



Compliance Audit Report 2012-2013 Harris County Department of Education Alternative 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: Mrs. Lidia Zatopek, Program Director

County/District Number: 101-000

SBEC Approval Date: December 10, 2004

Program Specialists, Vanessa Alba and Mixon Henry, conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Audit of the Harris County Department of Education's initial alternative teacher certification program located at 6300 Irvington Blvd., Houston, TX 77022 on January 15-17, 2013. The focus of the compliance audit was the initial teacher certification program and the Generalist EC-6 certificate. The following are findings and recommendations for program improvement.

SCOPE OF THE COMPLIANCE AUDIT:

The scope of this audit is restricted solely to verifying compliance with Texas Administrative Code §227, §228, §229, and §230.

Data Analysis:

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) governing educator preparation programs was collected by various quantitative and qualitative means. A self-report was submitted to the Texas Education Agency on December 12, 2012. An on-site review of documents, candidate records, course material, online courses, and curriculum correlations charts provided evidence regarding compliance. In addition, electronic questionnaires developed by TEA were sent to Harris County Department of Education alternative teacher certification program stakeholders by TEA staff. A total of one hundred twenty-two (122) electronic questionnaires were sent to stakeholders and responses were received as follows:

Nineteen (19) out of twenty-seven (27) advisory committee members (or 70%); Eleven (11) out of twenty-nine (29) student teachers, clinical teachers, interns (or 38%) ; Three (3) out of twenty-nine (29) cooperating teachers/mentors (or 10%); Five (5) out of seven (7) field supervisors (or 71%); and four (4) out of thirty (30) campus principals (or 13%) responded to their respective questionnaires. 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 to Texas Administrative Code.

Opening and Closing Session:

The opening session on January 15, 2013, was attended by eleven (11) people, including Mrs. Lidia Zatopek (HCDE-ACP director) and Dr. Linda Pitre (Harris County Department of Education Assistant Superintendent). The closing session on January 17, 2013, was attended by five (5) people. In addition to Mrs. Zatopek and Dr. Pitre, the following people were in attendance: Debra Anderson (Special Education and Early Childhood Specialist); Lois Jean Cole (Digital Learning Specialist); and Jonett Edwards Miniel (HCDE-ACP field supervisor).

COMPONENT I: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs- Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20

FINDINGS:

Program support was indicated by the governing body of Harris County Department of Education EPP per TAC §228.20(c) as evidenced by the participation and cooperation of Mrs. Lidia Zatopek, program director, in various stages and steps of the compliance audit.

The advisory committee consisted of twenty-seven (27) members. The members represented the following groups: Fifteen (15) members were from local public/private schools; seven (7) members were from higher education; one (1) member was from an education service center; and four (4) members were from business and community. Harris County Department of Education EPP meets TAC §228.20(b) requirements for advisory committee composition.

The first meeting of the 2012-2013 academic year was held on November 1, 2012. Twenty (20) members attended this meeting, including the HCDE-ACP Director. The 2nd meeting is scheduled for the June 13, 2013. An interim meeting was held prior to the TEA compliance audit to discuss the audit rubrics, requirements, and specific documents to be reviewed. Agendas, minutes, and attendee records (including advisory committee membership reflections & feedback) were available to substantiate that the advisory committee meetings were or are going to be held.

There were two advisory committee meetings held during the 2011-2012 academic year. They were held on November 7, 2011, and June 28, 2012. Nine (9) members attended the first meeting and fifteen (15) members attended the second meeting. Meeting minutes, agendas, and original attendance records served as evidence that two meetings were held during the 2011-2012 academic year. Verifying documentation of two advisory committee meetings per academic year was provided for the 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010 academic years. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the advisory committee members verified in their questionnaires that they had met twice during the academic year. Therefore, the program met the requirements for conducting a minimum of two advisory committee meetings per academic year as required by TAC §228.20(b).

The advisory committee members verified in the TEA pre-visit questionnaire that they assisted in the design, delivery, major policy decisions, and overall program evaluation of the educator preparation program as follows:

- Designing/Revising Curriculum yes 71%
- Major Policy Decisions yes 94%
- Overall Program Evaluation yes 100%

Based on the evidence presented, Harris County Department of Education EPP 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:

According to the self-report, to be admitted into the Harris County Department of Education alternative certification program, the applicant must have a degree from an accredited institution of higher learning [TAC §227.10(a)(2)]; a passing score on a Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) if available, but is not required [TAC §227.10(a)(3)(C)]; an overall GPA of 2.5 or 2.5 in the last 60 hours (the program will require a 2.75 GPA in content as of 2013) [TAC §227.10(a)(3)(A)]; twelve (12) semester credit hours in a subject-specific content area [TAC §227.10(a)(3)(C)]; show mastery of basic skills [TAC §227.10(a)(4)]; exhibit adequate oral communication skills [TAC §230.413]; submit an application [TAC §227.10(a)(6)]; participate in an interview or other screening instrument to determine appropriateness for teaching [TAC §227.10(a)(6)]; and meet any other requirements that the program determines [TAC §227.10(b)].

Out-of-country applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate competence in the English language by submitting a minimum score on the computer-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). In addition, the applicant must have his/her transcripts from an out-of-country non-English speaking university evaluated by an approved evaluation service [TAC §227.10(5) and TAC §230.413].

A total of fifteen (15) candidates' records were selected for review. The following verifiable evidence was found:

- A GPA range of 2.51-3.52 was noted on transcripts and worksheets in all files reviewed. The GPA met the requirements of TAC 227.10(a)(3)(A);
- A minimum of 12 semester credit hours in the subject specific content area for the certification area being sought was verified by original transcripts and worksheets in the candidates' records. Verification of semester hours met the requirements of TAC §227.10(a)(3)(C);

- Basic skills in reading, written communication, and mathematics were verified on the transcripts, or by TSI, or TSI exemptions. Basic skills verification met the requirements of TAC §227.10(a)(4) and TAC §230(a);
- Oral communication skills in TAC §230.11 could not be verified for a past out-of- country candidate whose first language was not English. The record reviewed was a candidate who was admitted into the program in 2010. The HCDE-ACP now requires a minimum TOEFL score of 75, which is stated on their website. The program did not meet the requirements of TAC §227.10(a)(5) or TAC §230.11(b)(5);
- Out-of-country applicants' credentials per TAC §227.10(a)(7) must be equivalent to those degrees earned in the United States based on standards and procedures in TAC §245. The HCDE-ACP program provided potential applicants a suggested list of approved credential reviewers at the applicant information sessions. A transcript review was located from the Foreign Credential Services of America in the record reviewed. The presence of reviewed credentials met the requirements of TAC §227.10(a)(7) and TAC §245;
- An application was found in all records reviewed. The presence of an application met the requirements of TAC §227(a)(6);
- A standard interview with an accompanying scoring rubric to determine the candidate's appropriateness for the certification being sought was found in candidates' records after 2011. The presence of interview documentation met the requirements of TAC§227.10(6); and
- Other academic criteria for admission that were published and applied consistently to all educator preparation candidates included: a resume and two letters of reference which were found in all records reviewed. The presence of documentation met the requirements of TAC §227.10(a)(7).

The self-report indicated that one (1) candidate was admitted with a grade point average of less than 2.5. The number of candidates admitted did not exceed 10% allowed by TAC §227.10(a)(3)(B). A document signed by the director was presented to verify admission of the candidate(s) was granted because of extraordinary circumstances.

According to the self-report, recruitment was conducted through the website, brochures, and public seminars scheduled in December 2012, and in January 2013. The screening and application process occurs at any time during an academic year. Admission and training cycles occur at two points, either October or February of an academic year [TAC §227.10(a)(7)].

Based on the evidence presented, Harris County Department of Education EPP is not in compliance with TAC §227- Admission Criteria.

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

FINDINGS:

Harris County Department of Education EPP is approved to offer teacher certification in eleven (11) fields and one (1) professional class. Additionally, the program is approved to offer two (2)

supplemental certificates which attach to the base teacher certification. For the purpose of this compliance audit, the Generalist EC-6 certificate was selected as the certification field for in-depth review.

Qualifications necessary to be selected as a course instructor, as stated in the self-report, required the following: Texas teacher certification in corresponding content and grade level, more than five (5) years of experience teaching content at a specific grade level in a public or private school, and principal/superintendent certification is preferred. Seventeen instructors' resumes and credentials (verified in Educator Certification Online System (ECOS)) were presented and all have Texas certification and a bachelor's, master's, or Ed.D/Ph.D. All instructors have the appropriate background and/or experience to provide instruction in the Generalist EC-6 certification area.

In reviewing the curriculum for the Generalist EC-6 certificate, it was found that the educator standards were not the curricular basis for instruction as required by TAC §228.30(a). This was based on review of the course module syllabi referred to as TXBESS standards. After formal conversations with the HCDE-ACP staff (5 members present) regarding the Generalist EC-6 curriculum, it was found that the TXBESS standards and modules were being utilized as some of the curriculum. It was also discovered that candidates seeking the Generalist EC-6 certificate were receiving 39.5 clock hours of content training from TXBESS prior to admission to the program but the hours accrued did not count toward the total 300 required. The TXBESS modules utilized were:

- EC-6 Content: ELAR – Parts I-III
- EC-6 Content: Math Parts I-II
- EC-6 Content: Science
- EC-6 Content: Social Studies
- EC-6 Content: Fine Arts/PE/Music/Health/Theatre
- EC-6 Content Practice Test with Item Analysis
- EC-6 Test Prep Review
- EC-6 Content Prep: T-Cert Training

Syllabi were reviewed for 56 training modules for the Generalist EC-6 curriculum. Additionally, three modules were presented online. The curriculum sequence from start to finish and the purpose of some content material could not be determined. The modules should be reviewed, edited, combined, and refined for future use.

Based on the alignment charts, various course modules, and lesson plans that candidates completed, the Generalist EC-6 curriculum addressed the relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as required by TAC §228.30(a).

The seventeen (17) subject matter topics were included in the training as prescribed by TAC §228.30(b) in pre-service training, summer institute training prior to the internship year, and prior to standard certification:

- The specified requirements for reading instruction adopted by the SBEC for each certificate were verified through summer curriculum institute trainings in three (3) different modules. Reading was adequately addressed. [TAC §228.30(b)(1)];
- Child development was verified through summer curriculum institute training [TAC §228.30(b)(3)];

- Motivation was verified through summer curriculum training in one module. It was also addressed in Differentiated Learning, which was offered as an online Moodle course. [TAC §228.30(b)(4)];
- Learning theories was verified through summer curriculum training in one module [TAC §228.30(b)(5)];
- TEKS organization, structure, and skills were verified in a variety of training modules presented during the summer curriculum training [TAC §228.30(b)(6)];
- TEKS instruction in the content areas were interwoven throughout the training modules [TAC §228.30(b)(7)];
- The state assessment of students (STAAR) instruction was incorporated throughout the training modules [TAC §228.30(b)(8)];
- Curriculum development and lesson planning were interwoven through various training modules [TAC §228.30(b)(9)];
- Classroom assessment for instruction / diagnosing learning needs were verified in various training modules [TAC §228.30(b)(10)];
- Classroom management / developing a positive learning environment were interwoven throughout the training modules [TAC §228.30(b)(11)];
- Special populations information was interwoven throughout the training modules [TAC §228.30(b)(12)];
- Parent conferences / communication skills instruction was covered in the summer curriculum training. [TAC §228.30(b)(13)];
- Instructional technology was covered in the summer curriculum institute trainings. It was also addressed in the online training courses. [TAC §228.30(b)(14)];
- Pedagogy / instructional strategies were interwoven throughout the training modules [TAC §228.30(b)(15)]; and
- Differentiated instruction information was covered in the summer curriculum institute training [TAC §228.30(b)(16)].

While the 17 topics were addressed throughout the training provided by Harris County Department of Education-ACP, what could not be determined was the depth and complexity of given to each topic. Neither could it be determined if appropriate assessments were used to determine the candidates' acquisition of knowledge and skills to the degree and depth that a beginning classroom teacher would be required to apply. Six clock-hours of explicit certification test preparation not embedded in any other curriculum elements was provided for candidates prior to TExES testing as per TAC §228.30(b)(17) and TAC §228.35(a)(3). A flow chart provided by the Program Director indicated when the candidates took the PPR EC-12 review and the representative PPR EC-12 test, participated in item analysis, and completed the PPR EC-12 T-Cert test prep. While the program provided a total of 17.5 hours of test preparation for the PPR EC-12, it was noted that only six clock hours not embedded in any other coursework were to count as a part of the 300 total clock-hours.

Clinical teachers/interns were asked to respond to a series of questions prepared by TEA in order to verify aspects of the curriculum, its delivery, and its effectiveness.

The teacher candidates' overall comments included the following generalizations regarding areas to improve and areas of strength:

Areas to improve:

- Better regular updates
- Better communication
- Better scheduling of classes

Areas of strength:

- Presented a broad view of teaching experience
- Different mentors for each content area
- Detailed trainings

Based on evidence presented, Harris County Department of Education EPP is not in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum.

COMPONENT IV: Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training (TAC) §228.35

FINDINGS:

Currently, the Harris County Department of Education alternative certification program is delivered in a face-to-face and hybrid-online format. The total program consists of three hundred thirty-two (332) clock-hours for elementary certification. This exceeds the requirement set forth in TAC §228.35(a)(3). Evidence was found in program course/module schedule with total clock-hours explicitly noted.

Thirty (30) clock-hours of field-based experience were inconsistently documented until 2011. From 2011 forward, field-based experiences were verified prior to internship as per TAC §228.35(a)(3)(A). Evidence in the form of candidate time logs signed by the observed teacher was present in the candidates' records. Per TAC §228.35(a)(7), the program may allow candidates to substitute prior ongoing experience and/or professional training for part of the educator preparation requirements as long as the experience does not replace internship, student teaching, or clinical teaching. Harris County Department of Education EPP had policies for such an accommodation in the current 2012-2013 Student Handbook. Eighty (80) clock-hours of coursework prior to internship were verified by a review of the program course module schedule and noted benchmarks as required by TAC §228.35(a)(3)(B).

Fifty (50) clock-hours of training provided by a school district and/or campus could be utilized toward the total number of program hours. A review of candidates' records provided evidence

verified by a school district or campus that hours were accrued through this method. [TAC §228.35(a)(6)]

Per TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C), an internship of 180 school days or an academic year is required for teaching candidates. The assignments must match the certification field for which the individual is accepted into the program and trained. In addition, according to TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C), the intern should be issued the appropriate probationary certificate and be classified as “teacher of record” on the campus PEIMS data. Evidence concerning internship was found in the candidates’ handbook, internship placement lists, Statement of Eligibility forms with school district placement information noted, and placement information in the candidates’ records.

Internship placement lists contained the start and end date of each probationary certificate that documented that internship occurred in an actual school setting rather than in a distance learning lab or virtual school setting prohibited by TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)(ii).

According to TAC §228.35(e), Harris County Department of Education EPP is responsible for providing mentors or cooperating teachers training that is scientifically-based or verify that training has been provided by a school district or education service center. Currently the HCDE-ACP has ten mentors. The 2012-2013 Handbook included policies, procedures, and expectations for mentor teachers. TxBESS training for mentor teachers occurred through Harris County Department of Education in Moodle or mentors/cooperating teachers could document school district training provided within the past two years. All 10 mentors had verification of training and a current valid teacher certificate. Training was verified by an original signature from the mentors, school district / ESC records, and online course attendance records. Mentor training met the requirements of TAC §228.35(e).

TAC §228.35(f) states that supervision of each candidate shall be conducted with the structured guidance and regular ongoing support of an experienced educator [TAC §228.2(10)] who has been trained as a field supervisor. It was reported in the self-report that field supervisors must meet the following criteria to be selected by the Harris County Department of Education EPP: Experienced professional educators with a minimum of 5 years of teaching/administrative experience, Texas teacher certification, and be a current Harris County Department of Education EPP faculty/instructor. Resumes and training certificates were reviewed for six field supervisors. Training was verified using the 2012-2013 Field Supervisor Handbook, original sign-in sheets verifying that eight (8) people were training on August 27, 2012, and August 22, 2011, field supervisor meeting, and a signed Code of Ethics acknowledgement.

Initial contact within the first three weeks of the candidates’ assignment was made by the field supervisor by email as required by TAC §228.35(f). A signed contact /observation form signed by the teaching candidate and the field supervisor was utilized in a few situations. The evidence provided met the requirements of TAC §28.35(f).

According to §228.35(f)(3), during internship, the program must provide a minimum of two formal observations during the first semester and one formal observation during the second semester. Dated and signed (by field supervisor and candidate) observation records served as verifiable evidence that the program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f)(3).

According to TAC §228.35(f)(1), each observation must be at least 45 minutes in duration and must be conducted by the field supervisor. The observation forms completed by the field supervisor found in the candidates’ records contained a specific start and stop time. Documentation presented met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f)(1).

Furthermore, TAC §228.35(f) requires that the field supervisors document instructional practices observed and provide written feedback through an interactive conference with the candidates. Historically, the observation instruments in the candidates' records were missing the interactive sign-off section for the field supervisor and candidates. However, it was noted that when the program director served as a field supervisor, the candidate was required to sign-off to verify that the interactive conference had occurred in a separate block of time. Because this was not a standard practice, this is an issue for the program.

It is also the responsibility of Harris County Department of Education EPP to provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's campus administrator as required by TAC §228.35(f). Harris County Department of Education EPP used a multi-copy observation instrument with a campus principal distribution noted or by the presence of an email with "read receipt" in the candidates' records. Documentation met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Additional informal observations and coaching were provided as specified in TAC §228.35(f). Emails found in candidates' records verified that additional support was provided. Documentation of informal observations and coaching met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

As specified in TAC §228.35(c), candidates who were hired after June 15th of the academic year is considered a "late hire." The candidates are still responsible for completing 30 clock-hours of field-based experiences as well as 80 clock-hours of initial training within ninety (90) school days of their assignment. The specific calendar dates for applicable candidates were noted in reviewed candidates' records. Documentation met the requirements of TAC §228.35(c).

Based on evidence presented, Harris County Department of Education EPP is not 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:

Harris County Department of Education has a benchmarking process as prescribed by TAC §228.40(a). Candidates' records were presented reflecting progression through the program by completed benchmarks. However, Harris County Department of Education alternative certification program did not have a well-defined candidate assessment process. The program did not provide consistent verifiable evidence of structured assessments within all of the HCDE-ACP modules. As a result, the program did not meet the requirements of TAC §228.40(a).

Readiness for testing [TAC §228.40(b)] was verified by the following documentation in the candidates' records: A dated and signed letter of admission and a record of the date of Pedagogy and Professional Responsibility (PPR) test approval. The 2012-2013 Candidate Handbook contained policies and procedures for testing. According to TAC §228.40(b), the program shall not grant test approval for the pedagogy and professional responsibilities test until the candidate has met all the requirements for admission to the program and has been fully accepted into the educator preparation program. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.40(b) and TAC §230.21(c).

Evaluation of the program's design and delivery of the curriculum should be continuous per TAC §228.40(c). Information such as performance data, scientifically-based research practices, and the results of internal and external assessments should be included in the evaluation process.

The self-report detailed evaluation activity, timeline, and person responsible. In addition, a dated evaluation report, as well as agendas and minutes for the advisory committee meetings met the requirements of TAC §228.40(c).

According to TAC §228.40(d), the program will retain documents that evidence a candidate's eligibility for admission into the program and evidence of completion of all program requirements for a period of five years after program completion. The program securely retains candidates' records in paper format for a period of five (5) years in the HCDE-ACP office on the 3rd floor in a locked file room in locked file cabinets adjacent to the ACP director's office. The program met the requirements of record retention per TAC §228.40(d).

Based on evidence presented, Harris County Department of Education EPP is not 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).

The Harris County Department of Education alternative certification program utilizes a staff handbook with procedures regarding the Code of Ethics and a signed statement of reading and understanding the current Educators' Code of Ethics.

The Harris County Department of Education alternative certification program uses various syllabi/course module outlines, the Student Handbook, and a signed statement of reading and understanding the Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics is also addressed as one of the 17 topics per TAC §228.30(b)(2) in several different modules interwoven throughout the program.

Based on evidence presented, Harris County Department of Education EPP is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.50 – Professional Conduct.

Texas Administrative Code §229

Current Accreditation Status

Harris County Department of Education alternative certification program is currently rated "Accredited" based on the 2010-2011 accreditation ratings.

Results of Certification Exams

Pass Rate Performance:	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
	70% Standard	75% Standard	80% Pass Rate
Overall:	96%	94%	100%

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. 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 REQUIREMENTS: In order to meet requirements of Texas Administrative Code governing educator preparation programs, the following corrections must be made:

TAC §227.10 Admission Criteria

- Require TOEFL for all out-of-country applicants whose first language is not English prior to admission into the program per TAC §227.10(5) and TAC §230.11(b)(5). This should be corrected immediately.

TAC §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum

- Require that the educator standards shall be the curricular basis for all educator preparation per TAC §228.30(a). The specific content area that was reviewed was the Generalist EC-6 curriculum. This should be corrected immediately.

TAC §228.35 - Program Delivery and Ongoing Support

- Require the field supervisor and the candidate to verify through a separate line item that the interactive conference has occurred per TAC 228.35(f). This should be corrected immediately.

TAC §228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement

- Review all modules and require structured assessments to ensure the candidate has acquired the knowledge and skills required for the certificate being sought. This should be corrected immediately.

OTHER PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Continue to follow the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and the State Board of Education (SBOE) meetings and/or review the minutes to ensure that the current program staff is knowledgeable about current Texas Administrative Code;
- Continue to participate in Annual Deans/Directors Meetings to ensure that the program director is knowledgeable about current Texas Administrative Code and future changes to Texas Administrative Code (Webinar Series);

- Continue to participate in webinars provided by the Division of Educator Certification & Standards to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about current requirements and changes in Texas Administrative Code;
- Continue to maintain communication with the program specialist assigned to the program for the purpose of asking questions about current requirements in TAC for Governance; Admissions; Curriculum; Program Delivery & On-Going Support; and Program Evaluation (TAC § 227-229);
- Align the verbiage of the program to that of current Texas Administrative Code. For example: Applicant / Candidate / Field Supervisor / Internship / Clinical Teacher; and
- Ensure that the HCDE-ACP Program Director utilizes the EPP Staff Information page to access pertinent information that EPP's frequently request.

Component I - Governance of Educator Preparation Programs:

- Ensure that the advisory committee includes representation from stakeholder groups not directly affiliated with Harris County Department of Education or Harris County Department of Education-ACP;
- Hold two advisory committee meetings per year (September 1 – August 31) and maintain the invitations, agendas, minutes, and sign-in sheets for audit purposes; and
- Use an advisory committee meeting template to ensure that required TAC items are covered at the two meetings per year.

Component II – Admission to Educator Preparation Programs:

- Continue to acknowledge admission into the ACP for the purpose of the start point of the candidate into the program. Consider requesting a response from the candidate to acknowledge entering the ACP.

Component III – Educator Preparation Curriculum:

- Create a uniform template for all course modules that contains the following: Educator Standards including content methodology, specific TEKS addressed, goals and objectives, assessments within the modules, and additional requirements for each course module that leads to certification within the HCDE-ACP certification program;
- Add rigor and depth to the curriculum to ensure alignment to the 17 topics per TAC §228.30(b) by creating assessments per course that objectively defines success or failure of the acquired knowledge and skills of the 17 topics taught;
- Ensure that reading instruction is provided for all certification areas, regardless of whether or not the program is a traditional undergraduate or alternative certification program;
- Utilize the TEA developed training for meeting “Teachers’ Responsibilities” for the STAAR test administration at:

<http://texas.testsecuritytraining.com/TestAdministratorTraining.aspx>. It may be used for a whole group or individually. A certificate can be printed upon completion. This is the same training that campus teachers must complete prior to STAAR testing; and

- Utilize the dyslexia information found on the TEA website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=4434> or at <http://www.region10.org/dyslexia/>.

Component IV – Program Delivery and On-going Support:

- Continue utilizing the T-CERT test preparation to determine the readiness of each candidate to take the appropriate TExES exam and ensure that the program maintains the certificate of completion verifying (6) clock-hours of test preparation that is not embedded in any other curriculum areas - or create another indicator for test prep not embedded in any other curriculum areas and ensure that the program maintains the certificate of completion verifying (6) clock-hours of test preparation. The T-CERT address is <https://pact.tarleton.edu/TCERT> and for questions email weiss@Tarleton.edu.