



Post-Approval Compliance Audit Report 2011-2012 Pflugerville ISD – ACP Initial 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 for details.

Contact Information: Justin Porter, Program Director

County/District Number: 227-904

SBEC Approval Date: April 8, 2011

Program Specialists, Vanessa Alba and Mixon Henry, conducted a Texas Education Agency (TEA) Post-Approval Compliance Audit of Pflugerville ISD Alternative Certification Program on May 3, 2012, as required by Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §229.6(a). The focus of the compliance audit was the initial certification program. The certification fields reviewed were the Bilingual Generalist-Spanish and Bilingual Generalist-Vietnamese (Grades EC-6). The following are findings and recommendations for program improvement.

Data Analysis:

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code governing educator preparation programs was collected by various qualitative means. A self-report was submitted to TEA on March 7, 2012. An on-site review of documents, candidate records, course materials, and curriculum correlations charts provided evidence regarding compliance. In addition, electronic questionnaires were sent to Pflugerville ISD-ACP stakeholders by TEA staff. Twenty-one (21) questionnaires were sent and fifteen (15) responses were received. A total of fifteen (15) out of twenty-one (21) advisory committee members responded. Because this is a new program, there were no candidates admitted into the program and no mentor teachers, field supervisors or campus principals identified at the time the questionnaires were sent. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to

evaluate the evidence. Evidence of compliance was verified by using a rubric correlated to Texas Administrative Code.

Opening and Closing Session:

The opening session also served as the closing session on May 3, 2012. It was attended by six people: Mr. Justin Porter, Chief Operating Officer/Program Director; Mrs. Barbara Kennedy, Program Coordinator; Ms. Tanya Ruckel, elementary principal; Dr. Ann O'Dougherty, University of Texas; Mr. Jose Medina, elementary principal; and Ms. Camille Ramirez-Longoria, elementary principal. All members present were members of the Pflugerville ISD-ACP Advisory Committee.

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

FINDINGS:

Program support was indicated by the governing body of Pflugerville ISD-ACP per TAC §228.20(c) as evidenced by the participation of Mr. Justin Porter and Mrs. Barbara Kennedy, in various aspects of the one year post-approval compliance audit.

The advisory committee consists of twenty-one (21) members. Fifteen (15) members are from local school districts; one member is from an education service center; one member is from higher education; and four (4) members represent community/business interests. Pflugerville ISD-ACP meets TAC §228.20(b) requirements for advisory committee composition.

The first advisory committee meeting of the academic year was held on October 3, 2011. An agenda, minutes, and attendee records were available to verify that the advisory committee meeting was held. The second advisory committee meeting was held on April 4, 2012. The third meeting for the academic year was held on May 3, 2012, and was the post-approval audit visit meeting. Six members attended this meeting. An agenda, minutes, and attendance records were provided at the time the meeting was held. TEA program specialists maintained documentation of the attendees present on TEA sign-in sheets.

In addition to the meetings held for the current academic year, advisory committee meetings were held last year on the following dates: November 8, 2010, and at the time of the pre-approval audit on February 14, 2011. Advisory committee members were trained at the time of the pre-approval audit by TEA.

Forty percent (40%) of the advisory committee members indicated that they did meet a minimum of two times per academic year and sixty percent (60%) indicated that they met more than two times per academic year in their electronic questionnaire. The program meets the requirements for conducting a minimum of two advisory committee meetings per academic year as required by TAC §228.20(b).

Advisory committee members reported that they do assist in designing/revising curriculum (54%), major policy decisions (92%), and overall evaluation (85%) of the educator preparation program. Sixty-six point seven percent (66.7%) indicated that review and discussion of field experiences was included in discussions at advisory committee meetings.

Based on the evidence presented, Pflugerville ISD-ACP is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.20 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs.

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

FINDINGS:

According to the Pflugerville ISD ACP self-report and their website, to enter the alternative teacher certification program, the candidate must meet the following criteria:

- Have a four year degree from an accredited institution of higher learning [TAC §227.10(C)];
- Pass the Generalist EC-6 Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) examination [TAC §227.10(c)];
- Have a GPA of 2.5 overall or in the last 60 hours [TAC §227.10(A)];
- Accrue twenty-four (24) semester credit hours in a content field [TAC §227.10(C)];
- Demonstrate proficiency of basic skills [TAC §227.10(4)];
- Exhibit adequate oral communication skills [TAC 227.10(5) & TAC §230.413];
- Submit an application [TAC §227.10(6)];
- Participate in an interview [TAC §227.10(6)]; and
- Meet any other requirements the program determines [TAC §227.10(7)].

Out-of-country applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate competence in the English language by submission of an official minimum score on the written or 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(5)]. The program currently has no candidates from out-of-country. However, Pflugerville ISD-ACP has procedures in place to verify that applicants meet the requirements per TAC §227.10(5) by utilizing the TOEFL [TAC §230.413] when the need arises.

In a review of the four applicant records, it was found that all required admission criteria were met and documented as follows:

- Each applicant file contained evidence that a four year degree from an institution of higher learning [TAC §227.10(C)] with a documented GPA ranging from 2.57-3.33 [TAC §227.10(A)];
- Each file contained a passing score on the Generalist EC-6 Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) examination with a passing score ranging from 241-269 [TAC §227.10(c)];

- Each applicant file contained evidence that basic skills were verified with the THEA [TAC §227.10(4)];
- Each file contained an application [TAC §227.10(6)];
- Each file contained an interview scored on a rubric by three different evaluators. Each applicant is scored on oral communication skills, program readiness, and overall alignment/fit with district culture. The rubric is a 4 point rating scale with a range from 1= below average to 4 = superior [TAC §227.10(6)];
- A writing and oral language assessment is required for Spanish bilingual applicants. Both the writing and oral language assessments are scored on a rubric for each of the following: task completion; topic development; and language use. The rating scale used ranges from 0 = low to 3 = high; and
- Each applicant file contained evidence that they completed of a minimum of 6 clock-hours of classroom observations in Pflugerville ISD schools, with three hours at the elementary level and three hours at the secondary level. A “Pflugerville ISD-ACP Pre-Admission Classroom Observation Form” for each observation was completed, signed and submitted prior to admission into the Pflugerville ISD-ACP [TAC §227.10(7)].

The self-report submitted by Pflugerville ISD ACP stated that information about admission criteria and their program is available through their website and the Pflugerville ISD-ACP Candidate Handbook. This was verified and met the requirements of TAC §227.10(7).

Based on the evidence presented, Pflugerville ISD ACP is in compliance with TAC §227 - Admission Criteria.

COMPONENT III: CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum

FINDINGS:

Pflugerville ISD ACP is approved to offer teacher certification in two certification fields. For the purpose of this post-approval compliance audit, the Bilingual Generalist Spanish and Bilingual Generalist Vietnamese (EC-6) were both selected as the certification fields for in-depth review.

Qualifications necessary to be selected as a course instructor require the following:

- Advanced Degree
- Texas Teacher Certification in one or more of the following areas: any cluster in the EC-12 certification field; Bilingual Education/Bilingual Supplemental; and ESL Supplemental; and
- Five or more years experience teaching in a public or private school.

There are 16 instructors for the Pflugerville ISD-ACP. Instructors’ credentials were presented for review and each of the criteria for selection was verified. All of the instructors have a Master’s Degree or a Ph.D., teaching certificates, and a background of teaching experience. It was verified that the instructors have the appropriate background and experience to provide instruction in the certification fields reviewed.

In reviewing the Bilingual Generalist-Spanish & Bilingual Generalist-Vietnamese EC-6 curriculum syllabi and alignment charts, it was verified that the educator standards were the curricular basis for instruction as required per TAC §228.30(a). It was also noted that curriculum did provide evidence that it addressed the relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as required per TAC §228.30(a). Program specialist reviewed the 10 course module-syllabi and curriculum alignment charts to verify compliance.

The seventeen (17) subject matter topics were verified in the coursework as prescribed [TAC §228.30(b)]. This was verified through a review of the Curriculum Alignment Chart submitted for the 17 curriculum topics and correlated to the 10 modules in the program's curriculum.

Six hours of explicit test preparation for the PPR were verified as being in place to provide to candidates prior to TExES testing as per TAC §228.30(b)(17) and TAC §228.35(a)(3)(C).

Since this is a new program and at the time that the questionnaires were sent out, the applicants had not yet been notified of their acceptance into the program. Candidates, mentors, and campus administrators/principals were not sent questionnaires.

Based on evidence presented, Pflugerville ISD ACP 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 – PREPARATION PROGRAM COURSEWORK AND/OR TRAINING

FINDINGS:

Currently, Pflugerville ISD-ACP program is delivered in a face-to-face format. The total program consists of 327 clock-hours for the Bilingual Generalist EC-6 (Spanish) and 321 clock-hours for the Bilingual Generalist EC -6 (Vietnamese) certification. The program clock-hours were verified in formal conversations with the program director and program coordinator. The program clock-hours meet the requirements set forth in TAC §228.35(a)(3).

Completion of a minimum of 30 clock-hours of field-based experience was verified as being in place to be completed prior to internship as required by TAC §228.35 (a)(3)(A). Verification of field-based experience was found in the self-report and in formal conversations with the program leadership team. TAC §228.35(a)(3)(A) allows up to 15 clock-hours of field-based experience to be provided by use of electronic transmission, or other video or technology-based method. Pflugerville ISD-ACP does utilize this method for eight (8) of the required clock-hours of field-based experience. Specifically the instructional video footage of Pflugerville ISD bilingual instruction is viewed by candidates during Modules 1-3 which occur prior to the internship year and meets the requirements of TAC §228.35(a)(3)(A).

TAC §228.35(a)(6) allows an educator preparation program to develop and implement specific criteria and procedures that allow candidates to substitute prior ongoing experience and/or professional training for part of the educator preparation requirements, provided that the experience or training is not part of internship, clinical teaching, student teaching, and is directly related to the certificate being sought. Pflugerville ISD ACP has not allowed candidates to substitute prior ongoing experience and/or professional training for part of the educator

preparation requirements. Pflugerville ISD-ACP has appropriate procedures in place as verified in the handbook provided by the program.

Pflugerville ISD-ACP requires candidates to complete 197 clock-hours of coursework prior to internship. Completion of this coursework was verified through a review of the program hours and a review of the hours required in Modules 1-4 that are completed prior to the internship year with the Pflugerville ISD ACP leadership team. There has not yet been a candidate who has completed the 197 clock-hours of coursework prior to the internship year; however, the hours exceed the minimum hours required as specified in TAC §228.35(a)(3)(B).

The Pflugerville ISD ACP internship for the first four candidates is scheduled for the 2012-2013 academic year and will meet the requirements set forth in TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C). That placement will occur within the Pflugerville ISD in actual school settings rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting prohibited by TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)(ii).

Per TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C), internship is required for a minimum of one academic year or 180 school days in an content area that matches the certification field for which the individual is accepted into the program. One candidate has been recommended for hire pending completion of the required program hours prior to internship and will hold a probationary certificate and will be classified as a “teacher” as reported on the campus PEIMS data [TAC §228.35(D)(2)(C)].

In addition, according to TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C), the program may permit an internship of up to 30 school days less than the minimum if it is due to maternity leave, military leave, illness, or a late hire date. Pflugerville ISD ACP does not currently have candidates in the program that needed this option. However, there are procedures in place for allowable leave on pages 21-22 of the Handbook should the need arise in the future.

According to TAC §228.35(e), Pflugerville ISD ACP is responsible for providing mentor teacher training that is scientifically-based or verify that training has been provided by a school district or education service center. The program has made a change since the original proposal was submitted. The mentor training that will be provided for the 2012-2013 academic year will be “Mentoring Texas: Beginning Teacher Induction and Mentoring (BTIM)”. This training will be provided to mentor teachers by either the PISD ACP or the school district. In the future, the program has reserved the right to substitute another scientifically-based mentoring program to ensure full alignment between the Pflugerville ISD ACP mentoring program and the mentoring program utilized by the Pflugerville ISD. The mentoring program, and the change, meets the requirements of TAC §228.35(e). To date, there have not been any mentors trained for the 2012-2013 academic year.

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. In a review of the field supervisor credentials, it was verified that the field supervisor currently holds an advanced degree and is a Texas certified educator. The training for the field supervisor was verified during the document review as having occurred during the 2011-2012 academic year. A Certificate of Completion served as evidence of compliance.

Initial contact with the candidate must be made within the first three weeks of the assignment by the field supervisor as required by TAC §228.35(f). A process is in place to ensure that first contact occurs and will be documented on a spreadsheet for each cycle of interns. The process meets the requirements specified in TAC §228.35(f).

A total of three observations [TAC §228.35(f)(3)] must be conducted during the internship assignment and must be at least 45 minutes in duration [TAC §228.35(f)]. Since there are not

any candidates who have begun their internship year, it was verified by a review of documents that will be utilized by the program and in formal conversations with the program coordinator that there is a start and end time noted on the observation document that will meet the requirements specified in TAC §228.35(f). TAC §228.35(f) also states that the first observation must be conducted within the first six weeks of internship [TAC §228.35(f)(1)]. During the document review and in the same formal conversations with the program coordinator, it was verified that a process is in place to verify and document that the first observation for each candidate will occur within the first six weeks of internship assignment per TAC §228.35(f)(1).

Furthermore, TAC §228.35(f) requires that the field supervisor documents observed instructional practices and provides written feedback through an interactive conference with each candidate. A review of the documents to be used, formal conversations with the program coordinator, and in the guidance provided, it was determined that a process is in place to ensure that instructional practices observed will be documented and an interactive conference will occur for each candidate to meet the requirements per TAC §228.35(f).

It is also the responsibility of Pflugerville ISD ACP field supervisor to provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's campus administrator as required by TAC §228.35(f). A review of the documents to be used, formal conversations with the program coordinator, and in the guidance provided it was determined that the field supervisor will provide the feedback to the campus administrator to meet the requirements per TAC §228.35(f).

Additional informal observations and coaching will be provided by the field supervisor as specified in TAC §228.35(f). A review of the documents to be used, formal conversations with the program coordinator, and in the guidance provided it was determined that the field supervisor will provide additional informal observations and coaching to meet the requirements per TAC §228.35(f).

A late hire for a teaching position shall complete 30 clock-hours of field-based experiences as well as 80 clock-hours of initial training within 90 school days of assignment. Up to 15 clock hours of field-based experience may be provided by use of electronic transmission, or other video or technology-based method [TAC §228.35(c)]. Pflugerville ISD ACP reported that it will not admit any candidates classified as late hires.

Based on evidence presented, Pflugerville ISD ACP 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:

Pflugerville ISD ACP presented evidence that it has a candidate assessment and benchmarking process in place as prescribed by TAC §228.40(a).

Readiness for TExES testing [TAC §228.40(b)] is determined by the completion of program requirements. According to TAC §228.40(b), the program shall not grant test approval for the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) test until the candidate has met all the requirements for admission to the program and has been fully accepted into the educator

preparation program. Since there are not any candidates who have been admitted into the program, the process to be utilized was verified. The process requires candidates to complete all coursework requirements. This meets the requirement of TAC §228.40(b).

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. The Pflugerville ISD ACP leadership team presented revisions to the process for program and curriculum evaluation and will meet 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. Pflugerville ISD ACP provided evidence of compliance by presenting the four current candidate files to verify that there is a process in place that will provide evidence of eligibility for admission to the program and completion of all program requirements for a period of five years after program completion. Currently, all files for the Pflugerville ISD ACP are kept in a locked file in a locked office. The process will meet the requirements of TAC §228.40(d).

Based on evidence presented, Pflugerville ISD ACP 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). There is a specific district policy regarding the Code of Ethics for current employees and staff. Candidates will be provided instruction in the Texas Code of Ethics in a variety of ways. During the first session of Module 2, candidates are first introduced to the Texas Code of Ethics with a specific emphasis on TAC §247.2(1). Module 3 provides key instruction for candidates with a specific emphasis on "Ethical Conduct Toward Students". Module 5 incorporates a review of the entire Texas Educator Code of Ethics to ensure a thorough understanding of the requirements as candidates begin the 180 day internship. A final review of TAC §247.2 is provided in Module 7 ("School Law and Ethics"). Pflugerville ISD meets the requirements of TAC §228.50(a).

Senate Bill 174/Texas Administrative Code §229

Current Accreditation Status

Pflugerville ISD-ACP currently has an accreditation status of "Accredited – Not Rated". There are not any results of certification exams to report because this is a new program.

Program Recommendations:

The following are recommendations based on the findings of the compliance audit. If the program is NOT in compliance with any identified component, please consult the TAC rules and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. A Compliance Status Report will be required every sixty days until the compliance issues are totally corrected.

Program recommendations are suggestions for general program improvement and no follow up is required.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

- None at this time.

GENERAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

Overall General Program Recommendations:

- 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;
- 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;
- Continue to maintain communication with the program specialist assigned to the Pflugerville ISD ACP for the purpose of asking questions about current requirements in TAC for Governance; Admissions; Curriculum; Program Delivery & On-Going Support; and Program Evaluation (TAC § 227-229).
- Align the verbiage of the Pflugerville ISD ACP Educator Preparation Program to that of current Texas Administrative Code. For example: Applicant / Candidate / Field Supervisor / Internship / etc.

Component I General Recommendations:

- Consider utilizing the yearly Advisory Committee PowerPoint presentation provided by TEA for annual advisory committee training; and
- Consider utilizing the template provided to ensure that the items required in Texas Administrative Code are discussed and documented in the advisory committee meeting agendas and minutes.

Component V General Recommendations:

- Consider continuing the practice of maintaining the Pflugerville ISD-ACP files/records separate from those of the PISD employee files/records.