

# Item 14:

## COVER PAGE

### Type of Agenda Board Item:

- Discussion Only:** TEA staff will present board items with an update, potential future items, and/or seek SBEC direction on potential future board action items. TEA staff will draft future action items from the board's discussion and direction.
- Board Action:** SBEC members will take action on the agenda item and the effective date will be immediately upon board approval.

### Summary:

This item is for the approval of University of St. Thomas, an approved and accredited educator preparation program (EPP) located in Houston, Texas, to offer the Superintendent class of certificate. Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff reviewed the proposal request and found that it complied with SBEC required provisions in rule. To be recommended for approval, a program must be rated "Accredited" under ASEP and prepare an extensive and complete application addressing the components of program governance, admissions, curriculum, program delivery and on-going support, evaluation, professional conduct and complaints process that is codified in SBEC rule. An Executive Summary also explains how the program complies with each required component.

### Statutory Authority:

All of the relevant statutes, if applicable, pertaining to this item are listed for you on the agenda title page and the entire statutory language is on Attachment I. This is always helpful in referencing the law the TEA staff was working under when preparing this item.

### TEA Staff Recommendation:

To approve the class of certificate as presented.

### Relevant SBEC Core Principles:

- *We believe well-prepared educators are essential.*
- *We believe high certification standards measured by rigorous and reliable assessments are essential.*
- *We believe stakeholder input is essential, and we are accountable to all Texas stakeholders.*
- *We believe educators must be held to high standards of ethical conduct.*
- *We believe we must continually improve our policies and processes in response to changing needs.*

**Item 14:****Consider and Take Appropriate Action on Request to Approve New Class of Certificate at the University of St. Thomas****DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

**SUMMARY:** This item provides the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) an opportunity to approve a request by University of St. Thomas, an approved and accredited educator preparation program (EPP) located in Houston, Texas, to offer the Superintendent class of certificate. Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff reviewed the proposal request 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 230, Professional Educator Preparation and Certification, Subchapter B, General Certification Requirements, and Chapter 242, Superintendent Certificate.

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** The statutory authority related to the approval of new classes of certification are the Texas Education Code, §21.0443 and §21.044.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Upon SBEC approval.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION:** The SBEC approves all new classes of certificates that are offered through an EPP. An EPP must be rated "Accredited" under the Accountability System for Educator Preparation (ASEP) to be eligible to add new classes to program offerings. The EPP prepares an extensive and complete application addressing the SBEC required components of governance, admissions criteria, curriculum, program delivery and on-going support, evaluation, professional conduct and complaint process. The proposal is reviewed by several TEA staff members who hold extensive discussions with the applying entity to ensure compliance to the TAC for the certification class being requested.

**PUBLIC AND STUDENT BENEFIT:** Approving a new class of certificate offering will increase the number of certified superintendents in the state.

**ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION:** I recommend that the State Board for Educator Certification:

Approve the Superintendent class of certificate at the University of St. Thomas.

**Staff Members Responsible:** Tim Miller, Director  
Educator Preparation

Sandra Jo Nix, Manager  
Educator Preparation

**Attachments:**

- I. Statutory Citations Relating to the Approval of New Classes of Certification
- II. Executive Summary for University of St. Thomas, Superintendent Certification

**Attachment I**

**Statutory Citations Relating to the Approval of New Classes of Certification**

**Texas Education Code, §21.0443, Educator Preparation (excerpts):**

- (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.

**Texas Education Code, §21.044, Educator Preparation (excerpt):**

- (a) The board shall propose rules establishing the training requirements a person must accomplish to obtain a certificate, enter an internship, or enter an induction-year program. The board shall specify the minimum academic qualifications required for a certificate.

## Attachment II

### Executive Summary for the University of St. Thomas (Houston), Superintendent Certification

#### Introduction:

The University of St. Thomas (UST) requests approval for a three-year, 54 semester credit hour *Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Ethical Leadership* with superintendent certification. The degree, that integrates superintendent preparation coursework, will be offered by the School of Education and Human Services (SEHS) at UST. If approved, the first cohort of students will begin certification coursework August 27, 2016. The Ed.D. in Ethical Leadership is designed to serve working educators and individuals in organizations who have experience in leadership at the campus, district, or county level. The program is designed in a cohort structure that will admit approximately 20 students each summer. The total cost is estimated to be \$45,000 that will be paid for over a three-year period. The Ed.D. in Ethical Leadership will provide educators in the Houston metroplex with an opportunity for preparation to assume senior administrative positions in educational settings and related organizations or agencies.

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

The advisory committee consists of 17 members from their Board of Visitors who volunteer to assist with the education side of the school. The 17 members from the Board of Visitors represent six public and private schools, the Region IV Education Service Center, four businesses, one museum, and four social service agencies. The 17 members from the Board of Visitors encouraged the development of an Ed.D. program and will provide feedback as development proceeds. If the program is approved, the advisory committee will meet each month.

#### Component 2: Admission Criteria:

The Ed.D. program will admit candidates who meet the academic requirements for the program and who demonstrate professional experiences that suggest a strong potential for success as doctoral candidates and as leaders in schools and education-related or other social service non-profit organizations. In addition, a professional and/or personal commitment to educational social justice is required. Applicants who have a 3.25 GPA from previous graduate work will be considered for admission to the program. In addition to an application, other admission requirements include three confidential references, an applicant statement of purpose reflecting understanding of inequities in schools, a response to a writing prompt at the time of the interview, and an interview with the admissions subcommittee. International students will be required to meet TOEFL standards (speaking score of 26) and have their transcript evaluated for equivalency if required for certification.

#### Component 3: Educator Preparation Curriculum:

Fourteen instructors from the SEHS at UST are the developers of the program coursework, including goals, student learning outcomes, syllabi, student handbook, sequence of courses, and other aspects of the program. Five goals for the Ed.D. program were established by the SEHS instructors. Student learning outcomes were then identified for each of the five goals. Following the development of the student learning outcomes, courses were developed following a common structure for the SEHS. Goals and learning outcomes were developed for each of the superintendent standards, and the required knowledge, skills, and values were aligned to the courses. Assessments in each course target the student learning outcomes and the superintendent standards identified in the course. In addition to individual course assessments, each semester of coursework includes a common assessment benchmark. Major benchmarks

are identified to track the progress of the candidate toward the degree and superintendent certification.

**Component 4: Preparation Program Coursework, Delivery & Ongoing Support:**

Initially, all coursework will be delivered face-to-face with some hybrid course delivery (less than 50% online or field assignments). The program includes 720 clock hours of coursework directly related to the superintendent certificate and two residency courses where students will complete their 160 practicum hours. Currently the SEHS at UST offers seven Master's of Education programs online. All online courses have been developed following the standards for online course development established by Quality Matters, Online Learning Consortium, and Blackboard Exemplary. Because the program plans to offer some of the coursework online in the future, they will continue to use standards for online course development from these sources. Field supervision will be conducted by university instructors who hold a terminal degree and who have experience as a district leader. The field supervisors will make first contact with the student within the first three weeks from the start of the practicum, one formal observation within the first six weeks of placement, and two additional observations over the two semester residency requirement. Using an observation form aligned with the superintendent standards, the observations will total 135 minutes over the course of the practicum. The field supervisors will also provide oral and written feedback on practices observed during the practicum. Site supervisors will be identified at the district level to provide timely advice and guidance to the student during the practicum experience. A rubric and observation form is provided to guide the field experiences in the practicum. A process is in place to assist students who might be struggling in the practicum activities.

**Component 5: Assessment & Evaluation of Candidates & Program:**

The Ed.D. program will utilize course evaluations completed by each student for each course as part of the curriculum evaluation. An outside evaluator, yet to be determined, will be hired to evaluate the program on an annual basis and will interview Ed.D. students, SEHS instructors and area administrators will review student progress towards degree completion. This information will be reported to the advisory committee at the end of each year's evaluation. The outside evaluator will also consider school district feedback once students have been hired. The advisory committee will offer feedback for improvement of the program.

**Component 6: Professional Conduct**

All candidates and university instructors will be required to sign an affirmation that they have read, understand, and will abide by the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics.

**Component 7: Complaints Process**

The UST has established a complaints process to address issues locally within the university. Should additional intervention be required, the candidate is informed of TEA's complaint process.