



Compliance Audit Report 2010-2011 Collin College Teacher Certification Program

According to Texas Administrative Code §228.10), "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 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..

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Texas Education Agency (TEA) program specialists Mixon Henry and Dr. Mary Black conducted a Texas Education Agency compliance audit on March 29, 30, and 31, 2011. The following are the findings and recommendations for program improvement.

Date Self-Report Submitted: February 28, 2011

Data Analysis:

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code governing educator preparation programs was collected by various qualitative means. A review of documents, syllabi, online courses, and curriculum correlations charts provided evidence regarding compliance. In addition, electronic questionnaires were sent to Collin College participants by TEA staff. A total of one hundred fifty (150) out of three hundred sixty seven (367) requests to complete the questionnaires were received. The responses included twelve (12) out of seventeen (17) advisory committee members, fifty-three (53) out of one hundred thirteen (113) educator candidates; fifty-four (54) out of one hundred thirty two (132) mentors/cooperating teachers, seven (7) out of ten (10) field supervisors, and twenty-four (24) out of ninety-five (95) principals. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to evaluate the evidence.

The following are the findings and recommendations for program improvement.

Opening and Closing Sessions:

The Opening Session on March 29, 2011, was attended by 26 people, including Dr. Brenda Kihl, Vice President Collin College; Sabrina Belt, Director of Collin College Teacher Certification Program, and Rachel Vogt, Assistant Director of Collin College Teacher Certification Program. Eight people attended the Closing Session on March 31, 2011.

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

Findings:

The advisory committee represents shared governance consisting of 17 members as listed in the self-report: ten (10) from a school district; three (3) from higher education; none (0) from an education service center, and four (4) from business and community. The composition of the advisory committee meets the requirements of TAC §228.20(b). However, the advisory committee and Collin College Teacher Certification Program would benefit from increased depth of membership by including mentors, interns, and human resource directors from local school districts. An advisory committee meeting was held on November 3, 2010. According to the self-report, the next advisory committee meeting has been scheduled for April 13, 2011. Meetings are held twice in an academic year as required by TAC §228.20(b). Agendas and attendance records (i.e., by list of attendees on the minutes) were available during the document review as evidence of compliance. Minutes of the meetings were kept by the program to confirm the level of advisory committee member involvement. [TAC §228.20(b)] The minutes of advisory committee meetings record and reflect the participation of members in the analysis of program curriculum, design, evaluation, performance, improvement, and field-based experiences. [TAC §228.35(d)]

Twelve (12) out of seventeen (17) or seventy-one percent (71%) of the advisory committee members responded to the electronic questionnaire sent by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) prior to the visit. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the responding committee members indicated they had served on the advisory committee one or more years. Ninety-two percent (92%) of the members also stated that they were familiar with TAC Chapters §227, §228, and §229. Twelve (12) of the advisory committee members responded that the types of teaching practicum offered by the program included student teaching, internship, and clinical teaching. The two types of practicum offered by Collin College are internship and clinical teaching. Thus, it is evident that these particular advisory committee members misunderstand the type of practicum offered by the program. It appears to be a terminology issue, not only by Committee members but program staff as well. During several conversations with advisory committee members and Collin College staff, these terms were consistently substituted, as though the terms were the same. The term student teaching also appears on the program's website, instead of clinical teaching. Clarity of terminology could be accomplished with a review of terms in TAC § 228.2.

Six of the responding advisory committee members (50%) indicated that they do not participate in designing or revising the educator preparation program's curriculum and in evaluating data for the purpose of preparing an improvement plan for the program. However, from a review of advisory committee meeting minutes from November 11, 2009, April 28, 2010, and November 3, 2010, there was evidence of involvement in the designing and revising of the educator program's curriculum and evaluation of program performance and improvements. Specifically, November 11, 2009 advisory committee meeting's agenda and minutes reflected No Child Left Behind issues, clinical teaching placement, and review of curriculum changes. The advisory

committee meeting held on April 28, 2010 addressed changes in the Generalist 4-8, and admission criteria. The November 2, 2010 advisory committee meeting addressed enrollment numbers, curriculum changes, and fee changes for clinical teaching. Other topics reviewed and input sought during the advisory committee meetings included: continuing Generalist 4-8 updates, additional fee changes, and admission requirements for candidates whose first language is not English. A specific topic appears in all of the advisory committee agendas and minutes; "Student Success" which highlighted specific success of individuals in the program and program accomplishments. The evaluation of the program appears in agendas as more of reflective successes in highlighting 100% pass rate, positive feedback from interns and school districts, and individual awards given to alumni of the program.

Because of the importance of the advisory committee's contributions and since there are ongoing revisions being made to the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), it is recommended that yearly training, such as that provided by the TEA webinar, be provided to the members. Since the membership of the advisory committee, especially those new to the committee, and those from the business and community group, may not be familiar with all of their roles in the analysis of program planning, evaluation and design, it is recommended that within the power points TAC be referenced to familiarize members of their roles as stated in TAC.

Based on the evidence presented above, Collin College Teacher Preparation Program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20 – GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS.

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

Findings:

Collin College Teacher Preparation Program uses the state requirements for admission to an educator certification program, including the following: baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited university; 2.5 Grade Point Average (GPA) or at least a 2.5 GPA in the last 60 semester hours; successful basic skills exams on Compass or Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA) or an exemption allowed with Texas Success Initiative (TSI) ; and a minimum of 24 semester hours in subject-specific content for the certification sought. Official transcripts were kept in student files. The application form includes a checklist for the steps in the application process. In the application, a writing sample is required using the prompt "Why I want to be a teacher". An interview is utilized and evaluated by a rubric which further screens applicants, fulfilling TAC§ 227.10 (6). These documents were located in student folders. As a matter of policy, out-of-country applicants must have the required transcript evaluation and pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam. Additional items necessary for admission include a criminal background check and three (3) references. Admissions criteria are published on the college website and in brochures. No students have been admitted with GPAs lower than 2.5.

One hundred and seventy-two (172) new candidates were admitted to the program during the past academic year. One hundred sixty-three (163) candidates were enrolled as ‘finishers’, “all but clinical,” and “other enrolled.” One hundred (100) candidates were enrolled as interns or clinical teachers for 2010-2011 academic year. Some candidates were accepted who had passed the Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) for their designated area of certification, and others must pass the TExES content exam after enrolling in the program. On the electronic questionnaires received from Collin College Teacher Certification Program candidates, thirty-three (33) who responded had passed the PACT, sixteen (16) were admitted without the PACT. Candidates who were admitted without the PACT received content preparation from the program prior to TExES content testing.

Based on the evidence presented above, Collin College Teacher Preparation Program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10 – Admission Criteria.

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

Findings:

Fifteen (15) charts showing alignment of standards and TEKS to curriculum modules and activities were prepared by Collin College Teacher Certification Program and reviewed by TEA program specialists during the document review. All required standards and TEKS were shown to be present in the Collin College Teacher Certification Program 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. Collin College Teacher Certification Program also supplied the TEKS, standards, and pedagogy alignment documentation for Science 4-8 and Science 8-12.

Fifty (50) teaching candidates responded to electronic questionnaires from TEA. Not all fifty (50) reported receiving instruction in all seventeen required topics. With the understanding that the program is organized in a cohort model, the majority of the responding candidates (100% - 63% varying for item to item) noted all seventeen topics in their curriculum. In reviewing the documentation at Collin College Teacher Certification program, it was clear from syllabi and schedules that not only are the topics addressed but also assessed by the program. Teaching candidates identified several areas for improvement in the curriculum: reading strategies across the curriculum, strategies for gifted and talented students, and strategies for students with limited English proficiency. Strengths of the curriculum identified by candidates were the following: instructional strategies for the classroom, child and adolescent development, how to develop a lesson plan, laws and standards regarding students with special education needs, theories of how people learn, and TEKS organization, structure and skills.

Syllabi for each content area in which candidates are currently seeking certification were reviewed during the document review. Domains and competencies were listed on some of the syllabus but not all. Assignments and assessments are also included in syllabi for each course. Grades are monitored by the director and staff with successful completion of each course

required prior to continuing to the next course. Some certification tracks have a day cohort and a night cohort to make accessibility easier for the working candidate.

Some of the significant courses of the Collin College Teacher Certification Program's curriculum, noted by program specialist and intern/clinical teacher questionnaires included: Content-specific Pedagogy, Assessing Student Data, Technology in the Classroom, and Introduction to Teaching Reading (Generalist). Content-specific pedagogy is a methodology course for each content area that includes 44 clock hours of training for secondary content specialists and 48 clock hours in the Generalist areas. The course Assessing Student Data (20 clock hours) focuses on collecting, managing, and analyzing student data to interpret learning results. The course Technology in the Classroom (20 clock hours) focuses on technology used by teachers for instruction, and making learning more active and engaging for students. Generalists take Introduction to Reading (60 clock hours) that encompasses reading theory, phonics and phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and guided reading. The curriculum created by Collin College Teacher Certification Program has produced a pass rate of 100% over the last three years with only two educators retesting prior to passing.

Based on the evidence presented above, Collin College Teacher Preparation Program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30 – EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM.

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

Findings:

Collin College Teacher Preparation Program provided four program hour charts prepared by the program director and staff that confirms hour requirements for the following certification levels: Elementary (374 clock hours), Middle (406 clock hours), Secondary (310 clock hours), and All Level EC-12 (310 clock hours). After the completion of all coursework and training, internship or clinical teaching must be completed. There are no online courses at the present time.

The practicum requires an additional forty (40) clock hours for workshops for the internship and twenty-two (22) clock hours for workshop for clinical teaching. The program requires all testing be completed prior to the candidate's practicum. The field experience component of thirty (30) clock hours is completed prior to the majority of the coursework. With districts limiting the program to only fifteen (15) clock hours of field experience in local school classrooms, video is now being used for the other 15 hours required for field experience. Candidates submit responses to specific questions concerning their field-based observations. Logs are also signed by the classroom teacher being observed. This documentation was available for review. Eight (8) hours of test preparation are also offered. Collin College Teacher Certification Program does not accept any training provided by school districts towards the required 300 clock hours mandated by the state for educator preparation.

Handbooks are provided to mentors and cooperating teachers. The Mentor Handbook included: roles and responsibilities, week by week expectations for clinical teacher/interns and cooperating teacher/mentors, the principal's role with mentor, and methods of providing feedback to the teaching candidates. Hard and electronic copies of the handbook are supplied to mentors and cooperating teachers. District training for mentors by Allen Independent School District (ISD), Frisco ISD, McKinney ISD, and Wylie ISD was documented by Collin College Teacher Certification Program and reviewed by program specialist.

All seven field supervisors for the program have five or more years of teaching experience and have a Texas Teaching Certificate. Six of the seven field supervisors have advanced degrees. In questionnaire responses by clinical teachers and interns, 98% felt the field supervisor was effective or very effective. In reviewing comments from mentor/cooperating teachers responses eighteen (18) of thirty-two (32) commented that a strength of the program was communication with field supervisors and the program.

A handbook for field supervisors was available, and discussion with field supervisors during the opening session revealed their commitment and excitement about the job. They have been trained in coaching techniques, mentoring methods, had a review the handbook, and have monthly meetings to address current issues. All forty-six (46) teaching candidates who responded to electronic questionnaires from TEA indicated that field supervisors made contact within the first three weeks of internship or clinical teaching. Field supervisors met with candidates in a face-to-face workshop. Observation forms contain a start and finish time of the observation and detailed comments. All forty-six (46) candidates who responded to questionnaires indicated that field supervisors had given them both verbal and written feedback from observations. Copies of the forms were provided for the campus administrator. This was verified by reviewed documentation and by responses on the principal's questionnaire. Candidates are observed seven (7) times, with a summative conference in the spring. Clinical teachers are observed three (3) times by the field supervisors and four (4) times by the cooperating teachers during the twelve week practicum with a summative conference attended by all. Ninety-four (94%) of the teaching candidates also indicated in the questionnaires that field supervisors had provided them with additional coaching and other informal observation, above what is required in TAC.

Based on the evidence presented above, Collin College Teacher Certification Program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35 – PREPARATION PROGRAM COURSEWORK AND/OR TRAINING

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

Findings:

Benchmarks for candidates are clearly delineated for each course with an 80% mastery of training and coursework required. All testing must be successfully completed prior to the practicum. Assessments throughout coursework were comprised of graded assignments, in-class written assignments, professional article reflections, quizzes, and performance based assessments (presentations). These assessments vary in content but were the basic methods of evaluating student progress. The coursework is offered sequentially and a candidate must pass each course before continuing to the next course. All coursework must be completed in order to begin the practicum. [TAC 228.40(a)]

Advisory committee minutes reveal annual evaluation of the curriculum and overall program effectiveness. A variety of data is reviewed, including: course evaluations; candidates' evaluation of course instructors and curriculum; candidates' evaluations during observations both formative and summative; candidates' evaluation of field supervisors; and field supervisors' evaluation of curriculum. Mentors provide feedback concerning the program and candidates' content and pedagogical knowledge. The final component of the evaluation process is the tests results on the TExES. Testing pass rates for Collin College Teacher Preparation Program for 2008, 2009, and 2010 are one hundred percent (100%) for all categories. All of this information is provided to the advisory committee for feedback and input and was verified in the advisory committee minutes. [TAC 228.40(c)]

A review of candidate files showed that required documents are retained for at least five years. [TAC §228.40(d)]

Based on the evidence presented above, Collin College Teacher Certification Program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.40 – ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION

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 Texas Administrative Code and initiate actions to correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. A Compliance Status Report will be required in sixty days on compliance recommendations.

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.

There were no compliance issues found during this audit.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS: No progress report is necessary.

1. Consider including evaluative feedback from principals, human resource personnel, and superintendents.
2. Use terminology from definitions in TAC§ 228.2 to describe the program and its processes; this will provide clarity and accuracy for program staff and advisory committee members.