A continuing approval visit of the Galveston County Alternative Certification Program (PACT) was conducted on January 25-27, 2010, by Texas Education Agency (TEA) Program Specialists, Annabel Pena and Mixon Henry. Galveston County ACP is a community college based alternative certification program. The program issued approximately 23 standard certificates last year and has approximately 23 interns on probationary certificates and three (3) clinical teachers this year. The following is a summary of the findings and recommendations for program improvement.

Self Report Submitted: 12/15/2009

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

Findings:

Galveston County ACP is in compliance with TAC §228.20-Governance of Educator Preparation Programs.

Galveston County ACP has a large and diverse advisory committee with 21 members representing private and public schools, higher education, business and community. The committee includes principals, human resources administrators, community members and program faculty. Over 70% of the 14 members responding to the survey indicated that they had been on the committee for more than four years.

The committee usually meets more often than the twice a year required in TAC rule. It is actively involved in admissions, appeals, training requirements and program evaluation as consistently noted in the self-report and advisory committee survey responses. A handout of the roles and responsibilities of the committee members was distributed to the members and training was provided. This information was verified in the sign-in sheets, agendas and comprehensive minutes kept since the program's inception in 2002.

**Compliance Status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20 - GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM. In light of the findings detailed above, Galveston County ACP is in compliance.**

**Commendations:**
Galveston County ACP is commended for having an exceptionally large and diverse advisory committee that meets more than twice a year and is actively involved in the improvement of the program. Over half of the advisory
committee members were present and actively participated at both the opening and closing meeting.

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

Findings:
Galveston County ACP (PACT) is in compliance with TAC §227.10 – Admission Criteria.
The self-report, website, and report indicate that the admissions criteria and process includes a:

i. Signed application
ii. Screening interview, essay, references
iii. GPA of 2.5 or on last 60 hours
iv. 18 combined hours for EC-6 Generalist and Special Ed. and 24/12 secondary, or passing PACT
v. Successful background check, and
vi. Basic Skills Test (Satisfactory test scores on the THEA or comparable test (Accuplacer/SAT)

It was evident that this criterion was strictly adhered to in the 20 student folders reviewed. The student folders also contained signed student contracts committing to the coursework and timelines including an estimated date of completion. The responsibilities of the candidate upon acceptance into the program are clearly delineated in the contracts and in a comprehensive student handbook that includes 115 topics. The process for addressing student grievances is outlined in the handbook.

Recruitment efforts are conducted utilizing the website, catalog, brochure, media outlet, and advisory committee. Despite these efforts, program production has declined from 80 standard certificates issued in 2005 to 40 standard certificates issued in 2009 due to several factors identified in the self-report.

**Compliance Status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10 - ADMISSION CRITERIA.** In light of the findings detailed above, the Galveston County ACP is in compliance.
COMPONENT III. CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30 - EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM

Findings:

Galveston County ACP (PACT) is in compliance with TAC §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum.

The self-report, surveys, and vitae reviewed indicated that the majority of the instructors have advanced degrees, appropriate certification, and public school experience. Over 90% of the instructors had Texas teacher certification in the corresponding content and grade level and more than 5 years teaching that content in a public or private school.

The course syllabi and curriculum notebooks reviewed include objectives, alignment to the standards, activities, assessments and grading criteria. This included a review of the syllabi and notebooks for the content methodology courses. The required 17 topics are embedded throughout the curriculum as noted during the review of curriculum documents and summarized in a chart showing where each of the 17 topics are taught within the program courses.

The interns responding to the survey indicated satisfaction with their preparation. Nine-five percent (95%) felt preparation for teaching the TEKS and differentiating instruction was effective or excellent. Candidates reported that the curriculum areas that needed improvement were strategies for EL and gifted learners, and curriculum development. Galveston County ACP has already developed a new course on teaching the special needs learner. This new course will be taught this summer for the first time.

The utilization of educational technology is integrated into the coursework as well as taught in a separate course.

Compliance Status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30 - EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM. In light of the findings detailed above, the Galveston County ACP is in compliance.

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

Findings:

Galveston County ACP (PACT) is in compliance with TAC §228.35- Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training.

The review of the self-report, student records and the program hours chart indicated that the training and coursework provided by the program without utilizing district professional development hours totals 367 hours. This exceeds the 300 hours required in TAC rule.

Beginning in January 2010, candidates received 80 hours of training prior to commencing their internship as required by rule. Previous cohorts had received less than the 80 hours but the program increased the number of hours at different points
throughout 209 to come into compliance. Forty hours of field-based experiences prior to assignment is required by the program. This was verified in student records and program documents. ASEP pass rates for this program have been 100% for the past four years.

Cooperating teachers and mentors are required to participate in a two to three hour training session by the field supervisor. This was verified by program records including sign-in sheets and agendas and validated in the survey responses from the cooperating teacher survey. Mentors are paid $200 a semester by the program and are required to submit specific documentation for payment.

Galveston County ACP has one full time field supervisor who is a certified Texas educator, master teacher with an advanced degree and has more than 5 years of teaching experience. Ninety-one% (91%) of the interns and clinical teachers who responded to the survey report satisfaction with the effectiveness of field supervision. The field supervisor conducts a minimum of 6 observations per year with the first observation conducted within the first six weeks. The field supervisor makes the first contact with the intern within the first three weeks. The principal and intern receive copies of each observation. The intern and field supervisor have a follow-up conference after the observation to address issues from the observation. This was consistently documented through observation forms maintained in student records and in field supervisor contact logs. This was validated by the survey responses from the interns, cooperating teachers, principals, and field supervisors.

One hundred percent (100%) of the six principals responding indicated that they had no concerns about the preparation of the interns from this program. Forty-three percent (43%) rated program relations satisfactory, 43% rated them excellent and 14% rated them unsatisfactory.

Compliance status for Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35 – PREPARATION PROGRAM COURSEWORK AND/OR TRAINING. In light of the findings detailed above, the Galveston County ACP is **in compliance**.

**Commendations:**

- Galveston County ACP is commended for its requirement, monitoring, and documentation of 40 hours of pre-assignment field-based experience and 327 hours of professional development raining. This total of 367 hours without including district professional development hours exceeds the TAC requirement of 300 hours. This has contributed to an ASEP pass rate of 100% for the past four years and a 100% satisfaction with the candidates’ preparation from principals responding to the survey.

- Galveston County ACP is commended for its requirements, monitoring and documentation of six observations per year, exceeding the three observations required by TAC rule. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the interns and clinical teachers found the field supervision experience effective or excellent.
Findings:

Galveston County ACP (PACT) is in compliance with TAC §228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement.

The course curriculum documents reviewed include benchmarks and assessments for each course. The candidates’ progress towards completion of the program (Certification Plan) is monitored and documented in each student folder identifying which courses they have completed and on what date they completed the course.

The Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) course of 102 hours provides extensive training in the domains and competencies of the PPR. Completion of the course is not required prior to PPR test approval or the internship. The interns and clinical teachers teaching performance during the internship or clinical teaching is reviewed throughout and they are commended for certification by the field supervisor and principal. This was validated in the review of completer folders.

End of course evaluations are conducted by students online and/or face-to-face utilizing rubrics with several categories and four options for responses. A final program evaluation of 31 items is completed by students when they exit the program.

The results of these evaluations along with ASEP pass rates and program numbers is presented to the advisory committee annually for program evaluation. This was verified in advisory committee agendas and minutes and in the survey responses.

The program maintains its student folders in locked cabinets in a secure locked office for five years.

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, Galveston County ACP is in compliance.
PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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.

There are no compliance recommendations.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Review the program curriculum annually to ensure that duplication in course content is limited and program procedures and processes are streamlined.
- Explore ways to increase communications with campus principals about the program as well as about intern progress.
- Review the end of year program evaluation procedures and consider surveying principals, human resource administrators, and mentors as well as the students.
- Research ways to market Galveston County ACP so that more candidates are recruited and retained. This could include a review of the fee structure and payment procedures as well as the class dates and time. The program has gone from 80 interns a year to less than 30 in the last five years.