

Item 10:**Consider and Take Appropriate Action on Request to Approve New Class of Certificate at Relay Graduate School of Education****DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

SUMMARY: This item provides the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) an opportunity to approve a request by Relay Graduate School of Education (Relay GSE), an approved and accredited educator preparation program (EPP) located in Houston, Texas, to offer the Principal as Instructional Leader EC-12 certificate in the Principal certificate class. Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff reviewed the proposal and found that it complied with provisions of 19 TAC Chapter 227, Provisions for Educator Preparation Candidates, Chapter 228, Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs, Chapter 229, Accountability System for Educator Preparation Programs, Chapter 230, Professional Educator Preparation and Certification, Subchapter B, General Certification Requirements, and Chapter 241, Principal Certificate.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: The statutory authority related to the approval of new classes of certification are the Texas Education Code, §21.0443 and §21.044.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon SBEC approval.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION: The SBEC approves all new classes of certificates that are offered through an EPP. An EPP must be rated "Accredited" under the Accountability System for Educator Preparation Programs to be eligible to add new classes to program offerings. The EPP prepared an extensive and complete application addressing the SBEC required components of governance, admissions criteria, curriculum, program delivery and on going support, evaluation, professional conduct, complaint process, issuance of certificates, and submission of required data. The proposal is reviewed by several TEA staff members who hold extensive discussions with the applying entity to ensure compliance with the SBEC rules for the certification class being requested. The Relay GSE application meets the minimum requirements for approval by the SBEC.

PUBLIC AND STUDENT BENEFIT: Approving a new class of certificate offering will increase the number of certified principals in the state.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Principal class of certificate at Relay GSE as presented.

Staff Members Responsible:

Tam Jones, Director, Educator Preparation

Lorrie Ayers, Program Specialist, Educator Preparation

Attachments:

- I. Statutory Citations Relating to the Approval of New Classes of Certification
- II. Executive Summary for Relay GSE, Principal Certification

ATTACHMENT I

Statutory Citations Relating to the Approval of New Classes of Certification

Texas Education Code, §21.0443, Educator Preparation (excerpts):

- (a) The board shall propose rules to establish standards to govern the approval or renewal of approval of:
 - (1) educator preparation programs; and
 - (2) certification fields authorized to be offered by an educator preparation program.
- (b) To be eligible for approval or renewal of approval, an educator preparation program must adequately prepare candidates for educator certification and meet the standards and requirements of the board.

Texas Education Code, §21.044, Educator Preparation (excerpt):

- (a) The board shall propose rules establishing the training requirements a person must accomplish to obtain a certificate, enter an internship, or enter an induction-year program. The board shall specify the minimum academic qualifications required for a certificate.

ATTACHMENT II

Executive Summary for the Relay GSE, Principal Certification

Introduction - Relay Graduate School of Education (Relay GSE) is an independent, non-profit institution of higher education, accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and authorized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Relay has operated as an approved EPP in Texas since 2014 and has grown its teacher residency program to serve districts in Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, and San Antonio. Relay seeks SBEC approval to add the Principal as Instructional Leader EC-12 certificate. The proposed principal certification program is designed in alignment with the new Texas Principal Standards and new TExES Principal (268) test and emphasizes three dimensions of school leadership - instructional, cultural, and strategic. Participants will undertake an intensive year-long fellowship where they will demonstrate mastery of skills through a hands-on learning experience in their school context and in service of student achievement. Course assessments are performance-based and require submission of artifacts and video of aspiring leaders implementing skills and practices in their schools. This model is uniquely suited to prepare principal candidates for success on the Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL). The proposed program builds upon the success of the Texas Instructional Leader Professional Development (IL-PD) series and Relay's National Principals Academy Fellowship (NPAF). Data shows that these programs are effective in improving school outcomes. In AY18-19, 98% of the 230 participants in the Texas IL-PD series agreed that the content improves their efficacy in their roles. Student achievement growth in schools led by NPAF-trained principals in the 2016-17 cohort with medium to high implementation of the Relay curriculum outpaced peer schools by a statistically significant 2.5 percentage points from AY15-16 to AY16-17. Relay is currently operating a non-certification bearing pilot principal fellowship program in San Antonio ISD with 4 participants. SAISD has committed to enrolling 10 aspiring principals in the certification program in 2019-20 and 20 in 2020-21 with enrollment increasing apace with capacity and demand each year thereafter. Relay is developing relationships with 6 additional IL-PD participating districts through 1:1 coaching and plans to grow partnerships throughout the state with districts aiming to strengthen and diversify the leadership pipeline with principals who are strong instructional leaders. The annual program cost is \$18,000, which may be sponsored by districts or funders. Relay is committed to ensuring accessibility by making the out-of-pocket cost to participants competitive.

Component 1: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs - The advisory committee includes senior leadership from several Dallas/Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Houston school districts, philanthropic organizations, service centers, and universities. The committee formally convenes at least once per year. Members provide guidance on field-based experiences, program design and delivery, and decisions on recruitment, growth, and partnerships.

Component 2: Admission Criteria - Applicants must meet minimum admissions standards in 19 TAC §227 and §241. Applicants must: 1) submit an application, including a leadership assessment from a supervisor and current resume; 2) participate in an interview, and 3) submit official, degree-conferred transcripts evidencing a baccalaureate degree or higher with a minimum GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale for the highest degree obtained. The two screening instruments are the leadership assessment and interview, which will be scored on rubric with a 0-4 scale (0=lacking and 4=exemplary). The cut score will be an average of 2.7 across rubric rows. Relay will also screen for: 1) Master's degree from accredited IHE; 2) valid classroom teaching certificate; and 3) minimum 2 years of creditable classroom teaching experience. Applicants will be informed of deficiency in writing prior to admission. Deficiencies must be addressed for standard certificate eligibility. Out-of-country applicants must show equivalent academic criteria through a course-by-course transcript evaluation

and evidence of English proficiency. Out-of-state applicants are held to the same standards as in-state applicants. Texas residence is required and the practicum must be completed at a TEA-accredited school.

Component 3: Educator Preparation Curriculum - The curriculum has as its basis the new Texas Principal Standards (19 TAC §149 Subchapter BB). The curriculum spirals standards throughout multiple courses to ensure the best possible preparation for leader candidates. Faculty are experienced former PK-12 school leaders who differentiate instruction and tailor coursework to ensure that it meets the needs of leaders in Texas. Assessments are evaluated by Relay faculty using published rubrics and normed feedback is provided.

Component 4: Preparation Program Coursework, Delivery & Ongoing Support - The Relay Texas principal certification program consists of a minimum of 200 clock-hours of coursework and a year-long intensive school-based fellowship. Coursework will be delivered in person, with assessments submitted through the Canvas LMS. Site supervisors must be currently certified, have at least 3 years of experience as a principal, and complete Relay site supervisor training. Supervision of candidates during the practicum will be conducted with the structured guidance of qualified Relay faculty members serving as field supervisors. Field Supervisors must complete both Relay and TEA-required field supervisor training. Field supervisors will conduct at least 3 formal observations (one in each third of the practicum), totaling at least 135 minutes. For each, the field supervisor will conduct an individualized pre- and post-observation conference and provide written feedback to the candidate and site supervisor.

Component 5: Assessment & Evaluation of Candidates & Program - Relay is committed to continuous improvement. Data for evaluation comes from candidate surveys, performance data, certification exam pass rates, and faculty surveys. Each course is assessed, and a standardized rubric is used for evaluation. To complete the program, candidates must demonstrate at least "Foundational" mastery in all courses and earn a cumulative 2.7 GPA. Candidates must be in good academic standing and pass (240/300) a full-length practice test for testing eligibility. Relay's performance assessments and practice-based fellowship model uniquely prepares principal candidates for success on the PASL. Additional test preparation support is available.

Component 6: Professional Conduct - All candidates and instructors will participate in TEA-created training, read and sign the Texas Educator's Code of Conduct during new student and faculty orientation, respectively.

Component 7: Complaints Process - Complaints must first be filed with the program Dean who will investigate and respond within 1 week. Candidates may appeal decisions related to grades or program dismissal. The policy is distributed during orientation and is available online.

Component 8: Issuance of Certificates - For standard certificate recommendation, candidates must demonstrate proficiency on all assessments, pass the TExES principal exam and PASL, hold a master's degree from an accredited IHE and valid classroom teaching certificate, have 2 creditable years of experience as a classroom teacher, and meet all practicum and training requirements. Relay will follow all rules as outlined in 19 TAC §230.

Component 9: Data Reporting - Relay will ensure all required data is consistently tracked throughout the academic year and reported on the yearly ASEP report on September 15.