



# Compliance Audit Report 2012-2013 Dallas ISD Alternative Teacher Certification Program Initial 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](http://www.tea.state.tx.us) for details.

**Contact Information:** Dr. Nell Ingram

**County/District Number:** 057905

**SBEC Approval Date:** May 1, 1992

Manager of Educator Preparation Program, Sandra Jo Nix, and Program Specialist, Mixon Henry, conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Audit of Dallas Independent School District alternative certification Program (DISD-ACP), 2909 N. Buckner Blvd, Dallas Texas 75228 on May 6-8, 2013. The focus of the compliance audit was the Bilingual Generalist EC-6 and the Generalist EC-6 with Bilingual supplemental certification. 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 (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 April 9, 2013. An on-site review of documents, candidate records, course materials, and curriculum alignment charts provided evidence regarding compliance. In addition, electronic questionnaires were sent to DISD-ACP stakeholders by TEA staff. Three hundred forty-six (346) out of one thousand four hundred eight

(1408) or 25% responded as follows: Thirteen (13) out of thirty (30) advisory committee member or 43%; one hundred twenty-three (123) out of three hundred twenty-five (325) educator candidates or 38%; thirteen (13) out of sixteen (16) field supervisors or 81%; forty-four (44) out of one hundred twenty-nine principals or 34%; and one hundred fifty-three (153) out of nine hundred eighteen (918) cooperating teachers/mentors or 34%. Quantitative and qualitative 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 May 7, 2013, was attended by thirty-six (36) individuals, including the following leadership staff: Mr. Mike Miles, Superintendent, Dr. Nell Ingram, Program Director, Dr. Ann Smisko, Assistant Superintendent. The closing session on May 9, 2013, was attended by twenty (20) people

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

### **FINDINGS:**

Program support was indicated by the governing body of Dallas ISD alternative teacher certification program per TAC §228.20(c) as evidenced by the participation and cooperation of the program director in all stages and steps of the compliance audit.

The advisory committee consists of thirty (30) members from various stakeholder groups as follows: twenty-one (21) members represent public/private schools; one (1) member represents an education service center; two (2) members represent higher education; and six (6) members represent community/business interests. Dallas ISD alternative teacher certification program met TAC §228.20(b) requirements for advisory committee composition. According to the self-report, the program attempts to secure a two year commitment to serve on the advisory committee. The current members will serve from 2013 to 2014. Most of the members this year did not serve last year and have only attended the meetings for this academic year.

Advisory committee meetings were held on the following dates:

December 8, 2011

May 3, 2012

December 3, 2012

April 9, 2013

Agendas, sign in sheets, minutes and presentation materials were available for all meetings.

The advisory committee members responded in the affirmative, with percentages noted, in their questionnaire: Assisted in the design/revision of curriculum (58.3%); participated in overall program evaluation (91.7%); and participated in major policy decisions of the educator preparation program (75%) [TAC 228.20(b)]. The committee also indicated that they reviewed types of field-based experiences provided to the educator candidates (81.8%) [TAC 228.35(d)].

**Based on the evidence presented, Dallas ISD alternative certification program 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 and website, to be admitted into the DISD-ACP, the candidate must have a four year degree from an accredited institution of higher learning [TAC §227.10(a)(2)]; a passing score on a Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) accepted by the program, but not required [TAC §227.10(a)(3)(C)]; an overall GPA of at least 2.5 in the last 60 semester hours [TAC §227.10(a)(3)(A)]; twelve (12) semester credit hours in the subject-specific content field for the certification sought [TAC 227.10(a)(3)(C)]; demonstrate mastery of basic skills proficiency through the TSI exemption for candidates from Texas institutions of higher education [TAC §227.10(a)(4) and TAC §230(a)]; exhibit adequate oral communication skills; submit an application [TAC §227.10(a)(6)]; participate in an interview [TAC §227.10(a)(6)]; and meet any other requirements that the program determines (letters of recommendation; writing samples, resumes, etc .) [TAC §227.10(a)(7)].

Out-of-country applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate competence in the English language by submission of an official score of 26 on the oral portion of 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(e)]. The self-report reflected that more than twenty (20) candidates were admitted into the program from out-of-country that required verification of the ability to speak and understand the English language at a level where they could readily participate in conversations and respond appropriately [TAC227.10(a)(5) and TAC 230.11 (b)(5)]

Nineteen (19) candidates' records were selected for review and the documentation required for admission was present.

It was noted that 10 candidates were admitted with a grade point average of less than 2.5. [TAC §227.10(3)(B)] A document signed by the program director stating that the candidate was admitted with a grade point average below the required 2.5 which also explaining what the extraordinary circumstance for making the exception was present. The number of candidates admitted using the exception should never exceed 10% of the cohort of candidates allowed by TAC §227.10(3)(B). The program also noted that it had up to 85 late hires that were hired after July 15<sup>th</sup>. The late hires are required to complete 30 clock hours of field-based observations and 80 clock hours of coursework within 90 school days of their assignment. Completion of this requirement was verified by observation logs and class attendance records.

The self-report reflected that at least five (5) candidates were admitted on a contingency basis. These candidates are currently enrolled in and expect to complete the courses and other requirements for obtaining a bachelor's degree at the end of the semester in which admission to the program is sought [TAC 227.15(a)(1)] and have met all other admission requirements. [TAC

227.15(a)(2). A statement from the college/university was available to verify that the applicant was eligible to be admitted. The candidates admitted were involved in the Teach for America program.

According to the self-report, information about the program and its admission criteria was available on the Dallas ISD website. In review of the site, it was noted that no concise information on admissions was listed in one place. The applicant had to wade through a number of pages and piece together all of the admissions information necessary. Publication of admission criteria met the basic requirements of TAC §227.10(a)(7).

**Based on the evidence presented, Dallas ISD alternative teacher certification program is in compliance with TAC §227 – Admission Criteria.**

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

#### **FINDINGS:**

Dallas ISD-ACP is approved to offer teacher certification in fifty-two (52) certification fields (including two that are no longer active) and three (3) supplemental certifications (which attach to the base certificate) and three (3) professional classes one (1) of which is inactive. For the purpose of this compliance audit, the Generalist EC-6 with the bilingual supplemental and the Bilingual Generalist EC-6 certificate were selected as the certification areas for in-depth review.

There are seventy-two (72) instructors from Dallas ISD and seventy-two (72) instructors/trainers for Teach for America Institute. Qualifications necessary to be selected as a course instructor, as stated in the self-report, require the following: An advanced degree (preferred but not required), Texas teacher certification in the corresponding content and grade level (where applicable), more than five (5) years experience teaching content at the specific grade level in either a public or private school (some trainers have less than 5 years); and principal/superintendent certification is preferred for field supervisors. Instructors' credentials were presented for review and criteria for selection verified. Each of the instructors held a Master's degree and had the appropriate background or experience to provide instruction in the Generalist EC-6 certification area. The program also uses non-certified instructors in subjects such as school law, child abuse prevention.

In reviewing the curriculum for the Generalist EC-6 with Bilingual Supplemental and Bilingual Generalist EC-6, it was found that the educator standards were the curricular basis for instruction as required by TAC §228.30(a). The evidence submitted prior to the audit included the educator standards alignment charts which were reviewed with the district curriculum staff during the second and third day of the on-site audit. In addition, focused field-based experiences were reviewed with the district curriculum team.

It was also noted that the Generalist EC-6 with bilingual supplemental and the Generalist EC-6 curriculum provided evidence that it addressed the relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as required by TAC §228.30(a)(7). The evidence provided by the program included the TEKS alignment charts, course outlines, and focused field-based experiences. Since the Dallas ISD-ATCP is housed within a school district, candidates participate in the district's TEKS training throughout the academic year.

The seventeen (17) subject matter topics were included in the coursework as prescribed TAC §228.30(b). The specified requirements for reading instruction adopted by the SBEC for each certificate were verified in the alignment charts and the instructors' lesson plans. Reading instruction was presented by an instructor from Texas Woman's University [TAC §228.30(b)(1)].

Ten hours of test preparation not embedded in any other coursework was provided for candidates prior to TExES testing as per TAC §228.30(b)(17) and TAC §228.35(a)(3). The evidence presented included alignment charts noting that the certification test preparation occurred using Certified Teacher, 240 Tutoring, and 191 Review. The candidate may be required to take a practice test with their assigned field supervisor. In addition staff may schedule one-on-one training with mentors if time permits. Readiness for a candidate to test was determined by the coordinator/manager completing the Test Approval Checklist to ensure all items are up to date. The checklist is submitted to the certification officer for approval of each examination the intern will need to take.

Clinical teachers and 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. Specifically, the candidates were asked to respond to the following question: "Do you feel that the EPP prepared you for the teaching experience in the following areas?" The responses follow:

#### 90-100% YES

- Texas Educators' Code of Ethics
- Using variety of Instructional Strategies

#### 85-89% YES

- How to develop a lesson
- Conducting parent conferences
- Theories of how people learn
- TEKS organization/structure/skills
- Variety of classroom assessment
- Laws and standards for Special Populations

#### 80-84% YES

- Child /adolescent development
- Utilizing TEKS in content areas
- Differentiating Instruction
- Teaching LEP students
- Curriculum Development
- Using formative assessments to diagnose student learning needs
- Classroom management

#### 75-79% YES

- Instructional methods for motivating students

#### 70-74% YES

- Reading strategies across the curriculum
- Instructional technology in the classroom

Below 69% YES

- Teacher's responsibilities for administering the STAAR
- Standards and teaching strategies for students designated as Gifted and Talented

**Based on evidence presented, Dallas ISD alternative teacher certification program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum.**

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

#### **FINDINGS:**

Currently, the Dallas ISD alternative teacher certification program is delivered in a face-to-face format. The total Dallas ISD-ATCP program consists of more than three hundred (300) clock-hours. This meets the requirements set forth in TAC §228.35(a)(3). Evidence was found in the hours chart within the self-report submitted by the program and in a review of candidates' records.

Thirty clock-hours of field-based experience were verified prior to internship as per TAC §228.35(d). Evidence was found in the field-based observations logs the nineteen candidate records reviewed. The logs reflected that candidates usually observed only one teacher in the same grade level. In addition, videos were used for variety beginning in the summer of 1012. Fifteen clock-hours hours of field-based experience may be provided by use of electronic transmission, or other video or technology-based method per TAC §228.35(a)(3)(A). Dallas ISD alternative teacher certification program has this option available.

Per TAC §228.35(a)(3)(B), 80 clock-hours of coursework and/or training shall occur prior to student teaching, clinical teaching, or internship. The Dallas ISD-ATCP provides two hundred fifty-six clock-hours of coursework and/or training in the Summer Institute prior to internship. This met the requirements of TAC §228.35(a)(3)(B).

Per TAC §228.35(a)(5), all coursework and training shall be completed prior to educator preparation program completion and standard certification. The evidence presented by the program included program benchmarks, a review of the program schedule and district modules completion, and each Dallas ISD-ATCP "Intern Certification Plan". This met the requirements of TAC §228.35(a)(5).

Fifty clock-hours of training provided by a school district and/or campus [TAC§ 228.35(a)(6)] was not utilized toward the total number of program hours. As employees of Dallas ISD, interns do participate in staff development presented by the district. However, these hours are not necessary to complete the required certification hours [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. The evidence presented included Internship placement lists with a start and end date of the assignment for each candidate, Dallas ISD information with placement information, and placement information in each candidate's file [TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)]. Dallas ISD-ACP does offer clinical teaching but only two candidates are

currently participating in it [TAC §228.35(d)(2)(B)]. All internships were completed within the Dallas ISD in an actual school setting, rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting. The internship placement lists were provided as evidence. Dallas ISD-ATCP met the requirements of TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)(ii).

According to TAC §228.35(e), Dallas ISD-ATCP is responsible for providing mentors training that is scientifically-based or verify that training has been provided by a school district or education service center. The training that mentor teachers receive is conducted by Dallas ISD ATCP and documented by original sign-in sheets with the mentor's signature and time in and time out of training. The program met the requirements of mentor training per 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. The Dallas ISD-ATCP currently has seventeen (17) field supervisors for the 2012-2013 academic year. All of the field supervisors' resumes reflect Texas certification. Field supervisors usually supervise twelve (12) to thirty-five (35) candidates. Training materials included a handbook and dated documentation with original signature verifying that training was provided. Dallas ISD also provides training throughout the academic year on a regular basis through various training sessions as well as staff meetings. Dallas ISD ATCP met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Initial contact by the field supervisor was made within the first three weeks of the assignment as required by TAC §228.35(f). Contact was/may be made by telephone, email, or other electronic communication. Documentation was found in the candidate's records of first contact by the field supervisor.

According to TAC §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. Dallas ISD does four observations. Verifying that field supervisors conducted observations per TAC §228.35(f)(3) were dated observation forms signed by the candidate and field supervisor in each candidate's file.

According to TAC §228.35(f)(1) observations must be at least 45 minutes in duration and conducted by the field supervisor [TAC §228.35(f)]. TAC §228.35(f)(2) also states that the first observation must be conducted within the first six weeks of all assignments. The Dallas ISD-ATCP observation forms had start and stop times noted indicating that observations were a minimum of 45 minutes in duration. The first observation was completed within the first six weeks of assignment and verified on the original observation forms provided in the candidates' records. Observation forms provided evidence that instructional practices observed by the field supervisor were retained in the candidate folders. In addition, Dallas is required by TEA to upload all intern observations with the start and stop time of the observations. The interactive conference with start and stop time was also noted on the retained observation forms along with signatures of the field supervisor and the intern.

It is the responsibility of Dallas ISD-ATCP to provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's campus administrator as required by TAC §228.35(f). Some observation forms are sent by email with a read receipt. The staff provided emails sent to principals. A multi-copy observation instrument was found in the candidate's records with principal distribution noted. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Additional informal observations and coaching were provided by the program as specified in TAC §228.35(f) by additional dated observation instruments in the candidates' records.

**Based on evidence presented, Dallas ISD-alternative teacher certification program 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:**

Dallas ISD alternative teacher certification program has a candidate benchmarking process as prescribed by TAC §228.40(a). Benchmarking verifies pre-service training, field observations, video feedback, mentor Mid-Year evaluation, intern assessment of mentor teacher. Principal's mid-year assessment, end of semester conference, completion of Introduction to Teaching, end of year conference, internship completion, principal's final recommendation, field supervisor's final recommendation. The Dallas ISD benchmarking process met the requirements of TAC §228.40(a).

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. Dallas ISD presented documentation detailing the evaluation activity, timeline, and person responsible in the self-report. There also is a first six weeks survey of candidates and weekly evaluations of daytime training. Texas Woman's University also includes a candidate evaluation of the coursework. The evidence presented for review 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 to the program and evidence of completion of all program requirements for a period of five years after program completion. Records are retained for five (5) years and securely stored in both paper and electronic formats [TAC §228.40(d)].

**Based on evidence presented, Dallas ISD alternative teacher certification program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement.**

## **COMPONENT VI: PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT (TAC) §228.50**

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

It was documented that candidates receive information regarding the Texas Code of Ethics in coursework and a handbooks provided by the program. In addition, the candidate is required to complete the Region X Code of Ethics training and provide the certificate of completion to the program. They also sign an acknowledgement of reading and understanding the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics.



The field supervisors must read and sign the Texas Educator’s Code of Ethics and must complete the one hour online course through Region 10 Education Service Center. They must achieve a score of 70% or retake the course.

**Based on evidence presented, Dallas ISD alternative teacher certification program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.50 – PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT.**

**Senate Bill 174/Texas Administrative Code §229**

**Current Accreditation Status**

Dallas ISD alternative teacher certification program currently has an accreditation status of “Accredited”.

**Standard I: Results of Certification Exams**

<b>Pass Rate Performance:</b>	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
	70% Standard	75% Standard	80% Standard
Overall:	100%	99%	100%

**PROGRAM ACTIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS**

Program Compliance Actions 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) rules 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 beginning in 2010

General Recommendations are suggestions for program improvement only.

**PROGRAM COMPLIANCE ACTIONS:**

None at this time.

## GENERAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Component I: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs:

- Discuss field-based experiences (30 hours field observation and internship) annually with the advisory committee and be sure to include the topic on the agenda and detailed in minutes. The current 2012-2013 minutes only inferred this discussion.
- Use the TEA template to ensure all required topics are covered at the advisory committee meetings.

### Component II: Admission Criteria:

- Monitor changes being made to the Texas Success Initiative;
- Date and sign all documents

### Component III: Educator Preparation Curriculum

- Strengthen direct instruction for all Generalist EC-6 candidates in the areas of art, music, theatre, health and physical education.
- Have all AC academy candidates complete CPR and first aid training.
- Increase technology instruction for candidates particularly in infusing it into the curriculum.
- 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 teachers must complete prior to STAAR testing.
- 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/>.
- Use the Texas STaR chart for technology instruction for evaluating the skill level of the teacher and the technology implementation at the campus level at <http://starchart.epsilen.com/docs/TxTSC.pdf> and <http://starchart.epsilen.com/docs/TxCSC.pdf>
- Consider 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](mailto:weiss@Tarleton.edu)

Component IV: Program Delivery and Ongoing Support:

- Provide educator candidates opportunities to observe at least one subject area in the elementary, middle, and high school areas or at least two to three teachers at the same grade level/content area.

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

- Establish criteria for degree of accuracy of candidate's responses on required work;
- Add information on assessment of candidates' acquisition of knowledge and skills to presenter notes and class organizers.

Component VI: Professional Conduct - General Recommendations:

- Consider utilizing the TEA approved Ethics training for both candidates and staff within the program to ensure that this topic is adequately addressed by the program & maintain evidence that that the training has occurred. For more information visit <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/ethics/>
- Have candidates sign a copy of the actual Code of Ethics and place it in the candidates' records.

Overall General Program Recommendations:

- Align the verbiage of the Dallas ISD ATCP with the verbiage of TAC rule (Ex: applicant/candidate/internship/field supervisor/mentor/campus principal);
- 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 to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about current requirements and changes in Texas Administrative Code; and
- Continue to maintain communication with the program specialist assigned to the Dallas ISD alternative teacher certification program for the purpose of asking questions about current requirements in TAC for Governance; Admissions; Curriculum; Program Delivery and On-Going Support; Program Evaluation; and Professional Conduct (TAC § 227-229).

- Ensure that the Dean/Director/Program Staff utilizes the EPP Staff Information page <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/eppinfo.aspx> to access pertinent information that EPP's frequently request.