

Compliance Report for Monitoring Visit 2009-2010

Alamo Community College District – St. Philip’s College

According to 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 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 of each rule.

Contact: Belkiss Bradford-Rodriguez

A technical assistance visit of the Alamo Community College District (ACCD) – St. Philip’s College alternative certification educator preparation program was conducted on February 22-25, 2010 by Texas Education Agency (TEA) Program Specialist, Sandra Jo Nix, and Manager, David Carmody.

Alamo Community College District’s central administration was asked to respond to the Governance and Admission Criteria portion of the self-report. ACCD- St. Philip’s College was asked to respond to the Curriculum, Field Experience and Support, and Evaluation portion of the self-report.

Self- Report Submitted: ACCD - September 14, 2009; ACCD-St. Philip’s College - February 19, 2010

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

Findings:

Alamo Community College District (ACCD) – St. Philip’s College is in compliance with TAC §228.20 Governance of Educator Preparation Programs. The operation of the advisory committee currently is the responsibility of the Alamo Community College District’s central administration. ACCD- St. Philip’s College participates as part of an advisory committee consisting of 14 members who represent public school districts, an education service center, and business and community interests. Currently, there are three vacant positions on the advisory committee. Bylaws have been created to guide the operation of the advisory committee. Meetings are scheduled quarterly; however, there have been some gaps in meetings with the restructuring of the ACCD program. Attendance records, agendas, and minutes were available for the October, 2009 and January, 2010 meeting. Additional meetings are scheduled for April and August.

One of the strengths of the advisory committee is the consistency and tenure of the members. The outgoing Chair of the ACCD Advisory Committee served in that position for three years. According to the advisory committee questionnaire, the members

understand their roles and responsibilities and actively participate in assisting ACCD-St. Philip's College in design, delivery, policy decisions and program evaluation. In the advisory committee questionnaire administered last summer, 100% of the members indicated they do not participate in program evaluation. However in reviewing the minutes provided in the document review, evaluative information was shared with the advisory committee on a consistent basis. No evidence of discussing field-based experiences could be located. Because of the importance of the advisory committee's contributions, it is suggested to provide training annually and to develop a handbook to help guide the activities and responsibilities of the committee.

Compliance Status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20 - GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM. In light of the findings detailed above, Alamo Community College District- St. Philip's College is in compliance.

Commendations:

Alamo Community College District's Advisory Committee is commended for meeting quarterly.

Alamo Community College District's Advisory Committee is commended for operating with the guidance of bylaws.

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

Findings:

Alamo Community College District (ACCD) – St. Philip's College is in compliance with TAC §227.10 Admission Criteria. Alamo Community College District's Central Administration in cooperation with St. Philip's College established uniform admission requirements for all ACCD colleges in 2008. According to the self-report and information posted on St. Philip's website, admission criteria includes a bachelor's degree, 2.5 grade point average or in the last 60 hours, passing scores on basic skill assessments, participate in an interview, and provide a signed application which includes three essay questions. In addition, each applicant is required to provide three references. Admission criteria were confirmed by review of the St. Philip's College's student folders. Through statements on the St. Philip's website and recruiting material, sufficient evidence exists that the admission criteria are applied in an equitable manner for all candidates. St. Philip's indicated that they do not admit any students under the 10% cohort rule.

According to the admission criteria on the website and confirmed while conducting the document review, the TOEFL is used to determine language fluency for out- of- country students. Transcript evaluations are also required by an approved credentialing service.

The TEA review of student folders indicated a few students who had been involved in the program for an extended period of time because of the difficulty in finding teaching positions or for lack of offering a PPR course. St. Philip's College should apply for clinical teaching in order to accommodate the candidates who have been unable to find jobs and to have them complete the program in a timely fashion. This may help the program attract individuals that would be able to participate in an alternative way of completing the requirements.

Candidate recruitment includes brochures, career and job fairs, media outlets such as newspapers, mass mailings to local graduates, and participating in the San Antonio Area Personnel Administrators Association. In addition, outreach efforts include Troops to Teachers and Para-professional development days. During the document review, TEA saw samples of recruitment material. Recruiting efforts should be reviewed and intensified in order to increase the number of participants in the program.

Compliance Status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10 - ADMISSION CRITERIA. In light of the findings detailed above, the Alamo Community College District – St. Philip’s College is in compliance.

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

Findings:

Alamo Community College District – St. Philip’s College is not in compliance with TAC §228.30 Educator Preparation Curriculum because of its failure to provide adequate coverage of the 17 mandated curriculum topics.

St. Philip’s College has eight adjunct faculty members. Faculty credentials consist of 7 Master’s and one Bachelor’s degree and all are Texas certified teachers. It was noted that all faculty members have many years of public school experience.

St. Philip’s provided syllabi for Special Education EC-12 and Generalist EC-6. At the site, each certification area had a notebook binder which contained information about the course content. In reviewing the material in the course binders, it was noted that each contained the nucleus of a curriculum guide for that certification area. However, the information it contained was minimal. The binder for the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) course only contained several practice tests. The intern responses on the questionnaire indicated that teachers’ responsibilities for administering the TAKS test (42.9%); classroom management (37.5%), laws and standards regarding students with special needs (50%), and standards and teaching strategies for gifted and talented students (50%) were not covered. Areas that were reported by the interns as needing improvement were reading strategies across the curriculum for all grade levels (62.5%), child and/or adolescent development (50.4%), methods for motivating students (50%), Texas essential knowledge and skills organization, structure, and skills (62.5%), utilizing TEKS in the content area (62.5%), teacher’s responsibility for administering the TEKS exam (62.5%), how to develop a lesson (62.5%), process of curriculum development (75%), using a variety of classroom assessments (75%), using formative assessments to diagnose student learning needs (75%), models and methods of classroom management prior to internship (75%), laws and standards regarding special education (75%), standards and teaching strategies for students designated as gifted and talented (75%), standards and teaching strategies for students with limited English proficiency (75%), conducting parent conferences (75%) using a variety of instructional strategies (75%), differentiating or changing instruction to meet individual student needs (75%), and instructional technology (62.5%).

It is evident from the curriculum deficiencies noted in the intern’s questionnaires and examination of the curriculum binders that all the colleges’ programs would benefit from having an ACCD Program Director with the responsibility of overall coordination of the

ACCD teacher education programs. It is strongly recommended that an intense curriculum development and revision project be conducted this summer to address curriculum improvement. Because of the time and cost involved in this endeavor, a team strategy including the Program Director and each campus coordinator should be utilized in this and all educator preparation projects. The products of curriculum project should include standardized curriculum guides for each active certification area to be used by the instructors at each college. St. Philip's College also should participate in the development of a new, expanded module in the area of technology. Successful completion of the technology module would be required by all teaching candidates. Each course developed should use interactive modes of instruction, modeling of specific instructional strategies by the instructor, and focused practice of skills by the teaching candidates.

In reviewing the course syllabi, it was noted that a cohesive and consistent format was used. The syllabi included instructor information, course description, course prerequisites, student learning outcomes, course objectives, textbooks and required materials, performance measures, and student responsibilities. However, the syllabi would be strengthened if it included more information about ways the students could be assessed for content mastery and skill attainment. Also, it would be helpful to make the content of a course, especially the 17 mandated curriculum topics, more obvious by providing a course outline of topics to be covered.

Test preparation is addressed through the Simulados software. The Simulados software program requires that each student have a user password that allows access to various aspects of the software. Practice tests or the study mode, which provides questions and then provides the correct way to answer the question and why, are available. The software also has a management system that allows the instructor and student to view the domains that need additional work. However, the Simulados software does not track the number of hours or minutes that the student is involved in time on task. Therefore, it is impossible to verify that six hours of test preparation have been provided for each candidate. This additional feature needs to be requested from the software developer.

In addition to the Simulados software, faculty members provide dedicated time in their classes to address specific testing topics and issues. But again, the time spent on class review is not documented at this time. It is suggested each syllabus and curriculum guide include information on the test topics to be reviewed, scheduled date of the review and amount of time expected to be spent. Since the time cannot be verified, it is suggested that a free-standing six hour professional development session be added to ensure proper student preparation for testing.

Compliance Status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30 - EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM. In light of the findings detailed above, Alamo Community College District – St. Philip's College is not in compliance.

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

Findings:

Alamo Community College District – St. Philip’s College is not in compliance with TAC §228.35 Program Delivery and On-going Support because of their failure to offer the PPR course in order to meet the 300 clock hour program requirement.

ACCD-St. Philip’s College facilities are spacious, well maintained, and resources for faculty and students are available. The instructional area where the classes are presented is designed to simulate the actual classroom with bulletin boards, table placement for small group work, and a children’s library. All of their courses are delivered in a face-to-face format.

ACCD-St. Philip’s College reported 300 clock hours of instruction. The interns through their questionnaire indicated that the PPR course has been postponed several times and, up to the date of the monitoring visit, still had not been provided. There appears to be a severe scheduling problem with the PPR course. In discussions with the coordinator and the field supervisor, St. Philip’s college is aware of this issue and is taking steps to address it individually with each candidate. In the future, it is imperative that the PPR course be offered on a regular and timely schedule to meet the 300 clock hours required of the program.

Thirty clock hours of field experiences are required. Teaching candidates respond to the field experiences by writing a reflective journal and keeping a time log which is signed by the teacher whose classroom they visit. The reflective journal is not focused on specific aspects of the classroom or of teaching observed. Therefore, it is suggested that a standardized field experience document be developed for the ACCD colleges which use focused observation activities such as taking a class census, noting teacher transition techniques, classroom management and motivational strategies. Candidates should be required to engage students in tutoring activities, small group reading, and other activities that allow the candidate to have actual face-to-face interactions with students. Development of the field experience activities should be a team effort because of cost and efficiency.

Fifty percent of the interns reported in their questionnaire that they received less than 110 clock hours of coursework and field experiences prior to beginning their internship.

Thirty-two hours of professional development training are required of the teaching interns. These sessions are presented on designated Saturdays and cover a variety of topics. Sign-in sheets were available for review during the TEA document review process. Opening the professional development sessions to teachers who have completed the ACCD program and who currently are in their 2nd through 5th year of teaching would be good public relations tool as well as reinforce ACCD interest and commitment to the teacher after completion of the program.

St. Philip’s College has one full time field supervisor who is a certified educator with at least five years classroom teaching experience. In addition to her field supervision responsibility, she also is an instructor in the program. In discussions with the field supervisor and the coordinator, they reported an intern to field supervisor ratio of ten to

one. The coordinator of the program indicated in discussions that should an individual field supervisor's responsibility exceed this number, additional staff will be hired.

First contact with the intern, first formal and subsequent observations are conducted as required. The observation length is 45 minutes in duration, and interactive feedback is provided as required by TAC rule §228.35. This was confirmed through the field supervisor, mentor teacher and intern responses on the questionnaire. In discussions with the field supervisor, the field supervisor acknowledged not providing a copy of the observation form to the campus principal. However, she does leave a note for the principal indicating that she was on the campus. In the interview with the field supervisor, concern was shared that the formal observations are so detailed that the notes may give the principal the wrong perception of the intern and also destroy intern/field supervisor trust. Nevertheless, it was indicated that in the future the campus administrator would receive a report on the intern's observation.

Sixty-six percent of the mentor teachers reported over four years of experience as a certified teacher. However, the same amount of mentors indicated that this was their first time to be a mentor. One hundred percent of the mentors responding to their questionnaire received mentor training from their respective school districts. The mentors indicated that they had daily discussions with the interns and the interns had observed them teach at least twice. The mentors confirmed that they did participate in a three way meeting with the field supervisor and intern. The mentors also reported that they had no concern with the intern's training or preparation that they received from St. Philip's.

In order to strengthen communication with the campus administrators, prior to the beginning of the internship, a letter of introduction should be sent to the principal outlining the training that has been provided to the intern and set expectations for the intern during the teaching practicum.

Compliance status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35 – PREPARATION PROGRAM COURSEWORK AND/OR TRAINING. In light of the findings detailed above, the Alamo Community College District – St. Philip's College is not in compliance.

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

Findings:

The Alamo Community College District- St. Philip's College is in compliance with TAC §228.40 Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement.

A series of checklists such as the program enrollment process checklist, coursework progress checklist, intern process checklist, and intern follow- up checklists are used to track the students' progress. The follow-up process checklist is designed to follow the completed interns for five years. On-going support is provided candidates who may be struggling in the program through faculty intervention and individual candidate tutoring.

However, there appear to be no college-wide support systems such as a counseling center, tutoring center or writing center in place.

Curriculum evaluation is conducted at St. Philip's College on an ongoing basis and also at the district level. The most recent revisions have been to the Generalist EC-6 program. A committee consisting of ACCD coordinators, current and past instructors, a school district curriculum director/advisory committee member served on the revision committee.

An overall program evaluation is conducted twice a year. Surveys are distributed to school district staff, and current/past interns. Candidates periodically evaluate the course content, effectiveness, and instructors. ACCD Central Administration disaggregates data by college and content areas. An evaluation report is compiled and submitted for review by the advisory committee members, deans, presidents and ACCD Governing Board.

Student records are kept at St. Philip's College for a minimum of five years in a secure environment.

Grievance procedures are outlined in the St. Philip's College catalog. Procedures for exiting the educator preparation program are also outlined in the college catalogue. Staff members have been identified and trained at St. Philip's College on the ASEP accountability system.

Compliance Status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.40 - ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT. In light of the findings detailed above, Alamo Community College District – Northwest Vista College is in compliance.

Commendation:

The Alamo Community College District- St. Philip's College is commended for tracking completed interns for five years.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency Technical Visit. If the program is NOT in compliance with any component, please consult the TAC rules and initiate actions to correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. A progress report will be required in one year to ensure compliance.

General program recommendations are suggestions for program improvement. No progress report is required.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS: A Progress Report will be required in one year.

- Improve instruction in the state mandated curriculum areas as per Texas Administrative Code §228.30(b) Educator Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training. Actions to correct should begin immediately.
- Offer the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities course on a consistent basis in order to meet the required 300 clock hours required by TAC 228.35. Actions to correct this should begin immediately.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Support the hiring of a program director to ensure consistency in all teacher education programs in the Alamo Community College District.
- Support the development of an overarching structure of program/curriculum planning, and coordination among all Alamo Community College District colleges. This is strongly recommended.
- Apply to TEA for clinical teaching in order to accommodate candidates who are not able to find teaching jobs. This is strongly recommended.
- Initiate a curriculum improvement project to strengthen the content of each certification area offered. This is strongly recommended.
- Develop a free-standing six hour training session covering testing topics. This is strongly recommended.
- Develop a handbook which outlines the complete and detailed roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee.
- Provide training for the advisory council yearly.
- Review and intensify recruiting efforts in order to grow the educator preparation programs.
- Develop an expanded technology course that addresses both management and instructional technology and require completion of the course by all teaching candidates.
- Open the professional development courses to allow teachers who completed the ACCD program and are in their 2nd-5th year of teaching to attend.
- Develop and send a letter to all principals where an intern is placed introducing the intern.
- Revise field experiences to make them more focused and meaningful.