

# 2022–2023 Continuing Approval Review Report

## Teach Us Texas

### INTRODUCTION

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Education Specialist, Irene Chacon, conducted a five-year Continuing Approval Review of the Teach Us Texas educator preparation program (EPP) on February 6, 2023. Per 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(b), “...An entity approved by the SBEC under this chapter shall be reviewed at least once every five years...”. Dr. Brandon Jouganas, Managing Director, was identified as the program Legal Authority and Primary Contact. Dr. Veronica Garcia, Director, Chief Academics Operations, was identified as the Backup Legal Authority, and Dr. Pamela Wetherington, Executive Director, was identified as the second Backup Legal Authority for the review process. Teach Us Texas was approved as an EPP on February 6, 2009. At the time of the review, the EPP was rated Accredited. The risk level was Stage 3 (low). The EPP reported 19 finishers for the 2020-2021 reporting year and 2 finishers for 2021-2022.

At the time of the review, Teach Us Texas was approved to certify candidates in the Teacher class in the alternative certification (ALT) route.

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 requirements for EPPs as applicable to all certification classes in all certification routes offered by the EPP using a standardized rubric aligned to Texas Administrative Code and Texas Education Code; and
- 2) developing a corrective action plan for compliance and quality improvement based on review data, performance indicators identified in 19 TAC §229.4, and self-reported EPP information provided in the Status Report.

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 January 20, 2023. Additional EPP documents, including records for 10 candidates, were submitted on February 2, 2023. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to evaluate the evidence.

“Findings” reflect EPP compliance with the TAC requirement(s) in a component. Determinations of non-compliance are supported by “Evidence” collected during the review process. Where a “Corrective Action” is required, the program should consult the TAC and/or TEC, complete the corrective action to bring the EPP into compliance, and submit the required evidence of corrective action to TEA by the identified Due Date.

**Corrective actions that are planned but have not been implemented must include an implementation date.**

“Recommendations” are suggestions for general program improvement or reminders of important information for the EPP and no follow-up is required.

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### GOVERNANCE (COMPONENTS 1 & 5)

Oversight of the EPP and ongoing evaluation of effectiveness of the programs within the EPP were reviewed. Following are the findings:

#### FINDINGS

1. The EPP has established an advisory committee that provides guidance and input on matters of program design, delivery, evaluation, and major policy decisions of each program within the EPP. [19 TAC §228.20(b)]
2. The advisory committee has been consistently trained in their roles and responsibilities. [19 TAC §228.20(b)]
3. The EPP has established evaluative tools and processes for continuous improvement of the programs within the EPP and has engaged the advisory committee in the evaluation and continuous improvement process. [19 TAC §228.40(e)]
4. The governing body of the EPP has provided sufficient support to enable the EPP to meet all standards set by the SBEC. [19 TAC §228.20(c)]
5. The EPP has notified TEA of a program amendment within the last five years. [19 TAC §228.20(e) & (f)]
6. The EPP has established a calendar of program activities that allows adequate time for admission, coursework, training, and field-based experience requirements prior to a clinical teaching or internship experience for each program in the EPP. [19 TAC §228.20(g)]
7. The EPP has published an exit policy that is reviewed & signed by each candidate at admission. [19 TAC §228.20(h)]
8. The EPP has notified TEA of the addition of new program locations. [19 TAC §228.10(e)]
9. The EPP has qualified instructors for the certificate categories offered. [19 TAC §228.10(d)(1)]
10. The EPP has notified TEA staff of the change of ownership in writing within 10 days of the change. [19 TAC §228.17(a)]
11. The EPP has consistently retained candidate and EPP records per the records retention requirement in [19 TAC §228.40(f) & §228.10(b)(2)]

#### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

### REQUIRED NOTIFICATIONS (COMPONENTS 2 & 7)

Candidate records, the EPP website, and other EPP documents were reviewed for evidence the EPP has published the required notifications for applicants and candidates. Following are the findings:

#### FINDINGS

1. The EPP has published information about the required criminal history background checks for clinical teaching and for employment as an educator in Texas. [19 TAC §227.1(b)]

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2. The EPP has published information about the potential impact of criminal history on candidate certification and the right to request a Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation from TEA. [19 TAC §227.1(d)]
3. The EPP has published the admission requirements of each program in the EPP. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(1)]
4. The EPP has published the completion requirements for each program in the EPP. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(2)]
5. The EPP has published Information about the EPP performance over time for the past five years. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(3)(B)]
6. The EPP has published information about the effect of supply and demand forces on the educator workforce in Texas. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(3)(A)]
7. The EPP has published a complaints process that provides a link to the TEA complaints process. [19 TAC §228.70(b)]

### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

## FORMAL & CONTINGENCY ADMISSION (COMPONENT 2)

Candidate records and records in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) were reviewed to verify the EPP has implemented a formal and/or contingency admission process as required in 19 TAC §227.17 and/or §227.15. Following are the findings:

### FINDINGS

1. The formal written offer of admission was consistently found in candidates' records. [19 TAC §227.17(b) & (c) or §227.15(a)(3)-(4)]
2. Applicants were consistently required to accept the offer of admission in writing. [19 TAC §227.17 (c) or §227.15(a)(4)]
3. The formal date of admission was consistently included in the written offer of admission. [19 TAC §227.17(d) or §227.15(b)]
4. The ECOS audit trail revealed candidate admission records were not consistently created in the ECOS within the 7 calendar days required. [19 TAC §227.17(e) or §227.15(c)]  
Evidence: Some teacher records were not created within the 7 calendar days required.
5. Candidates were not provided coursework, training, or test approval prior to formal or contingency admission. [19 TAC §227.17(f) and §228.40(d)]

### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must implement the formal and/or contingency admission process(es) for all classes as required by December 18, 2023.

1. **19 TAC §227.17(e) Formal Admission: 7-Day Notice of Admission:** Implement a process to create admission records in ECOS for each admitted candidate that is within 7 calendar days of the formal date of admission that is identified in the candidate's formal written offer of admission.

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### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS (COMPONENT 2)

Candidate records including applications, transcripts, screening rubrics, and other documentation were reviewed to verify the programs within the EPP qualify applicants for admission as required in 19 TAC Chapter 227. Following are the findings:

#### FINDINGS

1. The EPP consistently requires applicants to meet requirements for GPA. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(3)]
2. The EPP consistently requires applicants to meet requirements for subject-specific semester credit hours. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(4)]
3. The EPP consistently requires applicants to complete an application for admission. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)]
4. The EPP consistently uses one or more appropriate screening devices to evaluate the applicant’s appropriateness for the certificate sought. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)]
5. The EPP consistently collects all additional requirements for admission and verifies candidates meet all additional requirements for admission. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(9) and §227.10(b)]
6. The EPP has consistently verified English language proficiency. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(7)]

#### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

### STANDARDS-BASED COURSEWORK (COMPONENTS 3 & 4)

Syllabi, performance assessments, published degree plans, standards alignment charts, and information provided by the EPP in the Status Report, were reviewed as evidence the EPP provides the required standards-based coursework in each certificate class offered. Following are the findings:

#### FINDINGS

1. Candidates were consistently required to complete the minimum number of hours of coursework and training prior to completing the EPP. [19 TAC §228.35(b)]
2. Required standards were identified in coursework. [19 TAC §228.30]
3. Evidence of performance assessments was found, and assessments were aligned to standards. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(2) & §228.40(a)]

#### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

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### REQUIRED CURRICULUM TOPICS (COMPONENT 3)

Syllabi, published degree plans, candidate records, and information provided by the EPP in the Status Report were reviewed to verify the EPP provides instruction in the additional curriculum areas required in Texas Administrative Code and/or Texas Education Code. Following are the findings:

#### FINDINGS

1. Training in Ethics was found in coursework provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(1)]
2. Training in educating students with Dyslexia was found in coursework provided to candidates and was provided by the approved provider. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(2)]
3. Training in Mental Health, Substance Abuse, & Youth Suicide was consistently provided to candidates and was consistently provided by an approved provider. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(3)]
4. Instruction in the skills educators are required to possess, the responsibilities educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students in Texas was apparent in coursework provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(4)]
5. The importance of building strong classroom management skills was identified in coursework provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(5)]
6. Information about the framework for teacher and principal evaluation in Texas was provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(6)]
7. Training in appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications with students was consistently provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(7)]
8. Instruction in digital learning, virtual instruction, and virtual learning was consistently provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(8)]
9. The Digital Literacy evaluation and the related prescribed curriculum was provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(8)]
10. Instruction regarding students with disabilities, the use of proactive instructional planning techniques, and evidence-based inclusive instructional practices was provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(9)]

#### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

### PRE-SERVICE REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES (COMPONENT 4)

Syllabi, degree plans, benchmark documents and other candidate records, and published information was reviewed for evidence the EPP requires Teacher candidates to complete pre-service requirements (coursework and field-based experiences) as identified in 19 TAC §228.35(b) and §228.35(e)(1). Following are the findings:

#### FINDINGS

1. There is sufficient evidence that candidates consistently complete the field-based experience (FBE) hours as required. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(1) & §228.35(e)(1)]
2. FBE assignments and activities consistently meet requirements for completing FBE. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)]

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3. Candidates consistently complete pre-service coursework and training as required prior to beginning the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(2)]
4. The structure of pre-service coursework and training allowed the EPP to consistently capture candidate proficiency in one or more of the identified pedagogical areas. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(2)]

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### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

### SUPERVISED CLINICAL EXPERIENCE (COMPONENT 4)

Syllabi, degree plans, and documentation in candidate records such as placement documents, logs, observation records, mentor agreements, and training materials were reviewed as evidence the EPP consistently ensures that candidates complete the supervised clinical experience as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e) - (g).

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### FINDINGS

1. There is sufficient evidence that candidates consistently complete the required duration for the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)-(B)]
2. Candidates were consistently placed in an approved supervised clinical experience assignment. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A) & (B)]
3. There is sufficient evidence that candidates consistently engage with the educator standards for the certificate sought during the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(iii), §228.35(e)(2)(B)(ix)]
4. Candidates were consistently assigned appropriate qualified campus personnel to support them during the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(f)]
5. Qualifications of campus personnel supporting candidates in the supervised clinical experience were consistently verified by the EPP. [19 TAC §228.2(14) & (26)]
6. Training was consistently provided as required to campus personnel supporting candidates in the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.2(14) & (26)]
7. Candidates were consistently assigned a field supervisor to provide support and feedback to the candidate and EPP during the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
8. There was sufficient evidence that field supervisors supporting candidates in the clinical experience met qualification requirements. [19 TAC §228.2(18)]
9. Training was consistently provided as required to field supervisors supporting candidates in the clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
10. There was sufficient evidence that field supervisors conducted the first observation within the required time frame. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
11. Candidates received the required number and duration of formal observations during the clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
12. There was sufficient evidence that field supervisors consistently conduct observations through a POP cycle which includes a pre-conference and a post-conference for each formal observation. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]

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13. Field supervisors did not consistently capture educational practices observed, but captured evidence of candidate demonstration of proficiency in the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]  
Evidence: Observation documents were found with pre- and post-conference questions; however, records for five of the ten teacher candidates reviewed did not contain documentation that field supervisors captured evidence of educational practices observed.
14. There is sufficient evidence that the field supervisor consistently provides ongoing coaching and support to candidates completing the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]

### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must revise the structure and requirements in the supervised clinical experiences as needed to ensure candidates are placed in appropriate assignments where they are able to complete the experiences with appropriate supervision and support, and that candidate proficiency is accurately captured by the EPP as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e) by December 18, 2023.

1. **19 TAC §228.35(g) Field Supervision: Educational Practices Observed:** Update the observation instrument that captures the proficiency of standards as a record of instructional strategies observed. Require the field supervisor to document educational practices observed for each formal observation.

### EPP COLLABORATION WITH CAMPUS AND CANDIDATE (COMPONENT 4)

Documentation in candidate records such as logs, observation records, mentor agreements, and training materials were reviewed as evidence the EPP consistently collaborates with the campus and candidate during the candidate's supervised clinical experience as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g). Following are the findings:

### FINDINGS

1. There is sufficient evidence that the field supervisor consistently collaborates with the campus personnel assigned to support the candidate during the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
2. There is sufficient evidence the field supervisor makes initial contact with the candidate as required during the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
3. There is sufficient evidence that the field supervisor provides feedback from the observation to the campus personnel assigned to support the candidate during the clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]

### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

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### CERTIFICATION (COMPONENT 8)

Candidate records such as transcripts, degree plans, and completed benchmark documents, and data reported in ECOS, provided evidence of EPP compliance with certification requirements. [19 TAC §230.11 & §230.13]  
Following are the findings:

#### FINDINGS

1. Candidates who were recommended for certification consistently met the degree required for the certificate sought. [19 TAC §230.11, §230.36(b)(1), & §230.37(b)(1)]
2. There was sufficient evidence that the EPP consistently ensures candidates complete all requirements prior to recommendation for the certificate sought. [19 TAC §230.11, §230.36, & §230.37]
3. Candidates consistently met the English language proficiency requirement prior to being recommended for certificates. [19 TAC §230.11(b)(5)]
4. Candidates were consistently recommended for certificates in areas in which they were prepared by the EPP. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B), §230.36, §230.37, §230.11, & §230.13]

#### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

### INTEGRITY OF DATA SUBMISSION (COMPONENT 9)

Admission data, enrollment data, and observation data reported in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) by the EPP was compared with the data retained in candidates' records. Following are the findings:

#### FINDINGS

1. Candidates were consistently identified as enrolled in the area in which one or more certificates were issued. [19 TAC §229.3]
2. Admission data were not consistently reported accurately as compared with information in candidate transcripts. [19 TAC §229.3]  
Evidence: For seven of the ten candidates, the GPA that Teach Us Texas reported did not match the data on the transcripts in the candidates' records.
3. Observation dates and/or durations were not consistently reported as detailed on observation documents. [19 TAC §229.3 & §229.4]  
Evidence: Observation data reported in ECOS by Teach Us Texas for two of the ten teaching assignments were missing or did not match the related data in EPP records.

#### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must revise the process of maintaining records and reporting data so that data reported in ECOS is an accurate representation of data retained in candidates' records to meet requirements in 19 TAC §229.3 and §229.4 by December 18, 2023.



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1. **19 TAC §229.3(a), §229.3(f)(1), & related graphic Figure 19 TAC §229.3(f)(1) Data Reported: Accurately:** Implement a process for ensuring the integrity of data submitted into ECOS that includes ongoing data entry and a quality control check to verify data accuracy. Require GPA in calculation documents/transcripts to correspond exactly to GPA uploaded to the admission record in ECOS. Require observations to be completed and retained in candidate records.

### PROACTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING TECHNIQUES & INCLUSIVE PRACTICES FOR

Syllabi, coursework samples, information in the Status Report, and observation instruments were reviewed for evidence the EPP has implemented the required instruction. Following are the findings:

#### FINDINGS

1. The EPP incorporates proactive instructional planning techniques throughout coursework and across content areas using a framework that:
  - provides flexibility in the ways information is presented, students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and students are engaged;
  - reduces barriers in instruction;
  - provides appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges; and
  - maintains high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students of limited English proficiency. [19 TAC §228.10(a)(1)(J) and §228.30(c)(9)]
2. The EPP has integrated instruction in inclusive practices for all students, including students with disabilities, and evidence-based instruction and intervention strategies throughout coursework. [19 TAC §228.10(a)(1)(J) and §228.30(c)(9)]
3. The EPP has integrated instruction in inclusive practices for all students, including students with disabilities, and evidence-based instruction and intervention strategies throughout the clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.10(a)(1)(J)]
4. As required under TEC 21.044 (a-1), there is sufficient evidence that field supervisors consistently capture candidate demonstration of competency in the use of proactive instructional planning techniques that:
  - provide flexibility in the ways information is presented, students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and students are engaged;
  - reduce barriers in instruction;
  - provide appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges; and
  - maintain high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students of limited English proficiency. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(9); §228.35(e)(2)(A)(3); §228.35(e)(2)(B)(9); and §228.35(e)(8)]
5. In the supervised clinical experience, there is sufficient evidence that field supervisors consistently capture candidate demonstration of competency in the use of evidence-based inclusive instructional practices as required under TEC 21.044 (a-1). [19 TAC §228.30(c)(9); §228.35(e)(2)(A)(3); §228.35(e)(2)(B)(ix)]

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### CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Physical Education EC-12 (158), Health EC-12 (157), and English Language Arts & Reading 7-12 (231) exams will be available until September 1, 2024, and then will be replaced by new exams 258, 257, and 331, respectively. Candidates must apply and be recommended for certification by September 1, 2025 to use exams 158, 157, and 231 for certification. Additional information about the transitions of these certification exams is on the [Educator Testing](#) page on the tea.texas.gov website.
- Establish a process to add clinical experience records and observation records into ECOS as they occur throughout the year.
- Develop and implement more performance assessments in all programs.
- Review all certificate areas that the EPP no longer plans to support and request, in writing, for TEA to remove them from inventory.
- Notify the assigned specialist at TEA promptly when the EPP has staff changes in the roles of Legal Authority, Primary Point of Contact, Backup Legal Authority, or Certification Officer or when the EPP has changes in EPP contact information.
- 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, clinical teaching, internship, practicum, 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 education specialist assigned to the program.