# **Response to Findings**

**Follow-Up on Data-Informed Decisions**

When the EPP makes data-informed decisions for continuous improvement, the EPP reviews the data in the following years to determine if the program changes are contributing to the intended outcomes. This narrative and the accompanying evidence provide examples of the EPP’s efforts to follow-up on its data informed decisions.

The EPP began studying the correlation between overall GPA and student teacher final evaluations in 2004. The results of a regression analysis involved 808 student teacher placements over a seven-year period between the Fall of 2004 and the Spring of 2011 indicated a significant relationship existed between the cooperating teaching final mean score ratings and the cumulative GPAs of student teachers.

As a whole, the lowest level of mean score ratings being received by teacher candidates involved those with GPAs ranging between 2.50 and 2.74. The EPP was considering raising its GPA for program admission, but the data also indicated that exceptions existed. A 2011 decision was made to raise the admission requirement from 2.50 to 2.75 was informed by data. The VCSU Teacher Education Committee noted that approximately one-third of the teacher candidates with GPAs in the range of 2.50 to 2.74 were highly successful in their student teaching, so an appeal process was established. Teacher candidates with a GPA between 2.50 and 2.74 must appeal for admission. The teacher candidates who have appealed and have been permitted to continue have done well in their early field experiences, displayed favorable dispositions, and have shown a recent trend towards higher achievement in the classroom are able to appeal for admission.

The results have supported the GPA decision. The teacher candidates with GPAs between 2.50 and 2.74 who have been approved through the appeal process have achieved mean score ratings that are much closer to, and on some semesters higher, than the student teachers with GPAs between 2.75 – 2.99. Fewer teacher candidates are going into student teaching placements who may have struggled in the classroom and those teacher candidates are being successful.

The research continued as a new student teaching instrument with stronger alignment to the InTASC Standards was administered between the Fall of 2011 and the Spring of 2017. The research kept moving forward as a new assessment instrument was developed with more thorough rubrics and descriptors that were more actionable. The data from the Fall of 2017 through the Spring of 2020 also indicate a significant relationship exists between cooperating teacher mean score ratings for student teachers and cumulative GPA. Follow-up research on the EPP decision to more carefully screen the teacher candidates with a cumulative GPA below 2.75 has continued to indicate the program made a good decision ([Evidence 1](https://vcsuintasc.myefolio.com/Intasc2021/Uploads/GPA%20for%20Admission%20Raised%20and%20Update%20after%20Spring%202020.pdf)).

Another example of how the program follows up on its decisions involved the increase in the length of student teaching time from 10 to 12 weeks. The decision was made after surveys and a significant amount of cooperating teacher and faculty input to extend the length of the student teaching experience. The decision allowed more field experience time for teacher candidates. Follow-up research was done to determine if student teacher ratings from cooperating teachers might stay the same, increase, or decrease. The mean score ratings in every student teaching category were higher after the switch to 12-week student teaching placements. The student teaching assessment instrument was modified, so the research was discontinued because it could no longer provide apples to apples comparisons. The four semesters of follow-up data that were gathered supported the EPP decision to move from 10 to 12 weeks of student teaching ([Evidence 2](https://vcsuintasc.myefolio.com/Intasc2021/Uploads/Student%20teaching%20change%20from%2010%20to%2012%20weeks.pdf)).

A recent data-informed decision for improvement involved the addition of one credit to EDUC 240 Educating Exceptional Students. The decision has turned out positively for teacher candidate preparation in differentiated instruction. The decision to add a credit was debated over multiple years, because the EPP didn’t want to add costs for teacher candidates. The data and the voice of stakeholders reviewing the data impacted the EPP’s data-informed decision to make the change. The decision has been supported by follow-up data that indicate improvement in differentiated instruction. ([Evidence 3](https://vcsuintasc.myefolio.com/Intasc2021/Uploads/Add%20One%20Credit%20to%20EDUC%20240%20and%20Follow-Up%20.pdf)).

Another data-informed decision for improvement was in response to classroom management feedback and data. [Dr. Sheri Okland created a pilot for substitute teaching](https://vcsuintasc.myefolio.com/Intasc2021/Uploads/Subbing%20Program%20Information.pdf) that was successful and kept growing.

* VCSU expanded its field experience time for teacher candidates through opportunities for co-teaching and substitute teaching. The substitute teaching program enables pairs of teacher candidates to gain experience in classrooms while VCSU partners with area P-12 schools, so their faculty have time for professional development opportunities.
* Feedback from teacher candidates have indicated that their substitute teaching experiences have been highly beneficial, especially in gaining classroom management experience ([Evidence 4](https://vcsuintasc.myefolio.com/Intasc2021/Uploads/Evidence%204%20Follow-up%20on%20Classroom%20Management%20with%20Subbing%20Program.pdf)).

[Link to Follow-Up Research on Data-Informed Decisions](https://vcsuintasc.myefolio.com/Intasc2021/datadriven)