

Item 12:

2021–2022 Continuing Approval Reviews of Educator Preparation Programs

DISCUSSION AND ACTION

SUMMARY: This item provides the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) an opportunity to approve educator preparation programs (EPPs) for continuing approval for five years based on the results of the 2021-2022 reviews and an update on the status of current SBEC Agreed Orders.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: The statutory authority for 19 TAC §§229.6(a), 228.10(b) and 229.9 is the Texas Education Code (TEC), §§21.0443, 21.041, 21.0452, 21.0454, and 21.061.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon SBEC approval.

FUTURE ACTION EXPECTED: Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff anticipates recommending action for additional EPPs who have completed the 5-year review process.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION: TEC §21.0443 authorizes the SBEC to adopt rules providing for educator preparation program approval and renewal of approval. TEC §21.061 states that the SBEC is to carry out a process for reviewing and, as necessary, updating standards and requirements for EPPs. TEC §21.041 allows the Board to set fees for the approval or renewal of approval of an EPP. TEC §21.0452 authorizes the Board to make information available regarding EPPs to the public. TEC §21.0454 authorizes the Board to propose rules that develop a set of risk factors for each preparation program to be used by the agency to guide the five-year review process.

The continuing approval process provides the SBEC with the opportunity to approve existing educator preparation programs for continued operation. Twenty-seven EPPs were reviewed for continuing approval for the 2021-2022 academic year. Twenty of those EPPs that were reviewed are presented to the Board in this agenda for continuing approval. These programs have corrected deficiencies identified in the review and have demonstrated compliance with SBEC requirements for EPPs. TEA staff anticipates presenting the seven additional programs to the SBEC at the April 2023 meeting.

Additionally, due to outstanding deficiencies not corrected following the 2020-2021 continuing approval review, the University of St. Thomas EPP entered into an Agreed Order that was signed by the SBEC at the December 10, 2021 meeting. In 2021-2022, the responsive documents were reviewed, and it was found that some of the deficiencies remained uncorrected. As a result, the EPP closed effective August 31, 2022.

Educator Preparation Program Continuing Review Purpose and Process:

The purpose of a regular periodic review of an approved EPP, as required by statute in TEC §21.0443 and supported by SBEC rule in 19 TAC §228.10(b), is to provide evidence to ensure an EPP is adequately preparing candidates for educator certification and meeting the standards and requirements set by the SBEC. In the review process, TEA gathers evidence to determine EPP compliance with the TEC and TAC in the program approval components of:

- governance;
- admission practices;
- curriculum;
- coursework, training, program delivery, and ongoing support of candidates;
- assessment and evaluation of candidates and the program;
- professional conduct;
- complaints procedures;
- certification procedures; and
- integrity of data submission.

The review process provides clarification of current rules and requirements to EPPs and encourages the sharing of best practices to promote a continuous improvement mindset. TEA staff develops and implements targeted training to individuals and groups of EPPs based on common issues that surface across multiple EPP review reports. The review process also provides TEA with an opportunity to identify and showcase exceptional programs or practices that can be shared with other EPPs.

At the time of the review, the EPP must submit a status report regarding its compliance with existing standards for EPPs and the entity's original proposal to the SBEC. TEA uses the status report to focus on specific EPP processes and documents and to identify areas where EPP staff may not have a clear understanding of rules and requirements. TEA staff used a desk review format to review the EPPs that were determined to be of low or medium risk for the 2021-2022 reporting year. An on-site review conducted virtually was utilized for the EPPs that were in the high-risk level that required TEA staff to conduct an intensive look at the EPP internal processes as well as outcomes, including interviewing EPP program staff and instructors, in order to gain the clearest picture of how the EPP operates and what to address in a continuous improvement focus to assist the program.

After reviewing the status report and candidate records provided by the program, TEA staff may ask for additional information as part of the desk or virtual on-site review based on the results of the risk assessment, current accreditation status, and submitted materials. This additional information might include:

- Curriculum to review areas where candidates may not be receiving sufficient instruction resulting in EPP pass rate or candidate performance issues
- Targeted areas arising from complaints
- Reporting processes if lowered accreditation status was based on, for example, observations reported not making the 95% target because the program did not upload the observations properly
- Educator preparation program advisory committee activities to evaluate the types of support the program was receiving

At the close of each continuing approval review, TEA staff provides the results of the review as well as the next steps the program must complete to correct deficiencies identified in the review

process. TEA staff establishes a timeline for the program to come into compliance. In most cases, programs have about four months to provide TEA with evidence that identified deficiencies have been corrected, or to provide a plan to address deficiencies that take longer to address.

Recommended Approvals and Status of Remaining Programs:

Attachment I provides a list of programs that met all requirements in their review and completed their required improvement (if needed). TEA staff notified each of the EPPs in advance of the recommendation presented to the SBEC.

Attachment II identifies the programs who received five-year continuing approval reviews in the 2021-2022 academic year but who are in the process of correcting identified deficiencies and are expected to be presented to the Board in April 2023 for approval.

Attachment III identifies a program that closed during the 2021-2022 school year due an inability to meet the requirements of their Agreed Order, including the size of the program and the closure date. TEA staff assisted the program staff and candidates in the closing process by providing specific next steps for candidates based on their status in the program at time of closing.

PUBLIC AND STUDENT BENEFIT: The development and application of EPP review criteria will help ensure educator preparation programs are preparing educators to positively influence the performance of the diverse student population of the state.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the programs as presented for a five-year renewal of approval.

Staff Member Responsible:

Lorrie Ayers, Manager, Educator Preparation

Attachments:

- I. Programs Recommended for Continual Approval
- II. Programs Pending Approval Determination
- III. Program Closure due to Agreed Order

ATTACHMENT I**Programs Recommended for Continuing Approval**

County/District Number	EPP Name
015709	Alamo Colleges
101510	Houston Baptist University
227504	St. Edwards University
227502	Austin Community College
101726	Relay GSE
057502	Southern Methodist University
226501	Angelo State University
101723	ACT Houston at Dallas
102501	East Texas Baptist University
236950	Region 6 Education Service Center
015503	University of the Incarnate Word
221501	Hardin-Simmons University
221502	Abilene Christian University
116501	Texas A&M University-Commerce
014702	Texas A&M University-Central Texas
220501	Texas Christian University
071950	Region 19 Education Service Center
220950	Region 11 Education Service Center
227501	University of Texas-Austin
221503	McMurray University

ATTACHMENT II**Programs Pending Approval Determination**

County/District Number	EPP Name
101512	University of Houston-Downtown
101509	University of Houston-Clear Lake
057702	Criswell College
152501	Texas Tech University
236501	Sam Houston State University
101950	Region 4 Education Service Center
071701	Teachers for the 21 st Century

Attachment III**Program Closure due to Agreed Order**

Closing EPP Name	Size of EPP/ Finishers for 2020-2021	Size of EPP / Finishers for 2021-2022	Closure Date
University of St. Thomas	267	168	8/31/2022