



2020-2021 Continuing Approval Review Report Texas A&M University - Texarkana

Introduction

A 5-year Continuing Approval Desk Review was conducted by Program Specialist Lorrie Ayers of the Texas A&M University-Texarkana (019502) educator preparation program (EPP) on Monday, January 11, 2021. Per 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(b), an entity approved by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) to certify educators shall be reviewed at least once every five years. Texas A&M University-Texarkana (TAMU-T) was originally approved as an EPP on August 23, 1985.

Dr. Del Doughty was the program Legal Authority and Sara Lawrence was the primary EPP contact for the 2020-2021 review. TAMU-T is approved to prepare and certify candidates in the following certificate classes: Teacher, Principal, Superintendent, School Counselor, Educational Diagnostician, and Reading Specialist. Certification is offered in Undergraduate (U), Post-Baccalaureate (PB), and Alternative (ALT) routes. The EPP reported 108 finishers for the 2018-2019 reporting year and 95 finishers for 2019-2020. The EPP was rated Accredited - Warned (Year Two) at the time of the review. The risk level was Stage 2 (medium).

Candidate records were reviewed for five (5) candidates from each the Principal, School Counselor, Superintendent, Reading Specialist, and Educational Diagnostician classes. Ten records were requested from the Teacher class: five (5) from the Undergraduate (U) route and five (5) from the Post-Bac/Alternative Certification (PB/ALT) route.

EPP staff participating in the review at various stages were: Del Doughty, Katheryn Hartshorn, Amy Miller, Abbie Strunc, Kathy Lease, Rebeca Cooper, Trisha Ray, Melba Foster, Kelly Cordray, LuzMary Rincon, Jan Murdock, Frank Mullins, and Becky Barlow.

Per 19 TAC §228.1(c), "all educator preparation programs are subject to the same standards of accountability, as required under Chapter 229 of this title." The TEA administers TAC required by the Texas legislature for the regulation of all EPPs in the state. (See the complete [TAC](#) for details.) The five-year Continuing Approval Review was conducted in a "Desk Review" format where EPP staff submitted requested documents to TEA for review.

The scope of this review included: 1) verifying compliance with Texas Administrative Code and Texas Education Code as applicable to all certification classes in all certification routes offered by the EPP; and 2) developing a plan for improvement based on review data, performance indicators identified in 19 TAC §229.4, and self-reported EPP information provided in the Status Report. Next Steps were identified to address plans for quality improvement. Evidence of compliance was measured using a rubric aligned to TAC.

Data Analysis

Information concerning compliance with TAC governing EPPs was collected by a variety of means. A Status Report and related program documents were submitted to TEA on December 10, 2020. Additional EPP documents, including records for 35 candidates, were submitted on December 22, 2020. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to evaluate the evidence.



Findings, Compliance Issues, and Recommendations

“Findings” indicate evidence collected during the review process. If the program is “not in compliance” with any identified component, the program should consult the TAC and correct the issue immediately. A “Compliance Plan” or “Next Steps” may be drafted during the review that identifies compliance issues to be addressed and a timeline for completion. “Recommendations” are suggestions for general program improvement and no follow up is required.

Results: EPP and Program Requirements

Per self-reported information in the Status Report, the EPP meets requirements for program governance including a) support provided by the governing body; and b) advisory committee activity as required in 19 TAC §228.20. The TAMU-T EPP collaborates with the Texas A&M University “We Teach” initiative which provides additional advising opportunities as well as a variety of opportunities for collaboration. Currently the We Teach programs, including TAMU-T, have established MOUs with partnering districts. TAMU-T identified 12 partner districts within the area(s) served by the EPP. The EPP operates satellite sites at the Northeast Texas Community College and the Ratliff Academy at ESC Region VIII. Coursework delivery for most of the programs has moved to an online format. The Superintendent program and Teacher (U) programs continue to offer a face-to-face delivery option. As required in 19 TAC §228.20(e), there is a notification letter on file at TEA that identifies the additional sites and the program amendment to deliver coursework online.

The website and application materials were reviewed to verify the EPP had posted the required information for applicants and candidates.

- Information about admission and completion requirements was posted on the website for each program which meets requirements in 19 TAC §227.1(c). Information about the effect of supply and demand forces on the educator workforce in Texas and information about the performance of the EPP over five (5) years was posted for the Teacher (U) and Teacher (PB/ALT) programs. It was noted that the information about performance over time only reflected test pass rates and did not reflect Accreditation status or any other indicator of EPP performance. The required information was not posted for the non-teacher programs which does not meet the requirement in 19 TAC §227.1(c)
- The following information required in 19 TAC §227.1(b) and §227.1(d) was consistently found on the electronic applications for all programs for candidates admitted more recently; however, older applications did not consistently reflect the required information for the Principal, Superintendent, and School Counselor programs. It was recommended to the EPP that because this information must be transparently published and accessible to all educator applicants and candidates, they should consider posting the following information on the website in addition to the application materials:
 - The required fingerprint background check;
 - The potential ineligibility of an individual for certification due to a criminal history; and
 - The right of an individual to request a Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation (PCHE) from TEA.
- The published EPP complaints process was found either on the website or in a candidate handbook for each of the programs; however, not all of the policies that were



published had been linked to the TEA complaints process which does not meet the requirement in 19 TAC §228.70(b)(2). EPP staff were advised to review published policies and ensure each is linked as required to the TEA complaints page.

While there were no candidates admitted with credentials from out-of-country for any of the programs, it was noted that information published on the website for all programs regarding English language proficiency requirements was outdated and should be updated to reflect the current requirements in 19 TAC §230.11(b)(5).

The EPP provided staff acknowledgements of understanding and adherence to the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics (ECO) which meets requirements in 19 TAC §228.50 related to professional conduct for EPP staff.

There was no evidence that the EPP has allowed candidates to complete clinical teaching, internship, or practicum requirements outside of Texas.

Per 19 TAC §229.3(e), "all required EPP data for an academic year shall be submitted to the TEA staff annually by September 15 following the end of that academic year". The EPP is required to report admission activities, enrollment data, and observation data.

- The TAMU-T EPP met deadlines for data submission.
- Admission data for all classes has been reported either using the GPA spreadsheet or, effective September 1, 2019, through an admission record created in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS). Admission data was reported accurately. Some GPA numbers reported for the candidates in the Reading Specialist program appeared to be lower than the numbers reflected on the transcripts.
- Candidate enrollment data is reported for all classes annually on the Finisher Records List in ECOS. Enrollment status was reported accurately for candidates in all programs except one Teacher (U) candidate was admitted in History 7-12 but reported as enrolled in Social Studies 7-12. While this met the requirement for data, the EPP was reminded to collect and retain the written request from the candidate when he/she changes certificate category after admission as required in 19 TAC §228.40(c).
- Observation data for all classes is reported in the Accountability System for Educator Preparation (ASEP). There were discrepancies in the duration and date of one (1) or more observations reported for each of the following: one (1) Teacher (PB/ALT) candidate, one (1) Principal candidate, and five (5) Superintendent candidates. Reported observation data could not be verified for the Reading Specialist candidates because of missing records. Observation data is required to be reported for non-teacher candidates effective 2019-2020. The program was reminded that all formal observations conducted by the field supervisor must be reported and not just the minimum number.

19 TAC §228.40(f) requires the EPP to retain "documents that evidence a candidate's eligibility for admission to the program and evidence of completion of all program requirements for a period of five years after a candidate completes, withdraws from, or is discharged or released from the program". Records were available as evidence of compliance with most requirements. Observation summaries were present in records for non-teacher candidates; however, the observation records were missing. Additionally, other documentation such as candidate



transcripts, candidate handbooks, and posted EPP completion requirements reflect that non-teacher candidates are required to complete the practicum but documentation of completed practicums, including logs, were missing from records.

In all programs, some or all evidence reflecting cooperating teacher/mentor/site supervisor and field supervisor qualifications and training was missing. Records for two (2) Teacher (U) candidates contained signed cooperating teacher agreements that reflected the cooperating teachers met qualification requirements. The EPP was encouraged to adopt a similar agreement for other programs and reminded they must retain those signed agreements in EPP records. EPP staff were advised to update the records retention process to retain all required evidence for each program. It was noted in the records submitted for the review that the EPP referred to a "satellite location" in the context of a lack of candidate records at that location. The EPP was reminded that all satellite campuses or programs that process candidates under the authority of the EPP are responsible for collecting and securely maintaining records or ensuring the records are passed on to the main campus for secure records storage.

Next Steps

The EPP will submit evidence to TEA that deficiencies in these areas have been corrected on or before July 25, 2021:

1. [19 TAC §227.1(c)] The EPP must post current information regarding the effect of supply and demand forces on the educator workforce in Texas and information about the performance of the EPP over five years on the website where applicants and candidates seeking certification in all classes may access the information.
2. [19 TAC §228.70(b)(2)] The EPP must ensure the published complaints policy for each program is linked to the TEA complaints process.
3. [19 TAC §228.40(f)] The EPP must implement a secure records retention process that ensures evidence of admission and completion of all requirements is retained for the EPP including any satellite campuses or programs.

Recommendations

- Implement quality control measures for reporting data for all classes to ensure data accurately reflects EPP/candidate activities.
- Update information on the website for all programs to reflect the current requirements for demonstration of English language proficiency in 19 TAC §230.11(b)(5).
- Update information on the website, in a place that is accessible by applicants and candidates for all programs, to reflect information about fingerprint background checks and the related information about criminal history and the PCHE as detailed in 19 TAC §227.1(b) and §227.1(d).
- Review admission requirements for all programs and update where necessary to achieve uniformity across all places where those requirements are published (e.g., web pages, handbooks, application materials).



- Review the Digital Literacy requirements for all programs to ensure they are implemented with fidelity. Ensure the Digital Literacy evaluation measures the candidate's level of digital literacy and not just the candidate's opinion of his/her level of digital literacy.

Results: Candidate Preparation

Candidate and EPP records were reviewed to verify that each program within the EPP is compliant with TAC requirements for candidate admission and completion of preparation and certification requirements. Transcripts, admission documents, benchmark documents, degree plans, course descriptions, course syllabi, training certificates, and completed logs and observation documents were reviewed. The following are the results of the review by program.

Undergraduate Teacher Program

1. The requirements for admission into the undergraduate (U) teacher preparation program identified on the website and/or on the application for admission are:
 - An application;
 - An online screen (Educator Disposition Survey);
 - A GPA of 2.8 or higher;
 - Status of Junior;
 - Enrollment in course ED311;
 - Freshman and sophomore level coursework completed with a C or better, including the 12 or 15 semester credit-hours in the subject area of the certificate sought by the applicant; and
 - A writing sample and an oral interview.

Based on the records for the candidates reviewed, the Teacher (U) program met most admission requirements in 19 TAC §227.10. Candidates' records contained transcripts that provided evidence that candidates a) were enrolled and had completed coursework at the university; b) met the basic skills and English language proficiency requirements; and c) had a higher GPA than the minimum required. Each of the five (5) candidates had also completed more than the required number of semester credit-hours in the subject area of the certificate sought. Each candidate record contained an application as required in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(8). Each candidate had been screened using two screening instruments, an oral interview and a writing sample, that were scored with rubrics. Additionally, candidates completed a self-assessment using the Educator Disposition Survey that was on the admission application; however, most of the candidates selected the highest level of the rubric to describe themselves. There was no indication of how the information was used by the program.

The Teacher (U) program had implemented the formal admission process as identified in 19 TAC §227.17. Each of the five (5) records contained a signed offer letter reflecting an admission date. All had been uploaded into ECOS as admitted within the required 7 days.

The application for admission completed by the five (5) candidates required them to read the Educators' Code of Ethics (ECOE) and respond to a related prompt. The response was acknowledged as the attestation of reading and understanding the ECOE. Prior to



the close of the review, the program submitted an updated application that reflected language to include an agreement to adhere to the ECOE to align with the language in 19 TAC §228.50.

2. Self-reported information in the Status Report, with course descriptions and degree plans, provided evidence that coursework and training provided to Teacher (U) candidates is standards-based and addresses the TEKS. All additional instruction required in 19 TAC §228.30(c) and (d) was provided, including:
 - The code of ethics;
 - Instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia;
 - Instruction regarding mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide;
 - The skills educators are required to possess, the responsibilities educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students;
 - The importance of building strong classroom management skills;
 - The framework for principal and teacher evaluation;
 - Appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students;
 - Instruction in digital learning, including a digital literacy assessment;
 - The relevant TEKS, including the English language proficiency standards;
 - Reading instruction;
 - Prekindergarten Guidelines, where applicable; and
 - The skills and competencies in the Teacher Standards in 19 TAC Chapter 149.
3. Per course completion information and self-reported information in the Status Report, candidates complete more than 300 clock-hours of coursework which meets requirements in 19 TAC §228.35(b). Program staff submitted samples of authentic activities that reflect the courses for Teacher (U) contain opportunities for candidates to practice skills as required in 19 TAC §228.35(a)(2); however, program staff were encouraged to increase the number of performance-based assessments in coursework to allow candidates multiple opportunities to practice skills and demonstrate proficiency before implementing with students.

Field-based experience (FBE) logs were provided for three (3) of the candidates in the Teacher (U) program. The remaining two (2) candidates did not complete FBE hours because one (1) candidate left the program prior to completing FBE and the other candidate had not reached that point in the training process at the time of the review. FBE logs reflected that each had completed more than 50 hours of FBE prior to clinical teaching. Reflections of the experiences were submitted for the three (3) candidates; however, the reflections appeared to be for field experiences completed in a prior semester. All FBE hours were completed in a face-to-face format; however, candidate documentation of activities did not clearly indicate the number of interactive hours. Additionally, there was limited evidence that the program requires candidates to complete the FBE in a variety of settings as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)(A).

Benchmark documents, transcripts, clinical teaching logs, observation documentation, and records in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) were reviewed as evidence that candidates completed clinical teaching as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e) and were supervised as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g). Three (3) of the five (5) candidates had completed clinical teaching, one (1) candidate withdrew from the EPP



before clinical teaching, and one (1) candidate was not at the point of clinical teaching at the time of the review.

- Each of the three (3) candidates had completed the pre-service coursework requirements identified in 19 TAC §228.35(b) prior to beginning clinical teaching or internship. Additionally, candidates are required to complete test preparation and must pass all required certification exams prior to beginning clinical teaching. Candidates acknowledge this requirement on the application for admission.
- Clinical teaching logs signed by the cooperating teacher were provided for the three (3) candidates which is sufficient evidence that candidates are required to complete a clinical teaching assignment that meets or exceeds the 70 day requirement in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(i)(I)(-a-).
- Placement information, field supervisor logs, and data on observation documents provided evidence that each of the three (3) candidates was assigned a qualified cooperating teacher during clinical teaching as required in 19 TAC §228.35(f) and 19 TAC §228.2(14) and a field supervisor as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g); however, there was limited evidence to support that field supervisors consistently met the qualification requirements of certification, experience, and accomplishment. Training could not be verified for the cooperating teachers; however, certificates of completion were evidence that field supervisors had attended TEA-approved training as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g). There was no evidence the EPP provided any additional training to the field supervisors. Cooperating teacher observations were submitted for candidates completing clinical teaching.
- Placement information, clinical teaching logs, and field supervisor documentation were submitted for review; however, the information captured on the documents did not verify the clinical teaching assignments were full day with not less than an average of four hours each day in the subject area and grade level of certification sought as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(i)(I) and §228.35(e)(2)(A)(ii)(I).
- Information captured on observation documents or field supervisor logs were evidence that field supervision was provided to each of the three (3) candidates who completed clinical teaching as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g). Field supervisor logs for two (2) candidates captured evidence that field supervisors make first contact with candidates within the first three (3) weeks of the assignment. There was no field supervisor log submitted for the third candidate and observation documents did not capture first contact. Clinical teacher candidates received three (3) observations that were 45 minutes or longer in duration. Observation documents or field supervisor logs provided evidence that field supervisors capture the candidate's demonstration of proficiency during an observation; however, field supervisors should strengthen their process for capturing educational practices observed during each observation as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g). Field supervisor logs submitted for two (2) candidates captured evidence that field supervisors hold pre- and post-conferences with candidates around each observation; however, the observation documents submitted for the third candidate reflected only the post-conference.



- There is limited evidence the program has consistently implemented the requirement in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(iii) that the field supervisor and cooperating teacher must provide a written recommendation that the candidate was successful in the demonstration of proficiency in the standards during clinical teaching and is ready for standard certification. Of the three (3) candidates who had achieved standard certification, the required recommendations were found on the field supervisor log for two (2) of the candidates but there was no recommendation for the third candidate.
4. Three (3) of the five (5) candidates had achieved standard certification. Transcripts, provided as evidence of candidate benchmarks, with information in ECOS, were evidence each candidate met requirements for the standard certificate as required in 19 TAC Chapter 230.

Next Steps

The EPP will submit evidence to TEA that deficiencies in these areas have been corrected on or before July 25, 2021:

1. [19 TAC §228.35(e)] Update FBE requirements to ensure candidates complete requirements in a variety of settings. Retain evidence in each candidate's record. Provide evidence of the updated requirement (e.g., course syllabi, candidate handbook, a completed FBE log for one (1) candidate, or other)
2. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)(A)] Update FBE requirements to ensure candidates capture evidence of at least 15 hours of interactive experiences and complete reflections of 30 hours of FBE. Retain evidence in each candidate's record. Provide evidence of the updated requirement (e.g., course syllabi, candidate handbook, completed FBE log and reflections for one (1) candidate, or other).
3. [19 TAC §228.35(f) & §228.2(14)] Implement training, including training in how to coach and mentor teacher candidates, for cooperating teachers assigned to candidates during clinical teaching. Retain evidence such as certificates of completion or attendee sign in sheets. Provide the training materials and evidence of implementation such as a certificate of completion, a training sign in sheet, an email acknowledgement, or other, for a cooperating teacher assigned to one (1) candidate.
4. [19 TAC §228.2(18) & (14)] Ensure field supervisors and cooperating teachers assigned to support and supervise clinical teacher candidates meet qualification requirements. Retain evidence of qualifications in EPP and/or candidate records. Submit the completed documentation for the field supervisor and cooperating teacher assigned to one (1) candidate or submit the material(s) that will be used to implement this process and a written description of the process, the implementation date, and the program staff that will be responsible for implementation.
5. [19 TAC §228.35(g)] Provide EPP specific training to field supervisors and retain evidence such as sign in sheets or meeting minutes as evidence. Submit the training materials and evidence of completion of training for one (1) field supervisor.



6. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(i)(I) & §228.35(e)(2)(A)(ii)(I)] Update documents such as clinical teaching logs, cooperating teacher agreements, or field supervisor logs used to capture clinical teaching activities to capture that candidates complete full day or half day assignments and that the assignment is at minimum, an average of four (4) hours per day in the subject area of the certificate sought by the candidate. Submit the updated document or a written description of the updated process to TEA.
7. [19 TAC §228.35(g)] Update the process for capturing and retaining documentation and evidence of activities related to field supervision. Ensure first contact, pre- and post-conferences, and educational practices observed during the observation are documented. The combination of field supervisor logs and observation instruments that are signed by the candidate, EPP field supervisor, and campus cooperating teacher could effectively capture all required evidence. Submit evidence of the update to TEA such as documentation for one (1) candidate or a written description of the update with related documents, including the implementation date and the program staff responsible for implementation.
8. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(iii)] Implement a process to capture the recommendation from the field supervisor and the cooperating teacher that the clinical teaching experience was successful, and the candidate is ready for standard certification. Retain the documents in the candidate's record. Submit to TEA the document(s) related to the updated process and a short, written description of how the process will be implemented and the program staff that will be responsible for implementation or submit documentation for one (1) candidate.

Recommendations

- Update coursework to provide candidates more opportunities to practice skills and to be assessed for proficiency of skills prior to beginning clinical teaching.
- Application A used by EPPs to add new certificate categories has changed – plan to review requirements to prepare for adding new certificates, including the requirement to provide evidence of performance assessments in proposed coursework.
- The Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) changed effective January 27, 2020. Ensure curriculum in all teacher certificate areas has been updated to meet requirements for content pedagogy instruction and test preparation. Passing scores on TExES exams cannot be used to meet EPP admission requirements after 1/27/2020 but may be used for certification purposes until the expiration date of the related certificate. The new PACT, or “TX PACT”, is a content-pure assessment that cannot be used for certification purposes.
- Ensure benchmarks and test readiness requirements for Teacher programs have been updated to address changes in PACT, if necessary.
- The Science of Teaching Reading (STR) exam (293) is required for issuance of the Core Subjects with/STR EC-6, Core Subjects w/STR 4-8, ELAR w/STR 4-8, ELAR/Social Studies w/STR 4-8 and the Early Childhood: PK-3 certificates effective 1/1/2021. Teacher programs must have updated curriculum and processes to meet the STR requirement. The Core Subjects EC-6 test (291) will be offered until December 31, 2021



and can be used for certification until December 31, 2022. EPPs are advised to approve test 391 when approving testing for new candidates and for existing candidates who are being approved for the first test attempt.

Teacher (PB/ALT) Programs

1. The EPP website and/or application materials identifies the following admission requirements for the Teacher (PB/ALT) programs:
 - An application;
 - A GPA of 2.8 or higher;
 - A passing score on a PACT; and
 - An interview

Based on the records for the candidates reviewed, the Teacher (PB/ALT) programs met most admission requirements in 19 TAC §227.10. Candidates' records contained transcripts that provided evidence that candidates a) held a bachelor's degree at admission; b) met the basic skills and English language proficiency requirements; and c) had a higher GPA than the minimum required. Each of the five (5) candidates had either passed a Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) prior to admission or had completed more than the required number of semester credit hours in the subject area of the certificate sought. Each candidate record contained an application as required in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(8). While the admission requirements indicate that an interview is required as a screening instrument, there was no evidence in the records of the five (5) candidates reviewed that the interview had been implemented. Additionally, candidates completed a self-assessment using the Educator Disposition Survey that was on the admission application; however, most of the candidates selected the highest level of the rubric to describe themselves. There was no indication of how the information was used by the program.

The Teacher (PB/ALT) programs have implemented the formal admission process as identified in 19 TAC §227.17. Each of the five (5) records contained a signed offer letter with the admission date embedded. All had been uploaded into the ECOS as admitted within the required 7 days.

The admission application for this program requires the applicant to read the ECOE and acknowledge understanding and abiding. Older applications required the candidate to upload a signed document. More recent applications include the acknowledgement in the body of the electronic application. Each of the five (5) candidate records contained evidence of the ECOE acknowledgment which meets requirements in 19 TAC §228.50.

2. Self-reported information in the Status Report, with course descriptions and degree plans, provided evidence that coursework and training provided to Teacher (PB/ALT) candidates is standards-based and addresses the TEKS. All additional instruction required in 19 TAC §228.30(c) and (d) was provided, including:
 - The code of ethics;
 - Instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia;
 - Instruction regarding mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide;



- The skills educators are required to possess, the responsibilities educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students;
- The importance of building strong classroom management skills;
- The framework for principal and teacher evaluation;
- Appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students;
- Instruction in digital learning, including a digital literacy assessment;
- The relevant TEKS, including the English language proficiency standards;
- Reading instruction;
- Prekindergarten Guidelines, where applicable; and
- The skills and competencies in the Teacher Standards in 19 TAC Chapter 149.

Program staff were encouraged to increase the number of performance-based assessments in coursework to allow candidates multiple opportunities to practice skills and demonstrate proficiency before implementing with students.

3. The Teacher (PB) program requires a 36 credit-hour master's degree with certification, so candidates complete more than 300 clock-hours of coursework which exceeds requirements in 19 TAC §228.35(b). As defined in 19 TAC §228.2(3), candidates do not earn an additional degree while completing certification requirements through an alternative certification (ALT) program. Per course lists posted on the website and in transcripts, candidates completing alternative certification through the Teacher (ALT) program also complete more than the required 300 clock hours. Samples of authentic projects were submitted as evidence that the coursework provided to candidates is "performance-based" as required in 19 TAC §228.35(a)(2).

One or more courses in the Teacher (PB) and Teacher (ALT) programs appear to be delivered in an online format. Per 19 TAC §228.20(e) an amendment letter is on file at TEA informing of the transition to online delivery. The program was reminded that courses and programs that are delivered online must be in progress toward meeting quality standards identified in 19 TAC §228.35(a)(6).

Candidates in the Teacher (PB/ALT) programs completed 30 or more clock hours of field-based experience (FBE) prior to clinical teaching or internship. FBE logs provided evidence of requirements completed. Each of the five (5) candidates had completed reflections of the experiences. Candidates had completed 15 of the hours using videos; however, there was not enough evidence to support that candidates consistently complete the 15 hours of interactive FBE as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)(A).

Benchmark documents, transcripts, clinical teaching logs, observation documentation, and records in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) were reviewed as evidence that candidates completed clinical teaching, or an internship, as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e) and were supervised as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g). One (1) of the five (5) candidates had completed clinical teaching and three (3) of the five (5) completed, or were in process of completing, an internship. One (1) of the five (5) candidates had not reached that point in the training process at the time of the review.

- Each of the four (4) candidates had completed the pre-service requirements identified in 19 TAC §228.35(b) prior to beginning clinical teaching or internship.



- Evidence provided for the three (3) intern candidates supports that candidates complete a full-year internship while holding a valid Intern certificate for the subject area of the certificate sought by the candidates. A clinical teaching log signed by the cooperating teacher reflected the candidate completed more than the required 70 days of clinical teaching. The clinical teaching candidate had completed reflections of the clinical experience.
- Placement information and names on observation documents provided evidence that the four (4) candidates were assigned a cooperating teacher or mentor as required in 19 TAC §228.35(f) and a field supervisor as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g); however, there was limited evidence to support that cooperating teachers, mentors, and field supervisors met the qualification requirements of certification, experience, and accomplishment. Training could not be verified for the cooperating teachers or mentors; however, certificates of completion were evidence that field supervisors had attended TEA-approved training as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g). There was no evidence the EPP provided any additional training to the field supervisors. Mentor observations were submitted for one (1) intern providing limited evidence that mentors are consistently asked to conduct formal observations of candidates completing internships.
- Information captured on observation documents was evidence that field supervision was provided to each of the four (4) candidates as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g). There was limited evidence that field supervisors consistently make first contact with candidates within the first three (3) weeks of the assignment. Field supervisor logs reflected first contact for the clinical teacher candidate and for one (1) of the interns. The clinical teaching candidate received three (3) observations that were 45 minutes or longer in duration and interns received up to six observations that were 45 minutes or longer in duration. Observation documents or field supervisor logs provided evidence that field supervisors capture the candidate's demonstration of proficiency during an observation; however, field supervisors should strengthen their process for capturing educational practices observed during each observation as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g). There was limited evidence that field supervisors consistently hold pre- and post-conferences with candidates around each observation. Field supervisor logs reflecting pre- and post-conferences were available for two (2) of the four (4) candidates.
- There is limited evidence the program has implemented the requirement in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(iii) and §228.35(e)(2)(B)(vii) that the field supervisor and cooperating teacher or mentor must provide a written recommendation that the candidate was successful in the demonstration of proficiency in the standards during clinical teaching or internship and is ready for standard certification. Of the two (2) candidates who had achieved standard certification, the required recommendations were found on the field supervisor log for the intern candidate but there was no recommendation for the candidate who completed clinical teaching.



4. For four (4) of the five (5) candidates, test scores for the representative test and/or test preparation plans for the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities EC-12 (PPR) were submitted as evidence that the program determines readiness to test. One (1) candidate had not reached the point of testing. The program meets the requirement in 19 TAC §228.40(d). The candidates had passed a Pre-admission Content Test (PACT) prior to admission so there was not evidence of test preparation, as required in 19 TAC §228.40(b), expected in records. Due to the changes in PACT requirements for admission effective January 27, 2020, program staff were reminded to retain evidence of test preparation for the content pedagogy exams. Candidates are required to complete test preparation and must pass all required certification exams prior to beginning clinical teaching. Candidates acknowledge this requirement on the application for admission.
5. Two (2) of the five (5) candidates had achieved standard certification. Benchmark documents and transcripts provided evidence that each met requirements for the standard certificate as identified in 19 TAC Chapter 230; however, it was observed that the intern was certified with an effective date of May 20, 2019 that appeared to reflect the end of the college semester and not the later date that reflected the end of the full school-year internship assignment. Program staff were reminded that the candidate must complete the full school year internship prior to being recommended for the standard certificate and that the effective date on the standard certificate must be on or after the date the last requirement was met.

Next Steps

The EPP will submit evidence to TEA that deficiencies in these areas have been corrected on or before July 25, 2021:

1. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)] The program must consistently implement one or more screening instruments to determine if the EPP applicant's knowledge, experience, skills, and aptitude are appropriate for the certification sought. Evidence of each applicant's participation in the screen(s) must be retained in the candidate's record.
2. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)(A)] Update FBE requirements to ensure candidates capture evidence of at least 15 hours of interactive experiences. Retain evidence in each candidate's record. Submit a completed FBE log for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the updated process and any related documentation that will be used. Include the implementation date and the EPP staff who will be responsible for implementation.
3. [19 TAC §228.35(f), §228.35(g), and §228.2(14), (18), (26)] Update the process for collecting and retaining evidence of qualifications and training for cooperating teachers, mentors, and field supervisors that are assigned to support candidates during clinical teaching or internships. Submit a written description of the updated process(s) including any related documentation that will be used to collect evidence. Additionally, submit training that is provided to cooperating teachers and mentors and submit EPP training that will be provided to field supervisors. Include the documentation that will be collected as evidence that these individuals have completed the training (e.g., certificates of completion, copies of sign in sheets from training sessions-face to face or virtual, email acknowledgements, or other).



4. [19 TAC §228.35(g)] Update the process for collecting evidence that field supervisors make first contact with candidates and hold pre- and post-conferences with candidates around each observation as required. Submit to TEA completed documentation for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the improved process, including any related documentation that will be collected. Include the implementation date and the EPP staff who will be responsible for implementation.
5. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(iii) and §228.35(e)(2)(B)(vii)] Implement the process to collect the agreement from the field supervisor and appropriate campus personnel that the candidate was successful in the clinical teaching or internship assignment and should be recommended for standard certification. Submit to TEA a completed recommendation for an intern and for a candidate who completed clinical teaching; or submit a written description of the updated process, including any related documentation that will be collected. Include the implementation date and the EPP staff who will be responsible for implementation.

Recommendations

- Update coursework to provide candidates more opportunities to practice skills and to be assessed for proficiency of skills prior to beginning clinical teaching or internship.
- Application A used by EPPs to add new certificate categories has changed – plan to review requirements to prepare for adding new certificates, including the requirement to provide evidence of performance assessments in proposed coursework.
- The Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) changed effective January 27, 2020. Ensure curriculum in all teacher certificate areas has been updated to meet requirements for content pedagogy instruction and test preparation. Passing scores on TExES exams cannot be used to meet EPP admission requirements after 1/27/2020 but may be used for certification purposes until the expiration date of the related certificate. The new PACT, or “TX PACT”, is a content-pure assessment that cannot be used for certification purposes.
- Ensure benchmarks and test readiness requirements for Teacher programs have been updated to address changes in PACT, if necessary.
- The Science of Teaching Reading (STR) exam (293) is required for issuance of the Core Subjects with/STR EC-6, Core Subjects w/STR 4-8, ELAR w/STR 4-8, ELAR/Social Studies w/STR 4-8 and the Early Childhood: PK-3 certificates effective 1/1/2021. Teacher programs must have updated curriculum and processes to meet the STR requirement. The Core Subjects EC-6 test (291) will be offered until December 31, 2021 and can be used for certification until December 31, 2022. EPPs are advised to approve test 391 when approving testing for new candidates and for existing candidates who are being approved for the first test attempt.



Principal Program

1. The website and/or application materials identify the applicant must apply to the university and then to the Principal program. Admission requirements include:
 - Service records reflecting at least two (2) years of teaching experience by the end of the program;
 - A valid teaching certificate;
 - A letter of support from the campus administrator;
 - Scores on either the GRE or the MAT
 - Official transcripts reflecting an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher;
 - An interview; and
 - A satisfactory score on a Professional Educator Disposition Survey.

Candidate records provided evidence that the Principal program has met most of the applicable admission requirements in TAC. Transcripts submitted for four (4) of the five (5) candidates provided evidence that each candidate had at least a conferred bachelor's degree, had exceeded the minimum admission GPA and met the basic skills and English language proficiency requirements. There was evidence that service records and teaching certificates had been collected for each candidate and a deficiency letter had been issued to one (1) of the candidates who was admitted with one (1) year of service as required in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(5).

Admission requirements identify that an interview is used as one (1) of the admission screens required in 19 TAC §241.5(c); however, there was no evidence in the candidates' records that the screen had been implemented. Prior to the close of the review, the program submitted an updated application that contained a Professional Educator Disposition Survey that was identified as the second screening instrument. None of the five (5) records contained evidence that candidates had completed this survey. The Principal program has not met the requirement in 19 TAC §241.5(c) for screening applicants for their appropriateness for a principal certificate.

None of the records contained the letter of support from the campus administrator that was identified as an admission requirement which does not meet the requirement in 19 TAC §227.10(b) for additional admission requirements. Program staff were advised to review and update admission requirements and then to collect evidence that applicants met all requirements prior to admission.

The program has implemented the formal admission process. Each of the five (5) records contained a formal, signed offer of admission with the date of admission embedded in the letter. An admission record was created for each candidate within 7 days of the date of formal admission as required in 19 TAC §227.17.

None of the records for the five (5) candidates reviewed contained a signed agreement of reading and understanding the Educators' Code of Ethics (ECO) which is not aligned with the minimum requirement in 19 TAC §228.50 related to professional conduct. Prior to the close of the review, the program provided an updated admission application that reflected the ECO with an acknowledgement of reading, understanding, and abiding the ECO.



2. Curriculum for the principal program was recently updated when the program completed the transition from the Principal EC-12 certificate to the Principal as Instructional Leader EC-12 (PIL) certificate. Performance assessments were evaluated in the PIL application materials, so the program was determined to have met the requirement for a standards-based and research-based curriculum that includes performance activities and assessments as required in 19 TAC §228.30(a) and §228.30(e), §228.35(a), and §228.40(a). Through the Status Report, EPP staff identified that the Principal program has included the additional curriculum items required in 19 TAC §228.30(c):
 - The code of ethics;
 - Instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia;
 - Instruction regarding mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide;
 - The skills educators are required to possess, the responsibilities educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students;
 - The importance of building strong classroom management skills;
 - The framework for principal and teacher evaluation;
 - Appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students; and
 - Instruction in digital learning, including a digital literacy assessment.
3. Information posted on the EPP website identifies that TAMU-T offers Principal certification concurrent with a 30 credit-hour master's degree in educational leadership. Candidates who hold a master's degree complete 21 credit-hours of coursework to be certified through the alternative certification route. Both certification routes exceed the requirement of 200 clock-hours in 19 TAC §228.35(c). Per the Principal candidate handbook posted on the website, courses are offered online. The EPP had submitted an amendment letter to TEA notifying of the transition to online delivery which meets the requirement in 19 TAC §228.20(e) or (f).

Candidate and EPP records were reviewed to verify that candidates complete a practicum as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8). Per the candidate handbook, Principal candidates complete a practicum of 160 hours.

- Two (2) of the five (5) candidates had not completed a practicum at the time of the review. There were no practicum logs provided for the three (3) candidates who had completed the practicum so it could not be verified that the candidates engaged in standards-based activities or that the candidates completed at least 160 hours as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8).
- There was no placement information provided so the TEA-approved campus could not be verified. Additionally, there was no evidence that the three (3) candidates were assigned a qualified and trained site supervisor during the practicum as required in 19 TAC §228.35(f) and §228.2(33).
- A training certificate was provided for the field supervisor assigned to the three (3) candidates that was evidence of completing the TEA-approved training required in 19 TAC §228.35(h); however, there was no evidence of EPP training. An educator certificate and professional vita provided evidence the field supervisor was currently certified but did not reflect years of experience or if the field supervisor was “an



accomplished educator as shown by student learning” as required in 19 TAC §228.2(18).

- Evidence the principal program met field supervision requirements was limited. Spreadsheets with dates and durations of observations provided evidence that field supervisors observe candidates during the practicum. Additionally, there was a level of proficiency demonstrated by the candidate on a scale of 1-5. There were no completed observation instruments to reflect proficiency in the standards or that reflected educational practices observed as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8). Additionally, there was no evidence of other required field supervisor activities such as initial contact with candidates, pre- and post-conferences with candidates, or collaboration with site supervisors as required in 19 TAC §228.35(h).
 - There was no evidence the program had implemented the requirement that the field supervisor and site supervisor provide a written recommendation that the candidate was successful in the practicum as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(E).
4. Test readiness documentation was not evident in records; however, per the handbook the Principal internship is completed during the final semester where candidates are approved for, and complete, the PASL requirement. Test permission for the 268 is given when candidates are enrolled in the final course prior to the internship or when program requirements are complete. The program was advised to retain evidence that candidates meet test readiness requirements.
 5. Two (2) of the five (5) candidates whose records were reviewed had achieved standard certification at the time of the review. Transcripts reflected that each completed the program and had a master’s degree conferred. Each candidate had a valid teaching certificate and service records that reflected two (2) or more years of service.

Next Steps

The EPP will submit evidence to TEA that deficiencies in these areas have been corrected on or before July 25, 2021:

- [19 TAC §241.5(c)] Consistently apply the admission screening process that screens applicants for their appropriateness for Principal certification to all applicants. Evidence that the candidates completed the screens must be retained in their records per the records retention policy in 19 TAC §228.40(f). Submit to TEA evidence of two (2) or more screens completed for one (1) recently admitted candidate. Include the rubrics with scores and cut scores.
- [19 TAC §228.50] Submit evidence that the updated application reflecting the acknowledgement of the ECOE has been implemented.
- [19 TAC §227.10(b) & §228.40(f)] Implement a process to collect and retain all required admission and program completion documents per the records retention policy in 19 TAC §228.40, including evidence that candidates met the requirements established by the EPP that are in addition to those required in TAC. Submit to TEA admission records



for one (1) recently admitted Principal candidate that reflect evidence that all admission requirements were met.

- [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)] Update the process for collecting evidence that candidates complete a minimum of 160 clock-hours of standards-based practicum activities on an approved campus. Submit to TEA evidence for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the updated process, including any related documents. Include an implementation date and the EPP staff that will be responsible for the implementation.
- [19 TAC §228.35(f) and §228.2(33)] Provide evidence that candidates are assigned a qualified, trained site supervisor during the practicum. Submit documentation for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the updated process with related documentation, including training materials. Identify the implementation date and the EPP staff that will be responsible for implementation.
- [19 TAC §228.35(h) and 19 TAC §228.2(18)] Provide evidence that field supervisors assigned to principal candidates meet the qualification requirements of certification, experience, and accomplishment and are trained by the EPP as a field supervisor. Submit documentation for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the updated process with related documentation, including training materials. Identify the implementation date and the EPP staff that will be responsible for implementation.
- [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8) and §228.35(h)] Update the field supervision process, including implementation of an observation instrument so that field supervisors provide supervision according to TAC requirements. The updated requirements must include capturing evidence that field supervisors make first contact with candidates within the first quarter of the assignment and capture educational practices observed and candidate demonstration of proficiency observed during the formal observation. Additionally, requirements must include a process for the field supervisor and site supervisor to provide a written recommendation that the candidate was successful in the practicum and is ready to be recommended for standard certification. Candidate placement information must also be captured. Submit evidence for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the updated process, including related documents. Include the implementation date and the EPP staff responsible for implementation.
- [19 TAC §228.40(d)] Establish a process to capture evidence the Principal program determines test readiness in candidates. Submit evidence of test readiness determined for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the process that will be implemented, including related documents, the implementation date, and the EPP staff responsible for implementation.

Recommendations

- Update coursework to provide candidates more opportunities to practice skills and to be assessed for proficiency of skills prior to beginning the practicum.



Superintendent Program

1. Candidates may complete requirements in a fully on-line program through TAMU-T or in a face-to-face program delivered through a partnership with the Region VIII Education Service Center Ratliff Academy. The admission information on the website instructs applicants to apply to the university and then to the Superintendent program but there are no other admission requirements identified. A Superintendent handbook, posted on the webpage and accessible to all applicants and candidates, contains admission and program completion requirements. The admission requirements for the TAMU-T program are identified as:

- An application;
- Official transcripts reflecting a minimum GPA of 3.0;
- A valid principal certificate or letter of approval of managerial experience from TEA;
- An interview with program staff;
- A satisfactory score on a Professional Educator Disposition Survey; and
- TOEFL scores (for International students).

The application for admission identifies the applicant must meet the minimum score on two (2) screens, a 3.5 on the interview rubric and a 35 on the rubric for the Professional Educator Disposition Survey.

The application for admission into the Ratliff Academy program is downloaded from the website and identifies applicants must provide:

- Application Information page;
- Principal certificate;
- Transcripts;
- Evidence of administrative or supervisory experience;
- Letter of Application;
- Three completed Applicant rating scales;
- A superintendent's agreement form; and
- Completion of leadership interview questions.

The Superintendent program met most of the admission requirements. There was an application in the record for each candidate. Transcripts for four (4) of the five (5) candidates were evidence of a conferred master's degree. The transcripts for one (1) candidate were illegible so the conferred degree could not be verified. All transcripts in the five (5) candidates' records provided evidence that each met the required GPA and demonstrated basic skills and English language proficiency. A valid Principal certificate was collected at admission for each candidate and none of them substituted TEA approved managerial experience for the required Principal certificate; therefore, none of the candidates required a deficiency plan

There was limited evidence that the program has implemented the admission screens. In some cases, the application reflected whether, or not, applicants met the score requirements on the identified screens but there were no rubrics in records to show how the screens were scored. The most recently admitted candidate had completed the Professional Educator Disposition Survey and an interview as part of the application process; however, there was no evidence of a scoring rubric or cut score applied to the



responses. One (1) other candidate had completed the disposition survey only. The program does not meet requirements for screening applicants for their appropriateness for the Superintendent certificate as identified in 19 TAC §242.5(c).

There was sufficient evidence that the Superintendent program has implemented the formal admission process as required in 19 TAC §227.17. Four (4) of the five (5) records contained written offer letters with admission dates embedded that were accepted and signed by the candidate. One (1) of the records contained the written acceptance but no written offer so the admission date could not be verified. Based on the admission dates and the upload dates in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) audit trail, all of the candidates were uploaded unto ECOS within 7 days of admission. None of the candidates were contingently admitted. It was noted that the admission offer letter gave applicants a five-day deadline to accept the offer, but that deadline was in several cases after the formal admission date identified in the letter. It is recommended that admissions staff review the verbiage on the letter to ensure admission dates and deadlines allow a candidate to be officially admitted before beginning coursework. It was also noted that one (1) of the five (5) candidates completed coursework and a practicum prior to the date of formal admission which does not meet the requirement in 19 TAC §227.17(f) that Post-bac and ACP programs may not provide coursework prior to formal admission.

Records for two (2) of the five (5) Superintendent candidates contained a signed agreement of reading and understanding the Educators' Code of Ethics (ECO) which was insufficient to support that the program consistently meets requirements in 19 TAC §228.50 related to professional conduct. Prior to the close of the review, the program provided an updated admission application that contained the ECO and an acknowledgement of reading, understanding, and abiding the ECO which is aligned with 19 TAC §228.50.

2. Based on information provided in the Status Report and on published course information, the coursework provided by the Superintendent program is standards-based and includes most of the additional curriculum requirements in 19 TAC 228.30(c) including:
 - The code of ethics;
 - Instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia;
 - The skills educators are required to possess, the responsibilities educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students;
 - The importance of building strong classroom management skills;
 - The framework for principal and teacher evaluation;
 - Appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students; and
 - Instruction in digital learning, including a digital literacy assessment.

The training identified for Mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide was a list of resources the Superintendent candidate could access regarding mental health. This training does not meet the requirement in 19 TAC §228.30(c)(3). The program was advised to review the requirements about mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide training and update the curriculum to include the required instruction.



3. TAMU-T offers a Doctoral degree in Educational Leadership. The website for the Superintendent program identifies the Superintendent preparation is in the alternative certification route where some courses taken may be transferred to the Doctoral degree. The website identifies a two (2) semester program where candidates must complete 4 courses totaling 12 semester credit-hours, and a 160-hour practicum. The 12 credit-hour requirement is the equivalent of 180 clock-hours of coursework which does not meet the minimum requirement of 200 clock-hours in 19 TAC §228.35(c); however, program staff stated candidates are required to complete an activity with deliverables that is an extra 20 clock-hours of coursework. Additionally, information posted about the Ratliff Academy requirements also identifies the equivalent of 12 semester credit-hours of coursework which does not meet the 200 clock-hour requirement. Transcripts reflected that each candidate had completed the designated courses as appropriate for the enrollment status of the candidate. Program staff stated the extra 20 clock-hours of coursework is not part of the credit for any of the four (4) required courses and is not part of the 160 clock-hour practicum but must be completed by the candidate to be considered a program “finisher”. It is unclear if this requirement is also part of the Ratliff Academy program.

Observation data was entered into ECOS for each of the five (5) candidates indicating each had completed a supervised practicum. There was limited evidence that the practicum was standards-based according to requirements in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8) and §242.10(b) or that field supervision was provided according to requirements in 19 TAC §228.35(h).

- Four (4) of the five (5) candidates had completed the practicum during the summer which is not compliant with 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(B) which requires that “a practicum may not take place exclusively during a summer recess”.
- An assignment list provided for four (4) of the five (5) candidates who completed a practicum was sufficient evidence that each candidate was assigned a qualified site supervisor as required in 19 TAC §228.35(f) and §228.2(33) and completed the practicum in an actual school setting as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(A).
- There were no practicum logs to verify that candidates completed 160 clock hours in the practicum or that the practicum activities were standards-based per 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8) and §242.10(b).
- A certificate of completion was evidence that the field supervisor assigned to supervise the candidates during the practicum had attended the TEA-approved coaching training required in 19 TAC §228.35(h) but there was no evidence of training provided by the EPP. An educator certificate and professional vita provided evidence the field supervisor is currently certified and experienced as a superintendent; however, information on the vita did not reflect if the field supervisor was “an accomplished educator as shown by student learning” as required in 19 TAC §228.2(18).
- There was a limited amount of documentation detailing observations conducted by the field supervisor. A spreadsheet containing the candidate’s name,



practicum start date, date of observation, duration of observation, and a number from 1-5 representing proficiency was provided. There were no completed observation documents available to verify candidates were evaluated based on standards, that the field supervisor captured educational practices observed, held pre- and post-conferences with the candidate around each observation, and shared observation documentation with the candidate's site supervisor as required in 19 TAC §228.35(h). Dates on the available documentation indicate the candidates were provided more than the required number of observations which meets the requirement for ongoing coaching and support.

- There was no evidence that the Superintendent program has implemented the requirement that the field supervisor and site supervisor must provide a written recommendation to the EPP that the candidate should be recommended for a standard certificate as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(E).
4. Test readiness requirements in the candidate handbook identify candidates must complete all coursework, pass a department comprehensive exam at 80% or higher, and submit a portfolio demonstrating successful completion of all required practicum activities and training to qualify for approval to take the Superintendent exam. There was no evidence in the records for the five (5) candidates that each had met the test readiness requirements.

There is an exit policy and a complaints policy published in the candidate handbook.

5. Three (3) of the five (5) Superintendent candidates had achieved standard certification at the time of the review. Transcripts and valid Principal certificates reflected candidates met requirements for the certificate.

Next Steps

The EPP will submit evidence to TEA that deficiencies in these areas have been corrected on or before July 25, 2021:

1. [19 TAC §242.5(c)] The Superintendent program must consistently implement the required screening process for all applicants and must retain evidence of the outcome of each screen in candidates' records. Submit evidence of a completed screening process for one (1) recently admitted Superintendent candidate. Include the candidate's performance on the rubrics and the cut score for each. Or, submit a written description of the updated process with any related documentation. Include the implementation date and the program staff responsible for implementation.
2. [19 TAC §228.50] The Superintendent program must submit evidence that the updated application reflecting the acknowledgement of the ECOE has been implemented. Submit to TEA a completed application reflecting the ECOE acknowledgement for one (1) recently admitted candidate.
3. [19 TAC §228.2(18)] Implement a process to collect evidence that the field supervisor meets the qualification requirements of certification, experience, and accomplishment. Submit evidence for one (1) field supervisor or submit the written plan to update the



process and any related documents. Include the implementation date and the EPP staff who will implement the new process.

4. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(3)] Update coursework provided to Superintendent candidates to include the elements in the required instruction in mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide. Submit an updated course syllabus or course materials as evidence the required training has been added to coursework.
5. [19 TAC §228.35(c)] Add hours to the coursework required for the Superintendent program to meet or exceed 14 semester credit-hours, not including the practicum hours. Provide an updated degree plan that reflects the program meets or exceeds the coursework hour requirement. Or, provide documentation of the 20 clock-hour requirement that includes the details of the assignment, how the hours are logged, and evidence of completion of the assignment for one candidate. Evidence must also be submitted for the candidates completing the Ratliff Academy to ensure they receive, at minimum, 200 clock-hours of coursework.
6. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8) & §242.10(b)] Update the practicum requirements to collect evidence that candidates complete, at minimum, 160 clock-hours of standards-based activities. Submit evidence for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the updated process, including any related documents. Identify the implementation date and the program staff who will implement the process.
7. [19 TAC §228.35(h)] Update the field supervision process to capture evidence that field supervisors make first contact with candidates in the first quarter of the assignment, conduct pre- and post-conferences with candidates around each observation, capture educational practices observed and the candidates' demonstration of proficiency, and collaborate with the required individuals throughout the practicum. Submit the updated observation instrument and any other documents used to collect evidence the field supervision requirements have been met. The program may submit documents completed for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the updated process with the documents, including the implementation date and program staff responsible for the implementation.
8. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(E)] Implement the process to capture a written recommendation from the field supervisor and site supervisor that the candidate was successful in the practicum and is ready to be recommended for standard certification. Provide documentation for one (1) candidate or provide a written description of the update process with related documents, including the implementation date and the program staff responsible for implementation.

Recommendations

- Update coursework to provide candidates more opportunities to practice skills and to be assessed for proficiency of skills prior to beginning the practicum.



Educational Diagnostician

1. The Educational Diagnostician program has published the following admission requirements on the website and/or on the application materials:
 - A bachelor's degree;
 - A valid classroom teaching certificate;
 - A minimum GPA of 3.0; and
 - A satisfactory score on a disposition survey.

Additionally, for admission into the university, the following are required:

- A resume;
- A letter of intent; and
- Official scores on GRE or MAT are required for graduate school admission.

Eligibility requirements on the website identify a passing score on a TExES exam or proof of a valid teaching certificate. The program was reminded that a valid teaching certificate is required for admission in 19 TAC §239.81(2) and the Educational Diagnostician exam is not available prior to admission so this requirement should be clarified on the website for transparency.

The Educational Diagnostician program met most of the admission requirements. The records for four (4) of the five (5) Educational Diagnostician candidates contained an application. Transcripts were submitted for each candidate which provided evidence that each had a conferred degree, met or exceeded the required GPA, and met the basic skills and English language proficiency requirements. Service records were found in the records of four (4) of the five (5) candidates. Each of the four (4) candidates had two (2) or three (3) years of service as required for the candidate depending on the admission year. Certification records showed the fifth candidate who was admitted in 2017 had three (3) years of service at the time of certification in 2020. The deficiency letter in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(5) was not a requirement at the time the candidate was admitted.

There was limited evidence that the program has consistently implemented an admission screen. One (1) of the five (5) candidates had completed a disposition survey as part of the application process; however, there was no evidence of a cut score applied to the responses. Prior to the close of the review, the program submitted an updated application that included a Professional Educator Disposition Survey that was identified as the screen required in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(8).

Admission offers were found in records for four (4) of five (5) candidates which was sufficient evidence that the program has implemented the formal admission process. Admission records were created for each of the candidates within the 7 days required in 19 TAC §227.17.

Records for one (1) of the five (5) candidates contained a signed agreement of reading and understanding the Educators' Code of Ethics (ECO) which was not sufficient evidence that the program consistently meets requirements in 19 TAC §228.50 related to professional conduct. Prior to the close of the review, the program submitted an updated admission application that contains the ECO and requires an applicant to



acknowledge reading, understanding, and abiding the ECOE which aligns with 19 TAC §228.50.

2. Course descriptors, degree plans, and information reported on the Status Report support that the curriculum is standards-based and meets the additional requirements for curriculum in 19 TAC 228.30(c), including:
 - The code of ethics;
 - Instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia;
 - Instruction regarding mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide;
 - The skills educators are required to possess, the responsibilities educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students;
 - The importance of building strong classroom management skills;
 - Appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students; and
 - Instruction in digital learning, including a digital literacy assessment.

There is no evidence that Educational Diagnostician candidates complete the required training in the state framework for teacher and principal evaluation as required in 19 TAC §228.30(c)(6).

3. Program completion requirements on the EPP website identify the Educational Diagnostician certificate may be awarded concurrent with a 36-hour Master of Science degree in Curriculum & Instruction which exceeds the minimum 200 clock-hour requirement in 19 TAC §228.35(c). Candidates who possess a master's degree at admission are certified alternatively. Both the (PB) and (ALT) routes require candidates to complete 200 or more clock-hours of coursework which meets the requirement in 19 TAC §228.35(c). Candidates in the Educational Diagnostician program must maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher on coursework to continue in the program. Transcripts reflected that candidates met this expectation.

Three (3) of the five (5) candidates whose records were reviewed had completed a practicum. Two (2) of the candidates had not reached the point of practicum at the time of the review. Evidence of the practicum included field supervisor assignments, field supervisor logs reflecting observation dates and durations, and candidate transcripts reflecting passing scores in a practicum course.

- Practicum logs were not available in records as evidence the candidates had completed at least 160 clock-hours of standards-based activities.
- Placement information for each assignment was not available to determine if the practicum was completed in a TEA-approved site and that each candidate was assigned a qualified and trained Site Supervisor.
- The field supervisor observation log was evidence that each of the three (3) candidates that completed a practicum was assigned a field supervisor who conducted formal observations of the candidates as required in 19 TAC §228.35(h). The field supervisor had attended the TEA-approved coaching training but there was limited evidence retained of EPP training or of the



qualifications of the field supervisor which does not meet requirements in 19 TAC §228.2(18) and §228.35(h) for qualifications and training of field supervisors.

- There was no additional evidence such as completed observation documents or signed field supervisor logs in the documents submitted for review that indicates field supervisors interact and collaborate with candidates throughout the practicum which does not meet requirements in 19 TAC §228.35(h) for field supervision.
 - Due to the lack of observation documentation, it could not be verified that field supervisors hold pre- and post-conferences with candidates around each observation or provide feedback on educational practices observed.
 - There was no evidence that the program has implemented the requirement in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(E) that the field supervisor and site supervisor must recommend, in writing, that the candidate was successful in the practicum and should be recommended for a standard certificate.
4. There was no evidence in the records of the five (5) candidates that test readiness processes are in place which does not meet the requirement in 19 TAC §228.40(d).
 5. Two (2) of the five (5) Educational Diagnostician candidates achieved a standard certificate. Completed benchmark documents and/or transcripts in the candidates' records reflected each candidate had completed requirements. Teaching certificates and service records were provided as evidence that each candidate met the teaching certification and experience requirement. [19 TAC §239.84]

Next Steps

The EPP will submit evidence to TEA that deficiencies in these areas have been corrected on or before July 25, 2021:

1. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)] The Educational Diagnostician program must submit evidence that an admission screen has been implemented and the documentation has been retained in the candidate's records. Submit a completed screen for one (1) recently admitted candidate, including the scored rubric with cut score identified.
2. [19 TAC §228.50] Provide evidence the program has implemented the application that requires the applicant to acknowledge reading, understanding, and abiding the ECOE. Submit a completed application for one (1) recently admitted candidate.
3. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(6)] Update coursework provided to all Educational Diagnostician candidates to include training in the framework in Texas for teacher and principal evaluation.
4. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)] Update the practicum process to collect evidence that each candidate completes a standards-based practicum that is, at minimum, 160 clock-hours. Submit a completed log for one (1) candidate or provide a written description of the updated process with related documents, including the implementation date and the program staff that will be responsible for implementation.



5. [19 TAC §228.35(h) and §228.35(f)] Update the field supervision and campus mentoring processes to collect evidence that field supervisors provide supervision as required in 19 TAC §228.35(h) and that a site supervisor is assigned to each candidate as required in 19 TAC §228.35(f). Provide evidence that field supervision will include educational practices observed and the demonstration of proficiency by the candidate captured on a standards-based rubric; pre- and post-conferences held with each candidate around each observation; collaboration and communication with campus personnel regarding candidate performance and observation outcomes; and ongoing coaching and support of candidates. Provide TEA a copy of the observation instrument that will be used by field supervisors to evaluate candidate performance in the practicum. Include any additional documentation and/or written descriptions that will reflect evidence that field supervision meets the related requirements in TAC. Additionally, submit a written description of the process that will be used for placing candidates in a practicum and selecting and training site supervisors that will provide campus mentoring to candidates.
6. [19 TAC §228.2(18) and (33) and §228.40(f)] Implement a process to consistently capture and retain evidence of qualifications and training of site supervisors and field supervisors assigned to support candidates completing practicum assignments. Submit to TEA the relevant documentation for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the updated process(es) with any related documents including an implementation date and the EPP staff responsible for implementation.
7. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(E)] Update the field supervision process to capture a recommendation from the field supervisor and site supervisor that the candidate was successful in the practicum and is ready for standard certification as required. Submit to TEA the written recommendation for one (1) candidate.
8. [19 TAC §228.40(d)] Implement a process to determine candidate test readiness and to collect evidence that each candidate given test approval met the test readiness requirement(s). Provide evidence for one (1) candidate or provide a written description of the test readiness process with any related documents to TEA. Include the implementation date and the EPP staff responsible for implementation.

Recommendations

- Update verbiage on the website concerning the admission eligibility requirement of a teaching certificate or a passed TExES exam to align with requirements in TAC.
- Remind the admissions staff for the Educational Diagnostician program to implement the deficiency letter, if applicable, for candidates who are admitted without the degree, certification, and/or years of experience required for issuance of the Educational Diagnostician certificate.
- Review the admission process and admission point for the Educational Diagnostician program to ensure that there is a defined admission point that allows candidates enough time to complete at least 14 semester credit-hours of coursework in addition to the practicum and that candidates do not complete coursework prior to that defined admission point.



- Update coursework to provide candidates more opportunities to practice skills and to be assessed for proficiency of skills prior to beginning the practicum.

School Counselor

1. The following requirements for admission to the School Counselor program are in the candidate handbook posted on the EPP website and/or in the application for admission into the program:
 - A bachelor's degree;
 - Minimum 3.0 GPA;
 - Three current letters of evaluation from faculty or professional mentors;
 - Letter of interest;
 - A valid teaching certificate (per admission application);
 - Official scores on the GRE or MAT;
 - Successful in-person interview with program faculty; and
 - A satisfactory score on a Professional Educator Disposition Survey.

The School Counselor program met most admission requirements. The records for the five (5) School Counselor candidates contained an application and transcripts that verified that each candidate had a conferred degree, met or exceeded the required GPA, and met the basic skills and English language proficiency requirements. Program staff were reminded that a teaching certificate is not required for certification as a School Counselor; however, if a teaching certificate is listed as a requirement for admission, then the program is expected to collect it and retain it in candidates' records. Additionally, it was noted that the requirements for English language proficiency for out of country applicants that are published in the handbook are not aligned with requirements in 19 TAC §230.11(b)(5) and should be updated for transparency.

A written offer of admission with a formal admission date embedded was found in the record for each of the five (5) candidates reflecting that the program has implemented the formal admission process required in 19 TAC §227.17. It was observed that the wording on the admission letters allows for the candidate to accept the offer after the admission date identified in the letter. Program staff were advised to update this wording since the candidate is not formally admitted until the offer is accepted. In each case, TEA was notified of the admission within 7 days of the formal admission date as required in the formal admission process. Additionally, 19 TAC §227.17(f) requires that Post-Bac and ACP candidates may not begin coursework prior to formal admission. Transcripts for three (3) of the five (5) School Counselor candidates showed coursework completed in a semester that was before the formal date of admission.

Service records reflecting two (2) or more years of service were found in the records of three (3) of the five (5) candidates. Two (2) of the candidates did not meet the minimum years of service required for issuance of the School Counselor certificate at admission. Their written offers of admission contained a reminder that the candidates would be required to demonstrate two (2) years of service prior to receiving test approval or standard certification as a School Counselor which meets requirements in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(5) for a deficiency plan.



There was limited evidence that the program has implemented an admission screen. Two (2) of the five (5) candidates who had been recently admitted had completed a disposition survey as part of the application process. A minimum score of 35 was identified for admission; however, there was no evidence of a scoring rubric. The program does not meet the screening requirement in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(8).

The posted admission requirements include a resume, three (3) letters of reference, and a letter of intent. None of the records for the five (5) School Counselor contained evidence that the resume, three (3) reference letters, and the letter of intent had been collected. 19 TAC §227.10(b) allows an EPP to adopt requirements in addition to and not in conflict with those required in TAC. If the EPP has additional requirements, evidence that an applicant met those requirements prior to admission must be retained in the candidate's records.

The program must collect commitments to the Educators' Code of Ethics (ECO) as evidence they are ensuring candidates "understand and adhere to" the ECO. Records for two (2) of the five (5) candidates contained a signed agreement of reading and understanding the ECO which was not sufficient evidence to support that the program consistently meets requirements in 19 TAC §228.50 related to professional conduct. It was noted that the ECO agreements were found in records for candidates admitted in 2020 but not in records for candidates admitted in 2019 which suggests the program may have implemented the requirement recently. Prior to the close of the review, EPP staff submitted an updated admission application that lists the ECO and requires an applicant to acknowledge reading, understanding, and abiding the ECO which aligns with 19 TAC §228.50.

2. Degree plans, course descriptions, and information provided in the Status Report completed by EPP staff were reviewed for evidence that the School Counselor program is compliant with curriculum requirements in 19 TAC §228.30. There is sufficient evidence to support that the curriculum is standards-based the includes the required additional curriculum items:
 - The code of ethics;
 - Instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia;
 - Instruction regarding mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide;
 - The skills educators are required to possess, the responsibilities educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students;
 - The importance of building strong classroom management skills;
 - The framework for principal and teacher evaluation;
 - Appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students; and
 - Instruction in digital learning, including a digital literacy assessment.
3. School Counselor certification is offered concurrent with a 48-hour Master of Science degree in School Counseling which exceeds the minimum 200 clock-hours of coursework required in 19 TAC §228.35(c).

The program handbook and the degree plan identify that School Counselor candidates complete a practicum, and the handbook identifies candidates will complete the practicum in a school setting. Neither the handbook nor the program webpage identified



the number of clock-hours required for the practicum. There was limited evidence that the practicum requirements and the related field supervision are completed as required. Three (3) of the five (5) candidates whose records were reviewed had completed a practicum. Two (2) candidates had not reached the point of practicum at the time of the review.

- Practicum documentation was submitted for two (2) of the three (3) candidates. There were no records provided for the third candidate who completed the practicum in Fall 2020.
- The number of practicum hours completed and whether, or not, those hours were standards-based could not be determined because there were no practicum logs submitted for review which does not meet requirements in 19 TAC §228.35(c).
- There was no evidence available to support that each candidate was assigned a Site Supervisor for mentoring on-campus as required in 19 TAC §228.35(f). The placement information for each assignment was not available to determine if the practicum was completed in a TEA-approved site. Additionally, due to the lack of documentation regarding site supervisors, qualifications and training of those individuals could not be verified.
- Documentation submitted for two (2) candidates included field supervisor assignments, field supervisor logs reflecting observation dates and durations, and transcripts reflecting passing scores in a practicum course.
- There was no additional evidence such as completed observation instruments or signed field supervisor logs in the documents submitted for review that indicates field supervisors interact and collaborate with candidates throughout the practicum which does not meet requirements in 19 TAC §228.35(h) for field supervision. Additionally, based on the lack of observation documentation, it could not be verified that the field supervisor makes first contact with candidates within the first quarter of the assignment, holds pre- and post-conferences with candidates around each observation, or captures educational practices and the demonstration of proficiency observed.
- Field supervisor logs in the records for two (2) of the candidates were evidence that field supervisors conduct at least three (3) observations of candidates totaling a minimum of 135 minutes during the practicum. There was no observation evidence for the third candidate that completed a practicum.
- The field supervisor that was assigned to the three (3) candidates that completed a practicum had attended TEA-approved field supervisor coaching training but there was no evidence of additional training provided by the EPP. There was limited evidence to support that the field supervisor met the qualification requirements of current certification, experience, and accomplishment as required in 19 TAC §228.2(18).



- There was no evidence that the School Counselor program has implemented the requirement to obtain a recommendation from the field supervisor and site supervisor that the candidate was successful in the practicum and is ready for certification as required as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(E).
4. There was no evidence the School Counselor program has processes and requirements in place to determine candidate readiness to test which does not meet requirements in 19 TAC §228.40(d).
 5. Two (2) of the five (5) School Counselor candidates had achieved standard certification. A final transcript and a service record provided evidence that the candidate met all requirements prior to certification. One (1) of the two (2) certified candidates met the new requirement of a 48-hour master's degree in School Counseling while the other candidate was not impacted by the new requirement. It was noted that the School Counselor program requires a valid teaching certificate for certification. Program staff were reminded that a teaching certificate is not required for certification as a School Counselor per 19 TAC §239.20.

Next Steps

The EPP will submit evidence to TEA that deficiencies in these areas have been corrected on or before July 25, 2021:

1. [19 TAC §227.17(f)] The School Counselor program must ensure candidates do not begin coursework prior to formal admission. Identify the admission point into the School Counselor program that is before candidates begin coursework and training. The admission point must also allow candidates to complete at least 14 semester credit-hours of coursework in addition to the 160 clock-hour practicum after the point of admission. Provide to TEA a degree plan with the admission point identified that reflects School Counselor coursework started after the admission point. Provide a brief written description detailing when that requirement will be implemented and the EPP staff responsible for implementation.
2. [19 TAC §227.17(f)] Update the verbiage in the admission offer to require candidates to return the signed acceptance of the offer by a date that is on or before the admission date in the offer letter. Submit an offer letter for one (1) recently admitted candidate.
3. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)] Provide evidence that the screening process, including a rubric and cut score, has been implemented. Submit a rubric reflecting a score with cut score for one (1) recently admitted candidate.
4. [19 TAC §227.10(b)] Implement a process to collect and retain all documentation related to admission requirements. The program is advised to review and update admission requirements to determine the additional requirements that are important to qualify candidates for admission as allowed in 19 TAC §227.10(b), then update the records retention process to retain those documents and all other admission documents as required in 19 TAC §228.40(f). Provide a short, written description of the



updated records retention process, including the staff who will be responsible and the implementation date.

5. [19 TAC §228.50] Provide evidence the program has implemented the new application that requires the applicant to acknowledge reading, understanding, and abiding the ECOE. Submit a completed application for one (1) recently admitted candidate.
6. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)] Implement a process to collect evidence that each candidate completes a standards-based practicum that is, at minimum, 160 clock-hours as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8). Provide TEA a copy of the practicum log that will capture standards-based hours completed by candidates or other document that will be used by the program as evidence of requirements completed.
7. [19 TAC §228.35(h), §228.35(f), §228.2(18), and §228.2(33)] Update or implement practicum and field supervision processes to ensure each candidate is assigned a qualified and trained field supervisor and a qualified and trained site supervisor during the practicum. Submit documentation for one (1) candidate that reflects the assigned field supervisor and site supervisor and the qualifications of each. Additionally, submit the training that was provided to each. Alternately, submit a written description of the updated processes with any related documentation and training modules. Include the implementation date and the EPP staff responsible for implementation.
8. [19 TAC §228.35(h)] Update the field supervision process and any related documents so that field supervisors provide the ongoing coaching and support required. Documentation must capture field supervisor first contact with candidates, pre- and post-conferences held with each candidate, and educational practices and candidate demonstration of proficiency observed. Retain documentation in each candidate's record per the records retention policy in 19 TAC §228.40(f). Submit a copy of the observation instrument and any additional documents that will be used by field supervisors to evaluate candidate performance in the practicum and document ongoing coaching and support.
9. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(E)] Implement a process to capture a recommendation from the field supervisor and site supervisor that the candidate was successful in the practicum and is ready for standard certification as required. Submit documentation for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the updated process with related documents, including the implementation date and the program staff responsible for implementation.
10. [19 TAC §228.40(d)] Retain documentation that is evidence candidates met test readiness requirements per the records retention policy in 19 TAC §228.40(f). Submit test readiness documentation to TEA for one (1) candidate.

Recommendations

- Reconsider requiring a teaching certificate for admission into the School Counselor program since it is not a requirement for issuance of that certificate.
- Update the English language proficiency requirement for candidates from out of country that is published in the candidate handbook.



- Update coursework to provide candidates more opportunities to practice skills and to be assessed for proficiency of skills prior to beginning the practicum.
- Remove the requirement of a teaching certificate for certification as it is not required in 19 TAC §239.20.

Reading Specialist

1. Candidates admitted to the Reading Specialist program were pursuing a master's degree concurrent with certification. The EPP website and/or application materials detailed the following admission requirements for the Reading Specialist program:
 - An application;
 - A bachelor's degree;
 - A valid teaching certificate;
 - A service record reflecting at minimum, two years of teaching experience;
 - A minimum GPA of 3.0; and
 - A satisfactory score on a disposition survey.

Additionally, for admission into the university, the following are required:

- GRE or MAT scores;
- A letter of intent; and
- A passing score on a TExES exam or a valid teaching certificate.

The records for the five (5) Reading Specialist candidates contained an application. Records for four (4) out of five (5) candidates contained transcripts verifying each candidate had the required degree conferred and met or exceeded the GPA requirement and met the basic skills and English language proficiency requirements. There were no transcripts available for one (1) of the candidates. Service records were collected from each candidate. One (1) record reflected one (1) year of teaching experience, but no deficiency letter was issued to the candidate as required in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(5). Program staff were reminded that a valid teaching certificate is not required for issuance of the Reading Specialist certificate per 19 TAC §239.93 and were encouraged to review and update this program admission requirement.

There was limited evidence that the Reading Specialist program has consistently implemented an admission screen. Two (2) of the five (5) candidates had completed a disposition survey as part of the application process; however, there was no evidence of a cut score applied to the responses which does not meet the requirement for a screen in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(8).

There was sufficient evidence that the program has implemented the formal admission process as specified in 19 TAC §227.17. The records for four (4) of the five (5) candidates contained an email offering admission that the candidate accepted in a return email. The offer contained the admission date. Four (4) of the



five (5) candidates were identified as admitted in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) within the 7 days required.

There is limited evidence that the Reading Specialist program has consistently implemented the requirement in 19 TAC §228.50 to ensure the candidates understand and adhere to the Educators' Code of Ethics (ECO) in 19 TAC Chapter 247. Records for two (2) of the five (5) candidates contained a signed acknowledgement of reading and understanding of the ECO within the application for admission. Records for three (3) of the five (5) candidates did not contain evidence of a signed ECO agreement. Prior to the close of the review, the program provided an updated application that reflects the ECO and requires the applicant to acknowledge reading, understanding, and abiding the ECO which aligns with the requirement in 19 TAC §228.50.

2. Syllabi, course descriptors, and information provided on the website and Status Report provided evidence the Reading Specialist curriculum is standards-based and includes instruction in the following additional curriculum topics:
 - The code of ethics;
 - Instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia;
 - The skills educators are required to possess, the responsibilities educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students;
 - The importance of building strong classroom management skills;
 - Appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students; and
 - Instruction in digital learning, including a digital literacy assessment.

There is no evidence that Reading Specialist candidates complete the required training in mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide as required in 19 TAC §228.30(c)(3) or in the state framework for teacher and principal evaluation as required in 19 TAC §228.30(c)(6).

3. Program completion requirements on the EPP website identify the Reading Specialist certificate is issued concurrent with a 36-hour Master of Science in Curriculum & Instruction degree which exceeds the minimum 200 clock-hour requirement in 19 TAC §228.35(c). Candidates in the Reading Specialist program must maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher on coursework to continue in the program. Transcripts reflected that candidates met this expectation.

Per 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8), candidates for the Reading Specialist certificate must complete a standards-based practicum of a minimum of 160 clock-hours and must be supervised by a field supervisor as identified in 19 TAC §228.35(h) and an on-campus site supervisor as identified in 19 TAC §228.35(f). Two (2) of the five (5) candidates had reached the point of completing the practicum at the time of the review. There were no practicum logs, completed observation documents, or field supervisor logs provided as evidence the program met the practicum requirements. A sample "observation form" for non-teacher programs was submitted as part of the review documents. The form was in spreadsheet format and designed to collect relevant information to be reported about the observation such as date and duration



but there was no standards-based observation instrument found in any of the records. Program staff submitted the “observation form” summary document reflecting observations for one (1) candidate and submitted evidence of a passing score in the practicum class for the other candidate. Additionally, there was no evidence the program had collected a written recommendation from the field supervisor or site supervisor that either candidate was successful in the practicum and ready for standard certification.

The field supervisor that was assigned to one (1) of the five (5) candidates had attended TEA-approved field supervisor training but there was no evidence that program staff had provided any additional EPP training. A teaching certificate and vita were submitted for the field supervisor but there was not enough evidence to support that the field supervisor(s) met the qualification requirements in 19 TAC §228.2(18). Additionally, due to the lack of documentation regarding site supervisors, qualifications and training of those individuals could not be verified.

4. The benchmark document submitted for review is a transcript of courses completed. Additionally, the benchmark for test readiness for the Reading Specialist program is completion of the practicum. These benchmarks meet the requirement for benchmarking and test readiness in 19 TAC §228.40.
5. None of the five (5) candidates had achieved standard certification at the time of the review so certification requirements could not be verified for this program. It was noted that the program identifies a valid teaching certificate as a requirement for certification. The program was reminded that a teaching certificate is not listed as a certification requirement in 19 TAC §239.93.

Next Steps

The EPP will submit evidence to TEA that deficiencies in these areas have been corrected on or before July 25, 2021:

1. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(5)] The Reading Specialist program must implement a process to issue deficiency letters to applicants that do not meet the certificate issuance requirements at admission. Submit evidence for one (1) recently admitted candidate or provide TEA a copy of a letter template to be used and identify the staff member responsible for reviewing applicant material and issuing the letter when needed. Identify the date the process will be implemented.
2. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)] Submit evidence that the Reading Specialist program has implemented an admission screen, including a rubric and cut score, that is applied consistently to all applicants. Submit a screen completed by one (1) recently admitted candidate with the score and cut score identified.
3. [19 TAC §228.50] Submit evidence that the program has implemented the new application that reflects the applicant acknowledgement of reading, understanding, and abiding the ECOE. Provide a completed applicant for one (1) recently admitted candidate.
4. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(3) and §228.30(c)(6)] The Reading Specialist program must provide the required training in mental health, youth suicide, and substance abuse



and the required training in the state framework for teacher and principal evaluation as required in 19 TAC §228.30(c). Recent updates to TAC allow the program to provide the required mental health, youth suicide, and substance abuse training if it is offered as part of a course in a degree plan. Provide TEA with a syllabus reflecting the course in which each required training has been, or will be, implemented, including the implementation date and the program staff responsible for implementation.

5. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8), §228.35(f), §228.35(h)] Update or implement a process to collect evidence that each candidate completes a standards-based practicum per 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8) and each is supervised per requirements in 19 TAC §228.35(h) and §228.35(f). Provide TEA a copy of the practicum log that will capture standards-based hours completed by candidates and a copy of the observation instrument that will be used by field supervisors to evaluate candidate performance in the practicum. Submit any additional documents that will be used in the updated process. Additionally, submit a written description of the updated process requirements and the implementation date and staff responsible for implementation.
6. [19 TAC §228.2(18) and §228.2(33)] Implement a process to consistently capture and retain evidence of the qualifications and training of site supervisors and field supervisors assigned to support candidates completing practicum assignments. Submit to TEA the related documents for one (1) candidate or submit a written description of the updated process with any related documents, including training modules that will be implemented. Identify the implementation date and the EPP staff responsible for implementation.
7. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(E)] Implement a process to capture a recommendation from the field supervisor and site supervisor that the candidate was successful in the practicum and is ready for standard certification as required. Submit to TEA the written recommendation for one (1) candidate or submit the written description of the updated process with any related documents, including the intended implementation date and the program staff responsible for implementation.
8. [19 TAC §239.93] Remove the requirement of a teaching certificate for certification of Reading Specialist candidates. Update the information in handbooks, website, and any other location that displays the requirements. Submit screen shots, updated manuals, fliers, or other that reflect the updated requirement.

Recommendations

- A valid teaching certificate is not required for issuance of the Reading Specialist certificate per 19 TAC §239.93 so the program is encouraged to review and consider updating this program admission requirement.
- Update coursework to provide candidates more opportunities to practice skills and to be assessed for proficiency of skills prior to beginning the practicum.



Recommendations and Advisement

- Review all certificate areas that the EPP no longer plans to support and request, in writing, for TEA to remove them from inventory.
- Intern and Probationary certificate deactivation timelines and requirements have been updated in TAC for all certification classes. Changes include new timelines for requesting deactivations and information that must be provided to stakeholders in advance of internship start dates. Field supervisors will need to verify candidate placement information at the beginning of the assignment.

Program Recommendations for All EPPs

- To ensure continuity in record keeping and other related processes, consider creating a procedure manual documenting EPP processes.
- Align the verbiage of the program to the verbiage of Texas Administrative Code (TAC) (ex. Field supervisor, cooperating teacher, mentor, candidate, etc.);
- Continue to follow the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and the State Board of Education (SBOE) meetings and/or review the minutes to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about current Texas Administrative Code;
- Continue to participate in training and webinars provided by the Division of Educator Preparation to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about current requirements and changes in the Texas Administrative Code;
- Continue to maintain communication with the program specialist assigned to the program.
- Ensure that TEA staff has the most current contact information by sending updates to the assigned program specialist.

“I have reviewed the EPP Report and agree that all required corrections will be made on or before July 25, 2021”.

Signature of Legal Authority	Date
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Printed Name of Legal Authority	Date
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