve as a culminating experience and assessment to ensure that candidates have exposure to the full range of expectations of a reading specialist both to support student learning and teacher use of effective reading instruction practices.

The Reading Specialist Program has recently received national recognition for its reading program through the NCATE/IRA SPA review process. The notification letter states the program is “generally a strong program” that has taken significant steps to meet the appropriate standards and expectations for reading specialists. Candidates report that there is strong emphasis on professional attitudes and dispositions throughout the program and courses. The summer reading clinic was cited by virtually every candidate as being a particular strength of the program. Candidates noted that the rigor as well as the positive collegial environment created a strong and productive learning environment. They noted that most candidates have retained their collaborative teams even after the conclusion of the summer program.

As the Reading Specialist Program works to revise and improve its curriculum, it should consider updating its reference and resource lists for all program courses with the most recent information and on-line resources. Since the Reading Specialist Program leads to a Pk-12 certification, the program should also review its curriculum and course of study to ensure that sufficient focus is provided in secondary reading to ensure that all candidates graduate with the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions as secondary reading specialists in addition to the current strong elementary focus.

**2.02 Subject Matter Knowledge. Prospective educators develop a deep understanding of the subject matter of their area of certification.**

*N/A*

**2.03 Technology. Prospective educators develop an understanding of the role of technology in education and learn how to use technology as an instructional and administrative tool.**

*Unacceptable*

Course syllabi and materials reference the use of technology including video tapes, power point, slides, photographs, and overhead projectors. Some courses reference examining software packages for effectiveness and appropriateness. However, there are no identified technology standards that candidates are expected to meet and more current and varied technological resources, both as an instructional and administrative tool, are not evident. There are no clear expectations for the use of on-line tools and sources, adaptive technology, or other technology requirements articulated in the IRA standards. While some candidate work exceeds expectations for technology by using strategies such as integrating web-based links and information, most work is constrained by limited expectations.

Moreover, the Reading Specialist Program does not identify a technology proficiency that program graduates complete. Some candidates express concern that limited facilities and inadequate technology infrastructure contribute to limited integration of technology.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Reading Specialist Program review its expectations for technology integration in accordance with IRA standards and the Rhode Island Program Approval standards and make appropriate revisions to program and course content and process requirements.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Reading Specialist Program identifies and integrates a set of technology standards as an established expectation for student proficiency.

**2.04 Additional Rhode Island Certification Requirements. Prospective educators develop any additional knowledge and or skills required by Rhode Island educational law or regulations of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education.**

*On Standard*

Program and course materials, faculty, and candidates all indicate and report that important Rhode Island state initiatives such as the Rhode Island Pk-12 Literacy Policy, Personal Literacy Plans, Individual Education Plans, Grade Level and Grade Span Expectations, the New England Common Assessment Program, among others are integral parts of the learning experiences and outcomes. Course materials indicate specific connections to these initiatives and candidates are required to align their work products to appropriate initiatives.

**2.05 Coherence. Prospective educators pursue coherent educational studies that are grounded in research and theory.**

*On Standard*

The Reading Specialist Program is a coherent program that is founded upon the IRA standards, research-based instructional strategies and theories, and best practices in reading instruction. Candidates experience a broad range of learning experiences to engage all aspects of reading instruction – phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, fluency, and comprehension. The program and courses provide a clearly laid out plan and developmental approach to support candidate learning.

**3. Prospective educators have the opportunity to develop their learning in a variety of high quality field sites with professionals who model effective educational practice, assume responsibility for educating prospective colleagues, and are committed to ongoing professional development.**

*On Standard*

**3.01 Extensive Clinical Experience. Prospective educators complete purposeful and sequenced field experiences, including field experience prior to internship periods. Through an internship they have the opportunity to experience all aspects of the profession.**

*On Standard*

Clinical experiences in the Reading Specialist Program are sequenced and occur in a variety of ways. First, nearly all candidates are practicing professionals serving as classroom teachers and projects/assignments are crafted to be job embedded allowing for immediate application of concepts. The IR and course materials describe field experiences in ELED 685 and 686 in which candidates administer diagnostic tools, identify struggling readers, and design instruction to meet such students' needs. Additionally, candidates are required to shadow a reading specialist for a minimum of one day.

The major clinical experience, and one described by graduates as “transformational” is the summer reading clinic. The remedial summer reading clinic is a six credit summer course which serves as the internship experience for program candidates. The clinic is conducted on campus, is facilitated by adjunct faculty, and supervised by Rhode Island College program faculty. Candidates are assigned two children (grades 1-8) to tutor and work with their colleagues to design and implement instruction based on individual student need. Both current and graduate students indicated strong faculty support and guidance during the clinic experience. The summer reading clinic effectively builds upon the earlier program learning and allows candidates to apply this knowledge to actual students in an authentic environment. As such, candidates experience a meaningful internship that provides the opportunity to experience the full responsibility of a reading specialist.

**3.02 Clinical Experience in a Variety of Settings. Prospective educators complete field experiences in a variety of educational settings, including schools which serve culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students and classrooms that serve students with a range of abilities, including students with exceptional needs.**

*On Standard*

The Reading Specialist Program requires candidates to engage in a variety of field experiences through their course work and the summer reading clinic. Early program experiences include candidates working with struggling readers in their teaching context and with students experiencing reading difficulty at the college level. Program materials describe that these experiences provide candidates with opportunities to “work with readers from a variety of backgrounds and reading difficulties.”

Reading Specialist candidates are ensured at least one significant experience with students from diverse cultural, linguistic, and economic backgrounds through the summer clinic experience. Since student interest in the summer clinic is high, the program is able to coordinate admission to the clinic to ensure that the students represent a broad range of learners. The IR reports that during the summer 2007 clinic, thirty-four of the sixty children in the program were from diverse backgrounds. Candidates and graduates also indicated that formal and informal interactions during course activities additionally broadened their perspectives and understanding about teaching in diverse settings.

Candidates did express concern about limited access and experience working with secondary, primarily high school students. As the Reading Specialist Program furthers the process of continuous improvement it should explore additional mechanisms to ensure candidates have sufficient opportunities to work with struggling readers at all levels for which they will be certified to service.

***3.03 Effective Field Sites. Prospective educators complete field experiences in settings where they have the opportunity to practice their learning in a way that is consistent with the IRA Standards.***

***On Standard***

As noted in the IR, most candidates in the Reading Specialist Program are practicing professionals. Thus they teach and work in a variety of Pk-12 settings. In the early program courses, candidates are required to engage in various learning experiences in their work contexts to practice the knowledge, skills, and dispositions articulated in course expectations and the IRA standards.

The summer reading clinic, which serves as the primary field experiences, was created by the Reading Specialist Program to provide an authentic and robust field experience. As the clinic was designed by the program and staffed and supervised by program faculty, there is a great degree of control of the effectiveness of the field site. A review of program, course, and clinic materials, as well as interviews with participants and faculty, show a strong alignment to IRA standards and expectations. Further, candidates are required to create lessons for the clinic internship experience that reference and align to Rhode Island Grade Level Expectations.

**3.04 Effective Internship Supervisors.** Approved programs place prospective educators exclusively with internship supervisors whose practice is consistent with IRA Standards. The internship supervisors know how to help prospective educators develop and how to evaluate prospective educators in order to make a recommendation regarding successful performance with respect to the standards.

*On Standard*

The only supervised field experience is the summer reading clinic. The Coordinator of the Reading Program serves as the Internship Supervisor and two adjunct faculty members serve as clinic facilitators. The Coordinator is a full-time RIC faculty member with extensive experience in reading development and instruction. Both of the adjunct faculty members hold appropriate credentials and have extensive experience as reading specialists and literacy coaches. The Reading Specialist Program related that when it needed an additional adjunct clinic facilitator, it recruited a candidate who was highly qualified for the position and skilled in working with adult learners. The program candidates noted in interviews that there was extensive and useful feedback by the supervisors.

**3.05 Recruit and Provide Professional Development for Internship Supervisors.** Approved programs recruit internship supervisors and mentors whose practice is consistent with the IRA Standards and who are committed to supporting the development of prospective educators. The programs provide professional development opportunities and other incentives to help these educators enhance their effectiveness in these roles.

*On Standard*

The Internship Supervisors for the program are college faculty and adjuncts and are recruited based on the alignment of their practice to IRA standards and best reading practice instruction. The Internship Supervisors report that the summer clinic is collaborative learning experience in which they support candidates while monitor the effectiveness of the clinic experience. They also report that they are provided meaningful incentives and professional development to continue in their roles.

**3.06 College/University and School Partnerships.** Approved programs establish collaborative and respectful relationships between college and university faculty and their institution and field-based educators, their schools, and their school districts that benefit both the institution of higher education and the K-12 school district for the common goal of preparing prospective educators.

*Approaching Standard*

The Reading Specialist Program is involved in a number of partnerships with schools, school districts, and with the Rhode Island Department of Education. To help strengthen the Reading Recovery training within the state, program faculty has worked with RIDE in a leadership role.

During the fall of 2007 noted reading specialist, Dr. Michael Graves, presented a three-day conference for Reading Program candidates and other area educators. A special emphasis for this presentation was on middle school and high school teachers.

A review of program documents and exhibit room evidence suggests that while some efforts are made to develop helpful partnerships, it is not clear that these are consistent or of a sufficient high priority to positively impact the Pk-12 field sites. In particular are concerns surrounding issues of documented agreements, partnerships that primarily benefit schools and districts, and the extent to which partnerships are a program-wide priority.

The visiting team **RECOMMENDS** that the Reading Specialist Program review its partnerships with schools and districts and increase their prominence within the Reading Program to increase support for Pk-12 schools and districts.

**4. Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs and their institutions demonstrate a commitment to affirming the diversity<sup>3</sup> of our state, our communities, and our public schools by preparing educators who can work effectively with students, families, community members, and colleagues from diverse backgrounds to create learning communities in which all students succeed.**

*Approaching Standard*

**4.01 Curriculum.** Prospective educators develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions essential to preparing them to be effective teachers of diverse students. The preparation includes a curriculum that engages all students in issues of diversity in our world and in our schools. The curriculum also expands the socio-cultural awareness of prospective educators by helping them become more aware of how their own world views are shaped by their life experiences. The curriculum helps prospective educators develop affirming attitudes towards individuals from diverse backgrounds and a commitment to making schools places where all students succeed. Throughout their preparation, prospective educators learn about diverse communities and students and learn to teach in diverse communities and classrooms. They learn to create classrooms in which instruction builds from the cultures of their students' communities.

*Approaching Standard*

The IR details that “Advanced programs assist candidates to further develop positive dispositions toward diversity through a professional sequence that explicitly and implicitly focuses on issues of diversity.” As part of the common assessment system, program candidates are required to meet expectations regarding diversity identified in the advanced program competencies, the PAR (Plan, Act, Reflect) model, and the FSEHD dispositions. These include a systems view of human development, individual differences and cultural diversity, family-centeredness and engagement, and reflective practice.

Reading Specialist candidates explore issues of diversity in course tasks and assessments such as through written assignments, a genre project emphasizing diverse children’s literature, case studies, and working with diverse students in the Summer Reading Clinic. The IRA standards further identify issues of diversity as important learning goals for candidates. However, learning experiences detailed in program and course materials do not provide candidates sufficient opportunities to develop a deeper awareness of their own world view and the experiences of other cultures. Coursework on diversity is limited to electives, and consequently content/research about the effects of ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, gender, and exceptionalities is limited. As such, candidates may often miss opportunities to fully explore and apply the program expectations and standards regarding diversity.

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<sup>3</sup> Diversity is used throughout this standard to address ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual-orientation, and geographical area.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program and the FSEHD work to develop systems and/or program or course requirements to ensure that all candidates are prepared to practice through a curriculum that prioritizes issues of diversity so that candidates may demonstrate the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions consistent with IRA standards and those identified in the program and FSEHD assessment system.

**4.02 Field Experiences that Capitalize on the Diversity of P-12 Schools. Prospective educators successfully complete field experiences that are designed to assure interaction with exceptional students, and students from different ethnic, racial, gender, socio-economic, language, and religious groups. Through these experiences prospective educators examine issues of diversity in teaching and learning. Skilled cooperating teachers and college and university faculty help the prospective educators use these experiences to improve their ability to teach students from diverse backgrounds effectively.**

#### *On Standard*

The Reading Specialist Program recognizes the importance of field experiences that engage diverse learners and subsequently ensures that candidates have sufficient opportunities to design and implement instruction that is accessible to various groups of students. The centerpiece of this effort is the Summer Reading Clinic. Through this experience, Reading Specialist candidates are matched with students who are selected in part to ensure diverse representation from groups of students and school districts. Under the guidance of adjunct and college faculty, the candidates engage and are exposed to theory, application, and analysis to determine the appropriateness of instructional strategies and content to meet varied student needs.

**4.03 An Environment that Values Diversity. Colleges and universities and their teacher preparation programs make issues of socio-cultural awareness, affirmation of diversity, and the preparation of culturally responsive teachers central to their mission. Colleges and universities establish a campus environment that promotes and sustains a diverse community. They capitalize on the community's diversity to promote deeper understanding of issues of equity and diversity in our state, our communities, and our schools.**

#### *Approaching Standard*

The Reading Specialist Program appears to honor the importance of diversity. Issues of diversity are apparent in some course materials and assessments based on national standards, the Summer Reading Clinic, and in recommendations to participate in field experiences within diverse contexts. As part of the FSEHD and the college community, numerous efforts have been conducted to promote and develop an environment that values diversity including conferences that feature promising practices for the teaching of diverse learners, outreach and support groups for diverse students, and an emphasis in college-wide program and course materials offerings. While the visiting team recognizes that progress has made in this area throughout the college, it did not see sufficient success within the Reading Specialist Program. Reading Specialist policies and practices promote diversity, but actual implementation lags and have met with limited success to more fully develop a Reading Specialist Program environment that values diversity.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Reading Specialist Program review its policies and practices in regards to establishing an environment that values diversity including policies that emphasize socio-cultural awareness and affirmation of diversity, creating a diverse community, and promoting a deeper understanding of diversity to make specific and substantial changes to better realize this goal.

**4.04 Faculty. Colleges and universities and the teacher preparation programs recruit, hire, support, and retain a diverse faculty. Prospective educators have the opportunity to learn from faculty members whose diverse backgrounds enable prospective educators to view their craft through a wide lens.**

*Unacceptable*

Rhode Island College has provided evidence in the IR that efforts have been made at the college level and within and across certain departments and programs to recruit, hire, support, and retain a diverse faculty. The Reading Specialist Program did not provide evidence that similar efforts have been made within the program. Minimal diversity exists within the program faculty. All full-time faculty are white males, the two adjunct faculty who supervise the summer clinic are white females.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Reading Specialist Program work with the college community and other stakeholders to develop effective means to promote a more diverse faculty, including adjunct faculty, within the program.

**4.05 Students. Colleges and universities and their teacher preparation programs recruit, admit, support, and retain a diverse student body. The program's admission processes, curriculum, access to student services, and counseling and mentoring programs are designed to support the preparation of a more diverse teaching force. Prospective teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds and with experiences that differ from the other prospective teachers find their participation is elicited, valued, and affirmed throughout the preparation program.**

*Unacceptable*

As with the indicator 4.04 for faculty, the IR and evidence collected during the course of the visit suggest that Rhode Island College and the school-wide community is making progress in the area of recruiting, admitting, supporting, and retaining a diverse student body. This effort was further evident in the increasing diversity apparent across the campus. However, the Reading Specialist Program did not provide evidence that similar efforts have been made. Minimal diversity exists within the Reading Specialist student body. Data provided to the visiting team reveal that from 2002 – 20007, the college graduated 109 Reading Specialist. Of these, thirteen did not specify a racial/ethnic background and ninety-six were white.

The visiting Team RECOMMENDS that the Reading Specialist Program work with the Pk-12 schools, the college community and other stakeholders to develop effective means to recruit, admit, support, and graduate a more diverse student body.

**5. Rhode Island Educator Preparation Programs are supported by college and university structures that provide the resources necessary to ensure quality programs; a faculty which is engaged in scholarship, demonstrates exceptional expertise in its teaching fields, and is actively involved in PK-12 schools; and coherence within and across preparation programs.**

*On Standard*

**5.01 *Qualified Faculty Members.* The Professional Education Faculty is composed of individuals with exceptional expertise as teachers and scholars in their teaching fields. They exemplify the qualities of effective instruction including the proficiencies described in the IRA Standards.**

*On Standard*

Based upon a review of exhibit room evidence including: curricula vitae, statements of professional development and partnerships, course syllabi, and assessments, the education courses within the Reading Specialist Program are taught by faculty who demonstrate academic preparation that prepares them for their role within the FSEHD. While the visiting team was satisfied with quality of faculty based upon an evidence review, there was minimal evidence of a comprehensive evaluation system or of the use of data to track faculty performance and effectiveness for ongoing improvement.

**5.02 *Faculty Responsibilities and Professional Development.* The Professional Education Faculty is involved in teaching, scholarship, and service. They are involved with practice in K-12 schools. Approved programs ensure the ongoing professional development of their faculty.**

*Approaching Standard*

Based upon a review of exhibit room evidence including curricula vitae, statements of professional development, and partnerships, the visiting team saw evidence that the majority of faculty members in the Reading Specialist Program are actively engaged in teaching, scholarship, and service to the College and Pk-12 schools. Examples include presentations, publications, affiliations, memberships, office holding, and partnerships. Curricula vitae and other documents also provided evidence of professional development for some faculty members. However, not all faculty members engage in each of the identified criteria to achieve this standard – teaching, scholarship, and service. Furthermore, while some faculty engage in delivering or receiving professional development, exhibit room evidence suggests that other members do not avow themselves of this opportunity.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that program faculty ensure that they meet each of the expectations identified in this standard to promote and improve teaching, scholarship, and service.

**5.03 Resources. Approved programs assure access to adequate resources to support teaching and scholarship, including the necessary facilities, equipment, library, curriculum resources, educational technology, and financial resources to support quality programs.**

*Approaching Standard*

Based upon document review, interviews, and observations, the visiting team found strong evidence that the level of available resources for the Reading Specialist Program is limited, particularly in the area of technology, and impacts the program design, learning outcomes, and potential of faculty members to teach and conduct scholarship. Limited facilities and technology, insufficient fiscal resources for program improvement and instructional materials, and heavy teaching loads produce real challenges. These challenges force many faculty members to either work through or around them to best serve their students, program, and school. Members of the school community relate a representative unfortunate incident in which a professor wanted to use computer technology but did not have access in the assigned room. Subsequently the professor was forced to instruct using overhead transparencies rather than the intended and more appropriate power point format.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Reading Specialist faculty, other members of the college community and other stakeholders continue to work to maximize available funds, seek additional funding sources, and prioritize actions that match available funds.

**5.04 Professional Community. Approved programs support collaboration among higher education faculty, school personnel and other members of the professional community to prepare new educators and to improve the quality of education of children.**

*On Standard*

The Reading Specialist Program has established and engages in several collaborative partnerships that promote the quality of education of children. The most substantial partnership is the Summer Reading Clinic which both advances effective educator preparation, but also provides a critical support in reading interventions to struggling readers. The Reading Specialist Program also partners with schools and districts to provide in-service opportunities for teachers. Finally, graduates report that they maintain strong professional relationships with professors and with each other upon graduation.

**5.05 Coherence Within and Across Programs. Approved programs ensure that coherence exists between the IRA Standards and student outcomes, courses, field experiences, instruction, and assessment, both within and across programs.**

*On Standard*

The Reading Specialist Program provides a coherent course of study that meets its goal to provide effective instruction for Reading Specialists. Program courses, materials, and outcomes are aligned to the IRA standards. Pk-12 students, Pk-12 schools, candidates, Internship Supervisors, and program faculty equally benefit from a strong program that delivers research-based and current strategies for effective reading instruction.

**6. Rhode Island Educator Preparation Programs engage in a process of regular evaluation to ensure program improvement.**

*Approaching Standard*

**6.01 Commitment to High Quality and Improvement.** Approved programs engage in regular and systematic evaluations (including, but not limited to, information obtained through student assessment, and collection of data from students, recent graduates, and other members of the professional community) and use these findings to improve the preparation of prospective educators through the modification of the program.

*Approaching Standard*

The Reading Specialist Program is an effective program that well-supports candidates from admission to recommendation for licensure. The program has developed an innovative structure to ensure that candidates experience a meaningful clinical experience in a diverse setting at a time when they are available from the current full-time positions.

The program recognizes its success and also recognizes the need to continue to monitor and revise the program in response to candidate and program need. However, the evaluation of the program and potential revision does not represent a systematic and ongoing program improvement effort. The program faculties meet to reflect upon program and candidate performance, especially through retreats which occur at the end of each semester, but it is not clear that such meetings result in decision-making based on careful analysis of disaggregated data.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Reading Specialist Program identify critical questions to lead a systematic and ongoing review of all aspects of the program and a systematic response to the collected data for program improvement.

# Advanced Program in Educational Leadership

## **1. Prospective educators recommended for licensure by Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs are proficient in the ISLLC Professional Standards.**

### *Approaching Standard*

#### ***1.01 Assessment, Advisement, Feedback, and Counseling Throughout the Program.***

**Prospective educators are assessed through an ongoing process that begins with admission to the program and continues through recommendation for licensure. The results of these assessments are used to monitor candidates' progress toward meeting the standards and to provide academic and professional advisement throughout the program.**

### *Approaching Standard*

The FSEHD has designed and implemented a “common advanced program assessment system” for the advanced unit. In this assessment system candidates must demonstrate proficiency in the advanced unit’s conceptual framework – knowledge, practice, diversity, and professionalism; professional dispositions – self-reflection, lifelong learning, advocacy for children and youth, respect for diversity, collaboration, and professional work characteristics; and advanced program-specific standards and criteria. The common assessment system also identifies specific assessment points throughout the advanced programs – admission, formative, summative, and post program completion.

The visiting team saw evidence of the unit-wide comprehensive assessment system from program admission to recommendation for licensure. This common assessment system utilizes specific assessment checkpoints each matched to identified criteria. The team also saw evidence of a program-specific assessment system for the Educational Leadership Program. In addition to the advanced unit requirements, this system includes a self-evaluation against the ISLLC standards, successful completion of the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA), and a program-specific comprehensive exam.

Educational Leadership courses and tasks as designed align to the ISLLC standards and often identify specific standards and indicators that are featured in the content and products. The program also uses common rubrics across the courses that attempt to promote alignment to the ISLLC standards and provide feedback to candidates as to their progress and in gaining the knowledge, dispositions, and skills of educational leaders. Candidates are assigned to a faculty advisor upon admission to the program, develop a learning plan to outline their goals and experiences in the program, and meet with the advisor at assigned times.

However, the assessment system, courses, and tasks as implemented do not fully align with the full range of ISLLC standards nor do they align with those standards that are identified in

specified course materials. Demonstration papers, plans, and position papers did not always reflect the expected level of performance or depth of knowledge and yet were assigned satisfactory grades. Additionally, the assessment system does not articulate rigorous and varied expectations for candidate learning. Candidate reflections and theory over application comprise the primary emphasis in the process and content of many tasks and assessments. The common rubrics similarly emphasize process over specific content from ISLLC standards and indicators. Further, it is not clear that candidates receive sufficient or consistent feedback as to their progress in the program or their work in relation to ISLLC standards and expectations.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that Educational Leadership Program review its assessment system and rubric expectations to ensure greater alignment with ISLLC standards and indicators.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program review its assessment system and program and course assessments to increase the expectations for rigor and in-depth knowledge and application of the ISLLC standards and indicators.

***1.02 Admission into the Program. Prospective educators are admitted to certification programs based upon clearly articulated criteria that address the students' potential to meet the standards for licensure.***

***On Standard***

The IR identifies common assessment criteria for advanced programs. These include official standardized test scores (Graduate Record Examination or Miller Analogies Test), a professional goals essay, a performance-based evaluation, three candidate reference forms, a minimum number of years teaching experience, and other program-specific criteria. The Educational Leadership Program additionally requires an interview process with specified questions as criteria for admissions.

The visiting team found that the admissions criteria emphasize preparation for graduate program work and sound teaching practices, but do not emphasize students' potential to be educational leaders. For example, while a later course requires a self-evaluation against the ISLLC standards, no such emphasis on the knowledge, skills, or dispositions necessary for leadership are evident in the admission process.

The visiting team suggests that the Educational Leadership Program continues to review and revise its admission requirements to align them with expectations for candidates' potential to meet educational leadership requirements identified in the ISLLC standards.

***1.03 Determination of Readiness For Supervised Internship. Prospective educators demonstrate their readiness for supervised internship through an evaluation of their performance with respect to the ISLLC Standards.***

***Approaching Standard***

The FSEHD identifies readiness for Supervised Internship as the formative checkpoint in the advanced programs. The IR identifies common requirements that candidates must meet to achieve the formative transition checkpoint including a minimum GPA of B or better, a performance-based work sample, a self-evaluation, and a faculty evaluation. Individual advanced programs also require program-specific checkpoints to transition to the readiness for Supervised Internship level.

To demonstrate readiness for Supervised Internship, Educational Leadership candidates must successfully complete (B- or higher) the following courses – LEAD 500, 501 (B or higher) 502, 503, and 504. Candidates must complete a “work sample paper defining the educational leader’s role in supporting and promoting learning and good instruction.” They must also demonstrate satisfactory progress in completing the program portfolio as well as other specified performance assessments.

ILLSC standards are embedded in course syllabi and tasks, but the mapping of specific tasks and/or assignments to standards and indicators is not complete. It was not clear to the visiting team whether the standards defined the tasks or the tasks were simply matched to standards to promote coverage rather than to ensure the depth of understanding through application, synthesis, and evaluation. Further, many of the tasks prior to Supervised Internship entail practice assignments, reflections, or lack specific criteria to ensure authentic and rigorous opportunities to apply the ISLLC standards to a candidate learning context prior to internship.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program review the Readiness for Supervised Internship requirements to promote explicit and authentic connections to ISLLC standards in prior course work and program assessments.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program review and revise the LEAD Program Handbook to more clearly communicate course and program requirements and performance expectations prior to Supervised Internship.

***1.04 Assessment at the Completion of Clinical Experiences and as a Basis for Recommendation for License. Prospective educators demonstrate their performance with respect to the standards for the completion of supervised internship through an evaluation process that is shared by the college or university supervisor and the internship supervisor. Programs recommend prospective educators for licensure based on performance with respect to the ISLLC Standards.***

#### ***Approaching Standard***

The Educational Leadership Program is a new program design and as the first cohort of candidates will not advance to the recommendation for licensure level until spring 2008, the visiting team could only assess an intended design rather than implemented programs, processes, and requirements.

The common assessment system identifies several requirements for the summative transition point which serves as the Recommendation for Licensure gate. These include a minimum GPA of B- or better in the first two required courses, B or better in all subsequent required coursework, successful completion of the advanced program's comprehensive assessment, a capstone performance assessment, a self evaluation focused on the ISLLC standards, and a faculty evaluation of the internship experience. The Educational Leadership Program requires candidates to complete additional program specific assessments prior to recommendation for licensure. These include completion of an exit portfolio, an educational platform, specified program artifacts, and successful performance on the Education Testing Service's School Leaders Licensure Assessment.

While the design contained several appropriate requirements connected to ISLLC standards, the design for the recommendation for licensure level was incomplete and subsequently difficult to assess. For example, the course syllabus for LEAD 511, scheduled for the spring 2008 semester, does not provide specific tasks or assessments criteria; however, specific choices are apparent in the initial outline. Furthermore, course syllabi describe 'internship notebooks' that contain candidate plans of actions, yet evidence of these notebooks was not provided. The syllabus for LEAD 512 does not provide specific tasks, but introduces a list of possible assessments with the phrase: "assessments may include, but are not limited to." Another example includes the designation of comprehensive assessments as a requirement for licensure; yet, comprehensive examinations or a specified process for their implementation and evaluation has yet to be developed. Additionally, the proposed candidate's learning plan format is not evidenced in the program materials provided to the visiting team.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program work with the FSEHD to complete and finalize the course syllabi and recommendation for licensure requirements to clarify and clearly communicate the requirements for the recommendation for licensure.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the recommendation for licensure gates include clear criteria for successful performance that are linked to standards.

***1.05 Validity of Assessment System. Assessment systems are aligned with educator standards and with instructional processes, use multiple assessments and various methodologies, and have expectations that are clearly communicated to prospective educators.***

### ***Approaching Standard***

As detailed in the IR, the FSEHD specifically designed the common advanced program assessment system to "provide evidence of student achievement of the learning targets" across the advanced programs. The visiting team saw evidence of common assessment points, criteria, and rubrics that serve as elements of the common assessment system which are public and explicitly communicated to candidates.

The Educational Leadership Program and courses that are fully developed appear to be aligned to the ISLLC standards and provide valid opportunities to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected of educational leaders. As noted above, it was not clear to the visiting team that the admissions system has detailed measures of candidate preparedness as educational leaders rather than relying solely on readiness for graduate level work. While the program and courses require varied assessments tasks, the predominant modality of learning is personal and individual reflection over more rigorous expectations for application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. It is also unclear if the intended mentor training will provide consistent forms, processes, and supports to ensure mentors will provide the depth of support and evaluation that is aligned to the expectations of the Educational Leadership Program and the ISLLC standards. Further, since the design for the program and courses is incomplete, the program cannot clearly communicate the system to candidates nor demonstrate that the program validly measures the full scope of the ISLLC standards.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program complete the program and course design and review and revise course tasks to ensure multiple assessments and various methodologies that provide valid measures for alignment to ISLLC standards.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program develop systems to ensure validity as it completes program design and admits successive cohorts of candidates.

***1.06 Reliability of Assessment System. Assessment systems yield fair, accurate, and consistent evaluation of prospective educators.***

***Approaching Standard***

The FSEHD uses common formats for its rubrics as well as faculty training to ensure consistency of rating across the components of the common advanced program assessment system. The IR details FSEHD actions in spring 2007 to analyze data from these common assessments to determine consistency. Exhibits in the team room document that a strong coefficient of reliability was found for graduate programs, although the number of respondents was limited.

To ensure consistency of ratings, the Educational Leadership Program uses multiple raters to review candidate applications for admission to program. The program has also developed common rubrics and assessment tools and drafts for future common assessment tools to further ensure consistency of rating throughout the program. Program-wide reliability is hampered however by imprecise task expectations and rubric criteria for ISLLC and process indicators thus limiting consistent ratings on tasks and assessments. Upon reviewing sample candidate coursework, for example, it was not clear that work identified as exemplary was in fact superior to work identified as satisfactory.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program work to improve the validity as well as the reliability of the assessment system by using multiple

assessors to score representative candidate work from course and program assessments to clarify rubric expectations and determine appropriate levels of performance.

**2. Prospective educators in Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, develop the dispositions, and practice the skills that are encompassed in the ISLLC Standards.**

*Approaching Standard*

**2.01 Professional and Pedagogical Studies. Prospective educators follow a well-planned scope and sequence of courses and experiences to develop the knowledge, dispositions, and skills encompassed in the ISLLC Standards.**

*Approaching Standard*

The Educational Leadership Program provides a series of courses and experiences that are designed to align to the ISLLC standards and indicators. The program courses and tasks provide exposure to critical leadership issues such as school mission and culture, evaluation, school improvement planning, looking at data, and appropriate ethical behavior. The courses are developmentally sequenced and provide opportunities for students to engage critical issues prior to internship. At the completion of the program, candidates will be assessed against the full range of ISLLC standards through an exit portfolio and comprehensive examinations.

The visiting team has several concerns regarding the Educational Leadership curriculum. Although instructional leadership is evident in the curriculum design, leadership as a function of management seems to be emphasized at the expense of instructional leadership. The depth of knowledge, skills, and dispositions required in many of the implemented and designed tasks do not suggest adequate depth of understanding or require sufficient application, rather they focus on reflection over authentic leadership tasks and products of best practices. Specific rubric criteria for content in course tasks are not fully explicit nor aligned to ISLCC standards, leaving wide interpretation as to the quality of the product and process. Moreover, the incomplete curriculum design limits the visiting team's ability to assess courses and experiences that occur at the end of the program.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program review and revise the existing curriculum to promote balance between instructional leadership skills and strategies with the administrative management tasks identified in the ISLLC standards.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program complete the curriculum design and development while working to ensure depth of engagement with ISLLC standards through tasks that require more application of appropriate knowledge, skills and dispositions to balance the current emphasis on reflection.

**2.02 Subject Matter Knowledge. Prospective educators develop a deep understanding of the subject matter of their area of certification.**

*N/A*

**2.03 Technology. Prospective educators develop an understanding of the role of technology in education and learn how to use technology as an instructional and administrative tool.**

*Unacceptable*

The Educational Leadership Program assumes technology competencies in several program courses and tasks. An exhibit provided in the team room describes these experiences to include using the internet to access, evaluate, and select information, to make presentations, to create spreadsheets, and to access and use the WebCT software with Discussion Board. While each of these uses is valid for a leadership program, it is not clear from course materials or candidate work samples that these technologies are assessed, taught, or used at a level of understanding to ensure candidate proficiency.

Furthermore, due to the incomplete design of the program and courses, several classes that specifically identify technology components, LEAD 505, 507, 511, and 512, have yet to be offered or are still partial designs. Specifically, LEAD 505, Leading Learning II: Collaboration, Supervision, and Technology include technology in the course title but do not reference technology in the course description or intended tasks. Additionally, since the program has not adopted a set of technology standards it is not clear that all candidates learn or are required to demonstrate facility with appropriate technology in order to successfully demonstrate the skill and ability to complete assigned tasks appropriately.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program adopts or develops a set of technology standards and develop and incorporate learning experiences and tasks that require engagement with authentic uses of technology consistent with the expectations articulated in the ISLLC standards.

**2.04 Additional Rhode Island Certification Requirements. Prospective educators develop any additional knowledge and or skills required by Rhode Island educational law or regulations of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education.**

*Approaching Standard*

The Educational Leadership Program provided evidence in the exhibit room that tracks several state initiatives to program courses. Upon examination of the identified courses, the connections were neither prominent nor apparent. LEAD 502, for example, is identified as connecting to Middle/High School reform, Special Populations, Progressive Support and Intervention, and Healthy Schools. Limited connections to these issues are evident in the syllabus of course tasks. Furthermore, LEAD 506, Creating Learning Structures: Equity, Law and Practice, which is described to focus on “policy-making and legislation at the local, state, and federal levels”

provides only an outline of intended content with little specificity as to potential connections to state initiatives. Program candidates demonstrated limited knowledge of state initiatives in program coursework and in interviews. Candidates were more likely to cite their home school districts as providing this information. Moreover, the visiting team did not see a systematic approach by the program to ensure that candidates are exposed to critical state initiatives.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program review and revise its curriculum to meaningfully integrate and incorporate key state initiatives and work with agencies such as RIDE, RIASP, the Center for School Leadership, and other educational leadership organizations to increase the prominence of state initiatives within the curriculum design.

**2.05 Coherence. Prospective educators pursue coherent educational studies that are grounded in research and theory.**

*Approaching Standard*

The Educational Leadership Program provides a partially coherent study of issues and challenges related to instructional leadership and management as defined by the ISLLC standards. The standards are mapped across the program courses and tasks, but as is outlined above, this mapping is neither complete, consistent, nor fully explicit. The program provides a developmental approach to instructional leadership, but appears to focus on administrative management as a primary focus for curriculum design. Many of the tasks for the varied courses emphasize theory and reflection over authentic experiences that require candidate engagement in the work of educational leadership. Additionally, a review of required and recommended readings for several courses reveals that identified selections do not always reflect the most current offerings in a given field or provide varied readings across different courses.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program complete the design of the program curriculum to increase the application of knowledge, skills and dispositions contained in the ISLLC standards while assessing it for coherence and grounding in current research and theory as well as best practices in instructional leadership.

**3. Prospective educators have the opportunity to develop their learning in a variety of high quality field sites with professionals who model effective educational practice, assume responsibility for educating prospective colleagues, and are committed to ongoing professional development.**

*Approaching Standard*

**3.01 Extensive Clinical Experience. Prospective educators complete purposeful and sequenced field experiences, including field experience prior to internship periods. Through an internship they have the opportunity to experience all aspects of the profession.**

*Approaching Standard*

Candidates in the Educational Leadership Program engage in four field experiences during their program of study that are intended to provide access to all aspects of the profession. For example, in LEAD 501, candidates complete a minimum three hour shadowing experience to explore issues in school leadership. LEAD 503 requires a fifty hour field experience in a family or youth agency in an urban center with a diverse clientele. In program years two and three candidates will be required to complete two 150 hour clinical internships in their home school setting to include “a variety of substantial experiences planned and guided cooperatively by university and school district personnel.”

Within these field experiences candidates are expected to conduct observations and shadowing experiences, identify problems and propose action planning through execution and implementation, engage diverse members of the community, and develop various products to document their administrative skills, development, and meaningful learning of school leadership experiences. The initial field experiences and the design for the intended future field experiences appear to be a sequenced and developmental introduction to field experiences as educational leaders. However, the visiting team found that the design is incomplete and has yet to be implemented.

The visiting team found that the fifty hour agency field placement is identified in program materials as to occur in urban settings serving diverse clientele. However, of the four placements, only two fully match this expectation. Moreover, candidate and program evaluations of these four initial sites are less than satisfactory and recommend not using two of the four sites in the future. As noted above, rather than application of learning in a field setting, many of the products emphasize personal reflection which does not allow or require more useful and rigorous analysis and synthesis of program learning and ISLLC standards application. Similarly, it is not clear from the initial experiences or intended future experiences that sufficient focus is given towards all aspects of leadership as defined by the ISLLC standards.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program review the expectations and requirements for field experiences in light of the curriculum design to ensure that all candidates receive extensive field experiences that promote instructional leadership as well as administrative management through active participation and deep engagement with all aspects of school leadership.

**3.02 Clinical Experience in a Variety of Settings. Prospective educators complete field experiences in a variety of educational settings, including schools which serve culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students and classrooms that serve students with a range of abilities, including students with exceptional needs.**

#### *Approaching Standard*

The IR notes that the LEAD faculty “strives to create partnerships with school districts that provide candidates with opportunities to work with students from culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse backgrounds.” As noted above in 2.01, field experiences are a substantial and consistent part of the Educational Leadership Program and curriculum design. The field experience in LEAD 503, to be conducted in a family or youth agency or school within an urban setting, is a notable attempt to address the expectation for experiences in a variety of settings of a diverse nature.

However, as is also noted in the IR, as the majority of candidates are employed full-time as educators in the field, and “by necessity, most candidates arrange internships in school districts where they are employed” thus, limiting program control over field experience assignments in a variety of settings. Further, as noted above, not all members of the first cohort experienced the fifty hour LEAD 503 family/youth agency or school experience in effective or urban placements. The program is aware of this challenge and is exploring options to address this structural dilemma that inhibits candidate access to placements in a variety of settings. One suggestion by the program that may merit further consideration is accessing grants or other funding sources to provide and require opportunities for structured time for candidates to conduct program field experiences in settings other than that in which they are employed.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program ensures that the LEAD 503 field experience occur in a variety of settings as intended.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program continue to work with the candidates, the College, and other stakeholders to secure means to ensure field experiences for other courses and program requirements in a variety of settings.

**3.03 Effective Field Sites. Prospective educators complete field experiences in settings where they have the opportunity to practice their learning in a way that is consistent with the ISLLC Standards.**

***Approaching Standard***

The Educational Leadership Program identifies field experiences as critical components of candidate learning and experiences. The program and curriculum design provide for a sequenced and developmental approach to field experiences. In program exhibits and the IR, the program articulates that “it is anticipated that they (candidates) will seek to complete their internships at their own schools.” Whereas the program identifies specific criteria for field-based mentors, no such criteria are provided or suggested for field sites to ensure their effectiveness. Thus it is not clear that program candidates are ensured field site experiences to practice learning in a way consistent with ISLLC standards. Conversely, the program, has implemented an evaluation process for field sites for LEAD 503 based on less than satisfactory evaluation of the initial field placements and will seek to ensure that candidates engage in this field experience in a more appropriate setting.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program explore and develop processes and criteria to ensure that candidates experience field placements in settings that are aligned to ISLLC standards and expectations for practice.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program develop monitoring and evaluation processes and criteria to ensure the ongoing quality and effectiveness of field sites.

**3.04 Effective Internship Supervisors. Approved programs place prospective educators exclusively with internship supervisors whose practice is consistent with ISLLC Standards. The internship supervisors know how to help prospective educators develop and how to evaluate prospective educators in order to make a recommendation regarding successful performance with respect to the standards.**

***Approaching Standard***

Similar to the challenge identified in 3.03, the program recognizes that program candidates will most likely select their place of employment as their field site placement thus determining their Internship Supervisor. Despite this dynamic, the program provides explicit criteria to be accepted as LEAD Internship mentors to serve as the Internship Supervisor. These criteria include five years experience as principal or assistant principal, positive recommendations from a supervisor regarding raising student achievement and leadership practices, willingness to serve as a mentor and comply with program expectations, and other requirements. Additionally, mentors must attend an orientation/training session and meet with program faculty at least twice during the internship. Exhibits in the team room articulate that an orientation/training session will take place prior to the first internship placements in the spring

2008 semester.

The visiting team is concerned with two aspects of this program design. The first concern involves the program's ability to implement and ensure the Internship Supervisor criteria when candidates are allowed to control their internship placements. The second concern involves the absence of any specified materials or protocols for the training session despite the first internship placement occurring in the next academic semester. This leads to confusion as to the purpose or effect of various mentor evaluation forms that the program has developed and provided to the team as exhibits for this standard and indicator. Additional concerns surround the appropriateness of the mentor evaluation tools, their alignment with ISLLC Standards, and the use of potential results of a less than satisfactory performance of mentors through the evaluation process when candidates are already established in the program.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program explore effective means to evaluate and monitor Internship Supervisors to ensure that candidates are supervised by Internship Supervisors whose practice is consistent with ISLLC Standards.

***3.05 Recruit and Provide Professional Development for Internship Supervisors. Approved programs recruit internship supervisors and mentors whose practice is consistent with the ISLLC Standards and who are committed to supporting the development of prospective educators. The programs provide professional development opportunities and other incentives to help these educators enhance their effectiveness in these roles.***

#### *Approaching Standard*

As noted above in 3.04, the Educational Leadership Program has limited control over the selection of internship sites and internship site mentors. The program articulates in exhibit room evidence plans to recruit mentors and presumably corresponding candidates for the program through various outreach presentations and partnerships. The plans however appear to be at the brainstorm level and the visiting team did not see specific evidence supporting actions taken in this regard.

Exhibit room evidence states that "the quality of an internship depends on much more than simply a mentor who is an effective principal and thinks/acts in a manner that is compatible with the LEAD program." The evidence articulates additional expected attributes and training and support sessions that will occur to recruit and provide professional development to ensure that mentors meet program expectations.

The visiting team found that the trainings are scheduled to occur December/January 2007/2008 and no evidence was provided of the training or support materials to ensure this standard is met.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program implement its plans to recruit effective internship supervisors and develop the materials necessary to train and support them with effective professional development.

**3.06 College/University and School Partnerships. Approved programs establish collaborative and respectful relationships between college and university faculty and their institution and field-based educators, their schools, and their school districts that benefit both the institution of higher education and the K-12 school district for the common goal of preparing prospective educators.**

*Unacceptable*

The Educational Leadership Program identifies partnerships as an integral part of the program design and as a key resource. Evidence in the team room identifies potential partners and potential sources of partners including RIASP, RIASSA, the Rhode Island Center for School Leadership, and RIC faculty, alumni and candidates. The evidence also includes a draft partnership agreement that identifies and will regulate partnership agreements. As with much of the program design, particularly those courses and requirements yet to be implemented, there is no evidence that any action has been taken to develop these partnerships.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that Educational Leadership Program invest time and resources in securing helpful partnerships to support program implementation, revision, and improvement and that will support the wider field of Pk-12 education.

**4. Rhode Island Educator Certification Programs and their institutions demonstrate a commitment to affirming the diversity<sup>4</sup> of our state, our communities, and our public schools by preparing educators who can work effectively with students, families, community members, and colleagues from diverse backgrounds to create learning communities in which all students succeed.**

*Approaching Standard*

**4.01 Curriculum.** Prospective educators develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions essential to preparing them to be effective teachers of diverse students. The preparation includes a curriculum that engages all students in issues of diversity in our world and in our schools. The curriculum also expands the socio-cultural awareness of prospective educators by helping them become more aware of how their own world views are shaped by their life experiences. The curriculum helps prospective educators develop affirming attitudes towards individuals from diverse backgrounds and a commitment to making schools places where all students succeed. Throughout their preparation, prospective educators learn about diverse communities and students and learn to teach in diverse communities and classrooms. They learn to create classrooms in which instruction builds from the cultures of their students' communities.

*Approaching Standard*

The IR details that “Advanced programs assist candidates to further develop positive dispositions toward diversity through a professional sequence that explicitly and implicitly focuses on issues of diversity.” As part of the common assessment system, program candidates are required to meet expectations regarding diversity identified in the advanced program competencies, the PAR (Plan, Act, Reflect) model, and the FSEHD dispositions. These include a systems view of human development, individual differences and cultural diversity, family-centeredness and engagement, and reflective practice.

Educational Leadership candidates explore issues of diversity in course tasks and assessments such as conducting an equity audit and engaging issues of diversity, family, and community through varied course tasks. The ISLLC standards further identify issues of diversity as important learning goals for candidates. However, learning experiences detailed in program and course materials do not provide candidates sufficient opportunities to develop a deeper awareness of their own world view and the experiences of other cultures. Furthermore, due to the self-selection of field placement sites, all candidates do not learn how to lead in diverse communities and classrooms. As such, candidates miss opportunities to fully engage all aspects of the curriculum in diverse settings.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program and the FSEHD work to develop

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<sup>4</sup> Diversity is used throughout this standard to address ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual-orientation, and geographical area.

systems to ensure that all candidates are prepared to practice and apply the curriculum and demonstrate the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions identified in the program and FSEHD assessment system in diverse settings.

***4.02 Field Experiences that Capitalize on the Diversity of P-12 Schools. Prospective educators successfully complete field experiences that are designed to assure interaction with exceptional students, and students from different ethnic, racial, gender, socio-economic, language, and religious groups. Through these experiences prospective educators examine issues of diversity in teaching and learning. Skilled cooperating teachers and college and university faculty help the prospective educators use these experiences to improve their ability to teach students from diverse backgrounds effectively.***

#### ***Approaching Standard***

The Educational Leadership Program recognizes the importance of field experiences that engage diverse learners and allow candidates opportunities to design and implement instruction that is accessible to various groups of students. The IR and additional exhibit room evidence clearly articulate that the program and program faculty strongly encourage candidates to learn and gain practice as instructional leaders through diverse settings. To help candidates improve their ability to lead schools that include diverse learners, the Educational Leadership Program also requires candidates to conduct shadowing experiences, a fifty hour pre-internship in an urban family or student service agency, and complete two 150 hour internships. The family/youth agency field placement in particular is a proactive effort to ensure that field experiences capitalize on diversity. However, as the program asserts that it has little control over the field sites for the two internship courses and experiences, all candidates may not have sufficient experiences practicing leadership in diverse settings.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program examine its requirements for field experiences to ensure that all candidates have opportunities to develop their leadership practice in diverse settings.

***4.03 An Environment that Values Diversity. Colleges and universities and their teacher preparation programs make issues of socio-cultural awareness, affirmation of diversity, and the preparation of culturally responsive teachers central to their mission. Colleges and universities establish a campus environment that promotes and sustains a diverse community. They capitalize on the community's diversity to promote deeper understanding of issues of equity and diversity in our state, our communities, and our schools.***

#### ***Approaching Standard***

The Educational Leadership Program appears to recognize the importance of diversity. Issues of diversity are apparent in course and program materials, assessments based on national standards, and in strong recommendations and efforts to ensure candidate participation in field experiences within diverse contexts. As part of the FSEHD and the college community, numerous efforts

have been conducted to promote and develop an environment that values diversity including conferences that feature promising practices for the teaching of diverse learners, outreach and support groups for diverse students, and an emphasis on college-wide program and course materials offerings. While the visiting team recognizes that progress has made in this area throughout the College, it did not see sufficient success within the Educational Leadership program. The Educational Leadership Program policies and practices promote diversity, but actual implementation lags and have met with limited success to more fully develop a program environment that values diversity.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program review its policies and practices in regards to establishing an environment that values diversity including policies that emphasize socio-cultural awareness and affirmation of diversity, creating a diverse community, and promoting a deeper understanding of diversity to make specific and substantial changes to better realize this goal.

**4.04 Faculty. Colleges and universities and the teacher preparation programs recruit, hire, support, and retain a diverse faculty. Prospective educators have the opportunity to learn from faculty members whose diverse backgrounds enable prospective educators to view their craft through a wide lens.**

*Unacceptable*

Rhode Island College has provided evidence in the IR that efforts have been made at the College level and within and across certain departments and programs to recruit, hire, support, and retain a diverse faculty. The Educational Leadership Program did not provide evidence that similar efforts have been made within the program. Minimal diversity exists within the program faculty.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the program work with the college community and other stakeholders to develop effective means to promote a more diverse faculty presence within the program.

**4.05 Students. Colleges and universities and their teacher preparation programs recruit, admit, support, and retain a diverse student body. The program's admission processes, curriculum, access to student services, and counseling and mentoring programs are designed to support the preparation of a more diverse teaching force. Prospective teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds and with experiences that differ from the other prospective teachers find their participation is elicited, valued, and affirmed throughout the preparation program.**

*Unacceptable*

As with the indicator 4.04 for faculty, the IR and evidence collected during the course of the visit suggest that Rhode Island College and the school-wide community is making progress in the area of recruiting, admitting, supporting, and retaining a diverse student body. This effort was further evident in the increasing diversity apparent across the campus. However, the Educational Leadership Program did not provide evidence that similar efforts have been made at the program

level. Minimal diversity exists within the Educational Leadership student body. Although the Educational Leadership Program has developed a recruitment schedule for candidates and mentors, it is not clear that this work has yet to occur.

The visiting team **RECOMMENDS** that the Educational Leadership Program work with the college community and other stakeholders to develop effective means to recruit, admit, support, and graduate a more diverse student body.

**5. Rhode Island Educator Preparation Programs are supported by college and university structures that provide the resources necessary to ensure quality programs; a faculty which is engaged in scholarship, demonstrates exceptional expertise in its teaching fields, and is actively involved in PK-12 schools; and coherence within and across preparation programs.**

*Approaching Standard*

**5.01 Qualified Faculty Members. The Professional Education Faculty is composed of individuals with exceptional expertise as teachers and scholars in their teaching fields. They exemplify the qualities of effective instruction including the proficiencies described in the ISLLC Standards.**

*On Standard*

Based upon a review of exhibit room evidence including curricula vitae, statements of professional development and partnerships, course syllabi, and assessments the education courses within the Educational Leadership Program are taught by faculty who demonstrates academic preparation that prepares them for their role within the FSEHD. While the visiting team was satisfied with quality of faculty based upon an evidence review, there was minimal evidence of a comprehensive evaluation system or of the use of data to track faculty performance and effectiveness for ongoing improvement.

**5.02 Faculty Responsibilities and Professional Development. The Professional Education Faculty is involved in teaching, scholarship, and service. They are involved with practice in K-12 schools. Approved programs ensure the ongoing professional development of their faculty.**

*Approaching Standard*

Based upon a review of exhibit room evidence including curricula vitae, statements of professional development, and partnerships, the visiting team saw evidence that the majority of faculty members in the Educational Leadership Program are actively engaged in teaching, scholarship, and service to the College and Pk-12 schools. Examples include presentations, publications, affiliations, memberships, office holding, and partnerships. Curricula vitae and other documents also provided evidence of professional development for some faculty members. However, not all faculty members engage in each of the identified criteria to achieve this standard – teaching, scholarship, and service. Furthermore, while some faculty engage in delivering or receiving professional development, exhibit room evidence suggest that other members do not avow themselves of this opportunity.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that program faculty ensure that they meet each of the expectations identified in this standard to promote and improve teaching, scholarship, and service.

**5.03 Resources. Approved programs assure access to adequate resources to support teaching and scholarship, including the necessary facilities, equipment, library, curriculum resources, educational technology, and financial resources to support quality programs.**

*Approaching Standard*

Based upon document review, interviews, and observations, the visiting team found strong evidence that the level of available resources for the Educational Leadership Program is limited and impacts the program design, learning outcomes, and potential of faculty members to conduct scholarship or develop helpful partnerships. Limited facilities and technology, insufficient fiscal resources for program improvement and instructional materials, and heavy teaching loads produce real challenges. These challenges force many faculty members to either work through or around them to best serve their students, program, and school. Members of the school community relate a representative unfortunate incident in which a professor wanted to use computer technology but did not have access in the assigned room and was forced to instruct using overhead transparencies rather than the intended and more appropriate power point format.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership faculty, other members of the RIC community and other stakeholders continue to work to maximize available funds, seek additional funding sources, and prioritize actions that match available funds.

**5.04 Professional Community. Approved programs support collaboration among higher education faculty, school personnel and other members of the professional community to prepare new educators and to improve the quality of education of children.**

*Unacceptable*

Documents provided by the Educational Leadership Program indicate plans for potential partnerships with organizations such as RIASP, RIASSA, and the Rhode Island Center for School Leadership. A draft generic partnership agreement for potential partnerships was also provided among the documents for review. However, the visiting team could find no evidence of any active partnerships between the Educational Leadership Program, the higher education community, and the Pk-12 field. The visiting team recognizes that much design and implementation work is necessary to complete the newly implemented Educational Leadership Program which may limit the time and opportunity to develop such partnerships.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program identify and develop partnerships to support the preparation of educators and the quality of education for children with organizations outside of the college.

**5.05 Coherence Within and Across Programs. Approved programs ensure that coherence exists between the ISLLC Standards and student outcomes, courses, field experiences, instruction, and assessment, both within and across programs.**

*Approaching Standard*

The Educational Leadership Program presents at first glance a coherent design and intended implementation. Upon further review, it is evident that coherence is uncertain as a substantial portion of the program design is still in draft stages. Thus, what appears in the design to be coherent, may upon final drafting and implementation deviate from the original plan. This dilemma is particularly problematic as candidates are in classes while the subsequent class or assessment checkpoint has yet to be developed or tested.

The visit team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program with support from the FSEHD complete the design for the program to ensure coherence for each cohort of students within the program.

**6. Rhode Island Educator Preparation Programs engage in a process of regular evaluation to ensure program improvement.**

*Approaching Standard*

**6.01 Commitment to High Quality and Improvement.** Approved programs engage in regular and systematic evaluations (including, but not limited to, information obtained through student assessment, and collection of data from students, recent graduates, and other members of the professional community) and use these findings to improve the preparation of prospective educators through the modification of the program.

*Approaching Standard*

The Educational Leadership Program has collected some data as it monitors its progress against expected outcomes and standards. It is not clear however if this data is analyzed or used for program improvement. Further, the program does not represent a completed design, rather at many levels, an outline of a program. The program continues to grow and improve and despite design and implementation issues appears to be delivering intended learning outcomes that are built on standards.

The visiting team RECOMMENDS that the Educational Leadership Program conduct data collection and analysis consistent with checkpoints outlined in the program while working to revise the current unfinished plan and continually improve the program design and performance.