

## Item 9:

### Request to Approve a New Educator Preparation Program: Tarrant County College Educator Preparation Program

#### DISCUSSION AND ACTION

**SUMMARY:** This item provides the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) an opportunity to approve the application submitted by the Tarrant County College Educator Preparation Program, located in Fort Worth, 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.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Upon SBEC approval with recruitment and enrollment beginning Fall 2025.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION:** The SBEC approves all EPPs. The prospective EPP prepares and completes an extensive application addressing the SBEC-required ten components below.

Component	Component Description
1. <b>Governance</b> (19 TAC §228.25)	Pertaining to the responsibilities of the governing body and the EPP's advisory committee functions.
2. <b>Admission</b> (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. <b>Educator Preparation Curriculum</b> (19 TAC §228.57)	Pertaining to standards-based curriculum required of all candidates seeking certification.
4. <b>Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training</b> (19 TAC Chapter 228, Subchapters D, E, & F)	Pertaining to how the educator preparation program prepares candidates for educator certification and ensures they are effective in the classroom.

<b>5. Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement</b> (19 TAC §228.25 & §228.31)	<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>
<b>6. Professional Conduct</b> (19 TAC §228.31 & §228.57)	<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>
<b>7. Complaints and Investigations Procedures</b> (19 TAC §228.121 & §228.123)	<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 host teacher, a mentor, a site supervisor, or an administrator in a public or private school that serves as a site for clinical teaching, residency, internship, or practicum experiences may submit a complaint about an EPP for investigation and resolution.</p>
<b>8. Certification Procedures</b> (19 TAC §230.36 & §230.37 and 19 TAC Chapters 230, 239, 241, 242)	<p>Pertaining to the requirements for the issuance of Intern, Probationary, and Standard certificates.</p>
<b>9. Required Submission of Information, Surveys, and Other Data</b> (19 TAC §229.3)	<p>Pertaining to all data and information an educator preparation program must submit to TEA.</p>
<b>10. Candidate Training and Support on Inclusive Practices for Students with Disabilities</b> [19 TAC §228.11(a)(1)(J)/TEC §21.0443(b)(1) & (2)]	<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 Tarrant County College EPP application meets the minimum requirements for approval by the SBEC. The attachment includes an Executive Summary that was prepared by the applicant and summarizes how the proposed program will meet each of the SBEC-required components for program approval.

TEA staff members conducted a pre-approval site visit on February 21, 2024, and found that Tarrant County College EPP 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 and that the college facilities and resources were adequate to support candidates and the preparation process.

Representatives from Tarrant County College EPP will attend the April 25, 2025, 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
- English as a Second Language Supplemental
- Special Education Supplemental

**Anticipated Enrollment Start Date:** Fall 2025

**Anticipated Number of Candidates for the First Year:** 20-30

**Cost of the Program per Participant:** \$4,250

**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 Tarrant County College Educator Preparation Program as a new educator preparation program as presented.

**Staff Members Responsible:**

Lorrie Ayers, Director of EPP Management, Educator Preparation and Certification  
Rebecca Bunting, Program Specialist, Educator Preparation and Certification

**Attachment:**

Executive Summary for Tarrant County College Educator Preparation Program

**ATTACHMENT****Executive Summary****Introduction**

Tarrant County College District (TCCD) is seeking approval for an educator preparation program, Tarrant County College Education Preparation Program (TCC-EPP), to prepare Teacher candidates in the following certification categories: Core Subjects with Science of Teaching Reading: Early Childhood-Grade 6 (COR EC-6), Special Education Supplemental (SES), and English as a Second Language (ESL) Supplemental. The significant teacher shortage in Texas is attributed to a growing student population, a dwindling number of newly certified teachers, increasing enrollments in key subjects, and teacher attrition. "Teacher attrition is high among teachers across the nation and is one of the most serious causes of teacher shortage" (Zhang and Zeller, 2016). Shortages of teachers are more acute in economically disadvantaged communities. Fort Worth ISD, one of Tarrant County College District's largest K-12 partners, hires between 500 and 700 teachers annually. More than 300 classrooms were without teachers at the beginning of the 2022-2023 academic year. That trend continued, with 200 vacancies in August 2023 and 250 vacancies reported in June 2024. TCC-EPP is positioned to help meet the needs of the regional workforce by providing a high-quality program that recruits, prepares, and supports teacher candidates who live in and reflect the communities they will serve. The TCC-EPP is anticipated to launch in January 2026, with a cohort of 20-30 candidates, at a cost of approximately \$4,250.

**Component 1: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs**

TCC-EPP has established an advisory committee that includes seven representatives from local school districts, two from local universities, and one from the regional service center and two representing the business and community sectors. Members were invited based on existing partnerships, articulation agreements, the college's service area, and their unique insight into regional employment and economic needs. Formal invitations were sent to prospective members describing advisory committee roles along with a request for acceptance or declination. During the initial meeting, the advisory committee received in-depth training on governance, decision-making, and evaluation. The advisory committee will meet twice yearly to provide insight and input into the design, delivery, and evaluation of the preparation program.

**Component 2: Admission Criteria**

Admission into the TCC-EPP requires a bachelor's degree from an accredited university with a minimum 2.75 grade point average, 24 content area hours, professional references, and an interview. Applicants who do not meet the admission requirements for the content area based on university coursework must complete and submit a passing score on the content examination through the Texas Pre-Admission Content Test (TX PACT). Applicants applying with foreign credentials must be evaluated for eligibility and equivalency to a bachelor's degree earned in the United States (US). English language proficiency will be determined by a conferred degree from an accredited US institution, from an institution outside of the US where the country's official language is English, or by passing the Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-Based Test (TOEFL-iBT). Following receipt of the application materials, a screening interview will be conducted to assess the applicant's knowledge, skills, experience, and ability to perform duties of teaching. A formal offer of admission, including the request for the applicant's acknowledgment and acceptance or rejection, will be sent to applicants. Documents related to candidate admission, preparation, and completion of requirements, and all other records applicable to the EPP activities, will be securely retained for five years.

**Component 3: Educator Preparation Curriculum**

Curriculum in the TCC-EPP provides candidates with the requisite knowledge and skills required in the Texas Teacher Standards, Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities, and TEKS. Educator standards for COR EC-6, SES, and ESL are integrated into eight (8) courses. Candidates engage in authentic learning opportunities throughout the program. In the Educational Foundations course, students are introduced to essential knowledge and skills all teachers should possess. Later, in Methods for Teaching courses, candidates participate in creating, developing, and applying their learning in classrooms during field-based experiences. Throughout the Internship, field supervisors assess each candidate's instructional practices through formal and informal observations. Coursework also includes training in mental health, substance abuse, youth suicide, and dyslexia. All candidates complete the Science of Teaching Reading course, which focuses on the characteristics and identification of Dyslexia and effective multisensory strategies and demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and skills in reading instruction in addition to the TEALearn Dyslexia course candidates complete while enrolled. Each course includes field-based experiences to provide opportunities for classroom engagement and includes performance-based assessments to evaluate candidates' knowledge and skills.

**Component 4: Delivery & Ongoing Support**

TCC-EPP courses are delivered face-to-face at Tarrant County College. The program will be comprised of eight (8) courses, with forty-eight (48) contact hours in each course. Candidates' time on task and completion of coursework will be verified using course attendance sheets and grade books. Prior to a year-long internship, candidates complete all coursework, as well as 50 hours of field-based experience. The estimated length of time to complete the program is two (2) years, consisting of one (1) year of coursework and training and one (1) year in an internship in a TEA-accredited school. Each intern will be assigned a field supervisor and mentor teacher, who has been trained in their required activities, including coaching, observing, providing feedback, and guiding candidates through their first-year experience. Field supervisors will work directly with campus staff and mentor teachers and provide written documentation and feedback to the program office after each required formal and informal observation and interaction with candidates. Supervisors will complete five candidate observations and provide feedback to the candidate, mentor teacher, and campus administrator. Upon successful completion of the internship, the field supervisor and campus administrator will collaboratively recommend candidates for the standard certificate. All candidates will receive instructional and technical assistance throughout the program. Candidate records will be securely retained for a period of five years.

**Component 5: Candidate and Program Evaluation**

Candidates will be evaluated on their proficiency through course assignments, performance-based assessments, observations, and scores on practice TExES exams using program-approved test preparation software. Prior to approval for content pedagogy testing, candidates must successfully complete 150 hours of coursework (midpoint in the program) and demonstrate proficiency at 80% or better as measured by a TExES representative exam. Candidates should be prepared to sit for the Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities EC-12 (PPR) certification exam while enrolled in the final methods course of the program. For PPR exam approval, candidates must complete all required coursework and demonstrate proficiency at 80% or better as measured by a TExES representative exam. Course evaluations, mentor feedback, recruitment data, program benchmarks, and performance data from coursework and TExES

exams will be collected to assess the candidate's progress in the program. A five-year plan will be implemented to monitor and adjust the program as needed for continuing improvement of program components. The plan will consist of self-assessments, improvement planning, and annual data collection. Data analysis will include areas of performance and compliance with a specific focus on admission practices, certification procedures, curriculum, evaluations, governance, and complaints. Faculty, the Program Director, staff, and the advisory committee will recommend program changes and training. The advisory committee will identify strengths, as well as opportunities for improvement, and propose a plan to evaluate changes and assist in implementation.

**Component 6: Professional Conduct**

All instructors and candidates will be issued the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics and expected to sign a form acknowledging receipt, understanding, and adherence to all program requirements and the Code of Ethics.

**Component 7: Complaints Process**

Candidates with grievances will find the process on the program website. Students complete the Complaint Form and can appeal directly to the Program Director in person. If the candidate is dissatisfied with the outcome, an appeal may be made directly to the Divisional Dean.

**Component 8: Issuance of Certificates**

Intern certificates will be issued to candidates who have completed all coursework, including 50 hours of field-based experiences, passed the content pedagogy exam, and secured employment with an approved school or district. Probationary certificates will be issued after candidates have fulfilled all coursework requirements, completed 50 hours of field-based experiences, successfully passed the content pedagogy and Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities examinations, and secured employment with an approved school or district. Upon fulfilling all program requirements, completing a successful internship, and receiving recommendations from the field supervisor and campus administrator, candidates may be eligible for recommendation for the standard teaching certificate.

**Component 9: Accuracy of Data Reporting**

The TCC-EPP will comply with the Texas Administrative Codes and all accreditation requirements. The EPP will follow all rules pertaining to state and federal reporting.

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

The TCC-EPP will provide candidates the required instruction in proactive instructional planning techniques and inclusive practices, including differentiated instruction, Response to Intervention (RTI) strategies, data-driven instruction, and pedagogy, throughout the coursework and internship. The Educational Foundations Course prepares candidates to design interactive TEKS-based lessons and effectively assess student learning. The Teaching Exceptional Learners course covers the special education process and RTI strategies for supporting students with special needs. During the Teaching English as a Second Language course, candidates focus on the learning needs of English learners. Candidates are expected to observe and apply these inclusive practices during the field-based experience, as well as through performance-based assessments, and demonstrate them effectively during the Internship. This comprehensive approach ensures that candidates receive thorough instruction in proactive instructional planning techniques and inclusive practices.