

Item 12: Request to Approve a New Educator Preparation Program: Katy ISD TEA+CH Alternative Certification Program

DISCUSSION AND ACTION

SUMMARY: This item provides the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) an opportunity to approve a request by Katy ISD TEA+CH Alternative Certification Program (ACP), located in Katy, Texas to be approved as an educator preparation program (EPP) to prepare and recommend candidates for certification through the alternative certification route. Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff reviewed the proposal and found that it complied with provisions of 19 TAC Chapter 227, Provisions for Educator Preparation Candidates, Chapter 228, Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs, Chapter 229, Accountability System for Educator Preparation Programs, and Chapter 230, Professional Educator Preparation and Certification, Subchapter B, General Certification Requirements.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: The statutory authority related to the approval of educator preparation programs are the Texas Education Code, §21.0443 and §21.044.

The full text of statutory citations can be found in the statutory authority section of this agenda.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon SBEC approval with enrollments to begin Fall 2024 and candidates to begin coursework in January 2025.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION: The SBEC approves all EPPs. The EPP prepares and completes an extensive application addressing the SBEC-required ten components below. While the elements of the application were reviewed according to the legacy 228 rules in effect, the applicant has included many of the requirements in the new Chapter 228 which will ensure a smooth transition into compliance with all requirements in the new Chapter 228 after September 1. The required post-approval site visit will evaluate for implementation of new Chapter 228 requirements.

Component	Component Description
1. Governance (19 TAC §228.20)	Pertaining to the EPP’s advisory committee functions, responsibilities, and program amendments.
2. Admission (19 TAC §§227.10 and 227.17)	Pertaining to admission criteria and formal admission required of all applicants seeking initial certification in any class of certificate.
3. Educator Preparation Curriculum (19 TAC §228.30)	Pertaining to standards-based curriculum required of all candidates seeking certification.
4. Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training (19 TAC §228.35)	Pertaining to how the educator preparation program prepares candidates for educator certification and ensures they are effective in the classroom.

<p>5. Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement (19 TAC §228.40)</p>	<p>Pertaining to how the EPP has established benchmarks and structured assessments of a candidate’s progress throughout the EPP.</p> <p>Pertaining to how the EPP continuously evaluates the design and delivery of the EPP components based on performance data, scientifically based research practices, and the results of internal and external feedback and assessments.</p>
<p>6. Professional Conduct (19 TAC §228.50)</p>	<p>Pertaining to how the educator preparation program ensures that the individuals preparing candidates, and the candidates themselves, understand and adhere to Chapter 247 relating to the Educators’ Code of Ethics.</p>
<p>7. Complaints and Investigations Procedures (19 TAC §228.70)</p>	<p>Pertaining to the EPP’s responsibilities for maintaining a process through which a candidate or former candidate in an EPP, an applicant for candidacy in an EPP, an employee or former employee of an EPP, a cooperating teacher, a mentor, a site supervisor, or an administrator in a public or private school that serves as a site for clinical teaching, internship, or practicum experiences may submit a complaint about an EPP for investigation and resolution.</p>
<p>8. Certification Procedures (19 TAC §§230.36, 230.37, and 230.31)</p>	<p>Pertaining to the requirements for the issuance of Intern, Probationary, and Standard certificates.</p>
<p>9. Required Submission of Information, Surveys, and Other Data (19 TAC §229.3)</p>	<p>Pertaining to all data and information an educator preparation program must submit to TEA.</p>
<p>10. Candidate Training and Support on Inclusive Practices for Students with Disabilities (19 TAC §228.10(a)(1)(J))</p>	<p>Pertaining to coursework and clinical experience requirements for training educator candidates in proactive instructional planning techniques and inclusive practices for all students including students with disabilities and English language learners.</p>

The proposal is reviewed by several TEA staff members who hold extensive discussions with the applying entity to ensure compliance with the SBEC rules. The Katy ISD TEA+CH ACP application meets the minimum requirements for approval by the SBEC. The attachment includes an Executive Summary that describes how the program will meet each of the SBEC-required components for program approval.

TEA staff members, Lorrie Ayers, and Viviana Lopez conducted a pre-approval site visit on April 18, 2024, and found that Katy ISD TEA+CH ACP complied with the provisions of 19 TAC Chapter 227, Provisions for Educator Preparation Candidates, and Chapter 228, Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs, that govern approval of educator preparation programs.

Representatives from Katy ISD TEA+CH ACP will attend the July 19, 2024 SBEC meeting and will address the Board's questions related to their application as needed.

Certifications Requested:

- Core Subjects with Science of Teaching Reading (STR): Early Childhood-Grade 6
- Core Subjects with Science of Teaching Reading (STR): Grades 4-8

Anticipated Candidate Start Date: January 7, 2025

Anticipated Number of Candidates for the First Year: 100

Cost of the Program per Participant: \$3,000

PUBLIC AND STUDENT BENEFIT: The addition of this new educator preparation program will increase the number of qualified certified educators in Texas.

MOTION TO BE CONSIDERED:

Approve Katy ISD TEA+CH Alternative Certification Program as a new educator preparation program as presented.

Staff Members Responsible:

Lorrie Ayers, Director of EPP Management, Educator Preparation and Certification
Viviana Lopez, Program Specialist, Educator Preparation and Certification

Attachment:

Executive Summary for Katy ISD TEA+CH Alternative Certification Program

ATTACHMENT

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Katy ISD TEA+CH Alternative Certification Program (ACP), located at 438 FM 1463, Katy, TX 77494, seeks to serve applicants in Katy and the surrounding areas, including Harris, Fort Bend, and Waller counties. The program will offer certifications in the following high needs areas: Core Subjects with Science of Teaching Reading (STR) EC-6 and Core Subjects w/STR 4-8. Currently, both Waller and Fort Bend Counties are experiencing rapid population growth and are underrepresented in Educator Preparation Programs. In addition, Katy ISD is experiencing the impacts of the national teacher shortage, sustaining 200 teaching vacancies for the past two years. Professional resignations have increased, moving from 593 in 2020 to 1130 in 2022. The program anticipates 100 candidates in each cohort and is committed to providing a paid internship position in Katy ISD schools for each candidate admitted into the program. The program cost will be \$3,000, of which the program will refund \$1,500 upon completion of the first-year teaching in Katy ISD on an Intern/Probationary Certificate, and with a signed contract of agreement to remain teaching in Katy ISD for two school years. The program is anticipated to begin January 7, 2025. The Katy ISD TEA+CH ACP will create teachers who are successful in the classroom and will increase teacher retention for Katy ISD, thus contributing to the district's ability to accommodate the rapid growth in Katy ISD.

Component 1: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs

Katy ISD TEA+CH ACP has created a nine-member Advisory Committee, which has met three times. Members represent Katy ISD teachers and administrators, Iteach Texas, University of Houston, the Region IV ESC, as well as local businesses and the community. In-person meetings will be held twice annually, in January and July. Advisory Committee members will participate in all major policy decisions, and give input on the design, delivery, and evaluation of the program. Advisory Committee members will be informed of their roles and responsibilities as part of the Agreement Letter which will be signed by each member prior to serving on the Advisory Committee.

Component 2: Admission Criteria

Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree, have a minimum GPA of 2.75 (or GPA of 2.5 – 2.74 with accepted work experience, references and passing scores on a Pre-Admission Content Test (TX PACT), meet the minimum semester credit hours in the subject areas corresponding to the certification sought, complete an online application, provide three references, have a successful in-person interview indicating an aptitude for teaching, pass a background check, and prove English language proficiency. Essays in the application and the interview will be used to evaluate the applicant's appropriateness for the certification sought. Applicants with a degree from out-of-the-country must provide a foreign transcript equivalency evaluation and must pass the speaking, listening, reading, and writing portions of the TOEFL-iBT test to demonstrate English language proficiency. Candidate admission documents will be retained in a locked filing system in the office of the EPP Coordinator for a period of five years after a candidate leaves the program.

Component 3: Educator Preparation Curriculum

The Katy ISD TEA+CH program curriculum, founded on scientifically based research to enhance educator effectiveness, offers coursework and training meticulously aligned with the Texas Educator Standards. Candidates seeking certification in Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 and Core Subjects w/STR 4-8 will actively participate in meaningful and authentic learning experiences facilitated through face-to-face coursework, structured in-person collaboration, and personalized

coaching sessions. Prioritizing real-world application, our instructors will model diverse teaching methods, engaging candidates in interactive activities focused on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Candidates will be evaluated through discussion, assignments, and performance-based assessments, such as lesson plans, presentations, and self-assessments designed to foster the practical application of knowledge and skills. Candidate proficiency will be determined using rigorous, standards-based rubrics associated with performance-based assessments. The comprehensive curriculum encompasses reading instruction and content-area literacy, instructional planning techniques and inclusive practices for diverse student populations, knowledge of students and student learning, the learning environment, classroom management, multicultural education processes and strategies, data-driven practice, professional practices and responsibilities, the Educator Code of Ethics, and training in mental health, substance abuse, youth suicide, dyslexia, and digital learning.

Component 4: Delivery and Ongoing Support

All program coursework and training will be delivered in a face-to-face format over a period of 17 months. Candidates will be provided 324 hours of coursework for Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 or 304 hours of coursework for Core Subjects w/STR 4-8. In addition to the coursework, candidates will complete 50 hours of Field-Based Experiences (FBE), including 36 interactive hours at Katy ISD campuses and 14 hours of technology-based field experiences. The program has identified a list of Katy ISD master teachers with accomplished performance and the willingness to assist aspiring teachers. These master teachers will be utilized in campus interactive FBEs, as well as a number of technology-based FBEs. Candidates will complete an internship for one full school year in a Katy ISD classroom. Mentor teachers and Field Supervisors will be assigned to each candidate completing an internship and will receive training for the role prior to the internship. Field Supervisors will be certified T-TESS appraisers to ensure effectiveness in the role. The Mentor Teacher will check in weekly, meet formally each month, and attend training sessions with the candidate. The Field Supervisor will make initial contact via email with the candidates, and will conduct a minimum of five formal observations, including pre- and post-conferences for each, and will conduct informal observations with coaching sessions three times per semester. Written feedback will be provided by the Field Supervisor and shared with the Mentor Teacher and Campus Administrator. Field Supervisors will communicate at least three times during the internship with Mentor Teachers to gain feedback on candidate performance. The Field Supervisor will collaborate with the candidate and the campus administrator at least twice per semester, and the Field Supervisor will meet with the Campus Administrator in April to determine if the candidate demonstrated proficiency and should be recommended for standard certification.

Component 5: Candidate and Program Evaluation

Program staff will utilize the Program Progress Report to benchmark candidate progress through coursework, FBEs, certification testing, and internship requirements. Candidates must successfully complete admissions requirements, coursework, and assessments before approval for certification testing will be granted. Each year, the program will collect, review, and evaluate program data with EPP staff and the Advisory Committee, including program applications, candidate passing rates on certification tests, survey results, observation record summary data, retention rates, complaints received, and instructor feedback. A 5-year Continuous Improvement Plan will be utilized to track progress toward improvement goals for the program.

Component 6: Professional Conduct

Field Supervisors, Mentor Teachers, Instructors, EPP staff, and Candidates will receive Texas Educators' Code of Ethics training and will be expected to sign an acknowledgement form stating that they have read, understand, and agree to comply with the Educator Code of Ethics.

Component 7: Complaints Process

The Complaints Resolution Process will be included on the program website, Candidate Handbook, Field Supervisor Handbook, and posted at the physical sites. The program asks that complaints be addressed to the staff member as early as possible to resolve any issues which arise. If unable to be resolved, the complaint will go to the EPP Coordinator. If the issue is still not resolved, the complaint will be directed to the Assistant Superintendent for HR for final determination of the resolution. If the determined resolution is not satisfactory, a formal complaint may be filed with TEA. All complaints will be addressed within 10 business days.

Component 8: Issuance of Certificates

To qualify for the Intern certificate, candidates pursuing Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 must complete 246.5 coursework hours and an additional 50 hours of Field Based Experiences (FBE), pass the content pedagogy certification test, hold a conferred bachelor's degree, and must be currently enrolled and in good standing with the program. To qualify for the Intern certificate in Core Subjects w/STR 4-8, candidates must complete 226.5 hours of coursework and an additional 50 hours of FBE, pass the content certification test, hold a conferred bachelor's degree, and must be currently enrolled and in good standing with the program. To qualify for the Standard teaching certificate, candidates must complete the total of 374 hours of coursework and training, including FBE, for Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 or 354 hours for Core Subjects w/STR 4-8, achieve passing scores on the content pedagogy and Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities EC-12 (PPR) tests, hold a conferred bachelor's degree, successfully complete the full school-year internship, must be currently enrolled and in good standing with the program, and must receive the written recommendation from the Field Supervisor and Campus Administrator. All rules pertaining to issuance of certificates will be followed by the program staff.

Component 9: Accuracy of Data Reporting

The Katy ISD TEA+CH Alternative Certification Program will diligently ensure that all state and federal reporting requirements are met within the established timelines.

Component 10: Candidate Training and Support on Inclusive Practices for Students with Disabilities

Katy ISD TEA+CH ACP will embed proactive instructional planning techniques into instruction and will cover this instruction across all content areas. Candidates will learn how to provide flexibility and differentiation strategies for the way that information is presented to students and for allowing flexibility in the ways that students respond or demonstrate knowledge and engagement in the classroom. Instruction will address students with learning disabilities, English language learners, gifted and talented students, and those with cultural differences. Candidates will additionally be presented with student case studies in which they will skillfully identify and justify appropriate instructional planning techniques, inclusive practices, and evidence-based intervention strategies tailored to the individual needs of the learner in the case study. Candidates will learn how to provide appropriate accommodations, while maintaining high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students of limited English proficiency. Throughout the coursework, candidates will engage in Cultural Connections sessions, which will help them create inclusive, academically enriching environments and reduce instructional barriers. Additionally, these practices will be reinforced throughout the candidates' internship through the After the Bell Teacher Engagement sessions, focusing on the study of *Teach Like a Champion 3.0*. Evidence of implementation and understanding of these practices can be seen in instruction, lesson planning, performance-based assessments, FBE reflections, and internship evaluations. This dual focus ensures candidates develop a holistic skill set for responsive and engaging classrooms that reduces instructional barriers and accommodates both cultural diversity and behavioral challenges.