Fresno State’s Central Valley Partnership for Exemplary Teachers (CPET) arose from California’s unique fifth year credentialing requirement and the extremely low achievement of students in P12 schools of the central valley at the turn of the millennium. To assure subject matter competency, educator preparation programs in the state require a content area bachelor’s degree prior to admission. Until 2014, there was an added requirement that it be possible to complete each credential program in one year. These requirements limit the amount of field experience that can be required and do not allow for a gradual induction to the profession where, for example, a candidate has five semesters of gradually increasing classroom responsibility leading up to full time student teaching, as in many undergraduate programs in other states.

The P12 learning of students in the districts surrounding Fresno State formerly lagged behind much of the state and nation, accelerated by extensive poverty, transience, and a high percent of English learners in the region (p. 2 of original application). The issue for the Kremen School was how to prepare teachers to improve P12 learning for this student population while working within the limitations of the fifth year model and within schools which were not succeeding. Formerly, the Multiple Subject [MS] (P8/elementary) credential program was one summer and two semesters with field experience, part-time the first two terms and full time the third. Single Subject [SS] (K12/secondary) was two semesters only, with part time field experience the first, full time the second. Candidates enrolled in courses on campus and were assigned to different districts for the various unconnected field experiences. The program was only sequenced for field placement and because of the randomness of placement and assignment, it was difficult/impossible to determine the effect of preparation program on K-12 achievement. (In California, by law, individual teachers cannot be tracked for their effect on achievement). To deal with these circumstances, CPET was created in 2006, and it has since been expanded and adapted.

Initially, the Multiple Subject delivery was redesigned with the specific intent to benefit the districts, the candidates, and the partner schools, within the limits of the 5th year model. The purpose was to improve the preparation program so completers could better meet the needs of the districts by being “classroom ready” upon graduation while simultaneously impacting the P12 achievement in the district and schools where candidates were being prepared.
The Redesign. The Multiple Subject preparation was redesigned with tremendous input from the stakeholders, area teachers, principals, and superintendents. Instead of the pedagogy and foundations courses delivered on the University campus and field experiences in a variety of districts and classrooms, the credential program was sequenced, cohorted, and moved entirely on-site to Partner schools. The Partner schools each devoted a classroom to the partnership where the University courses could meet and where space for meetings between University faculty, K-12 practitioners, and teacher candidates would be available. The candidates were placed in Partnership sites as a cohort, for all classes in their credential, to create a learning community. Candidates were also assigned to work with the school’s “Professional Learning Communities” or “Accountable Communities”, depending on what each district terms the grade, pathway, or subject matter alike faculty who meet regularly to reflect on student learning, classroom activity, and instruction.

The candidates are embedded in the culture of that Partner school, not as a 10-15 week visitor, but an integral part of the school, there throughout the year, attending the same training and in-service as the building faculty. In addition to University faculty and clinical supervisors, each cohort is assigned a liaison whose job is facilitating placements and interactions, coordinating demonstration lessons and consultations, and dealing with challenges. Liaisons and other University faculty consult with the P12 teachers and offer demonstration lessons and consultations as needs arise. Liaisons are university faculty who receive one course equivalent of assigned time for the filling the role.

The credential classes are now all standards based, sequenced, cohorted, use co-teaching strategies, and are located in Partner schools where they are taught with the lens of the particular district. The candidates acculturate to the district specifically, and are hired with skills more like a second year teacher when finished, according to the hiring principals and superintendents.

P12 Learning. The achievement of the P12 students in the Partner schools shapes the program and the program affects P12 achievement through its variations among the partner locations and districts. As was shared on in our original application (pp. 3-4), the achievement of each subgroup for each grade level in each Partner school is tracked through a statewide data-base. Through test scores and informal assessments
certain aspects the delivery model are in a continual mode of adjustment and improvement. As demonstrated (p. 4), the Partner school sites have had an immediate and sustained improvement in P12 achievement. This was supported by data from follow up surveys of graduates and their employment supervisors and comments from the districts that hire the graduates.

Affecting new teachers alone was viewed as not having sufficient impact to change P12 achievement sufficiently, so other components were developed. Part of the model has been to deliver Masters programs on-site to affect those teachers already prepared and working in the schools. Administrator preparation was altered to focus on P12 achievement and included developing new leaders under the partnership model. On-site course delivery, cohorts, signature assignments, embedded fieldwork, and targeted coaching are now the norm of Educational Leadership. Simultaneously, the Central Valley Educational Leadership Institute (CVELI) (soon to be named the John Welty Educational Leadership Institute) was developed. CVELI provides coaching to leaders, focusing on raising P12 achievement and closing the achievement gap, and establishes networks of leaders, working together to impact learning.

**Sanger, Fowler, and Clovis Partnerships.** An example of CPET’s impact on P12 achievement can be documented through our work in Sanger and Fowler. In 2005, Sanger Unified was in Program Improvement as one of the lowest achieving districts in California, performing at the 2nd percentile. Sanger began working with CPET in multiple areas; training cohorts of teachers on-site, providing leadership coaching for the superintendent, Marc Johnson, and offering on-site masters degrees in Leadership, Reading, and Curriculum and Instruction. We housed the first MS cohort at Jefferson Elementary, where the student body is 97% socially disadvantaged, 65% English learners (EL), and 96% Hispanic. Prior to working with CPET, the student body was 20% proficient in English/Language Arts (ELA) and 22% in Math. Work with CPET contributed to that school raising ELA to 70% proficient and Math to 79%. Resultantly, Mr. Johnson was named Supt. of the Year for the United States and Jefferson Elementary has been named a STAR School (honoring high poverty/high EL, and high achievement schools) for five consecutive years.

Fowler Unified, another Partner district, established sites at both Malaga and Fremont Elementary for courses and field placements. In 2007 Malaga Elementary scored 20% proficient in ELA and 23% in
Math, with their 2013 scores rising to 49% proficient in ELA and 57% in Math. Fremont’s scores rose to 52% ELA and in 58% Math in 2013, from their 2007 scores of 40% (ELA) and 25% (Math).

Reagan Elementary in Clovis Unified was a Partner school site from 2007 to 2009. CPET left that site in part because of the higher SES of the students (only 31 percent FRSL), however achievement data showed continuing effects. For social disadvantaged students ELA went form 30% proficient in 2007 to 75% in 2012. English learners went from 40% to 85%. Hispanic students went from 30% proficient to 71% in ELA. Math scores started higher with all groups in the 50-60 % range and ended in the 70-90% proficient range.

**Fresno Partnership.** An example of the impact of achievement scores in P12 districts and the resultant changes made are seen through the establishment of the teacher residency in Fresno Unified. Fresno, with 75,000 students, lies primarily in California’s 18th U.S. congressional district, having the lowest average family income of all 435 U.S. districts. Fresno is 5th in the nation for concentrated urban poverty according to the Brookings Institute. Its students are 83% eligible for free/reduced lunch, 88% students of color, and 25% English learners (EL). Less than 50% of FUSD students were proficient in math, science, and ELA. On the 2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), science scores for 4th and 8th graders in Fresno were lower than their respective public school peers. The 2009 and 2011 NAEP results for math and reading in grades 4 and 8 showed that FUSD students performed below the national public school and large city school averages. For ELs, the percentages were much lower – based on the 2011 CA Standards Test (CST), only 6.5% of ELs were proficient in ELA and only 25.8% were proficient in math. While 45% of FUSD 3rd grade students scored proficient or advanced in ELA on the CST, only 36% of 8th graders did; and while 41.9% of 3rd graders were proficient on the math CST, only 30% of 8th graders were.

A study by the CA Dropout Project found that failing three classes in middle school reduces the chance of graduating high school by 50%. Based on this data FUSD identified a vast majority of students in grades 4-8 as being in critical need and on the path to school failure. The primary issues were math and science instruction, addressing the needs of ELs, and teacher understanding of child/adolescent development.
Ongoing since 2011, University and FUSD faculty have met to collaboratively revise the teacher preparation program targeting improvement through coursework changes, additional instructional opportunities, and enhanced clinical experiences. This partnership, the Fresno Teacher Residency Program (FTRP) is aimed at preparing 4-8 teachers with additional certification in math and science instruction who will teach in middle grades, where the failure has been occurring. Together, the faculties created early continuous clinical field experiences for pre-service teachers, aligned with the university’s academic program and under the guidance of a mentor teacher for the entire experience. Professional development school sites were established that enhance interaction between and among Fresno State faculty and the FUSD teachers and school leaders. The first cohort was a three-semester program; the second cohort, combined rigorous masters-level coursework sequence with the teacher credentialing coursework and changed the program to two summers and two semesters in real classrooms with a mentor teacher, and a comprehensive professional development curriculum for mentors in order to develop and support new teachers. Coursework and field experience addresses California credential requirements, Master of Arts in Education requirements, Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, and major district focus areas. Teacher candidates are assigned to and work with the Accountable Communities on the partnership sites.

Summary

These program changes are real and are based on P12 learning data. The mode of preparing teachers and school leaders was totally adapted based on the lack of adequate P12 achievement. The achievement in the sites where CPET has been most active have shown remarkable success, in the case of Sanger receiving national, sustained attention. This fall CPET started a cohort in tiny Washington Union District and in large, well-known Porterville Unified, the foremost Linked Learning site in the state. While using the CPET model, the curriculum changes will be different in each of those sites, as it has been for FUSD, Sanger, and Clovis. The faculty and districts jointly examine data including P12 achievement to determine the desired learning outcomes and prepare the candidates accordingly. We have published data that shows these teachers, wherever they are hired, are judged stronger and better prepared for the classroom than those prepared in more traditional pathways.