MSUB COE CAEP 2016 EPP Characteristics

Context and Unique Characteristics (1986/2000 characters)

Montana State University Billings (MSUB) is a public Masters University (Carnegie classification, 2006) dedicated to serving the educational and workforce needs of Montanans by providing high quality undergraduate and graduate programs in the arts and sciences, business, education, health, human services, and technology. Established in 1927 as Eastern Montana State Normal School, the institution was authorized to offer a two-year certification program for elementary teachers. In 1946, a bachelor's degree in education was added. In 1965, the institution became Eastern Montana College, offering four-year undergraduate and graduate degrees in education. In 1994, the Montana University System underwent major restructuring and Eastern Montana College became MSUB. The third largest unit of the Montana University System, MSUB has five colleges: Allied Health Professions, Arts and Sciences, Business, Education, and City College (focused on two-year degrees in applied technology). MSUB is spread over 118.5 acres, has more than 900 employees, is the fourth largest employer in Yellowstone County (with an annual payroll in excess of $18 million), and enrolls over 4,000 students.

Since its foundation, MSUB has been an integral part of the Billings community and prides itself on being a student-centered learning environment. The University continues to nurture a longstanding tradition of educational access, teaching excellence, civic engagement and community enhancement in a relatively urban setting. Billings is the largest city in Montana, although it only has about 100,000 residents. Surrounding counties are designated as Frontier Counties, and the area is rural by most standards. Montana averages less than seven people per square mile, making Billings "the big city" for most students. The relationship between the community and MSUB is strong, with a pattern of community support for student scholarships, academic programs, infrastructure, equipment, and technology.

Description of Organizational Structure (2000/2000)

The Montana University System has two main institutions: University of Montana and Montana State University (MSU). MSU comprises several institutions--each with its own chancellor-- that share a president at the flagship institution in Bozeman, MT. MSUB is one such institution. The MSUB College of Education (COE) comprises one department: Educational Theory and Practice (ETP), which is jointly overseen by a department chair and a dean. The dean reports to the Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, MSUB's chief academic officer, who in turn reports to the MSUB Chancellor, the administrative leader at MSUB. The dean advocates for the COE at the university level, serving on MSUB-wide committees and managing accreditation. The department chair is in charge of program operations, managing faculty workload, scheduling, student issues.

The COE comprises four main initial licensure educator preparation programs: elementary and secondary education, reading, and special education. Reading and special education are non stand-alone certifications in MT; students must declare a primary licensure area in elementary or secondary education. Initial licensure can be sought at the undergraduate or graduate level for elementary and secondary education, and students can add an endorsement in reading and/or special education. The COE faculty are structured in five program areas: educational foundations, elementary and secondary,

reading, special education, and graduate studies. The COE works closely with the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Allied Health Professions in order to offer its secondary education programs.

COE faculty are supported by two administrative assistants, a licensure officer, and a data specialist. The assessment coordinator is a full-time, tenure track faculty member. Two placement coordinators assist clinical educations, and both of them instruct courses. Several graduate assistants provide support for faculty research and COE operations

EPP's Shared Values and Beliefs for Educator Preparation (3942/4000)

The MSUB EPP has a long history of developing its shared values and beliefs in the form of a conceptual framework and its Educator Oath. In fulfilling its Mission and the College of Education (COE) Educators' Oath, the COE articulated a reflective practice model as a guide for assessment of the EPP (NCATE Review, 1992). This model was reviewed and revised during the next five years (NCATE Review, 1997). The model underwent extensive revision and evolved into the Reflective Practice Conceptual Frameworks for Initial and Advanced Programs during AY 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 (NCATE Review, 2002). Based on INTASC and NBPST principles, the conceptual frameworks were cumbersome, with as many as 72 indicators at the initial licensure undergraduate level. The conceptual frameworks were filled with developmental outcomes and benchmarks, and they won the AACTE award for Excellence in Accreditation in 2002. As candidates developed portfolios and faculty reviewed candidates' reflections on their portfolio artifacts, data gathered indicated that the frameworks were too detailed. Because the process for candidates, clinical educators, and COE faculty was so arduous, the review of artifacts became trivial, much of the data from the previous assessment system would not be considered reliable or valid by today's CAEP Standards. The COE intention of scaffolding candidates' understanding of their place in their overall development as reflective practitioners was not achieved. Candidates and faculty were losing sight of the forest (Reflective Practice Model) for the trees (the indicators' minutiae).

The redesign of the assessment system was accomplished collaboratively with members of the COE faculty, four teachers/administrators from local P-12 schools, and two faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences, who represented faculty in charge of secondary education programs. These stakeholders, most of whom served on the unit's Assessment Committee, met to complete the redesign.

In Fall 2005, the COE initiated a lengthy review of all conceptual frameworks that resulted in more simple, understandable, and user-friendly program outcomes. While maintaining a commitment to development of a Reflective Practitioner, the conceptual frameworks were reduced to their underlying foundations. The Initial Conceptual Framework outcomes were re-envisioned as the 10 InTASC principles with Montana-specific modifications incorporated. At that time, the Advanced Conceptual Framework was also re-written as six indicators that align with NBPTS Standards and assume InTASC competence.

Because the InTASC Standards are emphasized in the conceptual framework, the framework was reviewed after the InTASC Standards were revised in 2011. No major changes were made in 2011; however, in 2015-16, the initial and advanced conceptual frameworks were again revisited. Discussion on the framework for advanced programs was tabled due to CAEP's Standards for advanced programs being in flux. Discussion on the framework for initial programs ensued. The updated InTASC Standards and the COE's philosophical commitment to developing reflective practitioners both informed the revisiting of the initial licensure program framework, as did the ability to operationalize the InTASC Standards through using the four broad domains of Charlotte Danielson's (1996, 2007) Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching. Now included in the framework for initial programs is language that shows specific commitment to Montana's Indian Education for All (IE4A) initiative as well as culturally responsive teaching in general. This language is expressed as an addendum to the InTASC Standards and labeled as the "COE Standard."

Further explanation of the conceptual framework for initial programs, as well as the Educator Oath that represents the COE shared values and beliefs, appears in the Quality Assurance System document in evidence.

Standard 1 Holistic Summary

Tracking the key assessments used to provide evidence for CAEP Standard 1 are the purview of the College of Education (COE) CAEP Standard 1 Committee ("Std 1 Cmte"). The Std 1 Cmte includes faculty from each COE initial preparation program; the COE assessment coordinator serves as an ex officio member, is supported by the COE data specialist, and consults closely with the COE dean. All key assessments are an outgrowth of the COE conceptual framework that is based on the InTASC Standards and Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching.

The COE determined acceptable performance levels for EPP-designed key assessments by implementing collaboratively developed rubrics. Each year, faculty gather to review data from key assessments during a fall retreat. An improvement in Fall 2016 is that data are now disaggregated by every program and InTASC Standard. Previously, data were aggregated into three areas: elementary, secondary, and special education. Although assessments and rubrics were aligned to InTASC Standards, data had not been disaggregated to the point where individual secondary programs easily could review candidate achievement on particular InTASC Standards. This development and additional improvements to the COE Quality Assurance System (QAS) are described in detail in the Standards 4 and 5 summaries.

The key assessments submitted for Standard 1 evidence are:

-Evidence of Professional Growth (EPG), an EPP-designed teacher work sample implemented at three points in all initial licensure programs;

-Summative Evaluation of Clinical Experiences, an EPP-designed culminating quantitative assessment of candidate performance in Student Teaching;

-Assessment of Content Pedagogy (ACP), a required Montana state-designed assessment of pedagogy that is differentiated for elementary and secondary programs and administered in Student Teaching;

-Dispositions Evaluation, an EPP-designed quantitative assessment of non-academic candidate qualities that is implemented during sophomore, junior, and senior years;

-GPA at program entry and program completion;

-Praxis II Prior to program completion;

-Montana State Three-Part Assessment, a state-mandated scaled score measuring how candidates apply content and pedagogical knowledge as represented by performance on the ACP, content GPA at program completion, and Praxis Subject Assessment performance. This assessment is technically named the Montana Content Knowledge Score by MT's Office of Public Instruction (OPI), and it is used to determine recommendation for licensure.

In General, across all assessments, as candidates gained more experience (i.e., Sophomore, then Junior Field, then Student Teaching) average scores on the assessments increased as well as the percentage of candidates who performed at or above acceptable levels. For instance, on the EPG for Fall 2014 through Spring 2016, "competence" was observed on few InTASC Standards in Junior Field; many averages for Junior Field are in the "some skills" level, and several "inconsistent or weak skills." However, as candidates progress to Student Teaching, the vast majority of candidates performed at the "adequate skills" or "competent" levels on Standards; most showed "adequate skills," with few showing "some skills." No student teachers exhibited "inconsistent or weak skills."

Another observation is that within any particular key assessment and across all content areas and time frames, scores are very similar and not statistically different. For Example, when analyzing the color-coded heat maps of Junior Field dispositions appearing in the Quality Assurance System Annual Report (which shows percentages of candidates who performed at each level on the rubric), small percentages, if any, appear at "need for improvement" or "developing performance" levels across all rubric sections and all semesters; the majority of the candidates performed at the "exceptional performance" level. This suggests that inter-rater reliability is high. It does not confirm validity, however, and requires the COE to investigate if all students actually exhibit nearly perfect dispositions.

Finally, in instances when averages are low on any given assessment or when a high percentage of candidates who performed at unacceptable levels, the phenomenon can be attributed to skewed data: one or a few candidates scored low and the sample size (N) was small. For instance, the Student Teaching Summative Assessment for Music K-12 in Fall 2014, shows that 12.5% of candidates showed "need for improvement" on InTASC Standards 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10. However, the N=8, so this high percentage was the influence of a single candidate who was an outlier and performed poorly, pulling averages for these standards down.

In addition to these assessments, the COE partnered with MSUB's IT director in Fall 2016 in order to compare course grades received by pre-candidates and candidates for any course with performance by non-education students. Fall 2016 is the first semester this type of data has been made available to the COE, and faculty are slated to review these data, by program, during the Fall 2017 annual retreat. Also, the COE recognizes its limited assessment of commitment to college- and career-readiness standards and has identified the Common Core Position Paper from EDU406 (Philosophical, Legal, and Ethical Issues) as a pilot assessment; the purpose of this assessment is to help candidates develop an understanding of the Common Core and reflect on how these standards impact their work as new educators.

The QAS submitted as evidence supplements this explanation of how key assessments have been situated in the curriculum at the appropriate progression levels to measure understanding of the InTASC Standards. The QAS Annual Report provides data from each of the key assessments listed above. Also, the "State Report" folder in evidence provides reviewers with detailed charts showing the alignment between EPP curricula and the Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (MT PEPPS) that are used by OPI for state accreditation determinations. The PEPPS are based on SPA Standards.

In Fall 2015, faculty began reviewing the breadth and depth of all assessments occurring in the COE core curriculum, taken by all initial licensure candidates regardless of program. This review was managed by the CAEP Std 1 Cmte with the assistance of the assessment coordinator in response to a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of each CAEP Standard.

The first steps in this process have been implemented: each faculty member teaching a course in the core curriculum completed a course alignment chart. These charts required faculty to list all assessments in the core curriculum course they teach and the weight of each assessment toward the final course grade. Then, faculty recorded the alignment between the assessments and the course objectives along with alignment to the InTASC Standards and the MT PEPPS. One column was reserved on the chart for alignment with the Montana Educator Performance Appraisal System (EPAS), which aligns with the InTASC Standards and the COE Conceptual Framework. Three columns required faculty to identify alignment with three Innovation Configurations from the CEEDAR Center as part of COE work with that Center: Universal Design for Learning, Culturally Responsive Teaching, and Technology Innovation. One column required faculty to identify if the assessment was germane to Montana Content Standards (Common Core), and three columns asked details about field experiences on which any assessments might have been based. All core curriculum courses taught by COE faculty were reviewed, and the information was compiled into a large format Core Curriculum Matrix to gain an overview of the core curriculum on one page. The Course Alignment Chart template appears in the evidence; the matrix will be available on-site; the review process is ongoing.

This analysis revealed that key assessments are based mostly in authentic field experiences, meaning that the breadth of key assessments is focused on clinical experience courses such as Junior Field and Student Teaching. While candidate performance on all InTASC Standards has been regularly assessed, COE key assessments are lopsided toward the end of the program. This inhibits the ability to show the depth of the core curriculum and candidate growth over time. Using the Matrix, faculty are currently considering additional key assessments in earlier coursework to provide more comparison points throughout the curricula. The Reading program was chosen to pilot program-specific course alignment charts; the result of that curricular review is a curriculum proposal reviewed and approved by COE faculty during Fall 2016.

The Matrix review shows that evidence of candidates' use of research and evidence to develop an understanding of the teaching profession is gathered mainly through the EPG key assessment. The EPG is a teacher work sample that provides the structure for an observed lesson and requires candidates to analyze P12 performance data, reflect on personal responsibility for learner performance, and plan the next lesson based on data analysis and professional reflection. Candidates' ability to objectively analyze, reflect on, and adjust personal performance to strengthen their impact on learners is assessed by the EPG.

Foundational core courses (in human development, educational psychology, curriculum theory, and educational assessment) expose candidates to research methods and how to read and interpret research for purposes of being a professional educator. During the Junior Field experience and Student Teaching, teacher education candidates are required to complete the EPG, which includes lesson planning, collection of assessment data, analysis, and reflection. The EPG assignment is evaluated by clinical instructors using the EPG evaluation rubric. Improvements to the administration of the EPG in Junior Field are described in Standard 2.

During Student Teaching, candidates are required to complete a minimum of two full EPG assignments that are evaluated by their university supervisor. Viewing the student teaching experience as part of a developmental process, supervisors may elect to require the teacher candidate to complete additional EPG assignments, totaling up to four EPGs.

In 2014, the COE made a considerable change to its introduction to education courses. Faculty representing the foundations courses analyzed the elementary (EDU105) and secondary (EDU201) introduction courses. Upon review, the two courses were collapsed into one, with a common set of learning goals. This led to a more efficient use of faculty resources and clear outcomes that assured elementary and secondary education majors would receive the same introductory content.

Additional program improvements for the elementary education program in 2014 came about due to trends in data showing lower means in the areas of diversity and classroom management (thus the

addition of more special education courses) and assessment (thus the creation of a stand-alone assessment course). Prior to this new assessment course, assessment was assumed to be incorporated across methods courses. The data trends were across programs and included results from surveys of program completers and employers (see Standard 4 evidence for a description of the history and development of the completer and employer surveys).

Secondary programs are now required to take 65 hours in the Secondary Junior Field Experience (an increase from 45 hours) and there is now more emphasis on using the EPG than prior to the change. The COE now has more data coming from juniors and seniors who have completed the new program requirements in elementary education, and secondary majors are now required to do more pre-student teaching EPG work. The COE faculty anticipate being able to review these data during their Fall 2017 annual retreat in order to determine effect these changes have had on candidate ability to research P12 learning and reflect on their practice.

In addition to clinical experiences where the EPG is required, methods classes and the required Introduction to Educational Technology class provide opportunities for candidates to model and apply technology standards and demonstrate how they meet the needs of diverse learners. In Junior Field and Student Teaching, candidates are required to integrate technology into at least one lesson plan and Indian Education for All into another.

In Spring 2015, the COE invited the technology directors and teachers from two local school districts_Billings Public Schools and Billings Catholic Schools_to present to the COE about the use of technology in P12 schools. Two meetings were dedicated to this topic, with guest speakers in both. These local educators covered the different devices and programs used to support curricula, the challenges faced by P12 schools regarding technology, and thoughts on the future of educational technology. COE faculty shared a concern that candidates needed more than how to use technology; candidates also need to know how to integrate technology into teaching in ways that support P12 learning. Of particular interest is the technology requirement for graduate initial licensure programs, which required a two-credit Computers in Education course while the undergraduate programs required a three-credit course in instructional technology. Because the COE offers a non-licensure MED program in Online Instructional Technology, and because part of that program's curriculum included a three-credit Introduction to Educational Technology course, the COE decided to drop the two-credit course from the initial licensure graduate-level program and replace it with the three-credit course from the Online Instructional Technology MED degree. In Fall 2015, this three-credit course was updated. Rather than existing as a survey of educational applications and platforms, this course now focuses on making research-based choices about technology integration and developing a philosophical stance toward technology as part of an educative experience (referencing John Dewey's Experience and Education). This alteration will be formally reviewed AY2017-18 with an eye toward improving the undergraduate version of the course.

The COE recognizes its need for improved documentation of its use of student learning outcomes assessment for the purposes of program improvement. Prior to when the annual fall retreats were established, the COE faculty followed a review schedule whereby each CAEP Standard Committee reported to the faculty on data reviewed or actions recommended. Although COE faculty have dutifully met each year in retreats and data-focused meetings to review and discuss data, the retreats were not designated as decision-making times. According to the previous assessment system (now superseded by the Quality Assurance System), monthly accreditation and assessment meetings were focused on NCATE/CAEP standards and helping faculty to understand the shift from NCATE to CAEP. Time to review data from Standards Committees and recommendations based on those data during these retreats was thus limited by said shift. Generally speaking, because data regarding outcomes of student teaching and licensure were overall positive, and employers and completers were basically satisfied, few changes were made.

The assessment schedule was disrupted in 2012-13 and 2013-14 when meetings had to focus on budget shortfalls and on University strategic planning. Staff turnover and shortage in recent years further complicated the COE's ability to document program decisions, as did the shift from the Transformation Initiative to the Selected Improvement pathway (as described in Standard 5). Additional complications stemmed from multiple changes in the way the COE gathered and managed its data. Key assessment evidence gathering and data management have shifted from paper-and-pencil instruments with data stored in Access, and then in Microsoft SQL, to the use of Tk20. Planning for implementation of Tk20 was not thoroughly vetted, and support by Tk20 staff proved ineffective. This implementation, essentially, flopped. The COE dean formally acknowledged this mistake to clinical educators and students in 2015-16, and candidates were reimbursed by the COE for their purchase of Tk20. The COE returned to the use of paper-and-pencil instruments, and data currently are being stored and managed in both Excel and Access.

The current self-study has demonstrated that monthly reviews presented by a different committee each month cannot be consistently conducted. This results in fragmented information, hindering faculty ability to see the big picture of candidate performance. The self-study demonstrated that the COE has needed consistent assessment coordination and a full-time data specialist to work with the faculty assessment coordinator to present data for faculty consideration once a year at the fall semester retreat, as per the revised Quality Assurance System. Beginning in Fall 2017, decision-making for the EPP overall and for individual programs will be more efficient as a result of this self-study.

Although the COE has submitted into evidence the assessments and resultant data showing candidate competency regarding Standard 1, verification of annual retreats, department meetings, and assessment meetings_and the outcomes of these meetings_will be supported by on-site interviews with faculty. Two significant personnel additions have already shown merit toward remedying this lack of documentation and management of assessment logistics: the COE retained an assessment coordinator who is a full-time, tenure-track faculty member in Fall 2015 as well as a full-time staff member who serves as the COE data specialist in Fall 2016.

Standard 2 Holistic Summary

MSUB engages P12 partners in the co-construction of candidate clinical experiences (CEs). The College of Education (COE) has a history of partnering with districts in Yellowstone County and across MT and places a relatively high percentage of student teachers in hard-to-staff, rural schools. The COE is developing a formal partnership with Billings Catholic Schools, with which it has worked for many years, as a pilot site for the Clinical Practices and Partnerships Selected Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP serves as evidence for Standard 2. It was chosen based on a data review and formal SWOT analysis. (See SIP narrative).

The COE Dean shares oversight of clinical practices and partnerships with the COE Standard 2 Committee members include faculty who teach CEs, the two placement coordinators, the licensure officer, assessment coordinator, and data specialist.

This committee improved assessments used across field experiences, notably the Evidence of Professional Growth (EPG) introduced in 2005 and continuously developed through addition of a rubric (2008), rubric revision (2012, 2014), better explanation to students (2014), local P12 teacher input (ongoing), expansion of its use in additional CEs (2014), and analysis of data disaggregated by every program and InTASC Standard (Fall 2016). Data recommendations are forthcoming after another round of data is compiled due to a change in the instrument rubric two years ago. Integrity of data kept in Tk20 compel collection of another cycle of evidence for reliability testing; initial reliability testing on the EPG tool (2011, in evidence) shows statistically significant interrater reliability on 4/14 rubric components.

Candidates participate in four main CEs: EDU 220 (Human Growth and Development; 45hrs), EDSP204 (Intro to Special Ed; 15hrs), Junior Field (65hrs), and Student Teaching. Single majors engage in one Junior Field and 14-week Student Teaching placement, while double majors (El Ed/Special Ed or El Ed/Reading) complete two Junior Field and two Student Teaching placements totaling 20 weeks. Candidates gain exposure to multiple and diverse placements during candidacy. (On-site evidence: curricular advising sheets and professional core matrix.)

CE applications allow faculty and staff to monitor candidate progression. Applications ensure that candidates take required coursework and maintain a 2.65 GPA. (Evidence: Quality Assurance System narratives and charts outlining sequence, scope of CEs and the requirements for entrance and competency; applications can be viewed at http://msubillings.edu/coe/forms/). In each CE, candidates are assessed on knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions (see CAEP Std 1 summary). The EPG (a teacher work sample) is a main tool; candidates receive a Formative Assessment after initial lesson planning and a Summative Assessment later in both Junior Field and Student Teaching. The Formative Assessment is now a qualitative instrument after CT and P12 partner feedback. Clinical educators monitor student data closely and use a plan of improvement to assist candidates to overcome challenges, especially in the area of dispositions.

Early CEs are based in diverse settings. EDU 220 faculty partner with local social service agencies (Boys and Girls Club, Friendship House, CARE Academy, Discover Zone and Early Head Start); EDSP 204 faculty partner with Eagle Mount, a local recreational facility serving people with disabilities, and Billings Educational Academy. EDSP 204 is a major clinical experience in that it provides diversity of experience; however, no current key assessments are drawn from it. Early CE faculty place candidates in consultation with these agencies.

CEs in EDU 220 highlight how feedback is shared between CTs, clinical faculty, and candidates. Faculty and program/site directors communicate throughout the semester regarding candidate experiences, evaluation, and feedback to candidates and program/site members. Candidates are asked to evaluate the CE site. Faculty meet with directors to share evaluations, discuss issues that may have arisen, and make changes collaboratively. Each semester leads to improved quality of the experience. The CE is flexible in that a few candidates each semester have alternative placements, including during online summer sections. These include YMCA, The Education Academy, and classrooms where candidates live outside of Billings.

Later CEs_Junior Field and Student Teaching_are managed by partnership of clinical faculty, two placement coordinators, school administrators, and CTs. MSUB makes initial contact with the school. Candidates living outside Billings may assist in finding placement sites. Tentative placement is set upon agreement by the principal, who identifies quality CTs; school boards, superintendents, or special education directors may be involved in the process. An interview with candidates takes place at the school prior to final determination of placement. Placement coordinators inform clinical faculty of the placements, remaining in close contact with candidates and sites throughout the CE. Junior Field faculty hold five seminars; in Student Teaching, COE placement coordinators hold an orientation seminar prior to the CE and a second seminar as candidates finish. P12 Partners assist with seminars, including conducting mock interviews for student teachers.

University supervisors (USs) work with CTs to mentor student teachers using assessments aligned with InTASC Standards on which the COE conceptual framework is based. The CT Agreement and CT and US Evaluation Requirements outline duties of these roles. Training is provided in videotaped seminars hosted on the COE web site.

During a 2015-16 curricular review using course alignment charts and a matrix detailing the professional core courses' assessments, CEs emerged as the primary source for key assessment data. This allows for analysis of data to determine growth over time, but it puts a heavy burden on clinical faculty. P12 partners, especially CTs, are asked to do more each year. Complicating this, means for housing, processing, and analyzing data has been fraught with challenges over the past several years (See Std 1 and Std 5 summaries). Therefore, part of the SIP involves piloting new assessments with P12 partner

input at different points in the core curriculum. The SIP also involves seeking P12 input on technological solutions for data management.

The COE is grateful to have local schools eager to work with the college and accept candidates for placement. Criteria for selection and evaluation of CTs includes: eagerness to receive and provide candidate feedback, proper licensure, three years' experience, and one year in current district. Some school districts have additional stipulations, such as holding tenure, that the COE supports. Although candidates evaluate CTs formally, problems most often become apparent through personal communication between placement coordinators, candidates, and clinical faculty. In the past, the COE has made decisions not to use certain CTs based on CT responsiveness to candidate needs. Oversight is the purview of placement coordinators and dean, and decisions are validated with P12 administration input.

Student Teaching CTs receive written documents, placement coordinator support, and the Student Teaching Guidebook to assist them. Placement coordinators present an informational session yearly, and the Student Teaching Seminar is available online. Junior Field faculty communicate directly with CTs. One improvement to overall structure during 2015-16 was adding two faculty for secondary Junior Field and one for elementary Junior Field, as these courses were not managed by full-time, tenure track faculty members. Each has an office on campus and meets informally with other Junior Field instructors and the placement coordinator to ensure candidates are being monitored closely. Investigating and improving training to formalize it is a valuable addition to the SIP and will assist in efforts improve validity and reliability of assessments.

The COE received a $20,000 gift from CEEDAR through the state of MT to use through AY 2016-17, with potential for an additional $10,000. Part of this money is being used for curricular development as described in Standard 1, and part is being used to advance CEs and partnerships through the SIP. Professional development will be provided to P12 partners focused on the Montana Educator Appraisal System (EPAS). Like the COE conceptual framework, EPAS is based on InTASC Standards and Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching. MT districts are required by state accreditation standards to adopt, adapt, or align their teacher appraisal systems with EPAS. This is a major transition for most districts, allowing the COE to serve as expert and resource on the framework for local P12 stakeholders. Evidence of initial activities will be available at the site visit.

Standard 3 Holistic Summary

The MSUB COE has submitted a Quality, Selectivity, and Recruitment Phase-in Plan ("QSR Plan") in accordance with CAEP guidelines that serves as additional evidence for Standard 3. The COE Dean and the COE CAEP Standard 3 Committee ("Std 3 Cmte") share oversight of candidate quality, selectivity, and recruitment. A cross-section of COE faculty serve on the Std 3 Cmte.

Diverse Candidates Meet Employer Needs

In late October/early November each year, the state releases a Critical Educator Shortages list. There were 8 initial licensure areas appearing on the most recent list, and MSUB offers programs in 7 of them: Special Education, Mathematics, Music, Science, English, World Languages, and Art. This list also includes a list of impacted schools developed by the state after review on a 24-point rubric focused on rural isolation, economic disadvantage, and school improvement status. Many of these schools serve as placement and employment sites for candidates and completers, with rural isolation being a presiding factor. From 2010 to 2016, the COE placed 999 students in MT for student teaching. Of these, 649 (65%) were placed in what might be considered higher population communities: Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Helena, Kalispell, Miles City, Missoula. The remaining 350 (35%) students were placed in small rural communities throughout the state. In AY 15/16, there was a total of 127 student teaching placements. Of those, 60% were in higher population areas: Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, Helena, Kalispell. Nearly 40% were in more rural schools, many of which are located in highly isolated areas: Box Elder, Chinook, Columbia Falls, Conrad, Cut Bank, Glendive, Harlem, Libby, Lincoln, Lolo, Malta, Seeley Lake, Sidney. Importantly, many placements were on or near American Indian reservations: Box Elder, Cut Bank, Harlem, Lodge Grass, St. Xavier, Wyola.

The COE has successfully recruited and supported efforts to increase both the diversity and quality of candidates while addressing the need to prepare candidates for hard-to-staff schools and fields. For example, the COE participated in a three-year Memorandum of Agreement with Aaniiih Nakoda Tribal College to develop courses and provide coursework for 6 students who received their elementary education degrees last spring. COE faculty provided them with the last two years of their degree through this technology-intense pilot partnership. Faculty taught online and with compressed video (METNet); the COE also hired adjunct instructors to instruct coursework locally and act as face-to-face support. The grant to fund this partnership was obtained by Aaniiih Nakoda, and the COE served as a subcontractor.

The Noyce Scholars program is additional evidence of the COE's focus on hard-to-staff and high needs areas. Noyce Scholars complete coursework in STEM and begin teaching in high need schools. Those schools many times are on or near reservations, and the COE actively monitors science and mathematics openings in those areas. If completers begin careers at those schools, there is a stipend for continued support. The COE will monitor Noyce Scholar progress throughout the induction years, beginning in AY2017-18.

Beginning in 2005, the COE has maintained a memorandum of agreement with the Teton Science School (Jackson, WY) for a Postgraduate Residency in Environmental Education leading to elementary or secondary licensure. Graduate students studying to become field scientists take part of their coursework at MSUB. Their preparation in place-based education

emphasizing environmental issues reflects the commitment of the COE to support a variety of ways for addressing STEM needs at the P-12 level.

While MSUB is located in a predominately white community, the COE strives to recruit and support candidates that reflect the diversity of the state and America's P12 students. Montana is 89.4% White, 6.3% Native American, 2.5% two or more races, and less than 1% each Asian, Black, Native Hawaiian, and Other. The MSUB COE candidate and pre-candidate body for initial licensure programs (undergraduate, Fall 2015) is 85.8% White, 4.8% American Indian, 2.8% two or more races, and less than 1% each Asian, Black, Native Hawaiian, and Other. About 4.8% of these candidates and pre-candidates are Hispanic. Recruitment and support of American Indian students is especially important in MT. American Indians constitute the state's primary minority group. Montana is among five states with the highest percentage of American Indian residents. The Aaniiih Nakoda partnership is one example of COE efforts to recruit and support American Indian students. The campus American Indian Outreach Center provides a system of support specifically designed for American Indian students. The Center is led by an award-winning American Indian.

The COE is committed to serving the needs of its diverse learners and supporting them throughout completion. MSUB maintains an active Disability Support Services (DSS) office that tracks and supports COE candidates; diverse learners include candidates with ADHD; hearing impairment; learning, mobility, and psychological disabilities; traumatic brain injury; visual impairment; autism; PSTD; and other disabilities (see DSS table in evidence for semesterly headcounts). The DSS staff provide a handbook for faculty with helpful information regarding accommodations and other services, including note-takers, readers, interpreters, research assistants, and assistive technology.

Admission

While admission to MSUB is open enrollment, admission to the COE EPP is gated by an application process that enables tracking of pre-candidate requirements for candidacy. A major item of conversation in the COE since the inception of the CAEP 3.2 Standard has been the minimum GPA requirement for admission. Currently at 2.65, this minimum was studied and discussed two years ago, then revisited in Fall 2016. Cohorts are consistently above the 3.0 average at admission. The COE considered raising the minimum entry GPA to 3.0, but did not implement the change. Upon revisiting the data Fall 2016, faculty voted to leave minimum entry GPA at 2.65 because raising the GPA would block about one-quarter of pre-candidates from the application process. The Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education's Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Committee is proposing raising the criteria for full undergraduate admission to four-year institutions in Montana. The changes are based on changes in scoring for SAT and ACT tests and are currently under consideration as part of the QSR Plan. Neither SAT nor ACT

is required for entrance to MSUB or the COE. However, a new state policy calls for every high school junior in MT to take the ACT. This will allow the COE to track applicant performance over time and determine correlations between entrance GPA and outcomes on key assessments.

Selectivity and Progression

Admission, candidate progress, and impact on P12 learning are largely monitored through the Quality Assurance System (QAS) that summarizes Decision Points used to capture student data and determine ability to move forward in the program. Refer to the QAS document for additional description and visual diagrams of Candidate Selectivity and Progression, especially to gain understanding of how the COE meets CAEP Std 3.4 and 3.5.

The initial licensure program has several phases: Pre-candidacy, Admission to COE Candidacy, Admission to Clinical Practice, Admission to Student Teaching, and Completion. The phases are gated by applications, located on the COE website at http://msubillings.edu/coe/forms. Impact on P12 learning has largely been described in Standards 1 and 2. A progression of data has recently been available because Junior Field faculty collegially developed similar structures and assessments. Now, the EPG assessment is gradually introduced and implemented throughout the curricula. The lesson plan format is introduced in methods classes, an assessment course addresses the assessment portion, and the complete EPG is given as a "test-run" in Junior Field in preparation for its use as a teacher work sample in Student Teaching. These assessment data, triangulated with GPA, Praxis, and the State Three-Part Assessment, ensure that candidates have reached a high standard for content knowledge and can positively impact P12 learning. The State Three-Part Assessment is particularly useful because it triangulates candidate GPA, Praxis score, and score on the state-mandated Assessment of Content Pedagogy. This state-mandated assessment allows for comparison of multiple measures throughout the candidate experience.

Throughout their programs, candidates are continually required to address Montana Content Standards (Montana's version of the common core). They are required to integrate technology in their pedagogy in multiple fields on the lesson plan template. Introduction to Educational Technology requires candidates to gain exposure to and proficiency with various technologies as well as determine how to make appropriate choices based on professional standards (NETS, e.g.).

MSUB Admission Requirements: The Board of Regents' proposal is as follows: 22 in Math, 19 or above on Essay or 18 or above on Writing, and at least a 22 composite score. (Note that the COE mainly would use ACT scores due to pre-candidates commonly taking the ACT.)

COE Admission Requirements: Fingerprint and valid federal background check, 45 credit hours, 2.65 minimum GPA overall, in content courses, and in the professional core.

Upon admission, candidates agree to the following:

1. Grade Point Average and Licensure Requirements

a. After admission to the Educator Preparation Program (EPP), if the cumulative GPA falls below a 2.65 the candidate reverts back to provisional admission status.

b. No grade lower than a "C" is allowed in the teaching major, minor, concentration, professional core, or academic foundations content core.

c. Candidates must meet MSUB COE content licensure requirements for recommendation for licensure: 2.65 GPA in the General Education Core, take the Praxis Subject Assessment and Content Exams in all other Teaching Majors and Minors, and receive a passing score on a field-based assessment during student teaching.

2. Field Experiences

a. Candidates must be fully admitted to EPP in order to enroll in the elementary, secondary, graduate, or K-12 junior field experience and/or student teaching.

3. Candidates are not eligible to student teach until all requirements have been met:

a. Full admission to EPP at point of application for student teaching.

b. All incompletes must be finished and grades submitted.

c. All GPA requirements must be met the semester prior to student teaching.

d. Required coursework must be completed by the beginning of the student teaching semester. Candidates are permitted to take one course during Student Teaching without the need to appeal; candidates may petition the College of Education Appeals Committee the semester prior to student teaching for any other exceptions.

COE completion and retention rates have recently been compiled by IT, showing that the COE retains the majority of students admitted as candidates. The COE average is higher than the university benchmark average retention of the sophomore class (which is the first year pre-candidates can become candidates). The COE retention of Fall 2014 sophomores into Fall 2015

was 78.4%, while MSUB overall was 48.5%. Sixth year census of the 2008-2011 sophomore cohort indicates a graduation rate for the COE between 55-60% for the last several years, while the MSUB rate was between 43-49%. The COE has baseline benchmark data with one other small Montana University System school that had a fall-to-fall COE retention rate of 69%; however, the methodology for determining the rate is currently under investigation as part of the COE Reliability and Validity Phase-In Plan. The COE QSR Plan calls for investigating these data and includes making formal requests to other MUS EPPs to share methodology for, and then track, retention and completion among peer EPPs.

Non-academic Factors

The COE monitors candidates' dispositions throughout the curriculum, using a formal process in three field experience courses: EDU 220 (Human Growth and Development), Junior Field, and Student Teaching. Candidates are assessed by Cooperating Teachers, University Supervisors, and themselves. The data have been collected and analyzed; however, the first round of analysis showed an apparent glitch in the Tk20 data system because certain means were higher than the total possible score. Therefore, the data were set-aside for reanalysis. This analysis was recently completed by the newly hired data specialist, a full-time staff position, and it will be presented to programs in Fall 2016. Initial data analysis and interpretation will be available, as per the QSR Plan, by the time of the on-site review. Also as part of the Reliability and Validity Plan, the COE is investigating the reliability and validity of the dispositions assessment; the COE did not have the resources to study reliability and validity comprehensively prior to the addition of the data specialist position. Additional measures of non-academic factors are being researched, such as Duckworth's Grit Scale and the My Cultural Awareness Profile (MyCAP). Such an assessment allows an additional point to measure candidate dispositions; the COE recognizes and is addressing the need to implement a non-academic assessment at program entry. As part of the QSR Plan, the COE intends to pilot the use of a dispositional instrument to be required at program entry with the intention of using it to help predict student success. The current criteria for how the COE defines "dispositions" appears in evidence as explained on the Dispositions assessment rubric.

Professional Understanding

In Fall 2016, the faculty were presented with a potential assessment from EDU 406 (Philosophical, Legal, & Ethical Issues in Education) for measuring candidates' understanding of the expectations of the progression, especially in terms of ethics, commitment to the MT Content Standards, and school law. Currently the course grade distribution from EDU 406 is the primary measure of candidates' understanding of ethics and law. Candidates' understanding of professional standards is continuously assessed throughout their programs by lesson plans in methods courses, a measure also embedded into the EPG key assessment. The potential assessment from EDU 406 to be piloted includes a position statement on the MT Content

Standards, allowing an additional measure on commitment to professional standards. Baseline data for this assessment appear as evidence.

Standard 4 Holistic Summary

The MSUB COE faculty began on the Transition Initiative (TI) Pathway in 2012, with a focus on evidence of P12 learning. After two years of intense self-study and documentation, CAEP advised the COE in 2014 that the TI should be replicated at a level of national significance. The COE did not and does not have the resources to scale-up to the level required. The Selected Improvement (SI) Pathway was chosen by the COE in 2015. The COE did not abandon its TI work, which specifically was the investigation of the formative evaluation model of candidates and that model's impacts on candidates' impact on P12 learning. The continued development of P12 impact assessments in consultation with clinical partners is now part of the COE Selected Improvement Plan (SIP), focused on Standard 2 and directly relevant to Standard 4.

Two major improvements came from the COE's TI work: improvement to the evidence of professional growth (EPG) assignment (a teacher work sample) and the Fall 2016 upgrade to the unit's conceptual framework to align with Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching. The Danielson framework was used as the focus of the TI. Danielson's framework has also been chosen by Montana as the one to which school districts must "adapt, adopt, or align" when conducting teacher appraisals through the newly developed Montana Educator Performance Appraisal System (EPAS).

MSUB is now in the ideal position of being able to support current teachers and administrators who are learning about the formative EPAS evaluation model while at the same time preparing candidates who are familiar with the Danielson framework on which EPAS was built. Now that the COE has updated its conceptual framework, the EPG assignment will be revisited in light of the Danielson framework as per the SIP. The goal is to administer the EPG as a teacher work sample for pre-service candidates who then become in-service teachers that submit another EPG as part of a case study (see below). The COE will investigate completers' P12 impact both as candidates and after induction. Due to the TI work, faculty are now in agreement that the EPG assignment should be progressively integrated with the professional core curriculum: introduction early in the curriculum, reinforcement during Junior Fields, and culmination at Student Teaching. Prior to this work, the EPG assignment only appeared in Student Teaching. Students struggled with the assignment, and it was not situated developmentally within the curriculum. Now, as part of the curriculum course generally taken the semester that teacher candidates apply and are admitted to the EPP, candidates are introduced to writing lesson plans, the EPG assignment, and the preservice EPAS observation. With a focus on the lesson plan, candidates complete and receive feedback on a modified EPG assignment. The full EPG is then completed in both Junior Field and Student Teaching, with minor variations in Junior Field. At the same time, clinical educators evaluate the candidates' impact on P12 learning using multiple structured observations: the Summative Assessment (quantitative, a key assessment; see Standard 1) and the Formative Assessment (qualitative, not a key assessment; see Student Teaching Guidebook).

Montana does not use a value-added model, nor does it make P12 student data available to institutions of higher education. School districts are not required to report metrics of individual teacher effectiveness. The Montana Council of Deans of Education, comprised of each of the 9 EPP deans in the Montana University System (MUS), established an ad hoc committee focused specifically on CAEP Standard 4 ("Std 4 Ad Hoc Cmte"). The COE is a heavily invested member of this P20 partnership and is submitting for evidence the result of much of that ad hoc group's work. The COE is in agreement with the plans set forth by the Std 4 Ad Hoc Cmte as they appear in the evidence. The evidence also outlines the progress of the committee over the past year. The Completer Survey and Employer Survey are both examples of the Std 4 Ad Hoc Cmte's work (see below). Rather than develop a separate and distinct Phase-In plan for addressing CAEP Standard 4, which would duplicate efforts at the state-level and thus be a non-parsimonious use of COE resources, the COE decided to adopt the Std 4 Ad Hoc Cmte's work. The case-study methodology, the completer survey, and the employer survey will all be adopted from this state-level group. In this regard, the COE positions itself to save resources and "not re-invent the wheel" so that it can focus its resources more clearly on program development and the achievement of its Selected Improvement Plan (which is focused on CAEP Standard 2). The SIP work crosses-over with the Std 4 Ad Hoc Cmte work, again allowing for parsimonious use of resources. Montana is highly unique in that EPPs across the state collaborate at the highest levels in order to meet CAEP Standards and improve their programs. The EPPs are collegial rather than competitive, and they assist each other in order to use resources in the most efficient way possible. This is particularly evident in the EPPs' work to meet CAEP Standard 4 expectations as a group rather than as individual units.

Three major assessments of P12 impact stem from the Std 4 Ad Hoc Cmte, and they will be implemented in a three-year cycle: a revised Employer Survey, a revised Completer Survey, and a new Case Study of P12 Learning.

Employer and Completer Surveys. In Fall 2016, the Std 4 Ad Hoc Cmte met to compare the employer and completer surveys from all MUS schools. The group, including two members from MSUB, developed two drafts after an initial review of items' face validity through comparison to and alignment with InTASC and CAEP Standards. After receiving these survey drafts, MSUB faculty were able to review and offer revisions to the surveys. Piloting of the new employer survey will begin according to the process agreed upon by the MT Council of Deans during October 2016. Even though the COE is serving as a pilot site for an improved survey, it does have earlier meaningful employer and completer survey data that generated curricular improvements. For example, a recent survey indicated that completers were not confident in managing student behavior, a perennial complaint, but employers rated them satisfactory in that area. The COE interpretation was that employers gave new teachers some leniency in terms of classroom management during their induction years. However, the COE did add a course to address student behavior in the elementary education program. Going forward with the state pilot surveys, the COE will provide benchmark and comparison data between MSUB and the other MUS schools because all will be using the same form developed by the state Std 4 Ad Hoc Cmte. The state will assist in implementation, and will be able to provide results that can be disaggregated by program.

Case Study. Cross-referencing the SIP, reviewers will note that the COE has entered into a formal P12 partnership with Billings Catholic Schools (BCS) as a pilot site for a case study. Presently, the Reading program is reviewing options for being the program to partner with BCS. There is precedence for placing successful COE candidates at BCS. The plan is to implement a case study involving candidates who then become teachers at BCS so teacher work samples are available in the form of EPGs (for which there is comparison data from teachers' candidacies). At the beginning of Fall 2016, BCS teachers were surveyed to seek their innovative ideas. The qualitative data are currently being processed. Focus groups and book clubs for the professional development of BCS teachers are currently being planned. The COE will organize these conversations using books relevant to the Danielson framework, which assists teachers with their professional development while providing the COE an opportunity for feedback on completer performance. Through the COE CEEDAR initiative, funds for focus groups and book clubs that support teacher development are available. The CEEDAR initiative focuses on program development; the COE chose to focus on curricular development in specific regard to providing candidates with more support for impacting P12 students through their implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), and Technology Integration (see Diversity and Technology threads' reports). Through implementation of course alignment charts as described in Standard 1, COE faculty identified where these three curricular concepts are addressed and where completer impact on P12 students can be improved by increasing candidate exposure to UDL, CRT, and Technology Innovation. The case study pilot and partnership with BCS provide options for comparing qualitative data with the results of curricular review while providing BCS teachers with professional development at the same time.

P20 Partnerships in MT are a great strength. Many faculty participate in Higher Education Consortium meetings, the CEEDAR initiative, the Std 4 Ad Hoc Cmte, and joint trainings on the Danielson and EPAS frameworks. P12 stakeholders are often represented at these meetings, and state meeting organizers provide a considerable amount of time for meaningful conversations and reflection with P12 attendees. These partnerships are not nominal. Meetings provide a time to talk openly about the strengths and weaknesses of programs and to brainstorm solutions to challenges. The Std 4 Ad Hoc Cmte has been a pivotal workgroup in the advancement of CAEP Std 4. For example, when University of Montana Western ("Western") shared their prior self-study, several commonalities were immediately identified. This serves to encourage COE faculty as they move forward with improving the assessment system. Specifically, key assessments and the conceptual framework have always used language from the InTASC Standards for communication with students, as have Western's. However, the closely aligned Danielson framework provides much more user-friendly language that is easier for clinical educators and candidates to understand. This phenomenon was also noticed at Western, who revised their instruments with Danielson wording, which encourages the COE to do the same. This increases both reliability and validity of assessments and might allow for key assessment benchmarking between institutions.

Standard 5 Holistic Summary

The MSUB COE's Quality Assurance System (QAS) has been entered into evidence. It represents the evolution of several accreditation cycles' worth of use and feedback. It was most recently updated in Fall 2016 after faculty input during the annual fall retreat. The QAS is maintained by the assessment

coordinator with the assistance of the CAEP Standards 4 & 5 Committee ("Stds 4&5 Cmte"). This committee includes the dean, assessment coordinator, data specialist, and the chairs of the committees for CAEP Standards 1, 2, and 3. In the past, the assessment cycle embedded within the QAS has been on a monthly basis, with data presented to the faculty in meetings during the spring, the fall, or sometimes twice per year.

The updated QAS runs on a yearly basis, with all data from the academic year being gathered at the end of each semester and then analyzed for presentation to the faculty during the subsequent fall retreat. The assessment coordinator and the data specialist work with the placement coordinator and COE faculty to gather the data; the data specialist runs analyses for central tendencies and for percentage of cohort achieving any given assessment's minimum performance level; the assessment coordinator manages and interprets the analysis with the data specialist and prepares the results for presentation to the COE faculty. The updated QAS process formally commenced with the hiring of the data specialist in Fall 2016; the first full cycle will be completed Fall 2017.

Stakeholders who Monitor, Analyze, and Use Data

The QAS is conceptualized as having four components so that the COE can approach continuous improvement through an assessment framework based on multiple measures of performance. The QAS comprises: the Unit Assessment System (UAS); the Clinical Practice and Partnerships Selected Improvement Plan (SIP); the Quality, Selectivity, and Recruitment Phase-In Plan (QSR Plan); and the Reliability and Validity Plan (R&V Plan). Descriptions of and graphics describing the roles, responsibilities, and logistics of the QAS are described in the QAS document.

The four plans are monitored by four committees, one for each of the first three CAEP Standards and a fourth committee focused on Standards 4 & 5. The COE is at the point in its continuous improvement cycle where it is discussing how these committees work best together with program committees for optimum efficiency. The SIP outlines the piloting of program advisory groups as an improvement to clinical practices. These groups serve a major function in the quality assurance of programs, and the pilot plan (implemented in Reading) integrates the program advisory group with the program meetings, that will in turn report to the CAEP Standards Committees. The goal is for faculty to spend less time working in CAEP Standards Committees and more time working at the level where program decisions are made: in program-specific work groups with P12 partners.

The assessment coordinator assisted the CAEP Standards Committees in 2015-16 by helping them focus work on specific improvements. The CAEP Std 1 Cmte focused on curricular mapping; the CAEP Std 2 Cmte focused on evaluating their clinical practices and partnerships in preparation for writing a SIP; the CAEP Std 3 Cmte focused on answering the guiding questions for about quality, selectivity, and recruitment. CAEP Standard 4 is under the purview of the MT Council of Deans Std 4 Ad Hoc Committee, and CAEP Standard 5 is monitored by the COE's CAEP Stds 4&5 Cmte. With the hiring of the data

specialist and assessment coordinator, the CAEP Standards Committees will now meet once at the beginning, middle, and end of each academic year rather than every month; this allows faculty more time in program level meetings. Faculty do not have to manage and analyze data. The CAEP Standards Committees charge program committees with responding to assessment review, and they receive and compare program-level reports that are specific to each committee's standard. This process is being introduced during AY 2016-17, as it aligns with the SIP and the partnership between Billings Catholic Schools (BCS, see Standard 2) and the COE case study that will be piloted by Reading.

The QAS documents how the data specialist and assessment coordinator interact with IT and faculty to administer assessments, capture data, maintain and store data, analyze it, and provide it to CAEP Standards Committees. CAEP Standards Committees request actions from program-specific committees based on the data in light of the CAEP Standards. Programs will then interact with P20 program advisory groups and report back to the CAEP Standards Committees. This check-and-balance serves to formalize interactions with P12 partners and solidify their part in the continuous improvement of the EPP. The program advisory group strategy will be piloted in Reading, which is currently identifying experts for inclusion in group membership.

While program advisory groups may be a new strategy for stakeholder involvement in continuous improvement, the COE has maintained a College of Education Council (COEC) to serve as a College-level advisory group. A summary of these meetings appears in evidence. The meetings were focused on one or two specific topics per semester, and the Council was overseen by the dean. In 2015-16, the COE dean visited nearly every group of local P12 administrators during one of their staff meetings. The dean asked about increasing MSUB involvement with their students and about local P12 needs. The dean then prepared a report for the CAEP Std 2 Cmte that summarized how the local P12 schools are open to more involvement with MSUB faculty. From this contact, and from participation at a CEEDAR professional development session for P20 stakeholders, the COE was able to solidify BCS as its formal P12 Case Study Partner (see Standard 4). This is one example of how relevant stakeholders are involved in program evaluation.

The COE has complied with its assessment system, yet it struggled with documenting the monitoring, analysis, and use of data due to turnover in employees, in technology platforms, and in MSUB administration. In Fall 2015, the COE hired a full-time, tenure track Professor of Assessment and Accreditation who also teaches in and serves as the program leader for Online Instructional Technologies ("assessment coordinator"). This position was created two years earlier, but the person who filled it left Montana. The year prior, the COE switched from the Transformation Initiative (TI) Pathway to the Selected Improvement (SI) Pathway. The COE survived three changes in upper administration after the previous site visit. Other major changes were implementation of Tk20 in Fall 2014 and the subsequent abandoning of Tk20 in Fall 2015. During the loss of one accreditation coordinator, the switch from TI to SI, and the Tk20 issue, faculty continued to work in CAEP Standards Committees and engage in self-study. The hiring of the new assessment coordinator and a new data

specialist position has increased COE capacity to overcome prior challenges and agree on the improved QAS.

One example of how faculty have monitored, analyzed, and used data is through their consideration of increasing the required entrance GPA from 2.65 to 3.0. One professor and a group of graduate students analyzed candidate GPA data and found that the majority of students already attain above a 3.0 at application to candidacy. Based a discussion of these data at assessment-specific COE meetings, the COE voted to increase the GPA. The vote was not unanimous. Implementation of the vote was postponed, and another GPA analysis was conducted in Fall 2016 by the data specialist and assessment coordinator in collaboration with IT. Although the majority of students do attain above a 3.0, the COE would have been rejecting about 25% of candidate applications in nearly all programs. This raised concerns about whom the COE would be rejecting. After faculty discussion in another meeting, a unanimous vote was made to leave the GPA requirement at 2.65 because the cohort averages always meet the CAEP minimum of 3.0. This description is provided as an example of the COE's reliance on actionable data that it has vetted for reliability and validity.

Improvements to Specific Assessments

The development and improvement of the evidence of professional growth (EPG) assessment used to show candidate impact on P12 learning was described in Standard 4. The COE is continuously collaborating with P20 stakeholders to improve current assessments, including how they are reviewed for reliability and validity and how they are developed, implemented, and interpreted. The COE participates on state-mandated instrument reviews; for example, COE representatives serve on a state-wide ad hoc workgroup that is updating the Assessment of Content Pedagogy (ACP) with more descriptive language that aligns with EPAS, the Danielson framework, and consequently also with the conceptual framework. Faculty input on this assessment's improvement is given to the licensure official, who participates on the state-wide ad hoc group in consultation with the assessment coordinator. The COE is improving practices with P12 stakeholders by more formally documenting discussions of specific instruments. The pilot study at BCS is one example of this improvement (see Standard 2). The COE will review the ACP with BCS teachers and administrators, and it will then administer the ACP with its first case study cohort. The most recent updates from the state-wide ACP ad hoc group can be made available at/prior to the site visit.

Reviewing Data for Reliability, Validity, and Actionability

To be parsimonious, a plan for reliability and validity must use few resources and be integrated with existing faculty work load and organizational structure. This is in light of the fact that the COE is simultaneously working on its SIP*,* which necessarily must be guided by reliable and valid measures. The overall goal of assessment is for the Continuous Improvement of programs**;** it is an iterative process that has been completed in the past and will be completed again under new CAEP Standards. A course-mapping study of the professional initial licensure core was required in order to establish the basis for the face validity of COE assessments by ensuring alignment between course content and professional

standards. Individual assessments now need to be investigated for their face validity and content validity, along with their reliability. That review will culminate in the adoption or adaption of current and piloted key assessments for student learning outcomes based on the COE conceptual framework that is supported by the InTASC Standards and the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Criteria for adoption and adaption of key assessments are: reliability, validity, usefulness, and score on the CAEP assessment instrument rubric. The CAEP Std 1 Cmte is responsible for key assessments, with assistance from program advisory groups, the COEC, and the assessment coordinator. The assessment coordinator in turn collaborates with the dean, data specialist, and IT.

As a first step for investigating the reliability and validity of COE data, the data specialist conducted a thorough review of how data have been entered and managed over the past several years. Initial paper-and-pencil based assessments were replaced by online Tk20 assessments for AY2014-15, then reinstituted after Tk20 was abandoned in Fall 2015. Additionally, several different methods for entering and managing data were implemented by both the COE and IT. To assist with validity of data, all data generated by the COE are now managed by the data specialist. After determining data management issues and which data were missing, the data specialist found as much missing data as possible and reviewed raw data by spot-checking individual student records. Changes in assessment instruments that were not documented further complicated the process, and some data had been entered into spreadsheets without accounting for shifts in instrument criteria. This sometimes resulted in obvious errors, such as means that were outside of the potential range of scores. No data spreadsheets had been tagged to InTASC Standards, and most data were aggregated at the College level. Each of these issues presented hurdles to validity and actionability, and each of them have been addressed (fixed). The resulting Quality Assurance System Report has been submitted as evidence. The Report will be updated each year and presented to faculty for their review at the annual fall retreat. The Report disaggregates each assessment's data by program and InTASC Standard. The Report is intended for use by programs during program advisory group meetings. Time frames and disciplines sometimes need to be aggregated to protect student identity; redacted data can be made available at the site visit. Benchmark data compare COE candidates to the MSUB average or the COE average where available.

Ensuring the actionable quality of data was further addressed by the way data have been presented to faculty. While CAEP requires EPPs to submit means and ranges, interpreting the differences between means based on Likert scale data proves challenging because differences are not statistically significant. Therefore, the COE is currently piloting an additional way of presenting the data—the use of heat maps. Heat maps show the percentage of candidates who achieved any given performance level. The percentages are compared and color-coded as red, yellow, or green for the least, middle, and highest percentages. This allows COE faculty quickly to ask and answer: What percent of candidates met the minimum criteria? What performance level do most candidates achieve? For criteria and InTASC Standards do the highest percentage of candidates score the lowest? Because the heat maps are color-coded, they are easier to interpret than a list of means and differences. After faculty have the opportunity to work with the heat maps in their program groups, the assessment coordinator will survey the faculty to determine the actionability of the heat map strategy.