

Item 16:

2020–2021 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 for continuing approval for five years based on the results of the 2020-2021 reviews.

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: At the April 2022 meeting, Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff anticipates recommending action for the remaining program from the 2020-2021 reviews.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION: TEC §21.0443 authorizes the SBEC to adopt rules providing for educator preparation program (EPP) 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-eight EPPs were reviewed for continuing approval for the 2020-2021 academic year.

At the October 2021 meeting, fifteen programs were presented to the Board for continuing approval. TEA staff also informed the Board that one program, A Career in Education ACP, had closed in lieu of recommendation for SBEC sanction.

At the December 2021 meeting, five programs were presented to the Board for continuing approval. In addition, the SBEC approved Agreed Orders for two programs, University of St. Thomas EPP and Texas A&M University – Texarkana EPP, which implemented conditions on the EPPs to correct all remaining deficiencies identified in the review process.

Of the remaining programs reviewed during the 2020-2021 review cycle, three programs were determined to be in compliance. One program, Lubbock Christian University EPP, did not correct all deficiencies identified in the review process and is being presented in a separate item in this agenda to the Board for approval of Agreed Orders that will implement conditions on the EPPs to correct these remaining deficiencies. TEA staff anticipates presenting the final EPP, A+ Texas Teachers, for SBEC consideration at the April 2022 meeting.

The purpose of this item is to provide the Board an opportunity to approve the 3 programs that were determined to be in compliance, found in Attachment II.

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 2020-2021 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, including instructors, in order to gain the clearest picture of how the EPP operates and the areas 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. Each program has four months to provide TEA with the evidence of next steps that correct identified deficiencies or provide a written plan to address deficiencies that required more than four months.

Attachment II 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 III provides a list of programs that will be presented to the SBEC at the April 2022 meeting.

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 in the state.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION:

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

Staff Member Responsible:

Jessica McLoughlin, Director, Educator Standards, Testing, and Preparation

Attachments:

- I. Statutory Citations Relating to Continuing Approval Reviews
- II. Programs Recommended for Continual Approval

ATTACHMENT I**Statutory Citations Relating to Continuing Approval Reviews****Texas Education Code, §21.041, Rules: Fees**

- (d) The board may propose a rule adopting a fee for the approval or renewal of approval of renewal of an educator preparation program, or for the addition of a certificate or field of certificate to the scope of a program's approval. A fee imposed under this sub-section may not exceed the amount necessary, as determined by the board, to provide for the administrative cost of approving, renewing the approval of, and appropriately ensuring the accountability of educator preparation programs under this subchapter.

Texas Education Code, §21.0443, Educator Preparation Program Approval and Renewal

- (a) The board shall propose rules to establish standards to govern the approval or renewal of approval of:
- (1) educator preparation programs; and
 - (2) certification fields authorized to be offered by an educator preparation program.
- (b) To be eligible for approval or renewal of approval, an educator preparation program must adequately prepare candidates for educator certification and meet the standards and requirements of the board.
- (c) The board shall require that each educator preparation program be reviewed for renewal of approval at least every five years. The board shall adopt an evaluation process to be used in reviewing an educator preparation program for renewal of approval.

Texas Education Code, §21.0452, Consumer Information Regarding Educator Preparation Programs (excerpt):

- (b) The board shall make available at least the following information regarding each educator preparation program:
- (1) the information specified in Sections 21.045(a) and (b);
- (e) The board may develop procedures under which each educator preparation program receives a designation or ranking based on the information required to be made available under Subsection (b). If the board develops procedures under this subsection, the designation or ranking received by each program must be included in the information made available under the section.

Texas Education Code, §21.0454, Risk Factors for Educator Preparation Programs; Risk-Assessment Model (excerpt):

- (a) The board shall propose rules necessary to develop a set of risk factors to use in assessing the overall risk level of each educator preparation program.
- (b) The set of risk factors developed by the board may include whether an educator preparation program is accredited by other organizations.
- (c) The board shall use the set of risk factors to guide the agency in conducting monitoring, inspections, and compliance audits of educator preparation programs, including evaluations associated with renewals under Section 21.0443.

Texas Education Code, §21.061, Review and Updating of Educator Preparation Programs:

The board shall, after consulting with appropriate higher education faculty and public school teachers and administrators and soliciting advice from other interested persons with relevant knowledge and experience, develop and carry out a process for reviewing and, as necessary, updating standards and requirements for educator preparation programs.

ATTACHMENT II
Programs Recommended for Continuing Approval

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| University of Houston |
| Texas College |
| Wiley College |