



Compliance Desk Audit Report Summer of 2009 McMurry University 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 for details.

Contact Information: Dr. Perry K. Haley-Brown, Dean

County/District Number: 221-503

SBEC Approval Date:

Program Specialist, Corrina Noriega, conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Desk Audit of McMurry University. 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 McMurry University stakeholders. Fifty stakeholders responded to the questionnaires: Eight (8) advisory committee members; eight (8) student teachers, clinical teachers, interns; no field supervisors; eight (8) principals; and twelve (12) 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 McMurry University Educator Preparation program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 228.20 -Governance of Educator Preparation Programs. The McMurry University Educator Preparation program is advised through a tiered committee system. The Education Advisory Board directly advises the educator preparation program and consists of eleven (11) members. This board represents members of the school district, the university, and business and community. The University is actively seeking representation from the regional service center. The Education Advisory Council consists of elected members who represent each teaching field. This council provides input to the Education Advisory Board. McMurry University is also a part of the Big County Teacher Center, a regional advisory committee that represents higher education, professional organizations, students, teachers, and the community. Eight (8) members responded to the survey. Based on survey responses members are aware of the rules that govern educator preparation programs and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The documentation indicated that the committee met the required two times per year, and the minutes from various meetings indicated they were a body that is actively involved in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of the program.

Based on the evidence presented, McMurry University 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:

The McMurry University Educator Preparation Program is in compliance in with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 227.10 - ADMISSION CRITERIA. Information regarding the admission criteria is published on the website, catalog, and brochures. The university actively recruits new candidates through job fairs, school and community college visits, and various media outlets. Review of admission applications and other documentation indicated that McMurry University adheres to admission requirements as stated in rule. In order to determine the candidates' compatibility with the teaching profession, all candidates are required to successfully complete an introduction to education course. This course includes ten required hours of field experiences in which students must interact with students in the school setting. The Educational Advisory Board faculty members also review candidates' application and recommend candidates for the program. Review of the

student folders indicated that admission criteria were applied fairly and consistently. The folders reviewed contained signed applications, as well as a student teaching application. The program requires a GPA of 2.75 for admission, as well as TASP/THEA with higher than state mandated minimum scores.

Based on the evidence presented, McMurry University is in compliance with TAC §227 - Admission Criteria.

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

FINDINGS:

The McMurry University Educator Preparation Program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 228.30 - EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM. The university's faculty is well qualified and experienced. Of the faculty members who responded to the questionnaires (8), all have advanced degrees, and hold either a Texas teaching certificate or an out-of-state teaching certificate. The program exceeds the 300 clock hours as required by the state by providing 317 clock hours in the education coursework alone. The program provides fifty-five hours of field based experiences exceeding the state minimum requirement for field based experiences. Review of the Essential Components for Educator Preparation Curriculum document prepared by McMurry University staff indicated that all seventeen curriculum topics were covered throughout the curriculum. In addition, the curriculum is aligned to a departmentally-developed scope and sequence that specifies where each element of knowledge and skills is introduced, where it is further developed, and in where it is expected to be mastered. Review of the course syllabi substantiated these findings. The syllabi reviewed all had a similar format, listing the institutional and course objectives, competencies and expected outcomes. Each content area includes a complementary instructional methods course to address specific issues that arise in the delivery of the content of that area. According to the student teacher surveys, reading instruction across the curriculum was an area of instruction that needed improvement. Discussions with the dean, members of the faculty and advisory committee indicate that they are aware of this issue, especially at the secondary level.

Based on evidence presented, McMurry University 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: The McMurry University Educator Preparation Program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 228.35 - Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training. According to documents provided by the university, the total number of program hours is at least three-hundred and seventeen (317), with fifty-five (55) hours of field experiences that are embedded throughout the coursework. Courses are taught face-to-face, and most courses utilize learning system courseware (Moodle) for online assignments

and evaluation. Review of the surveys indicated faculty utilizes several methods of delivery, including class discussions, role plays, case studies, and class simulations. Faculty surveys indicated digital product distribution groups, Wikipedia, blogs, digital photography and internet-based video are also used in order to integrate technology into the curricula and model the use of technology for the candidates. Since 2003, students have been offered opportunities to work one-on-one with faculty members in individualized coaching sessions as they prepare for their PPR TExES exams. EC-6 students who score poorly on their

representative form exams are required to attend one-to-three hours coaching sessions, and secondary students are offered opportunities to work individually with a faculty member to prepare for their PPR TExES on several Saturdays throughout the year.

Cooperating Teachers are trained using TXBESS, and the program provides a handbook that outlines the roles and responsibilities of both the student teacher and cooperating teacher. Field supervisors are also given a handbook that outlines their roles and responsibilities. Cooperating teachers are given tuition vouchers that are redeemable at McMurry, Hardin-Simmons, and Abilene Christian Universities. McMurry assigns the field supervisors to sections of student teaching. Each section has 6 students. The supervisor goes to visit each student 5 times. The first visit is an introductory visit and the next 4 visits are for evaluation purposes. If there is a problem, they are authorized to do as many visits as they think are necessary. The university also employs a "Mobile Field Supervisor" whose responsibility is to visit the student teachers that are teaching in other areas across the state. The dean indicated on the self report that the administrator is not given a copy of observation documents; however, discussions with the field supervisors indicate that the administrator was given a copy of observation documents and the student teacher's progress was discussed. McMurry University has several innovative programs to provide opportunities for their teacher candidates. The EC-6 Reading Camp is designed to provide one-on-one reading instruction to students in the Abilene area. During this camp, EC – 6 pre-service teachers assess the students' reading abilities, identify areas of strengths and weakness, and deliver individualized instruction to each student for a minimum of 8 hours. During the fall and spring semesters, Reading Camp is field-based working with partner schools in Abilene ISD. During the summers, Reading Camp is provided on the McMurry University campus and is open to all students in Abilene and the surrounding areas. McMurry also hosts a fifth grade math/science magnet program for twenty-two Abilene ISD students. Teacher candidates have the opportunity to plan, teach and assess mini-lessons in the magnet school classroom. Faculty from various disciplines across the campus also gives their instructional time and expertise to the fifth grade magnet program. During the magnet school's first year of operation, all twenty-two students in the magnet school program passed all portions of the TAKS reading, math and science exams. McMurry University and the School of Education are very proud of this unique collaborative educational partnership. In the summer of 2008, McMurry University initiated the ESL tutoring experience for the secondary program candidates. The success of this initiative has prompted program leadership to explore more opportunities for their secondary candidates including a math/science camp where secondary students can help with labs for the magnet school.

Based on evidence presented, McMurry University is 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:

The McMurry University Educator Preparation Program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 228.40 ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT. The program utilizes various methods to assess the candidates for mastery of concepts. Along with taking practice TExES and PPR exams, candidates are required to complete research assignments, response papers, lesson plans, take part in role playing activities conduct self-evaluations and student presentations. Data from the TExES exams is used to address deficiencies in the curriculum. Content area faculty members are especially diligent with the review and discussion of this data to ensure the secondary certification candidates are receiving the proper instruction for testing success. The GPAs of students are periodically reviewed at various points during program to address deficiencies. In addition, all student teachers complete a Teacher Work Sample (TWS) during the first six weeks of their student teaching placement. The purpose of the TWS is to connect their teaching to the learning of their students. The TWS enables the student teacher to document the application of knowledge and skills to teaching and to analyze and reflect upon both the teaching and learning that occurs. Each TWS contains specific segments that are required components, and each student teacher is responsible for preparing it as evidence of professional competence. The office of Research and Planning and the program instructors complete yearly reviews of curriculum and use data from ASEP as well as evaluations from faculty and teacher candidates to drive curriculum changes. In addition, the university conducts a "Program Review" every five years to ensure the continued effectiveness of each department. The University is also a "CREATE" institution, and takes part in the Performance Analysis for Colleges of Education, or PACE, which describes and charts a Proximal Zone of Professional Impact (PZPI) for each institution in order to consider long-term program interventions. It also allows the university to measure effectiveness of the teacher preparation programs as well as furnish a structured format that will enable university and public school leaders to engage in systematic analysis of achievement and staffing patterns in their immediate vicinity.

Based on evidence presented, McMurry University is 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:

None at this time.

OTHER PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Continue to promote creative long term strategic planning to enhance all aspects of the educator preparation program;
- 2) Continue to advance the elaborate use of technology to efficiently operate and evaluate the educator preparation program;
- 3) Ensure all field supervisors share observation feedback with the administrator as stated in rule;
- 4) Continue to seek creative ways to increase secondary field-observation experiences.