



Compliance Audit Report 2009-2010 Education Service Center Region XI 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: County/District Number: SBEC Approval Date:

Program Specialist, Mixon Henry and David Carmody, conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Audit of Education Service Center Region XI. 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 Education Service Center Region XI stakeholders. One hundred fifty-three stakeholders responded to the questionnaires: Nine (9) advisory committee members; forty-two (42) student teachers, clinical teachers, interns; eight (8) field supervisors; twenty-five (25) principals; and forty-two (42) cooperating teachers/mentors and twenty-three (23) faculty instructors 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:

ESC XI is in compliance with TAC rule §228.20 Advisory Committee, Commitment and Collaboration. The advisory committee meets twice during the academic year, sometimes more depending on issues and concerns. To document the meetings, agendas and minutes per meeting were provided by the program. It was documented that there was input by the advisory committee with curriculum, policy, and the evaluation process. In reviewing membership and the self-report, all suggested members are included in the advisory committee.

Based on the evidence presented, Education Service Center Region XI 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:

ESC Region XI is in compliance with TAC rule §227.10 Admission Criteria. The criteria for admission include the following:

- GPA of 2.5 or better
- Satisfactory test scores on THEA or comparable test (ACT/SAT/or TSI)
- Interview of candidates
- Written assessment as part of the application
- 24 hours in the subject content areas (secondary candidates)
- Successful score on the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Assessment.

Recruitment for ESC Region XI is addressed by: Website, advisory committee, job fairs, school and community visits, and brochures.

Based on the evidence presented, Education Service Center Region XI is in compliance with TAC §227 - Admission Criteria.

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

FINDINGS:

ESC Region XI is in compliance with TAC rule §228.30, Educator Preparation Curriculum. The instructors have advanced degrees, Texas or out-of-state certificates, and public school experience. The curriculum covers the required 17 items of the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibility and is embedded throughout the curriculum. ESC Region XI offers a unique class on ethics that expands upon the rules and expectations of teacher behavior. This ethics coursework is a 12 hour online study of legal issues with scenarios based on the Texas Code of Ethics. This is followed up by a post assignment activity; a local school district's attorney presents a six-hour class on Ethics and Implications for the classroom teacher. It concludes with a question and answer session with the attorney for clarification.

The class schedule for each cohort group is color-coded and uses a template-like instrument to track the progress of each candidate through the training. This method allows a quick and accurate method to pinpoint the location of each educator in the program.

Feedback from candidates from the electronic questions reported the needed improvement in the following curriculum areas: administering TAKS examinations, conducting parent/teacher conferences, curriculum development, and technology development for the classroom.

Based on evidence presented, Education Service Center Region XI 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:

ESC Region XI is in compliance with TAC rule §228.35, Program Delivery and On-Going Support. ESC Region XI requires candidates to participate in field experience of 30 clock hours or more, which meets state requirements. They provide an excellent online course which enhances the opportunity of candidates to understand more in the field experience – Harry Wong book and follow-up activities (22 activities). Curriculum hours exceed the required 300 clock hours by TAC rule §228.35. In calculating the 300 clock hours, the program does not count the maximum allowed coursework of 50 hours offered by districts, but does document the training attended by candidates.

Training for cooperating teachers/mentors is provided by school districts and ESC Region XI. This training is also documented by the program.

Training for Field Supervisors is accomplished by a combination of materials including: TxBESS, coaching techniques, mentoring methods, orientation to field-based instruction and student teaching, and handbook review.

The ESC's field supervisors' qualifications are as follows: experienced professional educator currently certified in Texas, former administrator, and a minimum of 5 years of teaching experience. The observations of interns and clinical teachers are performed four or more times with oral and written feedback, followed-up with a conference. The observation documentation instruments have PDAS-like items that display the categories and anecdotal comments. In reviewing the interns electronic surveys, 36% of interns responded that the field supervisor has not made contact with them during the first 3 weeks of their assignment. In the electronic surveys of field supervisors, 14% stated they had not made contact within the first 6 weeks, 86% stated they had made contact within the first 3 weeks. Clinical teachers and interns also reported 94% satisfaction with the effectiveness of field supervisors.

Student records are well organized and kept in secure cabinets in locked offices and other documentation is kept electronically.

Program staff and advisory guide the candidates through the requirements with face-to-face meetings and direct contact to simplify the process.

Based on evidence presented, Education Service Center Region XI 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:

ESC Region XI is in compliance with TAC rule §228.40, Program Evaluation. The program uses Stetson & Associates for an external evaluation of the program. Stetson & Associates gathers feedback from interns, mentors, campus administrators, and district HR personnel, by way of questionnaires, to produce a comprehensive evaluation of the program. An internal evaluation of courses and/or modules is performed after each candidate completes the course or module training. The candidates' feedback includes coursework content and instructors. Program curriculum is evaluated by candidates' feedback, ASEP data, and Advisory Committee input. Evaluation of program is reviewed by program staff, administration, and advisory committee members and input is sought to improve or refine the process. Program evaluation takes place annually.

Based on evidence presented, Education Service Center Region XI 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:

No recommendations at this time.

OTHER PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Re-evaluate and reflect as to whether the field supervisors are making first contact within the required 3 week window of the intern's assignment to comply with TAC rule 228.35. If they are making that contact within the three week window, document the visit and reinforce to the intern that the first contact has been made. If it is not made, address the need for it to be made for compliance to rule and support for the intern.
- Consider ways to enhance the relationship with principals and cooperating teachers by possibly requesting insights and observations of the intern. This will demonstrate the high opinion for the role of the cooperating teacher/mentor and principal.