



Compliance Visit Report 2009-2010 Education Service Center Region VI

According to 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 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 rules at www.tea.state.tx.us for details contained in each rule.

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Mixon Henry, Program Specialist, and Dr. Mary Black, Program Specialist, conducted a Texas Education Agency continuing approval visit on March 24 and 25, 2010. The following are the findings and recommendations for program improvement.

Date Self-Report Submitted: February, 2010

COMPONENT I: COMMITMENT AND COLLABORATION - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20 – GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Findings:

Education Service Center Region VI (ESC VI) is in compliance with Texas Administration Code §228.20. The advisory committee represents a balanced membership of 33 voting members from school districts, higher education, education service centers, and business and community. Meetings are held four times per year. Meetings were conducted on April 21st and October 6th, 2009. An additional advisory committee meeting was held on March 24, 2010 during the ESC Region VI monitoring visit. Agendas, minutes and attendance records were available in the document review as evidence of advisory committee compliance.

Eleven out of 33 advisory committee members responded to the advisory committee questionnaire. Fifty-five percent (55%) of the responding committee members indicated they had served on the advisory committee for more than three years. In discussing the longevity of the advisory committee with the director, it was stated that the average time on the advisory committee was five years and one had been on it for seventeen (17) years. In the questionnaire responses, ninety-one percent (91%) indicated that they were well versed in their roles and responsibilities.

Based on responses from the advisory committee members, they have a direct impact on the program's policies, delivery and evaluation. The members reported that they participated in decisions impacting the clinical teaching assignments, starting dates of program, and manner of support for struggling interns.

Compliance Status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 228.20 - GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM. In light of the findings detailed above, Education Service Center Region VI is in compliance.

Commendations:

Education Service Center Region VI is commended for having three members of the Advisory Committee that are graduates of its teaching program.

Education Service Center Region VI is commended for the longevity of the membership on the Advisory Committee which has given stability on the committee.

COMPONENT II. ADMISSION CRITERIA - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10 - ADMISSION CRITERIA

Findings:

Education Service Center Region VI is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §227.10- Admission Requirements.

ESC Region VI requires a completed application with questions to determine educational philosophy, 2.5 Grade Point Average (GPA) or 2.75 in the last sixty (60) hours from an accredited university, passing scores on the THEA or comparable test or if transcripts satisfy Texas Success Initiative, a successful background check, letters of recommendation, and rubric graded interview with staff members in order to be considered for the educator preparation program. When all of the above mentioned items are submitted, staff evaluates the documentation to determine if the candidate has met the criteria for admission.

All students, regardless of immigration status, who are citizens of countries where English is not the native language must pass all three sections of the TOEFL prior to admission or file for an exemption.

The Education Service Center Region VI disseminates information to potential candidates through the advisory committee members, their website, catalogue, career fairs, school and community college visits, brochures, various media outlets, and by word-of-mouth.

ESC Region VI indicated that no students were admitted under the 10% cohort rule.

Compliance Status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 227.10 - ADMISSION CRITERIA. In light of the findings detailed above, Education Service Center Region VI is in compliance.

Commendations:

Education Service Center Region VI is commended for requiring two written components in the application and a face to face interview with program staff prior to admissions to the program.

COMPONENT III. CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30 - EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM

Findings:

Education Service Center Region VI is in compliance with TAC §228.30 Educator Preparation Curriculum. According to document review of the ESC instructors, one hundred percent (100%) have advanced degrees, hold a Texas teaching certificates, and have 5+ years of experience in the classroom.

Ninety two percent (92%) of the student teachers indicated that they had been provided with a clear and concise course syllabus. In reviewing the available course syllabi, it was found that there is a difference between the online courses syllabi and face-to-face ones. The online syllabi had common components such as course descriptions, objects, TExES standards, PPR topics covered and assessments to denote the progress of the candidate. The face-to-face syllabi were unclear as to objectives, standards, assignments, and assessments. It was recommended that instructors review each syllabus, create uniformity for all syllabi, and include the 17 TAC mandated curriculum topics in each syllabus where appropriate to make the curriculum items more obvious to the teaching candidates. It was noted that the face-to-face coursework lack sufficient assessments to track the progress of candidates.

Coverage of the 17 curriculum topics was confirmed through the self-report, clinical teacher/intern responses, and through the course correlation required by TEA. These topics spiral throughout the program's curriculum.

In responding to the question of how effective the course content was, the clinical teachers/interns indicated that instruction in the following areas was effective and useful: reading strategies across the curriculum for all grade levels (100%); Texas Code of Ethics (92%); utilizing TEKS in the content areas (96%), modeling and methodologies in classroom management (95%), and variety of instructional strategies (95%). Areas that clinical teachers/interns would like to see more emphasis placed were: process of curriculum development (22%); laws and standards regarding students with special needs (25%); and standards and teaching strategies for gifted and talented students (22%). It is recommended that the ESC Region VI review and create additional coursework on the gifted and talented curriculum. From the cooperative teacher/mentors' questionnaire, ninety percent (90%) revealed that they have no concerns with the preparation of the candidate or the education preparation program.

It was also noted that ESC Region VI provides additional coursework in school safety and crisis prevention and intervention (CPI). Preparation for the TExES PPR exam is offered through eight clock hours of online review and practice. These sessions are required of all teaching candidates. ESC Region VI's candidates' success on the TExES exam averages ninety-eight percent (98%) over the last three years.

Compliance Status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 228.30 - EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM. In light of the findings detailed above, Education Service Center Region VI is in compliance.

Commendations:

Education Service Center Region VI is commended for offering additional coursework in school safety and Crisis Prevention and Intervention.

COMPONENT IV: PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ONGOING SUPPORT - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35 – PREPARATION PROGRAM COURSEWORK AND/OR TRAINING

Findings:

Education Service Center Region Vi is in compliance with TAC §228.35 Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training.

The program’s curriculum is presented in a face-to-face and online format. The total program hours for the educator preparation program are 300+ clock hours, without the acceptance of district training hours. The program requirement of field experience is forty (40) clock hours.

Cooperating teacher/mentor are provided a handbook and an online training module. From questionnaires received from cooperating teachers/mentors and principals, qualification of cooperating teachers/mentors include: ninety percent (90%) have 7+ years of classroom experience, fifty percent (50%) have advanced degrees, and one hundred percent (100%) have a Texas teaching certificate.

In response from questionnaires from field supervisors and in documents reviewed, the qualifications for field supervisors include: one hundred percent (100%) have advanced degrees, one hundred percent (100%) have Texas teacher and/or administrative certification, one hundred percent (100%) have been a principal or superintendent, and one hundred percent (100%) have five or more years of classroom teaching experience. Training for field supervisors covers a combination of TxBEES, coaching techniques, mentoring methods, orientation to field base instruction, and handbook review. In response from clinical teachers/interns, one hundred percent (100%) reveals that field supervisors were effective or very effective.

Per responses from the clinical teachers/interns and cooperating teachers/mentors, first contact is made by the field supervisors within the first three weeks. In reviewing the student folders, evidence of three formal observations was present as prescribed by TAC rule §228.35. Formal observations were at least 45 minutes in duration followed by an interactive conference with the candidate. The observation forms found in the student folders were signed by the candidate and the field supervisor. Per the principal and the field supervisor, a copy of the formal observation is provided electronically to the campus administrator. The average field supervisor to student teacher ratio is 1 to 12.

Students who are struggling in the program are provided extra visits by the field supervisors. If issues continue, an intervention plan is created to identify and remediate areas of concern. If necessary, another year of internship is required to acquire the identified skill set.

Student records are well organized and kept in secured cabinets in locked offices in the Education Service Center building. Other documentation is kept electronically with secured identification and password required in order to gain access.

Compliance status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 228.35 – PREPARATION PROGRAM COURSEWORK AND/OR TRAINING. In light of the findings detailed above, Education Service Center Region VI is in compliance.

Commendations:

Education Service Center Region VI is commended for the quality of field supervisors. The academic and educational experience in the classroom and at the administrative position provides an exceptional insight to the needs of the school, student, and intern.

COMPONENT V. PROGRAM EVALUATION - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.40 - ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT.

Findings:

Education Service Center Region VI is in compliance with TAC §228.40 Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement.

ESC Region VI maintains a benchmarking system by testing, module assessments, projects and observations. However, more and varying assessments are needed to verify that required skill sets are acquired in order for the candidate to move forward in the program.

Curriculum evaluation is an ongoing process. Candidates evaluate each course, module, and instructor. That feedback is reviewed and evaluated by the ESC program director and Advisory Committee members. Revisions are made as needed.

Overall program evaluation is conducted annually by Stetson and Associates. Surveys are sent to all participants including interns, mentors, campus administrators, district human resource department personnel, field supervisors, instructors, and program staff. This information is gathered and correlated and then presented to the program in notebooks. The Stetson evaluation information and additional data gathered from ASEP, candidate retention information, and results of TExES exams are reviewed by staff and advisory committee members.

Records are kept for five years. Student folders are stored securely behind several lockable doors within the offices of the Education Service Center.

Compliance Status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 228.40 - ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT. In light of the findings detailed above, Education Service Center Region VI is in compliance.

Commendations:

Education Service Center Region VI is commended for utilizing an outside source in its annual program evaluation process.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION

The following are recommendations based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency Visit. If the program is NOT in compliance with any component, please consult the TAC rules and initiate actions to correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. A progress report will be required in one year on Compliance Recommendations.

General program recommendations are suggestions for general program improvement and do not require follow-up.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS: A Progress Report will be required in one year.

None at this time.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS: No progress report is necessary.

- Create additional coursework to address the Gifted and Talented strategies for instruction.
- Create additional assessments and benchmarks to determine the progress of the candidates as they progress through their coursework.
- Create clear and standardized syllabi for each course to address domains, competences, standards, objectives, hours counted in coursework, course readings, TEKS, activities, and assessments (with grading criteria) to prepare the candidate for the expectations of the course.