



Compliance Report 2012-2013 Education Service Center Region 1 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 rules at www.tea.state.tx.us for details.

Contact Information: Sandra McConaughy, Director of LDAC and Naomi Arnold, Senior Education Specialist

County/District Number: 108-950

SBEC Approval Date: May 4, 2001

Program Specialist, Mixon Henry and Manager of Testing and Data Reporting, David Carmody, conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Audit of Education Service Center (ESC) Region 1 alternative certification program otherwise known as PACE (Preparing and Certifying Educators) located at 1900 W. Schunior, Edinburg, Texas, 78541 on October 16-18, 2012. 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 was restricted solely to verifying compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §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 methodologies. A self-report was submitted to the Texas Education Agency on September 20, 2012. An on-site review of documents, student records, course material, and curriculum correlations charts provided evidence regarding compliance. In addition, electronic questionnaires were sent to ESC Region 1 alternative certification program stakeholders. Out of seven hundred seventy-one (771) questionnaires sent to stakeholders, a total of one hundred thirty-nine (139)

responses or 12.5% were received as follows: Five (5) out of forty-five (45) advisory committee members (11%); forty (40) out of three hundred thirty-four (334) educator candidates (11%); five (5) out of eight (8) field supervisors (62.5%); twelve (12) out of two hundred seventy-three (273) campus principals(4%); and thirty-five (35) out of one hundred eleven (111) cooperating teachers (31.5%). To ensure the anonymity of the respondents, the number and percent of responses received from each stakeholder group were only shared at the opening session presentation. Quantitative and 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 aligned to Texas Administrative Code.

Opening and Closing Session:

The opening session on October 16, 2012, was attended by eight (8) people in support of Education Service Center Region 1. The noted members of the ESC Region 1 program present included:

- Mr. Jack Damron, Executive Director of ESC Region 1;
- Mr. Tony Lara, Deputy Director of ESC Region 1;
- Ms. Sandra McConaughy, Director of ESC Region 1 Alternative Certification Program; and
- Naomi Arnold, Senior Education Specialist of the ESC Region 1 Alternative Certification Program

The closing session on October 11, 2012, was attended by eleven (11) people. They included Tony Lara, Sandra McConaughy, and Naomi Arnold.

COMPONENT I: COMMITMENT AND COLLABORATION - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20

FINDINGS:

Program support was indicated by the governing body of Education Service Center Region 1 per TAC §228.20(c) as evidenced by participation and cooperation of Sandra McConaughy and Naomi Arnold in all steps and stages of the compliance audit.

According to the self-report and evidence found during the audit, the advisory committee did not meet during the 2011-2012 academic year (September 1 through August 31) and has not met at this point during the 2012 -2013 academic year. Due to the lack of past attendance at the meetings, ESC Region 1 is in the process of creating a new advisory committee which will consist of forty-nine (49) members. Thirty-nine (39) members represent public/private schools; four (4) members represent higher education; three (3) members represent the education service center (ESC Region #1); and three (3) members represent community/business interests. The Education Service Center Region 1 alternative teacher certification program will meet TAC §228.20(b) requirements for advisory committee composition if and when the committee membership is activated and meetings take place.

Following are the historical dates of each advisory committee meeting noting topics covered (sign-in sheets, agendas, and minutes for verification were inconsistent):

Academic year 2012 – 2013:

- No documentation of meetings at this point in time.

Academic year 2011 - 2012:

- No documentation of meetings during this time frame

Academic year 2010 - 2011:

5/12/11

- No sign-in sheets or minutes provided
- Agenda included the following topics:
 - Program changes
 - Summer Institute
 - Stetson evaluation,
 - Pass rate chart, and
 - Future scheduled meeting for 8/22/12 (which never took place)

12/03/10

- No sign-in sheets or minutes provided
- Agenda included the following topics:
 - PACE program overview
 - Clinical teaching/internship
 - Field based experiences
 - 17 identified topics for the PPR
 - Pass rate
 - Stetson evaluation, and
 - Book review

Academic year 2009 – 2010:

12/10/09

- Sign-in sheets provided; six (6) members attended, three (3) of which were members of the program; just one meeting noted in document review.
- Agenda includes the following topics:
 - Program and Services (Project PACE., Clinical teaching, and ILP3)
 - Program direction and accountability (principal surveys, rules, ASEP, ratings for EPPs)
 - Training hour's requirements
 - TExES results (teacher and principal), and
 - Successes, challenges, and burning issues

Academic year 2008 – 2009:

4/24/09

- No sign-in sheets or minutes provided
- Agenda included the following topics:
 - Update on field based experiences
 - Stetson evaluation, and

- Curriculum review

12/15/08

- No sign-in sheets or minutes provided
- Agenda included the following topics:
 - Certification moving from Generalist EC-4 to Generalist EC-6
 - 30 hours of field based experience
 - TExES preparation and pass rate
 - Stetson and Associates evaluation and recommendations

Academic year 2007 – 2008:

12/14/07

- No sign-in sheets or agenda
- Minutes provided covering the following topics:
 - Recommendations for last year interns, mentors, and administration
 - Admission criteria (GPA emphasized)
 - C-Scope information
 - Payment plans
 - Secondary mentor shortage

The program does not meet the requirements for conducting a minimum of two advisory committee meetings per academic year as required by TAC §228.20(b).

In discussions with program staff and reviewing the list of potential advisory committee members, it appears that ESC Region 1 is in the process of addressing the requirement to meet twice per year as prescribed in TAC §228.20(b).

Past agendas reflected evidence of advisory committee review of on-going and relevant field-based experiences as specified in TAC §228.35(d). However, lack of current advisory committee meetings has not allowed for their input.

Based on the evidence presented, Education Service Center Region 1 is not 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 submitted by Education Service Center Region 1 alternative certification program staff, to be admitted into the program, the candidate must have:

- completed a bachelors' degree from a regionally accredited university [TAC §227.10(a)(2)];
- received a GPA of 2.50 (overall or last 60 hours) [TAC §227.10(a)(3)(A)];

- completed a minimum of twelve (12) semester credit hours in a content field [TAC §227.10(C)];
- demonstrated basic skills proficiency with THEA, TASP, or course work noted in Texas Success Initiative [TAC §227.10(4)];
- demonstrated adequate oral communication skills; TOEFL [TAC §230.413].
- submitted an application [TAC §227.10(a)(6)];
- participated in an interview or screening instrument to determine the educator preparation candidate's appropriateness for the certification sought, Watson-Glaser critical thinking assessment is administered to perspective candidates; [TAC §227.10(a)(6)]; and
- met any other academic criteria for admission that are published and applied consistently to all educator preparation candidates [TAC §227.10(7)].

Out-of-country applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate competence in the English language by submission of 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(7)]. According to the self-report, the program required the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), a Bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. institution, or a minimum of a Bachelor's degree from out-of-country English speaking university. It was noted that only two (2) out-of-country candidates were included in the records review. Both out-of-country candidates had transcripts reviewed by an approved vendor and TOEFL results. A concern was that one of the candidates did not meet the minimum score of 26 on the oral portion of the TOEFL as required [TAC §227.10(5) & TAC §230.413(b) (5)].

In twenty candidates' records reviewed, it was noted that all were admitted with a grade point average ranging from 2.5 to 3.96 [TAC §227.10(A)]. It was also noted that the program used "contingency admission" for applicants who have not yet had their degrees conferred by a university (TAC §227.15). This was noted specifically with the "Teach for America" candidates. The candidates were allowed to take teacher preparation coursework, but not allowed to progress further into the program until their degrees were conferred by their universities.

Transcripts found in the twenty records confirmed a minimum of 12 semester credit hours in the subject-specific content area for which certification was sought. Education Service Center Region 1 met the requirements of TAC §227.10(C).

Mastery of basic skills per TAC §227.10(4) was verified in eighteen of the twenty candidates reviewed. The official transcripts recorded THEA scores or indicated that candidates were admitted using the Texas Success Initiative exemptions. The program met the requirement of TAC 227.10(4).

Applicants are required to take the Watson Glaser Critical Thinking Assessment that serves as an "other screening instrument" [TAC §227.10(6)]. No face-to-face interview was conducted in the past, but has been implemented for the incoming 2012 candidates. It was discussed how face-to-face interviews could assist in evaluating the English language proficiency of applicants. If language is a potential factor in lack of test success, the language issue should be identified early in the program and remediated or the candidate's admission should be denied.

The self-report stated that information about the program and its admission requirements were available through the ESC Region 1 website and in brochures. In review, it was confirmed that the admission information was aligned with the documentation found in candidates' records.

Based on the evidence presented, Education Service Center Region 1 is in compliance with TAC §227.10 - Admission Criteria.

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

FINDINGS:

Education Service Center Region 1 alternative certification program is approved to offer teacher certification in forty-three (43) certification fields and three (3) professional certification classes. For the purpose of this compliance audit, the Generalist EC-6 certificate was selected for an in-depth review.

According to the self-report, qualifications necessary to be selected as a course instructor included a bachelor's or master's degree and teacher certification in the state of Texas. Instructors' vitas were presented for review and the criteria for selection verified. All instructors met the criteria established by the program.

In reviewing the Generalist EC-6 curriculum, it was verified that the educator standards were not the curricular basis for instruction as required by TAC §228.30(a). The alignment charts submitted by the program served as the basis for reviewing the syllabi provided by the program. The syllabi did not reflect the educator standards in art and theater. In informal conversations with program instructors and staff, it was verified that candidates' curriculum did not always include coursework covering these standards. In reviewing other content areas of the Generalist EC-6 curriculum, standards were addressed and verified in modules and alignment charts.

Syllabi and alignment charts for the Generalist EC-6 curriculum addressed the relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as required by TAC §228.30(a). In formal discussion with instructors regarding where the TEKS were addressed, it was verified that the program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(a).

Verification of the seventeen (17) subject matter topics required by TAC §228.30(b) yielded the following results:

- Evidence that the specified instructional requirements for reading for the Generalist EC-6 certificate per TAC §228.30(b)(1) was provided in workshop #37574 - EC-6 Explicit Reading Instruction for Elementary & Struggling Readers (7.5 Clock hours). Additional modules that included reading instruction and strategies were: #36647 Reading Instruction – Introduction (7.5 clock hours); #36650 - English Language Learners & ELPs; #37662 - Differentiated Instruction and Assessing Learner Needs for Instruction; and #37665 - Dyslexia. The two courses, #37574 - EC-6 Explicit Reading Instruction for Elementary & Struggling Readers and #36647- Reading Instruction – Introduction addressed the five essential components of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency; vocabulary, and comprehension. The other modules included strategies for reading and helped supplement the two reading modules. It was verified that all candidates, no matter the certification sought, received reading instruction. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(1);

- Evidence that the specified instructional requirements for child development per TAC §228.30(b)(3) was verified in the syllabi of three (3) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(3);
- Evidence that the specified instructional requirements for motivation per TAC §228.30(b)(4) was found in the alignment charts and verified in the syllabi of two (2) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(4);
- Evidence that the specified instructional requirements for learning theories per TAC §228.30(b)(5) was found in the alignment charts and verified in the syllabi of five (5) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(5);
- Evidence that instruction covering TEKS organization, structure, and skills per TAC §228.30(b)(6) was found in the alignment charts and in the syllabi of seven (7) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(6);
- Evidence that TEKS in the content areas instruction per TAC §228.30(b)(7), was found in alignment charts and in the syllabi of four (4) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(7);
- Evidence that the state assessment of students per TAC §228.20(b)(8) was found in the alignment charts and in the syllabi of four (4) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(8);
- Evidence that the process of curriculum development per TAC §228.30(b)(9) was found in the alignment charts and in the syllabi of four (4) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(9);
- Evidence that instruction in classroom assessment per TAC §228.30(b)(10) was found in the alignment charts and in the syllabi of five (5) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(10).
- Evidence that instruction in diagnosing learning needs per TAC §228.30(b)(10) was found in alignment charts and in the syllabi of five (5) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(10);
- Evidence of instruction in classroom management per TAC 228.30(b)(11) was found in the alignment charts and verified in the syllabi of five (5) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(11);
- Evidence that instruction in developing a positive learning environment per TAC 228.30(b)(11) was found in the syllabi of two (2) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(11);
- Evidence that instruction in special populations per TAC §228.30(b)(12), was found in alignment charts and syllabi of four (4) courses depending on the specific special population group addressed. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(12);
- Evidence that instruction in parent conferencing and communication skills per TAC §228.30(b)(13) was found in both the alignment charts and syllabi of four (4) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(13);

- Evidence of instruction in instructional technology per TAC §228.30(b)(14), was found in alignment charts and syllabus of one (1) course. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(14);
- Evidence of pedagogy and instructional strategies per TAC §228.30(b)(15) was found in the alignment charts and verified in the syllabi of eight (8) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(15);
- Evidence of instruction in differentiated instruction per TAC §228.30(b)(16) was found in alignment charts and in the syllabi of five (5) courses. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(16); and
- Evidence of 6 hours of certification test preparation per TAC §228.30(b)(17) was documented by attendance sign-in sheets. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(17) and TAC §228.35(a)(3).

Responses from the principal questionnaires regarding curriculum preparation of candidates were as follows:

- Knowledge of and use of models and methodologies of classroom management: Yes – 81.8% No – 18.2%
- Knowledge of academic and behavioral needs of students with disabilities: Yes – 54.5% No – 45.5%
- Skill in communicating clear expectations for achievement and behavior: Yes - 81.8% No-18.2%
- Knowledge of and use of technology to support and extend student learning: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Collaboration with others: Yes – 81.8% No – 18.2%
- Knowledge of academic and behavioral needs of students with Limited English Proficiency: Yes – 72.7%
No – 27.3%
- Knowledge of and use of formal and informal assessments: Yes – 63.6% No – 36.4%

Responses from cooperating teachers' questionnaires regarding the candidates' curriculum preparation were as follows:

- Knowledge of and use of reading strategies: Yes – 69.2% No – 30.8%
- Knowledge of and use of reading strategies: Yes – 92.3% No – 7.7%
- Knowledge of child and adolescent development: Yes – 76.9% No – 23.1%
- Knowledge of and use of instructional methods to motivate students: Yes – 92.3% No – 7.7%
- Knowledge of and use of theories of how people learn: Yes – 84.6% No – 15.4%
- TEKS: organization, structure, and skills: Yes – 92.3% No – 7.7%
- TEKS in the content areas: Yes – 92.3% No – 7.7%
- Knowledge of and role in STAAR testing: Yes – 76.9% No – 23.1%
- Skill in developing lessons: Yes – 84.6% No – 15.4%

- Knowledge of curriculum development: Yes – 84.6% No – 15.4%
- Knowledge of and use of classroom assessments: Yes – 92.3% No – 7.7%
- Knowledge of and use of formative assessments: Yes – 61.5% No – 38.5%
- Knowledge of and use of models and methodologies of classroom management: Yes – 61.5% No – 38.5%
- Knowledge of laws and standards for Special Education: Yes – 53.8% No – 46.2%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for GT students: Yes – 38.5% No – 61.5%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for LEP students: Yes – 38.5% No – 61.5%
- Skill in preparing and conducting parent conferences: Yes – 61.5% No – 38.5%
- Knowledge of and use of a variety of instructional methods: Yes – 53.8% No – 46.2%
- Knowledge of and use of technology to support and extend student learning: Yes – 84.6% No – 15.4%

Responses from student teachers in regard to their perception of their curriculum preparation were as follows:

- Knowledge of and use of reading strategies: Yes – 60% No – 40%
- Knowledge of the Code of Ethics: Yes – 88.6% No – 11.4%
- Knowledge of child and adolescent development: Yes – 52.9% No – 47.1%
- Knowledge of and use of instructional methods to motivate students: Yes – 65.7% No – 34.3%
- Knowledge of and use of theories of how people learn: Yes – 51.4% No – 48.6%
- TEKS: organization, structure, and skills: Yes – 82.9% No – 17.1%
- Use of TEKS in the content areas: Yes – 77.1% No – 22.9%
- Knowledge of and role in STAAR testing: Yes – 57.1% No – 42.9%
- Skill in developing lessons: Yes – 80% No – 20%
- Knowledge of curriculum development: Yes – 57.1% No – 42.9%
- Knowledge of and use of classroom assessments: Yes – 71.4% No – 28.6%
- Knowledge of and use of formative assessments: Yes – 67.6% No – 32.4%
- Knowledge of and use of models and methodologies of classroom management: Yes – 80% No – 20%
- Knowledge of laws and standards for Special Education: Yes – 71.4% No – 28.6%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for GT students: Yes – 48.6% No – 51.4%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for LEP students: Yes – 77.1% No – 22.9%
- Skill in preparing and conducting parent conferences: Yes – 65.7% No – 34.3%
- Knowledge of and use of a variety of instructional methods: Yes – 77.1% No – 22.9%

- Knowledge of and use of technology to support and extend student learning: Yes – 62.9% No – 37.1%

The main issue with the coursework centered upon that fact that art and theater instruction were not addressed for all candidates seeking the Generalist EC-6 certificate.

In discussions about other certification fields offered by Education Service Center Region 1, it became apparent that not all certification fields had content training. Programs are required to provide content preparation unless the program's admission requirements include Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) completed prior to admission. This is a requirement for educator preparation programs and needs to be addressed immediately.

Based on evidence presented, Education Service Center Region 1 is not in compliance with TAC §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum.

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

FINDINGS:

Currently, Education Service Center Region 1 alternative certification program is delivered in a face-to-face format. In reviewing the self-report and in discussions with staff, the training hours offered by the program totaled 347.5 clock-hours for the Generalist EC - 6 certificate. Evidence was found in the self-report submitted by the program and verified in the tracking worksheet developed by Senior Education Specialist Naomi Arnold. The total clock-hours exceeded the minimum requirements set forth in TAC §228.35(a)(3).

The program provided sufficient evidence that six clock-hours of test preparation was not embedded in any other curriculum elements per TAC §228.35(a)(3) and was offered to all candidates. Readiness to test was based on completion of coursework reflected on the tracking worksheet. Content and PPR test preparation were provided in workshops which were held during afternoons and weekends. Original sign-in sheets were evidence of compliance. The program met the requirements for test preparation per TAC §228.35(a)(3).

Completion of the required thirty clock-hours of field-based experience was verified by documentation in candidates' records. The field-based experience documentation required the name of school, classroom, subject taught, and reflections by the candidates. Documentation also verified that field-based observations occurred in a variety of educational settings with diverse student populations and included observations, modeling, and demonstration of effective practices to improve student learning. 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. However, previous experience cannot replace internship, student teaching, or clinical teaching. ESC Region 1 alternative certification program allowed for such an accommodation and detailed in program policy. The clock hour allowance was specific to past experiences as an instructional aide or substitute teacher and counted toward field-based experience only. Field-based experiences were completed as required in TAC §228.35(d).

Eighty (80) clock-hours of coursework prior to clinical teaching/internship were verified through benchmarks and tracking worksheets. Approximately 141.5 clock hours of training took place during the Summer Institute, which occurred prior to clinical teaching or internship assignments. Evidence was provided by the tracking worksheets in the candidates' records. [TAC §228.35(a)(3)(B)].

According to the self-report program hours chart, Education Service Center Region 1 accepted fifty (50) clock-hours of training provided by a school district and/or campus toward the total number of program hours. This training was verified through tracking worksheets in the candidates' records [TAC §228.35(a)(5)].

Clinical teaching [TAC §228.35(d)(2)(B)] was conducted for a period of twelve (12) to fourteen (12-14) weeks. The variance in weeks allowed for any absences that may occur. A candidate must complete a minimum of twelve (12) weeks and the actual time continues until the full twelve weeks hour equivalency is met. The requirements were explained in the candidates' handbook. Clinical teaching placement information was found in the current candidates' records and on the tracking worksheets. Internship is also offered by ESC Region 1 which consists of serving as teacher of record for one academic year or a minimum of 180 days at a TEA approved school [TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)]. Information, requirements, and policies were provided to candidates in their program handbook.

Evidence was found in the candidates' records of clinical teaching and internship placement, which verified that each took place in actual school settings rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting. All clinical teacher and internship placements occurred in local independent school districts. The candidates' placements met the requirements of TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)(ii).

According to TAC §228.35(e), ESC Region 1 alternative certification program is responsible for providing mentors and/or cooperating teachers training that is scientifically-based or verify that training was provided by a school district or education service center. The ESC Region 1's training curriculum utilized an abridged form of the TxBESS mentor program. Evidence presented verified that the cooperating teachers and mentors received training at McAllen High School on September 27, 2012. Verification was noted by attendance sign-in sheets, agendas, and cooperating teacher/mentor commitment agreements. The program 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 who has been trained as a field supervisor. A total of fifteen (15) field supervisors were assigned to the candidates within the program. Verifiable evidence was available that field supervisors were trained using the TEA field supervisor training. In addition, the observation forms and roles and responsibilities of the field supervisor were covered. Documentation in the form of meeting dates and electronic sign-in sheets were available. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Initial candidate contact by the field supervisor was made within the first three weeks of their assignment as required by TAC §228.35(f). The field supervisors met candidates at their assigned campuses. Documentation of first contact was found in the candidates' records and on the tracking worksheets for the 2011-2012 cohort. The 2012-2013 documentation was not available because the field supervisors had not entered the data into "Let Me In" data base.

The three observations [TAC §228.35(f)(4)] conducted during clinical teaching and internship must be at least 45 minutes in duration [TAC §228.35(f)] and the first observation must be

conducted within the first six weeks of clinical teaching or internship. The observation forms signed by the teaching candidate and field supervisor, as well as the field supervisor contact log, provided evidence that the program met the requirements. It was discovered in past candidates' records that there was an inconsistency in recording observation times. The observation form was adjusted to reflect the start and stop time of the observation, whereas the old form just recorded duration of observation time. The program implemented the change prior to the TEA audit for the 2012-2013 cohort.

TAC §228.35(f) requires that the field supervisors document observed instructional practices and provide written feedback through an interactive conference with the candidates. The dated observation forms served as evidence that the field supervisor documented observed instructional practices. However, there was no evidence such as a signature of the candidate and/or field supervisor on the observation form to reflect that an interactive conference occurred. Prior to the audit, ESC Region 1 initiated use of a revised observation instrument to ensure verification of the interactive conference. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

ESC Region 1 alternative certification program is required to provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's campus administrator [TAC §228.35(f)]. The observation instrument was a multi-copy document and one copy was left with the campus administrator or his/her representative. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Evidence of additional informal observations and coaching was requested. Emails between program staff, field supervisors, and candidates served as evidence that additional observations and/or coaching occurred. The program met the requirements as specified in TAC §228.35(f).

Based on evidence presented, Education Service Center Region 1 is 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:

Education Service Center Region 1 alternative certification program has a candidate assessment and benchmarking process as prescribed by TAC §228.40(a). Evidence provided included specific benchmarks on a tracking worksheet for each candidate. There are four phases that benchmark the progress of the candidate through the program.

Instructional module assessments tend to be more “activity oriented”. Most are assessed with rubrics and corrections are allowed if products did not meet standards. However, expectations and standards for quality work were not provided. Tests were used to assess the content knowledge of the candidate over specific curriculum areas. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.40(a).

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. Readiness for testing [TAC §228.40(b)] was determined by the program after a candidate attended test preparation sessions. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.40(b).

Evaluation of the program’s design and delivery of the curriculum should be continuous per TAC §228.40(c). Information such as candidate exit surveys, test pass rates, and workshop evaluations were collected for evaluation. There were no external evaluations from cooperating teachers, mentors, principals, and other school district personnel. ESC Region 1 decided to rejoin Stetson and Associates to utilize their evaluation tools and analysis services. The limited information collected was not provided to the advisory committee due to the lack of meetings. Education Service Center Region I did not meet the requirements of TAC §228.40(c).

According to TAC §228.40(d), an educator preparation program shall retain 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. The program kept records for the past five years in both electronic and paper formats. The records were securely stored in locked cabinets in locked offices located in the education service center building. The retention of records met the requirements of TAC §228.40(d).

Based on evidence presented, Education Service Center Region 1 alternative teacher certification program is not 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). The program curriculum addressed the Code of Ethics in the first course called “Orientation and the Code of Ethics.” It also provided information in the candidates’ handbook. In addition, each candidate and staff member signed a statement verifying that they read and understood the Educator’s Code of Ethics. Candidate documentation was found in the 2012-2013 records. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.50(a) and TAC §228.30(b)(2).

Based on evidence presented, Education Service Center Region 1 is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.50 – Professional Conduct.

Texas Administrative Code §229

Current Accreditation Status

Education Service Center Region 1 alternative certification program is currently rated “Accredited” based on the September 1, 2010 - August 31, 2011 accountability ratings.

Standard I: Results of Certification Exams

Pass Rate Performance:	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
	70% Standard I	75% Standard I	80% Standard I
Overall:	97%	97%	89%
Demographics			
Female	NA	NA	77%

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Compliance actions are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency audit. If the program is not in compliance with any component, please consult the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) for details and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. 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.

Other recommendations are suggestions for program improvement only.

Compliance Actions: In order to meet requirements of Texas Administrative Code governing educator preparation programs, the following actions shall be implemented immediately:

TAC §228.20 Governance of Educator Preparation Programs

- Re-establish the advisory committee including members from the following categories: approved TEA public and private school, institutions of higher education, education service center, and business and community.
- Meet twice each academic year (September 1 – August 31)
- Specifically seek input for design, delivery, evaluation, major policy, and field based experience from the members.

TAC §228.30 Educator Preparation Curriculum

- Require that all Generalist EC-6 candidates' coursework include art and theater. The curriculum must be based on the educator standards for those areas and must be implemented immediately.

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

- Create an evaluation process which utilizes internal and external sources to support program improvements such as design and delivery of curriculum based on performance data and scientifically based research practices.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Component I: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs:

- Accurately identify attending advisory committee members;
- Record detailed minutes to reflect adherence to advisory committee roles and responsibilities identified in TAC;
- Use the TEA training PowerPoint to inform members of their roles and responsibilities;
- Seek creative ways such as SKYPE, webinars, phone conferences to increase participation in advisory committee meetings.

Component II: Admission Criteria:

- Consider adding face-to-face interviews with potential candidates to determine the applicant's English proficiency;
- Score the face-to-face interview with a rubric to ensure objectivity and fairness;
- Consider adding an admissions exam requirement that will identify the reading level of the candidate; there is a significant correlation between reading level and test taking success.
- Add Pre-Admission Content Testing as an admissions requirement to ensure the content preparation of the candidate and match the PACT with the subject area hours recorded on the candidate's transcript.

Component III: Educator Preparation Curriculum:

- Implement content methodology coursework for each certification field offered by ESC Region 1 if the PACT is not utilized.
- Review the curriculum to add rigor, depth, and overlapping information;

Component IV: Program Delivery and On-Going Support:

- Increase course clock hours to allow a deeper understanding of the coursework and develop of skills;
- Requiring first contact and observations data be entered into "Let Me In" on a continuous basis to allow tracking of candidates and their progress; it would immediately identify missed observation timelines, candidate concerns, and document additional support provided by field supervisors.

Component V: Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement:

- Create assessments to evaluate both content knowledge and associated skills to be developed.

Other General 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 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 and Fingerprinting 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 Education Service Center Region 1 alternative certification 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); and
- Align the verbiage of Education Service Center Region 1 alternative certification program to with current Texas Administrative Code (For example: Applicant / Candidate / Field Supervisor / Student Teacher / Intern/ Mentor/ Cooperating Teacher).