



**Compliance Report
for
Web-Centric ACP
Cypress, Texas
November 16-18, 2010**

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.

A continuing approval compliance audit for the Web-Centric alternative certification program was conducted on November 16-18, 2010 by Texas Education Agency (TEA) Program Specialists Dr. Mary S. Black and Mr. Mixon Henry in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10 (c).

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code rules governing educator preparation programs was collected by various qualitative means. A review of documents, syllabi, and a curriculum correlation chart provided evidence regarding compliance. In addition electronic surveys were sent to Web-Centric participants by TEA. A total of 416 responses to the surveys were received by TEA, including 162 from interns, 28 from field supervisors, 83 from school principals, 125 from campus mentors, and 3 from other advisory committee members. A self-report was submitted to TEA by Web-Centric on October 2010. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation were used to evaluate the evidence.

The Opening Session November 17, 2010 was attended by 14 people, including the owners Bob and Nancy Brackett. Operations manager Gabriel Brackett, and technology manager Johnnie Jackow also attended. Four instructors, five field supervisors and several advisory committee members representing local schools or districts were also present. Mr. and Mrs. Brackett and Gabriel attended the closing session November 18, 2010.

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

Findings:

The advisory committee is comprised of nine members representing local schools and districts. Several board members also serve as field supervisors, keeping the committee well informed about intern experiences in the field. The committee recently lost a representative from higher education who has not yet been replaced. Minutes

and sign-in sheets from meetings on June 8, 2009, July 22, 2009, and July 14, 2010 were in evidence. The next meeting is planned for December 7, 2010.

TEA program specialists presented brief advisory committee training regarding Texas Administrative Code (TAC) 228 and 229 at the Opening Session.

Based on the evidence presented above, Web-Centric is in compliance with TAC §228.20.

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

Findings:

Web-Centric uses the state mandated requirements for admission to an educator certification program. The program has an online application form, which is followed-up by telephone interviews conducted by two Web-Centric employees. Interviews are evaluated using a rubric. Applicants must also supply character references. Official transcripts were kept in student files, with envelopes stapled to the transcript to show it was sent directly from the college or university. Written policies concerning admission were in evidence during the document review, as well as an application checklist to track all pieces of the application process. In Summer 2009 Web-Centric began admitting only those who had already passed the Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT). A review of candidate grade point averages (GPA) upon admission showed that on 7.8% of the new admittees from August 2009-2010 had GPAs below 2.5. Because much information for Web-Centric is kept electronically, this percentage was instantly available. All admission criteria are found on the Web-Centric website, www.online-distance-learning-education.com, as well as in brochures and written material.

Based on the evidence presented above, Web-Centric is in compliance with TAC §227.10.

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

Findings:

Three charts showing alignment of standards and TEKS to curriculum modules and activities were prepared by Web-Centric and reviewed by TEA program specialists during the document review. All required standards and TEKS were shown to be present in the Web-Centric curriculum. The charts document the standards alignment for Generalist EC-6, TEKS for Generalist EC-6, and the 17 mandated topics in Texas Administrative Code §228.30.

The curriculum is presented in three blocks, which serve as benchmarks for candidates. The first block includes reading across the curriculum, human development, learning theories, and an introduction to English language learners, lesson planning, and differentiated instruction. Candidates must complete 10 activities and participate in five

live chats to discuss information with a peers and a live instructor. Charts are one-hour long with required participation. The online system logs each participant in and out and times each chat. A transcript of each chat session is available. Each of the activities is uploaded online, graded by a live instructor with a rubric and returned to the candidate within three to four days. Candidates also have short online assessments over each of the five books on reading instruction and a final multiple-choice quiz. Module II is primarily concerned with classroom management, but also integrates other topics. There are five activities and four live chats required in Module II. These two blocks must be completed successfully before entering an internship. Two textbooks are used during the first two modules: *Reading Safari*, published by the Texas Education Agency, and *Classroom Instruction that Work* by Robert Marzano.

The third module is instructional technology. In addition, candidates must complete curriculum for their particular content area before being recommended for the standard certificate. Now that candidates are admitted by PACT, the program added this requirement to make sure all candidates have additional content knowledge and pedagogy necessary to be successful in the classroom. Standards and TEKS for each content area are clearly linked in these modules. Two optional modules concern career services and test taking strategies.

Each major block has a syllabus delineating requirements, expectations, activities, assignments and quizzes.

TEA received 125 responses to electronic surveys sent to classroom mentors with Web-Centric. Mentors indicated that interns needed more preparation in certain areas, including: 1) TAKS responsibilities; 2) parent conferencing; 3) curriculum development; 4) formative and summative assessments; and 5) special populations. From the 162 survey responses from interns, interns reported weak curriculum areas as 1) TAKS responsibilities; 2) strategies for gifted and talented students; and 3) parent conferencing. Interns really liked the program's flexibility, supportive atmosphere, and fast feedback, according to survey responses.

Based on the evidence presented above, Web-Centric is in compliance with TAC §228.30.

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

Findings:

Web-Centric curriculum is presented in an online format. Standards for online course development and delivery from the International Society of Technology Education (ISTE) were used to construct the program. The Web-Centric program consists of 312 required clock hours of coursework and training. Web-Centric has only recently started accepting continuing professional education hours from school districts as part of the minimum requirements. Therefore, some students can have up to 362 clock hours of coursework and training in additional to internship or clinical teaching.

Web-Centric uses scientifically-conducted research to calculate the number of clock hours in their online program. A study by Abbie H. Brown and Tim Green (December 2009) discusses the amount of time spent reading threaded discussions in online graduate courses. This study concludes that, using the assumptions and formulas Brown and Green developed, the time commitment for participatory activity in a course using asynchronous communication methods is similar to traditional face-to-face classes.

Each intern or clinical teacher is assigned a mentor by the school where they are teaching. Web-Centric provides a mentor handbook and TXBess information to all mentors. The handbook contains the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, guidelines, responsibilities, policies, schedules and TxBess assignments (done with the intern). Several mentors indicated in the electronic surveys that they would like more communication with the program and the field supervisors. Five field supervisors present at the Opening Session discussed this and strategized how to improve this area. Mentors reported few concerns about the interns or the program in the surveys.

Over 97 per cent of the 162 intern surveys returned to TEA reported that field supervision was effective to very effective. Field supervisors are all experienced educators and receive training and handbooks of policies and guidelines from the program. Copies of evaluation forms are given to campus administrators and scanned into electronic student files at the program.

Evidence from student folders showed that all first-year interns and clinical teachers received the required three formal observations, within the mandated time frame. Those candidates on second or third year probationary certificates had not been observed, however. Because of the lack of field supervision for second and third year interns, Web-Centric is out of compliance with Texas Administrative Code 228.35 (f).

Based on the evidence presented above, Web-Centric is in not compliance with TAC §228.35.

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

Findings:

Benchmarks for candidates are clearly delineated. Candidates cannot receive recommendation for the probationary certificate until they have successfully completed Modules I and II, completed 30 hours of observation, passed the TExES content exam, completed four pre-service online chats, been hired at a school district, completed fingerprinting and applied and paid for the probationary certificate. The program has a probationary certification checklist for candidates that they must fax to the program before receiving recommendation. A similar checklist exists for recommendation for the standard certificate.

Candidates are assessed in multiple ways and at various times during the program. These assignments include lesson plans, journal reflections, projects, TXBess activities, quizzes and short multiple choice tests.

Student records are currently kept for five years or more in paper format, but the program is moving to all electronic record-keeping.

Program evaluation is currently conducted by means of three surveys to interns: one after the application process; one after the coursework; and one at the end of internship. Candidate test scores in the Accountability System for Educator Programs (ASEP) show 100 per cent across the board for each of the past three years. Advisory committee members review the surveys and test data annually. Curriculum is periodically reviewed for currency and effectiveness, but no detailed evaluation plan was available at the time of the audit.

Over 60% of the 83 surveys returned from school principals rated the training of Web-Centric interns as sufficient or well-prepared. Some principals indicated a desire for more communication with the program in the open-response survey questions. It is likely that the need for more information about programs will grow among principals as they now must complete evaluative surveys about beginning teachers as part of the new accountability for all educator preparation programs in the state.

Based on the evidence presented above, Web-Centric is in compliance with TAC §228.40.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Program Compliance Recommendations are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency technical assistance visit. If the program is out of compliance with any component, please consult the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) rules and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. General Recommendations are suggestions for program improvement only. Failure to comply with TAC rules governing educator preparation programs may result in action by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) per TAC 229 beginning in 2010.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS: In order to come into compliance with all Texas Administrative Code rule governing educator preparation programs, the following recommendations are made:

- Observe all second and third-year interns as prescribed by TAC 228.35 (f).

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Add other forms of data concerning curriculum and overall program effectiveness to program evaluation procedures.
- Communicate with mentors and principals more.
- Expand representation on the advisory committee, geographically and by representative role.