



## Compliance Audit Report Summer of 2009 Austin College Initial Teacher Certification Program

According to Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(c), "An entity approved by the SBEC under this chapter...shall be reviewed at least once every five years under procedures approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff; however, a review may be conducted at any time at the discretion of the TEA staff." Per 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 Texas Education Agency administers Texas Administrative Code rules required by the Texas legislature for the regulation of all educator preparation programs in the state. Please see the complete Texas Administrative Code at [www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us) for details.

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Program Specialist, Corrina Noriega, conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Desk Audit of Austin College. The focus of the compliance audit was the initial teacher certification program. The following are findings and recommendations for program improvement.

### **SCOPE OF THE COMPLIANCE AUDIT:**

The scope of the audit was restricted solely to verifying compliance with Texas Administrative Code §227, §228, §229,

### **Data Analysis:**

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) governing educator preparation programs was collected by various qualitative means. A self-report was submitted to the Texas Education Agency via Survey Monkey along with requested verifying documents. Because student records contain confidential information and could not be transmitted to TEA, student records were checked by the program using a check list supplied by TEA. In addition, electronic questionnaires developed by TEA were sent to Austin College stakeholders. Number stakeholders responded to the questionnaires: Number advisory committee members; Number student teachers, clinical teachers, interns; Number field supervisors; Number principals; and Number cooperating teachers/mentors responded. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to evaluate the evidence. Evidence of compliance was measured using a rubric aligned with Texas Administrative Code. After the review of the information, the program specialist arranged a telephone debrief to cover the findings of the audit. The findings were incorporated into the

original survey monkey form and sent to the program. This summary report provides the findings and recommendations resulting from the audit.

## **COMPONENT I: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs- Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20**

### **FINDINGS:**

The advisory committee (AC) consists of members from within and outside the educator preparation program. A list of members from the self-report indicated there are currently twenty-three (23) members. No business or community interests are represented on the advisory committee. Review of agenda minutes and sign in sheets indicated two meetings were held within the academic year. Ten (10) advisory committee members responded to the questionnaire. The advisory committee confirmed through their questionnaire that they felt involved in the decision making process of the Austin College educator preparation program. While they indicated the AC does not directly change policy, they feel they do have some influence on program decisions. They also feel they keep the program abreast of new trends in curriculum, instruction, technology, and informed of state mandates in public schools.

**Based on the evidence presented, Austin College is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.20 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs.**

## **COMPONENT II: ADMISSION CRITERIA - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10**

### **FINDINGS:**

Austin College is a post-back master's level certification program. The college has met and exceeds the state minimum requirements for admission. All candidates must have a 3.0 GPA in the content area in which they are seeking certification. In addition, all applications are reviewed and admission is determined by a faculty advisory board. Information about the program is posted on their website, and the program utilizes the news, information sessions, and media to recruit new students into their program. Student records are managed in accordance with state requirements.

**Based on the evidence presented, Austin College is in compliance with TAC §227 - Admission Criteria.**

## **COMPONENT III: CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30**

### **FINDINGS:**

Austin College is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum. Upon review of the documentation supplied by Austin

College, it is clear that courses are aligned to educator standards and TEKS. According to the self-report, instructors have advanced degrees and more than five years experience teaching. All are certified teachers, and most are Texas certified teachers. Comments on student teacher questionnaires indicated that while instruction was provided in the 17 curriculum areas, instruction regarding conducting parent conferences, addressing the needs of special needs children, and English language learners was limited. Syllabi for each course were provided. These very detailed and were consistent across the curriculum. All provided a course description, expectations, assignments, due dates and grading policy. Further review indicated the 17 curriculum topics were embedded throughout the coursework. No online courses are offered; however, the respondents indicated online chats and blogs were utilized so classmates could communicate with each other during the student teaching experience. The college has integrated the use of technology in their program, and the interns' responses on the questionnaire substantiated these findings.

**Based on evidence presented, Austin College is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum.**

#### **COMPONENT IV: Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training (TAC) §228.35**

##### **FINDINGS:**

Observations are documented by keeping a log of classroom visits on calendars, and notes taken during observations are shared with the students and cooperating teachers. For struggling candidates, additional observations with specific feedback for improvement are offered, as well as extra contact with cooperating teachers/mentor teachers/principals. It was noted that the program does not provide observation information to campus administrators. According to TAC Section §228.35, a copy of observation documentation must be provided to the campus administrator.

**Based on evidence presented, Austin College is not in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §228.35 – Program Delivery and On-Going Support.**

#### **COMPONENT V: Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement – Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.40**

##### **FINDINGS:**

Austin College is in compliance with TAC rule §228.40. The candidates are evaluated throughout their undergraduate and graduate coursework through graded exams, observations, critiqued lesson plans and class discussions. Field supervisors and cooperating teachers evaluate candidates throughout the student teaching experience by field supervisors and cooperating teachers using observation forms. According to the self-report and questionnaires completed by student teachers and cooperating teachers, observations often lasted more than forty-five minutes. Feedback is shared with the candidate. Candidates' progress is continually monitored through student folder review, as well as an end of semester review of students' performance. ASEP data over the last three years shows a 100% pass rate on exams. Of the twenty (20) student teachers surveyed, fifty percent passed the content test the first time, while thirty-seven

(37) percent had not taken the test. Sixty-five percent indicated they passed the PPR test the first time, while thirty-five (35) percent had not taken the test. The ten members on the advisory committee who responded indicated that they evaluate the program using ASEP scores, qualitative evaluations from faculty, students, and campus administrators, as well as student retention information and test pass rates.

**Based on evidence presented, Austin College is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement.**

## PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Program Compliance Recommendations are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency compliance audit. If the program is out of compliance with any component, please consult the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. General Recommendations are suggestions for program improvement only.

**PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:** In order to meet requirements of Texas Administrative Code governing educator preparation programs, the following recommendations must be implemented immediately:

TAC §228.35 Program Delivery and On-Going Support

- Share written feedback regarding the candidate with the campus administrator as prescribed by TAC Rule §228.35(f) for the 2009-2010 school year.

### **OTHER PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:**

None at this time.