



## Compliance Audit Report 2010-2011 Education Service Center (ESC) Region XIII

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](http://www.tea.state.tx.us) for details contained in each rule.

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Mixon Henry, Program Specialist, and Dr. Phillip Eaglin, Program Specialist, conducted a Texas Education Agency compliance audit on October 5 - 7, 2010. The following are the findings and recommendations for program improvement.

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

#### Findings:

**The ESC Region XIII Principal Program is in compliance with Texas Administration Code (TAC) §228.20.**

The advisory committee consists of sixteen (16) members: eleven (11) from school districts, three (3) from education service center, one (1) from higher education, and one (1) from business and community. The advisory committee composition meets the requirements in TAC §228.20 (b).

Meetings of the advisory committee are held twice each academic year or more often, if needed. The first meeting for this academic year was conducted on July 16, 2010, the second meeting was conducted on September 30, 2010, and the third is scheduled for November 11,

2010. As evidence of compliance, agendas, minutes, and attendance records for the July and September meetings were available as part of the document review process. This information was also verified by the advisory committee questionnaire, which was distributed to committee members prior to the compliance audit. In reviewing minutes, discussions with members included design, delivery, evaluation, and major policy decisions of the program.

In reviewing the advisory committee questionnaires, the participation of the advisory committee member responses showed the following:

- Designing and revising aspects of the program; 85.7% no and 14.3% yes;
- Major policy decisions; 85.7% no and 14.3% yes; and
- Overall program evaluation; 57.1% no and 42.9% yes.

There is a discrepancy between minutes and agendas of meetings that were conducted and the recall by advisory committee members in the questionnaires. To alleviate this discrepancy, minutes should be distributed to advisory committee members and verified.

In addition, training of the advisory committee members will ensure more transparency, outline involvement in resolving issues, the development of solutions, and encourage continuous involvement between scheduled meetings.

Since this verbal recommendation by TEA, arrangements were made by ESC Region XIII to present the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) webinar PowerPoint on Advisory Committee Responsibilities at the November advisory meeting. ESC Region XIII sent the TEA PowerPoint to members to ensure advisory committee members understand their roles and responsibilities and how to enhance their involvement in the program's growth and improvement.

Other items on the advisory committee's questionnaire:

- 67% of the advisory committee indicated that they understood TAC rules §227 and 228;
- 44% of advisory committee member were familiar with TAC § 241, rules related to principal preparation programs;
- Questions involving program collaboration with local schools: 42.9% good and 57.1% very good.

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

### **Findings:**

**The ESC Region XIII Principal Program is in compliance with Texas Administration Code (TAC) §227.10 – Admission Requirements.**

The ESC Region XIII self-report and website states that to be admitted into the Principal Program, candidates must have a Bachelor's and Master's degree from an accredited university with a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0. Additionally, a signed application must be submitted,

along with a writing sample, and three professional references. Furthermore, the program administers to all potential candidates the Gallup *Further Insight into Talent (FIT)* interview and a *Principal Insight Survey*. The potential candidate must provide documentation of a Texas Teachers Certificate and a service record with three years of creditable teaching experience. All of the requirements were found in the candidates' folders, except for the three years of creditable teaching experience. The program stated that the certification officer confirmed creditable teaching experience by calling each school district. To ensure compliance with Texas Administrative Code, a service record must be present in all candidate folders.

Program recruitment is essentially done by word-of-mouth. Principal intern questionnaires revealed that 61.9% of interns heard about the program by word-of-mouth and 61.9% selected the program because of their positive reputation.

### **COMPONENT III. CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35 and - § 241.15 EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM**

#### **Findings:**

**The ESC Region XIII Principal Program is in compliance with TAC §228.35 and §241.15.**

The program is a seventeen (17) month program beginning with a summer session. The cohort of 18-25 principal candidates begin by attending an overnight retreat where candidates participate in team- building experiences. The end result of the retreat is a team that has a foundation of trust and open lines for effective communication.

The delivery of the program's curriculum is through a hybrid model. Principal standards identified in TAC §241.15 are addressed in the nine (9) online modules. The tenth and final module is focused on test preparation. The combination of the face-to-face and online curriculum is in excess of 400 clock hours. Coordinated with each module is ten (10) face-to-face sessions on Saturdays 4 to 8 weeks apart. The sessions provide extensive dialogue of previously completed modules and an introduction of the new module. Each module has an assessment which is a selected response test, which assesses the knowledge of the candidate to continue to the next module. A lack of success on a module would require the educator to repeat the module with assistance of the program. Assignments for each module are focused on tasks that are to be incorporated into the internship practicum experience such as the following: the curriculum module's task related to campus curriculum initiative, personnel module's task involves campus personnel issues, and the budget module's incorporates creating a campus budget with the campus administrator. Each module incorporates assignments that are performance-based with accompanying assessments to be graded by the director/field supervisor. The criteria for assessments were not clearly defined. It is recommended that rubrics be created for participants or evaluative criteria clarified prior to each assignment.

There was a syllabus for each module that included: standards, readings, assignments, and timelines. ESC Region XIII provided guest speakers which are professionals in the field to address specific topics that align with the principal standards. Intern questionnaires, distributed by TEA confirmed all standards were addressed.

The same intern questionnaires revealed that the perspective of the intern viewed the effectiveness of the preparation on a 1 – 4 rating scale (4 very effective and 1 not effective):

- 33.3% rated it as a 3 and 61.1% rated it a 4.

Individual statements about strength of the curriculum included:

- “Specialists brought in to teach particular modules”, “excellent speakers”, “curriculum was relevant and applicable to the real world”, and “program curriculum was extremely comprehensive”.
- “More could be added with regards to technology”,
- “Update course materials...reading were often 5-15 years old”,
- “Special education law and practices were somewhat lacking”,
- “Ensure the materials are updated”.

In viewing the curriculum, it was primarily text without components that encouraged interaction or multi-media presentations. The program provided a work order and meeting samples that showed that the program has acknowledged the need to update primary materials that align with the standards and will encourage more interaction by all candidates. The curriculum issues are being addressed immediately.

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

##### **Findings:**

**ESC Region XIII Principal Program is not in compliance with TAC §228.35 Preparation Program Coursework and Training.**

The principal program coursework, assignments, and assessments are incorporated within the principal practicum. During the curriculum review, there was documentation that verified 400+ hours of training was required for completion of the program. The field-based practicum took place in diverse settings and included curriculum and assignments called “Action Research Projects”. These projects provided opportunities for principal candidates to review the needs of a campus, identify an area of specific need, create a plan or strategy to improve the identified need, and attempt to implement the plan. Upon review, some projects were successful and helped improve the school’s identified need, while others were not. This experience provided insight regarding the process of implementing change on a campus.

Principal candidates were placed at the elementary, middle, and high school levels for their practicum. There was an issue of three candidates' practicum not being conducted at a school setting. In reviewing TAC §228.2

***(16) Practicum--Practical work in a particular field; refers to student teaching, clinical teaching, internship, or practicum for a professional certificate that is in the school setting.*** The program acknowledged this error and is implementing change to correct the problem.

There was evidence of mentor assignments to principal interns, but the principal intern questionnaires showed that some interns sought other individuals for support and insight. It was noted that no mentor training is provided by the program or districts. ***TAC §228.35 3 (e) Campus Mentors and Cooperating Teachers... The educator preparation program is responsible for providing mentor and/or cooperating teacher training that relies on scientifically-based research, but the program may allow the training to be provided by a school district, if properly documented.*** Program administrators and TEA audit team members discussed options by which this issue could be addressed.

There is only one field supervisor to perform the observations for all principal interns. The training for the field supervisor is provided by the program. The initial contact with interns is made within the first three weeks of assignment as evidenced by emails, sign-in sheets for class meetings, and field supervisor's log from campus visits. Principal interns were not observed the required three times; only two observations are documented in the field supervisor's log and student records. The program was unaware of the requirement in TAC §228.35 which addresses required observations.

- ***TAC §228.35 (f) On-Going Educator Preparation Program Support... Supervision of each candidate shall be conducted with the structured guidance and regular ongoing support of an experienced educator who has been trained as a field supervisor. The initial contact with the assigned candidate must occur within the first three weeks of assignment. The program must provide a minimum of two formal observations during the first semester and one formal observation during the second semester. Each observation must be at least 45 minutes in duration and must be conducted by the field supervisor. The first observation must occur within the first six weeks of assignment. The field supervisor shall document instructional practices observed, provide written feedback through an interactive conference with the candidate, and provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's campus administrator. Informal observations and coaching shall be provided by the field supervisor as appropriate.***

The program will make adjustments and implement immediately. Observations are 45 minutes in length and include activities and interactions performed during their role as assistant principal. The first observation was not within the first six weeks of the assignment for all principal interns but approximately half were seen within that time frame. There was an interactive feedback session with the field supervisor and intern upon the completion of an observation. No written feedback was provided to the campus administrator. The observation form does not include items for specific feedback, but rather allowed for general descriptors of items noted in the 45 minute observation. It was suggested that the program create an instrument to reflect the

principal standards that would be observable. This way, clear expectations of performance would be quantifiable and therefore, understandable by the candidate.

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

### **Findings:**

#### **ESC Region XIII is in compliance with TAC § 228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement.**

Assessments of principal candidates are performed with selected-response tests at the end of each of the nine online modules. There are also performance-based assessments which are specifically related to each online module and tasks performed during the practicum. Documentation of all assessments are kept for 2-3 years in a paper format and then converted to an electronic format for 5 years. The program evaluates the modules by administering each principal candidate a questionnaire.

ESC Region XIII contracts with Stetson and Associates to conduct the overall program evaluation. Stetson and Associates requires that all participant principal candidates associated with the program provide feedback. It is a comprehensive assessment of the program from multiple-perspectives. Also involved in the survey process are mentors, campus administrators, district administrators, and advisory committee members. Stetson and Associates correlates the data and presents it to the program. The advisory committee reviews and evaluates the results of the surveys and then provides feedback to the program. Stetson and Associates may be able to assist the program to become more aware of Texas Administrative Code (TAC) to ensure that program compliance issues are evaluated and assessed. As a result, program improvement and alignment with the TAC can be identified and acted upon.

## **PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

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

### **PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS: A Compliance Status Report will be required in sixty days.**

#### **Component IV - TAC §228.35 Preparation Program Coursework and Training**

- Require the placement of the practicum to be in a school setting for all interns according to TAC §228.2; implement immediately

- Perform the first observation within six weeks of assignment as noted in TAC §228.35 (3) (e); implement immediately
- Increase the number of observations to three for principal interns as stated in TAC §228.35 (3) (e); implement immediately
- Provide mentor training according to TAC §228.35 (3) (e); implement immediately
- Provide written feedback to the campus administrator for each observation performed as noted in TAC §228.35 (3) (e)

**GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS: No progress report is necessary.**

Advisory Committee:

- Continue training for all advisory committee members regarding TAC rules and advisory committee responsibilities;

Admission Criteria:

- Document years of creditable teaching experience; require potential candidates to submit service records as part of the admissions process; implement for the 2011 cohort.

Curriculum:

- Update curriculum by using more current technological innovations; consider interactive components, implement real-time video conferencing, and electronic portfolios (allowing peer and self evaluations).
- Embed more Special Education and Special Education Law into the curriculum; Consider guest speakers from the field and possible intern interviews of Special Education Directors and/or attorneys.
- Define assessment criteria and delineate the levels of quality with rubrics that are aligned to the principal standards. Provide analytical feedback which should be provided to educators prior to the assignment. Provide additional information in the syllabi that indicates assessment criteria and evaluation methods.

Delivery and Ongoing Support:

- Create an observation instrument that can be used to provide feedback to the principal candidate. Include the principal standards and refer to these during the 45 minute observation. Produce in triplicate and provide the feedback and evaluation to the appropriate campus administrator.

Other General Recommendations:

- Add additional field supervisors to lower the ratio of supervisors to principal candidates.