



Compliance Audit Report 2011-2012 Stephen F. Austin State University Principal Preparation 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 rules at www.tea.state.tx.us for details.

Contact Information: Dr. Betty Alford, Chair of Secondary Education and Education Administration

County/District Number: 174501

SBEC Approval Date:

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Program Specialists, Dr. Mary S. Black and Mixon Henry conducted a required compliance audit of the Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU) principal preparation program February 27-29, 2012, in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §229.6 (a).

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 TEA by SFASU prior to the onsite visit. An onsite review of documents, candidate records, course material, and curriculum correlations charts provided evidence regarding compliance. In addition, electronic questionnaires were sent to SFASU principal preparation program stakeholders by TEA staff. A total of 51 (of 172) responses were received. They included: out of three of five advisory committee members; three of three field supervisors; four of five campus principal mentors; and 41 of 159 principal candidates. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to evaluate the evidence. Evidence of compliance was measured using a rubric correlated to Texas Administrative Code.

Opening and Closing Sessions:

An opening session on February 28, 2012 was attended by 17 people, including the SFASU Chair of Secondary Education and Educational Leadership Dr. Betty Alford, and Associate Dean Dr. Lisa Mize. TEA program specialist Dr. Mary Black presented a training PowerPoint for the advisory committee. The closing session on February 29, 2012, was attended by Dr. Judy Abbot, Dean of the SFASU Perkins College of Education, and 11 others.

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

FINDINGS:

The governing body and chief operating officer of an entity shall provide sufficient support, and shall be accountable for the quality of the educator preparation program and the candidates whom the program recommends for certification [TAC 228.20(c)]. The presence of Dr. Alford, and Dr. Mize at the opening session and other staff involvement at various times during the compliance audit indicates support for the TAMUSA principal certification program by university administration.

Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU) in Nacogdoches, Texas, has an advisory committee for the principal certification program composed of six members: three members from local school districts; one member from Region 7 ESC; one member from higher education; and one member representing local business and community stakeholders. The advisory committee meets the composition as required by TAC §228.20(b).

The advisory committee was trained in their roles and responsibilities October 13, 2011, according to the agenda and minutes from the meeting [TAC §228.20(b)]. Minutes and agendas from five meetings were reviewed by TEA program specialists for January 28, 2011, March 8, 2011, April 19, 2011, October 13, 2011, and February 21, 2012. Attendees for each meeting are recorded in the minutes. SFASU holds three advisory committee meetings per year. This exceeds the number required by TAC 228.20(b). The self-report indicated that input from the advisory committee had caused the program to strengthen the alignment between AEIS data and the practice of using data for improvement [TAC §228.20(b)]. Each course in the principal program has a field-based component which is approved by the advisory committee [TAC §228.20(d)].

Based on the evidence presented, Stephen F. Austin State University principal preparation program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.20 – GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS.

COMPONENT II: ADMISSION AND CERTIFICATION CRITERIA - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10 and TAC §241

FINDINGS:

There are currently 159 principal candidates in the program. A review of 27 candidate records confirmed that SFASU requires a 2.5 grade point average (GPA) for admission [TAC §227.10(A)], with a minimum 2.8 in the last 60 hours of undergraduate course work. Ten

percent or fewer candidates were admitted with less than the required GPA. However, this policy was not publicly available to all potential candidates and therefore not applied consistently to all applicants [TAC §227.10(7)]. All candidates completed the Texas universal online application for admission to the program [TAC §227.10(6)]. A minimum score of 800 on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), a writing sample, and three letters of recommendation were also required [TAC §227.10(7)]. No formal rubric was used to evaluate the writing sample.

All candidates had official transcripts in the registrar's office verifying their completion of a four year baccalaureate degree from an institution of higher learning and grade point average [TAC227.10(c)]. Prior to certification, two years of creditable teaching experience was verified by service records as well as classroom teacher certification as required by TAC §241. The university verified that candidates had obtained master's degrees prior to certification as principals [TAC §241].

No candidates with out-of-country degrees have been admitted into the program. However, policies and procedures are in place if needed [TAC §227.10(7)(e); TAC §227.10(5)]. The admission criteria is publically available on the university website and in the catalog [TAC §227.10(7)].

Because the policy concerning admission of fewer than ten percent of a cohort with less than the required GPA was not published, and the lack of a rubric for the writing sample, SFASU is out of compliance in this area.

Based on the evidence presented, the Stephen F. Austin State University principal preparation program is not in compliance with TAC §227 and TAC §241 – ADMISSION AND CERTIFICATION CRITERIA.

COMPONENT III: EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §241.15 and TAC §228.35(b)

FINDINGS:

Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §241.1(b) states that the standards for this certificate must emphasize instructional leadership; administration, supervision, and communication skills; curriculum and instruction management; performance evaluation; organization; and fiscal management. These standards shall be the curricular basis for all principal preparation programs [TAC §241.10(a)].

Evidence that the SFASU curriculum for principal certification is aligned with standards approved by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) was found in the course syllabi and alignment charts submitted by SFASU. All syllabi contain standards from SBEC and the Education Leadership Consortium Council (ELCC). In the field-based portion of each course, each candidate must align selected field activities with both SBEC and ELCC standards. In this way, curriculum is aligned with required standards throughout every aspect of the program. The program also offers certification test preparation in addition to coursework.

Based on evidence presented, the Stephen F. Austin State University principal preparation program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §241.15 — CURRICULUM FOR PRINCIPAL PREPARATION.

COMPONENT IV: PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ONGOING SUPPORT - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35

FINDINGS:

The SFASU program is delivered both a face-to-face and online format. Coursework for the master's with principal certification is 450 clock hours long [TAC §228.35(b)]. The required practicum is distributed through eight courses with 20 clock hours required in each course, and the remainder completed in courses AED 554 Practicum for the School Principal and AED 599 Synthesis of Educational Leadership [TAC §228.35(d)(3)]. Candidates receive a total of 300 clock hours of practicum experience, according to the self-report, syllabi, degree plan, and candidate logs.

Campus mentors are assigned during the field-based component for the first course taken [TAC §228.35 (e)]. This is documented by signed mentor-agreement forms kept at the university. Mentors receive training via an extensive handbook and a PowerPoint presentation that is emailed to them [TAC §228.35 (e)]. Mentors complete the training and provide a signed feedback form to the professor of the course. A certificate of completion is provided to each mentor when the feedback forms are provided. In addition to the training, the university supervisor meets with the mentor and candidate to discuss expectations and responsibilities of the candidate and

An assignment list confirmed that university field supervisors are also assigned to each candidate [TAC §228.35(f)]. Field supervision is conducted by SFASU faculty, who hold an annual retreat and hold monthly meetings for training and discussion [TAC §228.35(f)].

Completed formal observation documents were found in candidate records [TAC §228.35(f)]. The observation form contained TExES domains and competencies rated on a Likert-like scale with written descriptions of evidence observed. Prior to spring, three required observations of a minimum of 45 minutes are required by the field supervisors. However, there was no time in/time out place on the form to verify the 45 minute observation. The campus mentor is included in debriefing with the candidate and field supervisor [TAC §228.35(f)].

In addition, all candidates complete a self-assessment from the National College Association for Teacher Education (NCATE). Comprehensive candidate practicum logs detail activities accomplished and align them with ELCC and SBEC standards. Reflections for each activity are also required and kept in portfolios.

Based on evidence presented Stephen F. Austin State University is not in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §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:

Benchmarks for SFASU principal candidates include completion of each field-based component, meetings with advisors each semester, online practice exams for the TExES, individual course assessments, the NCATE self-assessment, and comprehensive exams for the master's degree [TAC §228.40(a)]. SFASU ensures its candidates are ready for the certification exam by

requiring a minimum score of 80 per cent on the practice exams prior to recommendation for testing [TAC §228.40(b)].

SFASU evaluates the curriculum regularly using multiple sources of data, including course evaluations by candidates. A program retreat was held May 13, 2010 to examine the overall design and delivery of the principal certification courses and training. The university conducts an annual formal review of the entire program. The overall program is also evaluated through NCATE and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). An evaluation report is currently being prepared for the ELCC for March 2012 [TAC §228.40(c)].

The University maintains documents that evidence a candidate's eligibility for admission to the program and evidence of completion of all program requirements for a period of five years after program completion [TAC 228.40(d)]. Candidate records are kept in secure storage. Some observation documents from previous years could not be located due to personnel changes.

Based on evidence presented, the Stephen F. Austin State University principal preparation program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.40 – ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT.

COMPONENT VI: Professional Conduct (TAC) §228.50

TAC 228.50(a) states that during the period of preparation, the educator preparation entity shall ensure that the individuals preparing candidates and the candidates themselves demonstrate adherence to Chapter 247 of this title (relating to Educators' Code of Ethics).

Senate Bill 174/Texas Administrative Code §229

Current Accreditation Status

The Stephen F. Austin State University principal preparation program is currently rated "Accredited."

Standard I: Results of Certification Exams

Pass Rate Performance:	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
	Final 80% Standard	70% Standard	75% Pass Rate
Principal Exam only	95.2%	93.2%	88.9%

Program Recommendations:

The following are recommendations based on the findings of the compliance audit. If the program is NOT in compliance with any identified component, please consult the TAC rules and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. A Compliance Status Report will be required every sixty days until the compliance issues are totally corrected.

Program recommendations are suggestions for general program improvement and no follow up is required.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Texas Administrative Code 227.10- Admission Criteria

- Create a rubric for the profile writing sample used for admission
- Publish the policy allowing admission with a lower GPA

Texas Administrative Code 228.35 – Program Delivery and On-Going Support

- Add the start time and stop time to the formal evaluation to verify the 45 minute observation requirement.

GENERAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION

- Have campus mentors sign to acknowledge training
- Ensure all candidate records, including observation forms, are maintained for a minimum of five years after a candidate completes the program