



## Compliance Audit Report Texas A&M University—San Antonio Principal 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. Eric Lopez, School Head

**County/District Number:** 15712

**TEA Approval Date:** Legislative mandate May 2009

A compliance audit visit for the post-baccalaureate principal certification program at Texas A&M University—San Antonio (TAMUSA), San Antonio, Texas, was conducted on February 21-22, 2012, by Texas Education Agency (TEA) Program Specialists Dr. Mary S. Black and Vanessa Alba in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §229.6 (a).

### **Data Collection and Analysis:**

The audit used information from a self-report by Texas A&M University—San Antonio, a review of documents, syllabi, and curriculum correlation charts, and responses from electronic questionnaires as evidence of compliance with Texas Administrative Code. A total of 26 responses were received by TEA to the electronic questionnaires: four (of eight) from advisory committee members; two (of two) from field supervisors; three (of 32) from campus mentors; and 17 (of 123) from principal candidates. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation were used to evaluate the evidence. Evidence of compliance was measured using a rubric correlated to Texas Administrative Code.

### **Opening and Closing Sessions:**

An Opening Session was held the morning of February 21, 2012. The meeting was attended by 11 people, including Dr. Eric Lopez, Head of the School of Education and Kinesiology, Dr. Brent Snow, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Alberto Valadez, Chair of Leadership and Counseling, Dr. Sam Garcia, Chair of Curriculum and Kinesiology, and Dr. David Herrington, Coordinator of the Education Leadership program. Dr. Valadez presented an

overview of the Texas A&M University-San Antonio principal certification program, and Dr. Mary S. Black, TEA Program Specialist, reviewed audit procedures. Dr. Black also presented a summary of findings at a Closing Session February 22, 2012, to Dr. Lopez and 13 other TAMUSA faculty and staff members.

## **COMPONENT I: COMMITMENT AND COLLABORATION - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs**

### **FINDINGS:**

The governing body and chief operating officer of an entity shall provide sufficient support, and shall be accountable for the quality of the educator preparation program and the candidates whom the program recommends for certification [TAC 228.20(c)]. The presence of Dr. Snow, Dr. Lopez, Dr. Garcia, and Dr. Valadez at the opening session and at various times during the compliance audit indicates support for the TAMUSA principal certification program by university administration.

The TAMUSA advisory committee consists of eight members: two (2) members from local schools and districts, four (4) members from higher education, one (1) member from Region XX Education Service Center, and one member from the local business community. The advisory committee meets the composition as required by TAC §228.20(b). Minutes, agendas, and sign-in sheets for advisory committee meetings were reviewed for November 17, 2010, April 20, 2011, November 9, 2011, and February 8, 2012. The minutes indicated the committee discussed program design, delivery, policy, and evaluation [TAC §228.20(b)]. According to the self-report submitted by Texas A&M—San Antonio, the spring 2012 meeting will be dedicated to program evaluation.

Minutes also revealed committee discussion of the principal practicum experience and collaboration with Northside ISD, San Antonio ISD, Harlandale ISD, and South San Antonio ISD [TAC228.35(d)].

**Based on the evidence presented, Texas A&M University—San Antonio is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.20 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs.**

## **COMPONENT II: ADMISSION CRITERIA - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10 and TAC §241 – Admission and Certification Criteria**

### **FINDINGS:**

Applicants to the TAMUSA principal program submit the online Texas universal university application [TAC §227.10(6)] and official transcripts [TAC §227.10(c)], which are kept in the Registrar's Office. The Department of Education and Kinesiology maintains a candidate evaluation sheet in each candidate's file listing the candidate's Grade Point Average (GPA) [TAC §227.10(A)]. Of the ten candidates' records reviewed, all had GPAs higher than the state minimum 2.5.

The program conducted oral interviews with applicants prior to admission and were also available in the candidates' records [TAC §227.10(6)]. No candidates with out-of-country degrees have been admitted into the program so far. However, policies and procedures are in

place if needed [TAC §227.10(7)(e); TAC §227.10(5)]. The admission criteria is publicly available on the university website and in the catalog and applied consistently to all candidates [TAC §227.10(7)].

Prior to recommendation for the standard principal certificate, the university verifies two years of creditable teaching experience through service records and prints a copy of the candidate's initial teaching certificate [TAC 241]. These documents were available in each candidate's record reviewed. The candidate's application for graduation from the master's degree program in the file serves to verify the Master's degree requirement for principal certification [TAC 241].

**Based on the evidence presented, Texas A&M University—San Antonio is in compliance with TAC §227 and §241 - Admission Criteria.**

### **COMPONENT III: CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §241 – Principal Preparation Curriculum**

#### **FINDINGS:**

Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §241.1 (b) states that the standards for this certificate must emphasize instructional leadership; administration, supervision, communication skills; curriculum and instruction management; performance evaluation; organization; and fiscal management. These standards shall be the curricular basis for all principal preparation programs [TAC §241.10 (a)].

A curriculum alignment chart as well as syllabi provided evidence for curricula adherence to the principal standards. TAMUSA requires eight graduate-level courses for a master's degree with principal certification. One course includes the required practicum for principal candidates. One online course was reviewed by TEA program specialists. Course activities are well-structured and appear to be meaningful and relevant to the preparation of principal candidates.

The syllabi contained TExES domains and competencies as well as standards from the Educational Leadership Constituents Council (ELCC), which are aligned with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards. These research-based, national standards were developed in 2007 and 2011 by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA).

**Based on evidence presented, Texas A&M University—San Antonio is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §241- Principal Preparation Curriculum.**

### **COMPONENT IV: PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ONGOING SUPPORT - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35 – Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training**

#### **FINDINGS:**

The TAMUSA program requires a minimum of 360 clock hours of coursework [TAC §228.35(b)] according to the degree plan, and 160 clock hours [TAC §228.35(d)(3)] of practicum. According to candidate logs, the practicum often exceeds 230 clock hours over 16 weeks. Six of the required courses are delivered face-to-face, one is online, and one is the practicum.

Two university field supervisors support candidates in the field during the practicum [TAC §228.35(35(f))]. Field supervisors and campus mentors are trained by means of a handbook discussing all requirements and policies [TAC §228.35 (e); TAC §228.35(f)]. The handbook explicitly states that responsibilities of the field supervisor, campus mentors and candidates. Lists of campus mentors and field supervisors assigned to each practicum candidate for fall 2011 and spring 2012 provided evidence of appropriate assignments [TAC §228.35 (e); TAC §228.35(f)].

The initial contact with the candidate by the field supervisor is documented with agendas and sign-in sheets [TAC §228.35(f)]. The three required formal observations are documented by the field supervisor contact log, the signed observation instrument, and a signed contract between the campus principal and the field supervisor [TAC §228.35(f)]. Observation instruments have space for time in/out to document that each observation is a minimum of 45 minutes and that an interactive conference has occurred [TAC §228.35(f)]. Three completed observation forms for each candidate for fall 2011 were included in the candidates' records. The campus mentor is involved in the interactive conference after the candidate's observation [TAC §228.35(f)].

Practicum activities are structured according to ELCC standards. Candidates must select at least three performance activities from a list provided in the handbook for the field supervisor to observe at each formal evaluation. For example, to demonstrate ELCC Standard 1.0, candidates could select to 1) conduct a problem-solving session with staff focusing on a real problem or crisis; or 2) chair a committee for the school; or 3) participate in the development of a campus vision. Candidates and field supervisors document these activities through logs and reflections seen in candidate records.

**Based on evidence presented, Texas A&M University—San Antonio is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §228.35 – PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ON-GOING SUPPORT.**

#### **COMPONENT V: PROGRAM EVALUATION – Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement**

#### **FINDINGS:**

Texas A&M University—San Antonio evaluates candidates prior to admission and at various benchmark points throughout the program. According to the self-report, benchmarks include admission, completing the representative TExES exam with 80 percent or better cut score, internship and graduation [TAC §228.40(a)]. In addition, candidates must meet with an advisor every semester and adhere to the degree plan.

In addition, candidates are required to complete eight clock hours of test preparation held on two Saturday mornings prior to attempting the principal certification exam. Professors analyze practice exams by competencies and review practice results with candidates to determine their readiness to test [TAC §228.40(b)].

The department and university review aspects of the principal program at the end of each course and semester, using a variety of data. In addition, faculty are conducting a study with graduates hired as school administrators to determine what elements of their training served them best and what needs improvement. Candidate responses to electronic questionnaires indicated overall satisfaction with the program [TAC §228.40(c)].

The University maintains 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 [TAC 228.40(d)].

**Based on evidence presented, Texas A&M University—San Antonio 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 individuals preparing candidates and the candidates themselves demonstrate adherence to Chapter 247 of this title (relating to Educators' Code of Ethics).

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

#### **Current Accreditation Status**

Texas A&M University—San Antonio is currently not rated due to being a new program with less than ten finishers. No candidates have completed the principal certification program through TAMUSA at this time.

#### **Standard I: Results of Certification Exams**

<b>Pass Rate Performance:</b>	2010-2011	2011-2012
	75% Standard	80% Standard
Overall:		
Principal Exam Only		

## **PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

Program Compliance Recommendations are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency technical assistance visit. If the program is out of compliance with any component, please consult the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) rules and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. General Recommendations are suggestions for program improvement only. 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.

**PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:** In order to meet requirements of all Texas Administrative Code rule governing educator preparation programs, the following recommendations are made:

- None at this time

## **GENERAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Include updated Texas Code of Ethics in handbook
- Be alert to upcoming revisions in Texas Administrative Code and in the standards for Principal programs.