



Department of Educator Preparation, Certification, & Enforcement

# **Educator Preparation Program Continuing Approval Review Handbook**

## **2023-2024**

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## Continuing Approval Reviews Overview

The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) are committed to ensuring high-quality educator preparation that starts with the educator preparation program (EPP) that recruits and prepares qualified candidates. TEA is required by 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(b) to review each EPP at least once every five (5) years. The purpose of a regular periodic review is to provide evidence to ensure an EPP is adequately preparing candidates for educator certification and meeting the standards and requirements set by the SBEC. Through the Continuing Approval Review (CAR) process, TEA staff clarify current rules and requirements to EPPs and share best practices to promote a continuous improvement mindset. TEA staff develops and implements targeted training for individuals and groups of EPPs based on common issues that arise across multiple EPP reviews. The CAR process also provides TEA with an opportunity to identify and showcase exceptional programs or practices that can be shared with other EPPs.

The scope of the five-year CAR is limited to the EPP's compliance with TAC and Texas Education Code (TEC). In the review process, TEA reviews evidence to determine EPP compliance in the [Ten Components of the Continuing Approval Review](#) identified on page 4. Additional recommendations may be made as applicable to the overall improvement of one or more EPP processes.

An EPP may also receive a discretionary CAR. This type of review may occur at any time outside of the five-year review rotation and most often occurs when an EPP needs assistance bringing one (1) or more program components back into compliance with TAC and TEC.

Two (2) different formats are used for conducting a five-year or discretionary CAR: the **desk** review and the **on-site** review (an on-site review may be conducted virtually if necessary). The EPP will be notified in advance of the type of review to expect. This handbook provides detailed instructions and forms to facilitate the CAR process.

### Desk Review Overview

EPPs who are low risk (Stage 3) or medium risk (Stage 2) based on Accreditation status and the outcome of the risk analysis are reviewed via the **desk** review format. The **desk** review format requires the EPP to submit specific documents and records to TEA for review and does not include an on-site visit to the EPP. The **desk** review process includes:

1. notification and training by TEA;
2. preparation and secure submission of EPP documents and records to TEA;
3. TEA analysis of EPP documents, records, and EPP data;
4. communication at midpoint and at close of review; and
5. an official written report.

Once the review closes, TEA Review Specialists will not accept any additional documentation or evidence. A set of Next Steps and Recommendations will be developed based on the findings in the review. Next Steps are action items that the EPP must correct. Next Steps are evidence-based and time-bound where the EPP submits artifacts to TEA as evidence of corrective action by an identified timeline. Recommendations are suggestions for EPP improvement that are optional for EPPs to implement. A formal report that is issued following the review will detail the findings of the review and the corrective actions required in the Next Steps items along with Recommendations for improvement. Note: Following a **desk** review, a discretionary on-site review may be required depending upon the nature and extent of compliance issues to be corrected.

## **On-Site Review Overview**

An **on-site** review is required for programs who are at highest risk (Stage 1) based on Accreditation status and/or the outcome of the risk analysis. The on-site review format requires two or three TEA staff members to conduct the review on site at the EPP. During the **on-site** review, TEA staff will review documents and records compiled by the EPP staff. TEA staff may also interview EPP staff members such as instructors or field supervisors regarding EPP processes and/or curriculum. The entire **on-site** review process has five stages:

1. notification and training by TEA;
2. preparation of materials by the EPP;
3. review of candidate records, EPP documentation, and data by TEA staff;
4. frequent opportunities for informal and formal communication between TEA and EPP staff;
5. an official written report.

The EPP may be issued a Compliance Plan and a set of Recommendations at the closing meeting to guide program updates as a result of findings. The Compliance Plan is evidence-based and time-bound where the EPP submits artifacts to TEA as evidence of corrective action by an identified deadline. Recommendations are suggestions for EPP improvement that are optional for EPPs to implement. A formal report that is issued following the review will detail the findings of the review and the Compliance items and recommendations. Note: if the onsite must be conducted virtually, EPP staff will prepare and submit documents to TEA for review 2 weeks prior to the start date of the review, and TEA will use a synchronous digital platform (e.g., Microsoft Teams or ZOOM) to communicate and engage with EPP staff throughout the review week.

## **The Ten Components of the Continuing Approval Review**

EPPs are required to comply with TAC and TEC, which guide various aspects of the program. Compliance is determined by reviewing EPP documentation and records within the context of these components:

- I. Governance [19 TAC §228.20]
- II. Admission Criteria [19 TAC Chapter 227]
- III. Curriculum [19 TAC §228.30]
- IV. Coursework, Training, Program Delivery & Ongoing Support [19 TAC §228.35]
- V. Assessment & Evaluation of Candidates & Program [19 TAC §228.40]
- VI. Professional Conduct [19 TAC §228.30; §228.50; and Chapter 247]
- VII. Complaint Procedures [19 TAC §228.70]
- VIII. Certification Procedures [19 TAC Chapter 230]
- IX. Integrity of Data Submission [19 TAC Chapter 229]
- X. Candidate Training & Support on Inclusive Practices for Students with Disabilities [19 TAC Chapter 228]

During the review, the TEA review team records evidence of compliance on a standardized rubric that reflects TAC and TEC requirements within each component.

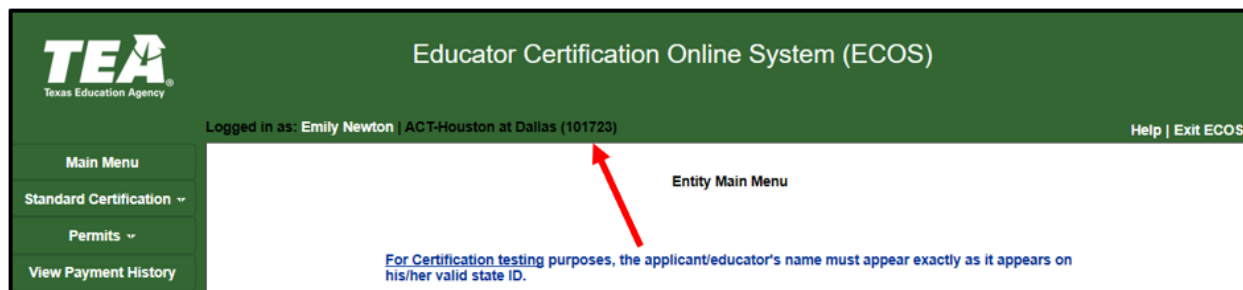
## **Assigned Review Specialist**

For the CAR, a TEA Education Specialist will be assigned to work with EPP staff during the review process. The “Review Specialist” that is assigned may not be the specialist that is normally assigned to the EPP. The assigned Review Specialist will be the “lead” who will assist with answers to questions, facilitate the review process, assist the EPP in developing a Compliance Plan/Next Steps, if necessary, and write the

final report. All communication relating to the CAR must be submitted to the assigned Review Specialist. Contact information for TEA staff is in [Appendix C](#).

### County/District Number

Many EPPs have similar names. To facilitate identifying the correct EPP, the county/district number (CDN), which is unique to the entity, should be placed on all communication with the TEA. If necessary, EPP personnel may contact the [assigned Review Specialist at TEA](#) to confirm the CDN. The CDN is also found in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS):



### Fees for the Continuing Approval Review

There is no fee for a **desk review**. There is a fee required for TEA to conduct an **on-site review (including a virtual onsite format if that becomes necessary)**.

In 19 TAC §229.9, the following fees are mandated for the Continuing Approval Review:

- Five-year continuing approval review (on-site / virtual on-site) = \$4,500
- Discretionary continuing approval review (on-site / virtual on-site) = \$4,500

To submit fees:

- ✓ Complete the “Educator Preparation Program Fee Form” found in [Appendix A](#) of this handbook; and
- ✓ Pay Fees Electronically – contact Review Specialist for instructions; or
- ✓ Make checks payable to **TEA–EPP** and mail to:  
TEA-Accounting Dept.  
1701 N. Congress Ave.  
Austin, TX 78701.

Note: Fees for EPPs receiving an **on-site CAR** in 2023-2024 **must** be received at TEA between **September 1 - September 30, 2023**. Note: Failure to pay required fees will result in a violation of TAC which may include SBEC action.

### Program Preparation Prior to the Continuing Approval Review

#### Risk Assessment

At the beginning of the 5-Year CAR cycle, TEA staff develops a set of risk factors to assess the overall risk level for each EPP to determine the type of review for that EPP in accordance with TEC §21.0454. 19 TAC §228.10(b)(3) specifies that TEA staff shall, at the minimum, use the following risk factors to determine the need for discretionary reviews and the type of five-year reviews:

- (A) a history of the program’s compliance with state law and board rules, standards, and

procedures, with consideration given to:

- (i) the seriousness of any violation of a rule, standard, or procedure;
  - (ii) whether the violation resulted in an action being taken against the program;
  - (iii) whether the violation was promptly remedied by the program;
  - (iv) the number of alleged violations; and
  - (v) any other matter considered to be appropriate in evaluating the program's compliance history;
- (B) whether the program meets accountability standards under Texas Education Code, [§21.045](#), and
- (C) whether the program is accredited by other organizations.

The factors used in the risk assessment for 2023-2024 CARs include:

- 1) All available data from the Accountability System for Educator Preparation Programs (ASEP):
  - Results on all ASEP indicators at the "All" level and disaggregated at individual demographic levels, as specified in 19 TAC §229.4, were used.
- 2) Formal complaints against the EPP that occurred within the five (5) years prior to the 2023-2024 review, including overall number of complaints, number of violations of TAC/TEC resulting from complaints, and whether those violations were remedied as prescribed in TEC §21.0454(a)(1);
- 3) Accreditation status of the EPP with increased risk for those with Accredited-Probation status prescribed in TEC §21.0454(a)(2); and
- 4) Accreditation by other organizations, which reduced the risk for EPPs accredited by a national organization for educator preparation.

The method used to conduct the risk assessment is:

#### ASEP Indicators

The preliminary risk assessment calculated a value for each program using data from the most recent reporting year. The assessment was conducted using the ASEP indicators at the "All" level, as well as the demographic group level, and allowed for small group exceptions to be factored into the calculation. The risk assessment was calculated by counting the number of indicators and groups where the program met the standard and dividing by the number of indicators and groups in which they had data. The resulting values were converted to percentages.

Specifically, to complete the preliminary risk assessment, the following process was used: for the denominator, count the total possible "met standard" and "did not meet standard" cells; for the numerator, count the total number of these cells with "met standard." Exclude all cells without data. Values for the "All" cells were weighted to be more substantial than the disaggregated grouped cells. SAS code was written to consistently generate the program percentages. Using these percentages, three stages of risk were calculated, with Stage 1 representing the highest risk and Stage 3 the lowest level of risk.

#### Accreditation Status

The Accreditation Status in effect at the time of the risk assessment was used. For CARs conducted in 2023-2024, the 2021-2022 Accreditation status was used. Programs rated Accredited-Probation were automatically assigned a risk of Stage 1 (highest risk).

### Complaints

Violations that resulted from formal complaints incurred by an EPP from September 1, 2018, to the present were quantified as follows:

- For each violation of the TAC or TEC identified in a formal complaint, the EPP received -1 point.
- If a violation was **promptly remedied** by the EPP, thus addressing the root cause of the problem within the timeframe provided, the EPP received 0 points for each violation remedied. If a violation was **not remedied** within the timeframe provided, the EPP received a -1 point for each violation not remedied.
- If the **number** of complaints of alleged violations against the same program was two (2) or more, the EPP received - 1 point (not including complaints that violated TAC).

### Accreditation by Other Organizations

Accreditation by other organizations was quantified in this way:

- If the program has completed requirements and achieved accreditation through a nationally recognized organization in addition to what is required in TAC, the EPP received +1 one point for additional accreditation.

### Process for Assigning the Final Risk Stage

1. The Preliminary risk stage of 1, 2, or 3 was calculated for each EPP;
2. Any EPP rated Accredited-Probation was moved to a final risk of Stage 1;
3. Points deducted due to violations of TAC or TEC, as identified through formal complaints, were combined with points awarded due to accreditation by other organizations. The resulting total points were factored into the risk model through a sliding scale where:

0-2 points = No change in Risk Stage assignment

3-5 points = Level down one Risk Stage assignment (higher risk)

6 or more points = Level down two Risk Stage assignments (highest risk)

### **The Notification Letter**

An EPP scheduled for a CAR will be notified by TEA via a **Notification Letter** sent attached to a notification email. The email will be sent to the EPP Legal Authority or Primary Point of Contact with copies to the Legal Authority Back-up(s) and Certification Officer. 'Read receipts' will be requested so that TEA staff may follow up, if necessary, to be sure EPP staff receives communication in a timely fashion.

The **Notification Letter** identifies the following detail:

- Date of the review;
- Risk Stage & Review format;
- Training webinar date and link for EPP staff who may have questions about the review process;

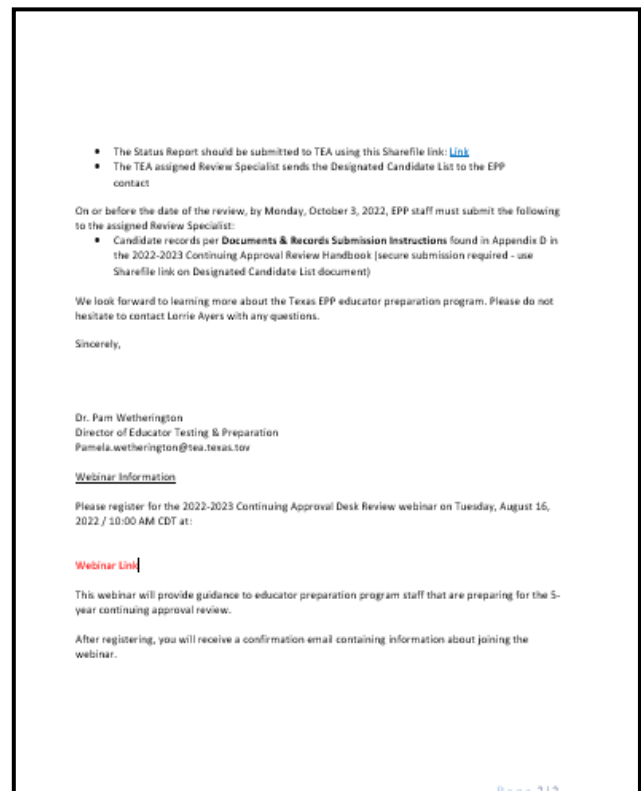
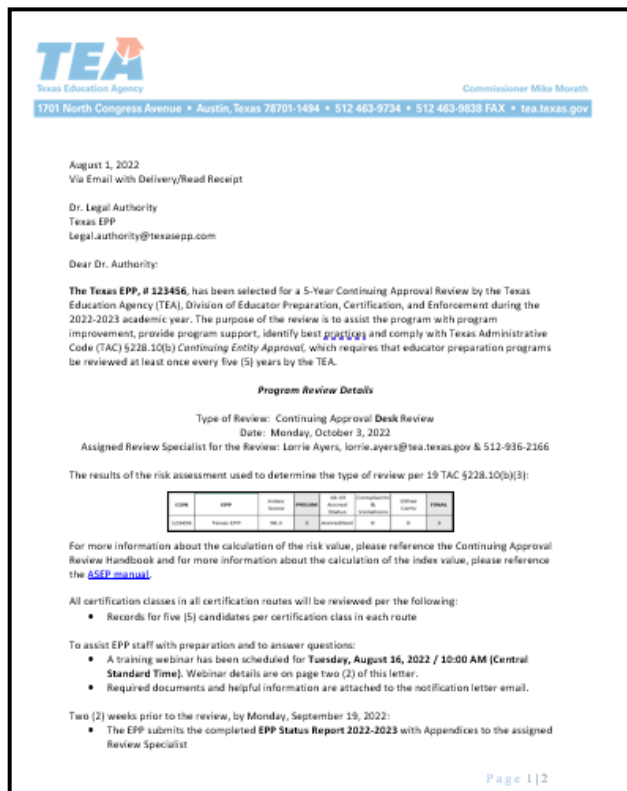
- Number of candidate records to be reviewed with due dates;
- Status Report due date; and
- Assigned Review Specialist contact information.

The following documents are attached to the notification email:

- ✓ Notification Letter
- ✓ Continuing Approval Review Handbook 2023-2024 for reference
- ✓ Status Report - to be completed by EPP and returned to TEA by the specified due date
- ✓ STR Alignment Charts – to be completed and attached to the Status Report
- ✓ Scope and Sequence Document

Note: The [Continuing Approval Review Rubric 2023-2024](#) is not attached to the **Notification Letter** but is posted on the Program Provider Resources page on the TEA website.

Sample Notification Letter:



### Continuing Approval Review Handbook

The **Continuing Approval Review Handbook** is emailed to the EPP, along with the **Notification Letter**. A copy of the handbook is also posted on the [Program Provider Resources](#) page on the TEA website. The handbook is a reference document that should answer common questions concerning the EPP review process. EPP staff can expect to find the following in the handbook:


- ✓ An overview of the CAR process
- ✓ Details about how the EPP can prepare for the review
- ✓ Details about the risk assessment
- ✓ Document submission instructions
- ✓ Appendices containing helpful documents



## Status Report

The **Status Report** is required in 19 TAC §228.10(b)(1), which states, “at the time of the review, the entity shall submit to the TEA staff a status report regarding its compliance with existing standards and requirements for EPPs.” The **Status Report** is emailed to the EPP along with the **Notification Letter**. It is designed to be completed and submitted to TEA electronically. The spaces available for type-in responses will expand as necessary to accommodate EPP responses. The purpose of the **Status Report** is for EPP staff to provide insight into EPP design and processes as they relate to requirements in TEC and TAC. In addition, the **Status Report** will provide an opportunity for EPP staff to inform TEA about accomplishments and achievements.

The first page of the **Status Report** will be completed with the information about the EPP and the person who will be the primary EPP contact during the CAR process. In addition, the EPP Legal Authority will sign verifying the accuracy of all information reported within the **Status Report**.

  
Educator Preparation Program (EPP) Status Report  
2023-2024

19 TAC §228.10(b)(1) At the time of the review, the entity shall submit to the TEA staff a status report regarding its compliance with existing standards and requirements for EPPs.

Note: For any section that is not applicable to your program, please include "N/A" in the corresponding table or text box.

|                       |                                     |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| EPP Name              | County/District Number              |
| Mailing Address       | Legal Authority Name                |
| Primary Contact Name  | Primary Contact Phone Number        |
| Primary Contact Email | Review Start Date                   |
| Type of Review        | Accreditation Status and Risk Level |

SIGNATURE PAGE

"I have reviewed the evidence in this status report and verify all the information contained in the report is true, accurate, and is compliant with all applicable state and federal requirements governing educator preparation programs".

|                                 |      |
|---------------------------------|------|
| Signature of Legal Authority    | Date |
| Printed Name of Legal Authority | Date |

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Throughout the **Status Report**, there are opportunities for the EPP to provide general information about the programs within the EPP and specific information about candidates within those programs.

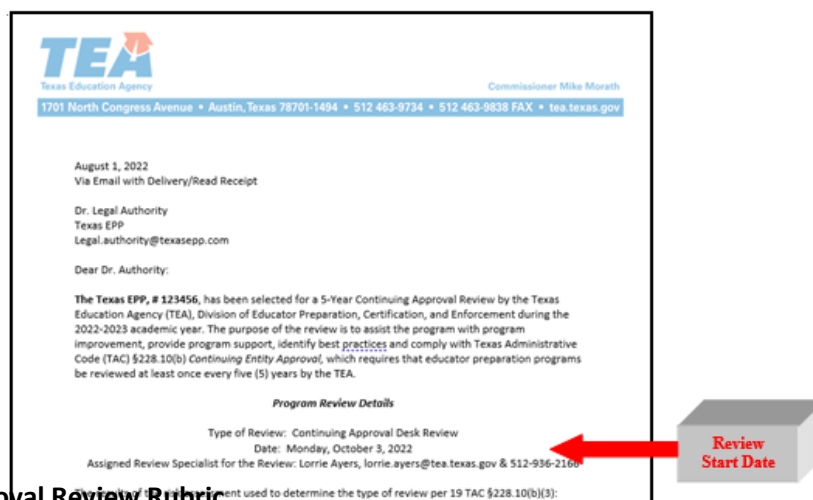


| APPENDICES   |   |
|--|---|
| Please submit the following, if applicable, with your completed Status Report: |   |
| Appendix A   | Candidate Handbook(s), if applicable  |
| Appendix B   | Field Supervisor Handbook(s), if applicable   |
| Appendix C   | Cooperating Teacher / Mentor / Site Supervisor Handbook(s), if applicable                                     |
| Appendix D   | Calendar of Program Activities per <a href="#">19 TAC §228.20(g)</a> , for each program area                  |
| Appendix E   | Summary of Accreditations Received from Any Other Accrediting Entity(s)                                       |
| Appendix F   | Any Other Documents EPP Wants TEA to See (as relates to EPP quality)  |
| Appendix G   | Copy of Completed Memoranda of Understanding (If applicable) - Optional                                       |
| Appendix H   | Early Childhood Performance Assessment (If applicable)  |
| Appendix I   | Science of Teaching Reading Performance Assessment (If applicable)  |
| Appendix J   | Science of Teaching Reading Alignment Chart(s) (If applicable)  |
| Appendix K   | Scope and Sequence  |
| Appendix L   | Curriculum Alignment Chart(s) for Specified Certificate Area (Request charts from assigned Review Specialist) |

To submit the requested Appendix items to the assigned Review Specialist, create an electronic folder for each appendix labeled with the appendix letter and name (e.g., Appendix A Candidate Handbooks), and then save the labeled document(s) in the labeled folder. NOTE: All documents should be uploaded through the unique Sharefile link which will be provided by TEA in the **Notification Letter**.

**Note: All folders uploaded through a unique Share File link must be zipped/compressed.**

Since secure information, such as candidate records, may be included in the **Status Report**, the **Status Report** must be submitted through the unique Sharefile link. The **Status Report** must be received by the assigned Review Specialist at TEA **at least two (2) weeks prior to the review start date identified in the Notification Letter**. The **Status Report** due date is also explicitly identified in the **Notification Letter**.



**Continuing Approval Review Rubric**

A copy of the rubric used for the review is posted on the [Program Provider Resources](#) page on the TEA website. The rubric is aligned to TAC requirements for all certification classes and all certification routes

(Undergraduate (UG), Post-Bac (PB), and Alternative Certification (A)). The completed rubric will be a permanent record of findings during the review. If the review team cannot populate the rubric based on the evidence submitted, the assigned Review Specialist may request additional evidence from the EPP to verify compliance with a specific requirement in TAC. NOTE: The rubric is a useful tool for EPPs that want to engage in a self-audit prior to the TEA review, which TEA strongly encourages.

### **Document & Records Review**

As part of the CAR process, EPP staff will be asked to provide various documents, including candidate records, as evidence that EPP processes are compliant with requirements in TAC and TEC. Documents such as training transcripts or benchmarking documents and degree plans provide information about coursework hours. Documentation retained in candidates' records such as applications, university transcripts, service records, observation documents, and completed EPP training transcripts provide evidence of a "candidate's eligibility for admission to the program and completion of all program requirements" as required in 19 TAC §228.40(f). The retention of documents and records is required in TAC, so it is expected that the EPP will be able to provide this evidence. The **Continuing Approval Review Rubric** used to evaluate documentation in the CAR is published on the [Program Provider Resources](#) page on the TEA website and is a useful resource for examples of evidence. Additionally, the [Figure: 19 TAC §228.10\(b\)\(1\)](#) will provide some guidance on the types of documents and information that may be collected and evaluated by TEA staff during the review (NOTE: The [Figure](#) may not be up to date with the most recent updates elsewhere in TAC). The assigned Review Specialist at TEA can assist with answers to questions regarding evidence of compliance with TAC. Some of the items may reference an item on the **Status Report**. This reference is meant to be a helpful tool for deciding what types of documentation to gather and provide to TEA for the review.

The TEA review team will also review records such as syllabi and performance assessments for a specified certificate area. The curriculum area to be reviewed will be collaboratively determined by the EPP and TEA assigned review specialist prior to the start of the review and is usually focused on the certificate area with the largest enrollment with lower performance.

### **Candidate Records**

The candidates' records to be reviewed will be pre-determined by the TEA review team. The candidates whose records will be reviewed are referred to as "Designated Candidates" and are randomly selected from EPP records in ECOS such as Finisher Records lists (Other Enrolled and Finisher), admission lists, certificate recommendation lists, and from the Status Report. Candidate names are generally selected from the current reporting year and the previous reporting year but, if necessary, may be selected from reporting years following the last review date.

Candidate names will be selected from each active certification class and each active certification route within the EPP. Up to five (5) records will be selected from each. For programs with enrollment greater than 5000 candidates in a route, additional records may be requested for candidates enrolled in that route. During the review, additional records for additional candidates may be requested at the discretion of the review team. For example, TEA may request additional documentation if the team uncovers a compliance issue in a specific class or route and needs to gather more information; or if the evidence previously submitted contains incomplete information, and the team needs more information to determine compliance with a TAC requirement.

### **Continuing Approval Desk Review (Information for EPPs reviewed in a desk review format)**

## Documents and Records Submission Instructions

In the **desk review** format, documents and records requested for review must be submitted to TEA. All documents must be carefully labeled for efficient processing. During the review, TEA staff must be able to link documents and records to specific certificate categories and classes, certification routes, and/or to specific candidates. For that reason, please organize and label all documents and use the naming scheme identified in the document submission instructions in the **Continuing Approval Desk Review Document & Records Submission Instructions** document in [Appendix D](#). **Note: Documents that are not organized and labeled correctly may delay the review and/or result in a score of non-compliant due to missing evidence.**



When labeling candidate records, use the identifier that includes the last name, first initial, and the TEA ID number. **DO NOT SUBMIT SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS. Candidate records must be submitted via secure submission using the unique secure Share File link provided by TEA.** Label EPP documentation (documents or folders) with the identity of the document or folder and the program that uses the document. **No paper documents will be accepted.**

**Example label for the records submitted for Teacher candidate Merry Educator who is in the Teacher Undergraduate program:**

Educator.M\_123456 (label for document)

Candidates\_Teacher(U) (label for a folder containing candidate records for the program)

**Example label for EPP document(s) submitted:**

Syllabus\_EDUC 3315 (label for a document)

Syllabi\_Principal (label for a folder of syllabi submitted for the program)

For the **desk review**, the EPP will receive the **Designated Candidate List** containing the names of candidates whose records will be reviewed two (2) weeks prior to the CAR date identified in the **Notification Letter**. The EPP will then gather copies of the requested records for the “Designated Candidates” on the list and submit them securely to TEA for review. Candidates’ records **must** be submitted securely to the TEA assigned Review Specialist using the unique Share File link embedded in the **Designated Candidate List** document. See more information about submitting documents to TEA in the [Continuing Approval Desk Review Document & Records Submission Instructions](#) included in this handbook in [Appendix D](#). Documents and records submitted to TEA for the **desk review** will not be returned to the EPP. It is important that EPP staff retain the original records as per the record retention policy.

Example of Designated Candidate List:

| Designated Candidate List   |  |
|---|--|
| EPP Name (CDN)  |  |
| Documents due at TEA by: <b>Review date from Notification Letter</b>  |  |
| Submit documents securely: Use this link to upload files ( <b>insert link</b> ).  |  |
| When the Document & Records Submission Instructions request information and documentation about <b>“Designated Candidates”</b> , it is referring to the candidates on this list. These names will be selected from EPP records in ECOS. Please <b>DO NOT</b> substitute any |  |

### **The Desk Review Process**

For a **desk review**, the review officially opens on the date identified in the **Notification Letter**. **Desk reviews** take approximately six weeks to complete. During this window, the review team will review documents, record evidence, and populate the standard CAR rubric. After the first review, the assigned Review Specialist will schedule a mid-point conference call with the EPP contact to discuss initial findings and seek clarification, if necessary. The TEA review team may request additional documentation at that time. The assigned Review Specialist will also identify the due date for submission of the follow-up documents. The TEA review team will then complete the review with any additional documentation submitted by the EPP. A final conference call or video meeting will be scheduled with EPP staff to discuss final outcomes. A report containing findings and areas requiring corrective action (Next Steps) will be drafted and sent electronically to EPP staff prior to the final conference call. After the final conference call, the CAR will close. At that point, no additional documentation will be accepted for review.

### **Curriculum Review**

TEA staff will review the syllabi or course outlines, **Status Report**, and any other material requested to ensure the program is adhering to all curriculum requirements as prescribed by TAC. TEA will notify the program if additional curriculum documents are needed during the **desk review**.

### **Continuing Approval Review Report for the Desk Review**

An official report will be prepared and emailed to the EPP within approximately two (2) to four (4) weeks after the close of the review. The report will reflect review findings as well as areas requiring corrective action. After the EPP Legal Authority receives the report, he/she will have 10 business days to review the report and request any corrections to its contents. NOTE: Review findings may not be changed in the report. If the EPP Legal Authority does not respond within 10 business days, the report will become official on the eleventh business day. There will be no changes to the report once it becomes official.

EPP staff will have four (4) months to complete all corrective actions and submit requested evidence to TEA for review. Reports are posted on the [Consumer Information](#) page on the TEA website.

## **Continuing Approval On-Site Review (Information for EPPs reviewed in an on-site review format)**

The **on-site review** is conducted on the EPP site. During the review, EPPs can expect a detailed audit evaluating the ten components of the CAR and thorough communication from TEA staff.

### **Agenda for the On-site Continuing Approval Review**

The TEA assigned Review Specialist will consult with the EPP on the specific agenda for the on-site visit and will prepare and email a final copy of the agenda to the EPP. The EPP can expect the review team to report to the EPP site between 8:00-9:00 am on the first day (usually a Tuesday morning) and close the review and depart from the EPP site between 12:00-5:00 pm on the last day (likely on Friday depending on the size of the EPP). The agenda may reflect time at the beginning of the first day for the EPP staff to have a brief introductory meeting with the TEA staff to discuss the CAR process and provide a brief overview of the EPP. Opening and closing sessions may be attended by any EPP staff at the discretion of the EPP. There will be time reserved at the end of each day to review the findings with EPP staff and discuss additional documentation that may be needed for the next review day.

### **Travel Arrangements for the On-site Continuing Approval Review**

For a CAR that is conducted on-site at the EPP, all travel arrangements will be made by the TEA review team in accordance with TEA policies and procedures. The assigned Review Specialist may request assistance from EPP staff in securing specific directions to the EPP site and/or information about parking on-site. If parking passes or other security measures are required, EPP staff should work with the TEA review team so that they are informed and are able to provide the appropriate credentials needed to access the EPP site during review week.

The EPP should not plan breakfasts, lunches, or evening activities for the TEA review team during the visit. The review team often continues working after leaving the review site. Additionally, the EPP staff must not provide gifts of any kind to the TEA review team as they are not able to accept them.

### **EPP Facilities for the On-site Continuing Approval Review**

The TEA review team will require a room which can be locked and has internet access. The work room must have a lock to protect secure records in the event the review team must leave the room for some reason. Internet access is necessary so that the TEA review team may work collaboratively and also so they have access to the ECOS system and to published TAC and TEC as needed via electronic links.

### **Document & Record Submission Instructions**

Except for the **Status Report** documents, EPPs reviewed in the on-site format will not submit documents and records to TEA. Instead, documents and records will be reviewed by the TEA review team on-site at the EPP. EPP staff should begin to collect general EPP records and documents in preparation for the review; however, candidate records will be requested by the TEA review team once the team is on-site at the EPP. For planning purposes, the CAR rubric which is published on the [Program Provider Resources](#) page, may be a helpful guide for EPP staff as they prepare for a TEA on-site review because it contains examples of evidence. Additionally, the [Figure: 19 TAC §228.10\(b\)\(1\)](#) will provide some guidance on the types of documents and information that may be collected and evaluated by TEA staff during the review (NOTE: The Figure may not be up to date with the most recent updates elsewhere in TAC). The assigned Review Specialist at TEA can also assist with answers to questions regarding evidence of compliance with TAC. Other than the **Status Report** and related Appendices, documents and records must NOT be submitted to TEA but instead must be available for review when the review team arrives on-site. **NOTE: EPP staff will need to be available to provide and supervise TEA access to any records that are maintained in electronic EPP files. TEA supports the use of electronic files and does not expect or prefer that EPP staff print electronic records for the purposes of the review.**

### **Candidate Records**



For the **on-site review**, the EPP will receive a **Designated Candidate List** when the review team arrives on-site on opening day. The list reflects the names of candidates whose records will be reviewed. EPP staff will deliver the requested candidate records to the work room designated for the TEA review team. If records are stored electronically, a person from the EPP staff must pull records up from the electronic database for reviewers. If records are in paper files, the records can be delivered to the review team and will be returned in their original condition to the EPP staff for storage after the review team has completed the review. Examples of candidate records that will be reviewed include: all admission records, including transcripts; benchmarking documents; observation documents completed by field supervisors; service records; mentor agreements, documentation of qualifications of field supervisors, mentors, cooperating teachers, and site supervisors and evidence of training provided to them; and any other documents that provide evidence of candidate admission and completion of program requirements.

Example of Designated Candidate List:

| Designated Candidate List   |                              |                |               |                                     |           |
|---|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| EPP Name (CDN)  |                              |                |               |                                     |           |
| These names have been selected from EPP records in ECOS. Please provide candidate records for these candidates. DO NOT substitute any other names for those on this list. |                              |                |               |                                     |           |
| Certification Route (U, PB, ACP)  | Certification Class/Category | Candidate Name | TEA ID Number | Other Enrolled (OE) or Finisher (F) | Year      |
| U   | CS EC-6                      | B. Smith       | 222222        | OE                                  | 2018-2019 |
| PB  | Principal                    | J. Leader      | 111111        | F                                   | 2019-2020 |
|   |                              |                |               |                                     |           |
|   |                              |                |               |                                     |           |
|   |                              |                |               |                                     |           |
|   |                              |                |               |                                     |           |
|   |                              |                |               |                                     |           |
|   |                              |                |               |                                     |           |

**EPP Documents**

Some other records and documents the review team will want to evaluate are: evidence of advisory committee activity (e.g., meeting minutes); published information for candidates and applicants such as the EPP complaints process, information about background check requirements, and other required notifications; curriculum materials for one or more pre-determined certificate areas (e.g., syllabi, performance assessment samples); and program evaluation documents, including evidence of programmatic changes based on ongoing program evaluation.

**The Review**

For the **on-site review**, the review officially opens on the date identified in the **Notification Letter** which coincides with the first date the review team is on-site at the EPP. The review “opens” on the morning the team arrives on-site and “closes” on the day the team concludes the review (i.e., leaves the EPP site), a duration of three (3) to four (4) days. The duration of the review is usually influenced by the organization and availability of records and relevant documents at the EPP and/or the size of the EPP which dictates the volume of documents that will be reviewed. Once on-site, the review team will review documents, record evidence, and populate the standardized CAR rubric. After the review window closes and the review team has departed the EPP site, no additional evidence or documentation will be accepted for review.



At the end of each day, the TEA review team will meet with EPP staff to discuss the findings from the day and any additional documentation that may be needed for the next day.

The EPP is strongly encouraged to assign an EPP staff member to assist the review team with retrieving documents, accessing electronic records, and reaching out to other EPP staff that the review team may need to interview (examples for other EPP staff may include the certification officer, teaching faculty, technology staff, or field supervisors). NOTE: The TEA review team attempts to be as unobtrusive as possible, thus minimizing disruption to the EPP; however, at times, communication with various EPP staff provides valuable insight into EPP function and into the documentation and records being reviewed, and thus can be an important aspect of an in-depth review.

During the closing session on the last day, the findings will be shared with EPP staff with specific areas of growth and improvement identified. TEA staff will work with EPP staff, if necessary, to develop a Compliance Plan to bring identified EPP processes back into alignment with TAC. The Compliance Plan is detailed, evidence-based, and time-bound.

### **Continuing Approval Review Report for the On-Site Visit**

An official report will be prepared and emailed to the EPP within approximately two (2) to four (4) weeks after the close of the review. In some instances, the preparation of the report may take longer. After receiving the report, the EPP Legal Authority will have 10 business days to review the report and request any corrections to its contents. NOTE: Review findings may not be changed in the report. If the EPP Legal Authority does not respond within 10 business days, the report will become official on the eleventh business day. There will be no changes to the report once it becomes official. Reports are posted on the [Consumer Information](#) page on the TEA website.

## **Closing a Continuing Approval Review**

### **Closing Session**

Once the CAR is closed, no additional documents will be accepted. Upon completion of either the **desk review** or **on-site review**, the assigned Review Specialist will review the findings in a closing session with the EPP staff. For **desk reviews**, the closing session is via conference call or a synchronous digital platform. For **on-site reviews**, the closing session is face to face at the EPP site. EPP staff will need to engage a meeting room for that purpose if a large number of staff are expected to attend. If a situation arises where the on-site closing is disrupted due to weather, or another aggravating factor, the on-site closing will move to a virtual synchronous platform. If this happens, the TEA Review Specialist will provide the necessary links and access to EPP staff to attend the virtual meeting.

If compliance issues are identified during the review, the TEA and EPP staff will work together during the closing session to develop a plan to correct the out-of-compliance issues. EPP staff may include anyone they choose to attend the closing session. It is recommended that staff responsible for the various programs within the EPP engage in the closing session so that they may ask clarifying questions and contribute potential resolutions for the action items identified to bring the EPP back into compliance with requirements in TAC and TEC.

Once a plan is in place to address the action items, EPP staff will be expected to follow up with the assigned Review Specialist with evidence that all identified action items in the **Compliance Plan** or the **Corrective**

**Action/Next Steps** items have been resolved by the identified resolution date. **Note: Some reviews such as those conducted in accordance with SBEC Board Orders may not result in a Compliance Plan.**

**Corrective Action (Next Steps) / Compliance Plan**


If areas of the EPP are identified as non-compliant with TAC or TEC during the review, the TEA Review Specialist will work with EPP staff to develop a plan of action to bring the EPP back into compliance in all identified areas. This will be summarized in the report as well as detailed on a written plan provided to the EPP staff at closing. Evidence that the identified items have been corrected must be submitted to the assigned Review Specialist by the agreed-upon dates. The EPP will have four (4) months to provide evidence to TEA that compliance items have been corrected and required corrective actions are complete. When all areas of non-compliance have been brought into alignment with TAC or TEC, the Legal Authority will receive a letter from TEA verifying that the EPP has met TAC requirements and resolved all identified issues. This letter should be attached to the original CAR report issued by TEA and retained in the EPP records.

**Sample Section from CAR Report Reflecting Corrective Action for Desk Review:**

**CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED**

The EPP must publish the required information in a location transparent to applicants and/or candidates (as applicable) for all programs within the EPP as required by [enter due date].

1. Item:
2. Item:
3. Item:


4

**Sample Section from Compliance Plan Document for On-Site Reviews:**

| EPP Name: Texas EPP   |                         | 2022-2023 Compliance Plan |  | County District Number: 123456                         |  |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| The Compliance items listed below are due to TEA by <b>DUE DATE</b> . Upload through <b>SHAREFILE LINK</b> .<br>*Any folders uploaded in ShareFile must be zipped/compressed prior to upload. |                         |                           |  |  |  |
| TEA Compliance Discrepancy to be Addressed (Insert TAC and descriptor)  | Certification Class(es) | EPP Required Improvement  | Evidence of Completion (Submit to TEA) | Accepted / Not Accepted<br><small>TEA USE ONLY</small> |  |
| Component 1: Governance<br><a href="#">19 TAC §228.20</a>   |                         |                           |  |  |  |
|   |                         |                           |  |  |  |
| Component 2: Admission<br><a href="#">19 TAC §227.10</a>  |                         |                           |  |  |  |
|   |                         |                           |  |  |  |

**What Happens Next?**

19 TAC §229.6(a) identifies that the continuing approval of an EPP will be based on the EPP’s accreditation status and compliance with SBEC rules, as determined in the CAR. If during the five-year review, the EPP is found to be compliant with TAC and TEC, 19 TAC §229.6(b) requires TEA staff to issue a proposed recommendation to the SBEC to approve the renewal of the EPP. If TEA staff determines that an EPP has failed to comply with TAC or TEC and the EPP does not achieve compliance within the timelines

established, the TEA staff must recommend that the SBEC sanction the EPP. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, “public reprimand, revocation of program approval, or the imposition of conditions upon continuing program approval.”

# Appendix A



TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY  
 Division of Educator Preparation, Certification, & Enforcement  
 Educator Preparation Program Fee Form  
 For Site Visits

19 Texas Administrative Code §229.9 **Fees for Educator Preparation Program Approval and Accountability** requires payment for certain services provided by the TEA. Please complete this form and remit with payment.

|                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| EPP Name                       | Name of Person Submitting Form |
|                                |                                |
| County/District Number         | Contact Person                 |
|                                |                                |
| Contact Email                  | Contact Phone Number           |
|                                |                                |
| Amount Enclosed / Check Number |                                |
| \$4,500.00 /                   |                                |

Please send this form with a money order or check made payable to **TEA-EPP** prior to services being rendered. **Payment for on-site Continuing Approval Reviews for 2023-2024 is due at TEA between September 1 - September 30, 2023.**

If the payment sent to TEA is not honored by the financial institution, TEA will not be able to complete the requested service. Any bank fees assessed due to payment that is not honored by the financial institution will be the responsibility of the EPP.

Failure to return this form with the correct or complete payment may result in a delay in the review process.

**Please send your payment(s) to the following address:**

**TEA Accounting  
 1701 N. Congress Ave.  
 Austin, TX 78701**

# Appendix B

## **Guidance for Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) to Pay Continuing Approval Review Fees to TEA Electronically**

This document contains instructions for EPPs and prospective EPPs to make electronic payments to TEA for the fees for continuing approval reviews conducted on-site at the EPP. **This process should NOT be used to pay annual ASEP Technology fees. EPPs will receive separate guidance for how to pay annual ASEP Technology fees when invoiced for that fee.**

Per [19 TAC §229.9](#), the following fees are required for continuing approval reviews:

**(1) Five-year continuing approval review site visit--\$4,500.**

**(2) Discretionary continuing approval review site visit--\$4,500.**

Step 1: Pay the Fee Electronically

**Contact the assigned Review Specialist for  
electronic payment information.**

When making an electronic payment, the following information MUST be included in the addendum record.

Identify who the payment is from:

- ✓ Customer or Remitter Name

Identify the reason for the payment:

- ✓ EPP Name
- ✓ County District Number
- ✓ Application Type or "Continuing Approval Review" ("CAR")

There are 80 characters in this field so modify the information as necessary to convey the same meaning with fewer characters.

Step 2: Notify TEA of the Electronic Payment

EPP staff or entity Accounting Dept staff MUST notify TEA of the payment by submitting a [Help Desk](#) ticket via the Preparation Programs tile verifying:

- ✓ EPP name
- ✓ Application
- ✓ Date of Payment

For questions about this process, please contact the department of Educator Preparation at TEA via the Preparation Programs tile in the [Help Desk](#).

# Appendix C

## **Educator Preparation Contact List**

Contact the assigned Review Specialist with any questions or concerns. The assigned Review Specialist will facilitate the Continuing Approval Review process and will continue to work with the EPP staff as they complete Compliance Plan items or Corrective Action items.

**Vanessa Alba**



[Vanessa.alba@tea.texas.gov](mailto:Vanessa.alba@tea.texas.gov)

512-463-6282

Education Specialist

**Irene Chacon**

[irene.chacon@tea.texas.gov](mailto:irene.chacon@tea.texas.gov)

512-463-8429

Education Specialist

**Linda Mott**

[linda.mott@tea.texas.gov](mailto:linda.mott@tea.texas.gov)

512-463-8568

Education Specialist

**Keena Sandlin**

[keena.sandlin@tea.texas.gov](mailto:keena.sandlin@tea.texas.gov)

512-463-8379

Education Specialist

**Lorrie Ayers**

[Lorrie.ayers@tea.texas.gov](mailto:Lorrie.ayers@tea.texas.gov)

512-936-2166

Director, EPP Management

**Marilyn Cook**

[marilyn.cook@tea.texas.gov](mailto:marilyn.cook@tea.texas.gov)

512-936-8274

Senior Director, Educator Preparation and Certification

## Appendix D



### Continuing Approval Desk Review

# Document & Records Submission Instructions 2023-2024

\*\*Please read this section and all other document components carefully. Failure to submit requested documentation will indicate that documentation is unavailable and will therefore reflect as “non-compliance” in the review. \*\*

The purpose of this review is to comply with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(b), which states educator preparation programs (EPPs) “shall be reviewed at least once every five (5) years under procedures approved by the TEA staff; however, a review may be conducted at any time at the discretion of the TEA staff.” The documents and records requested in the Continuing Approval Review (CAR) reflect EPP compliance with the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) rules governing EPPs.

To complete this CAR in the **desk review** format, the EPP must submit documents and records to TEA using the following method:

- (1) electronically submitted via TEA’s secure Share File link.

Some document submission requirements may refer to a specific item identified on the **Status Report**, so it will be important for EPP staff to retain a completed copy of the **Status Report** as a reference when gathering documents to submit for review.

## Document Submission

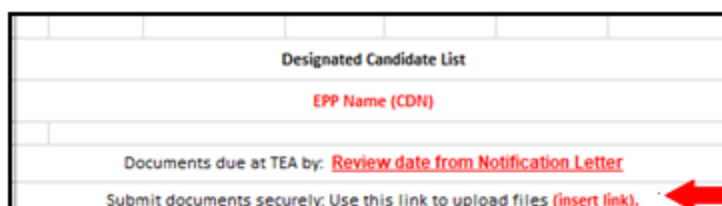
1. Copies of EPP records must be submitted and labeled as requested in these **Continuing Approval Desk Review Document & Records Submission Instructions**. Secure file submission must be used for the submission of all requested candidate records.
2. When documentation is required for a specified year, a “year” will be defined as September 1 – August 31 of the identified academic/reporting year (i.e., September 1, 2022 - August 31, 2023).
3. For the records review, TEA has pre-selected candidates from EPP records in ECOS. When information and records are requested for “Designated Candidates,” the EPP shall upload information **ONLY** for these pre-selected candidates via the secure Sharefile. If the requested information is missing for any of the candidates, the missing item should be noted in the documentation. **DO NOT** substitute information for any other candidates for the missing information.

## Secure Submission

Candidate information and records must be submitted via secure electronic transmission (i.e., the Sharefile that TEA sends to the EPP).

Submit documents via the secure Sharefile link:

1. Use the unique link provided on the Designated Candidate List document to submit secure files. When the files are received, the ShareFile system sends an email to the assigned Review Specialist that the files have been uploaded into the shared file.



**NOTE:** Folders uploaded via the ShareFile link must be zipped/compressed prior to upload. Documents that are not properly labeled or organized may cause delays in the review process.

EPPs are strongly encouraged to retain copies of everything sent to TEA. Documents containing candidate information are considered ‘audit working papers’ and are not required to be retained by TEA per the agency records retention policy. EPPs should not share information for any candidates other than those requested by TEA; further, EPPs must not use Social Security numbers as candidate identifiers. The names and TEA ID numbers for “Designated Candidates” pre-selected for this review will be sent to the EPP two (2) weeks prior to the Continuing Approval Review date identified in the **Notification Letter**.

### Submission of Requested Documents & Records

#### Candidates Identified for Records Review

For EPPs receiving a **desk review**, a “**Designated Candidate List**” document, populated with specific candidates, will be sent securely to the EPP two (2) weeks prior to the review date identified in the **Notification Letter**. When the submission instructions require documents to be submitted for the “Designated Candidates,” the instructions are referring to the candidates on this document:

| Designated Candidate List  |  |
|--|--|
| EPP Name (CDN)   |  |
| Documents due at TEA by: <a href="#">Review date from Notification Letter</a>  |  |
| Submit documents securely: Use this link to upload files <a href="#">(insert link)</a> .   |  |
| When the Document & Records Submission Instructions request information and documentation about “Designated Candidates”, it is referring to the candidates on this list. These names will be selected from EPP records in ECOS. Please DO NOT substitute any other names for those on this list. |  |

### **Records and Documents to be Submitted to TEA**

Submit the following EPP documents and/or candidate records to TEA. Where necessary, compile documents in electronic folders and label as identified below:

#### Component 1 & Component 5

- Document: Advisory Committee Minutes reflecting program evaluation discussion
- Document: Advisory Committee Training (or other evidence members are informed of roles and responsibilities on the advisory committee)

#### Component 2 (for each Designated Candidate)

- Candidate Record: Application for Admission into EPP
- Candidate Record: Written Offer of Formal Admission w/ Formal Admission Date
- Candidate Record: Transcripts Collected at Admission & Transcript Review, if applicable
- Candidate Record: Admission Screen(s) w/Rubric(s)
- Candidate Record: Deficiency Letter (nonteachers) (as applicable)
- Candidate Record: TOEFL Scores (as applicable)
- Candidate Record: Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) (as applicable)
- Candidate Record: Evidence of any additional published admission requirement (e.g., resume, letters of recommendation, writing sample, statement of purpose, etc.)

#### Component 3

- Document: Syllabi for Courses in Certificate Field/Class to be Evaluated (confer with Review Specialist to determine field or class)
- Document: Scope & Sequence
  - Scope & Sequence for Certificate Field/Class to be reviewed (Low Risk and Medium Risk only)
  - Scope & Sequence for Each Active Class (High Risk only)
- Document: Syllabi for Courses in which Required Curriculum Items in 19 TAC §228.30(c) & (d) are Taught

#### Component 4 (for each Designated Candidate)

- Candidate Record: FBE Log & Reflections (or Syllabus Detailing Collection and Verification of Reflections)
- Candidate Record: Supervised Clinical Experience Log (Clinical teachers, Non-teacher Practicum)

- Candidate Record: Statement of Eligibility (Intern Teachers)
- Candidate Record: Completed Observation Documents
- Candidate Record: Cooperating Teacher/Mentor/Site Supervisor Assignment & Qualifications
- Candidate Record: Cooperating Teacher/Mentor/Site Supervisor Evidence of Training
- Candidate Record: Evidence of Ongoing Support Provided by Field Supervisor (log or other)
- Document: Field Supervisor Qualifications
- Document: Field Supervisor Evidence of Training

#### Component 6

- Document: Signed Ethics Agreement for Staff
- Candidate Record: Signed Ethics Agreement for Candidate (for each Designated Candidate)

#### Component 7

- Document: Evidence of EPP improvement resulting from violations uncovered in formal complaints to TEA, as applicable **(NEW) (Label with Complaint Number)**

#### Component 8 (for each Designated Candidate)

- Candidate Record: Benchmark Document for Candidate Completion of Requirements
- Candidate Record: Transcripts Indicating Required Degree Conferred (U & PB)
- Candidate Record: Recommendation from Field Supervisor and Campus Personnel of Successful Clinical Experience

#### Component 9

- Data on documents and records will be compared with data in ECOS records to verify reporting accuracy for this component

#### Component 10

- Document(s): Course Syllabi for the Identified Certificate Area Reflecting Required Instruction
- Document(s): Coursework Samples for the Identified Certificate Area Reflecting Implementation of Required Instruction
- Candidate Record: Observation Document Reflecting Implementation by Candidate in the Clinical Experience

### **Labeling and Organizing Documents and Records for Submission**

All records and documents must be clearly labeled so that TEA’s review team understands the evidence contained in the records and documents. Please follow these guidelines when preparing documentation for submission:

Scan records for each candidate into a document and label the document with the candidate’s name and TEA ID number: “Last Name.F\_TEA ID”

e.g., Smith.B\_0000000

Compile the labeled candidate records into folders by program, and label each folder with the program name and identifying the contents of the folder: "Program\_Candidate Records"

e.g., PIL\_Candidate Records

Label EPP documents identifying the document contents and the program that uses that document.

e.g., AC Minutes\_EPP

e.g., Syllabus EDUC3305\_TCH(U)

Compile the labeled documents either individually or multiple related EPP documents in a folder by program and label the folder with the program name and contents:

e.g., Syllabi\_PIL(A)

e.g., Assessments\_DIA

When labeling documents and folders, it is important to keep the file names as short as possible to avoid downloading errors that happen when file names within a file hierarchy are too long. To help with this, please feel free to use the TEA certificate codes and route codes (see list below) for the program areas when labeling files. Note that files that do not download will need to be resubmitted or will be identified as missing records and the related items flagged as noncompliant.

Certificate Codes

|     |                           |
|-----|---------------------------|
| TCH | Teacher                   |
| PIL | Principal                 |
| SPN | Superintendent            |
| DIA | Educational Diagnostician |
| COU | School Counselor          |
| LIB | School Librarian          |
| RSP | Reading Specialist        |

Route Codes

|   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| U | Undergraduate/Traditional |
| B | Post-baccalaureate        |
| A | Alternative               |