



Compliance Audit Report Educators of Excellence November 15-17, 2011

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: Dr. Carole Crain or Lynn Kirby

County/District Number: 227-703

TEA Approval Date: November 2006

A compliance audit visit for the Educators of Excellence Alternative Certification Program (ACP) in Austin, Texas, was conducted on November 15-17, 2011, by Texas Education Agency (TEA) Program Specialists Dr. Mary S. Black and Mr. Mixon Henry in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §229.6 (a).

Data Collection and Analysis:

The audit used information from a self-report submitted by Educators of Excellence (E²) on October 18, 2011 to TEA, a review of documents, syllabi, and curriculum correlation charts, and electronic questionnaires sent to program participants by TEA as evidence of compliance with Texas Administrative Code. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation were used to evaluate the evidence. Evidence of compliance was measured using a rubric correlated to Texas Administrative Code.

Opening and Closing Sessions:

Lynn Kirby, one of the founders of Educators of Excellence, presented an overview of the program during an Opening Session November 16, 2011. Also in attendance were Dr. Carole Crain, co-founder, Dr. Ruth Kane, director of the ACP at Huston-Tillotson University and member of the E² advisory committee, and Pat Griffith, another advisory committee member. All attendees were familiar with advisory committee rules and responsibilities, so TEA program specialists did not present advisory committee training. Dr. Mary Black gave a short summary of the results from respondents to the electronic questionnaires sent out by TEA about the program.

Mixon Henry reviewed the compliance audit matrix in detail with Dr. Crain the afternoon of November 16. The Closing Session was held November 17, 2011 with Dr. Crain, Mary Black, and Mixon Henry in attendance.

This compliance audit focused on the Generalist EC-6 curriculum since that certificate generally has the largest enrollment. The program had 45 finishers in 2010-2011, and currently has 25 interns and clinical teachers enrolled. The report below details findings from the compliance audit.

COMPONENT I: COMMITMENT AND COLLABORATION - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs

FINDINGS:

Component I concerns governance of the program, or the advisory committee mandated in Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20. According to the self-report, Educators of Excellence has 18 members on the advisory committee, including 12 from local schools and districts, four representing local business and community, and 2 from higher education. Two meetings per academic year are documented by agendas, minutes, and sign-in sheets. Meetings for 2010-2011 were held February 11, 2011 and August 10, 2011. Meetings for 2011-2012 will occur February 8, 2012 and August (date to be announced) 2012. Minutes indicate that the advisory committee discusses field-based observation placements and overall program evaluation, among many other topics.

Based on the evidence presented, Educators of Excellence 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 and Certification Criteria

FINDINGS:

Educators of Excellence abides by mandated rules for admission to educator preparation programs in TAC §227.10 except for one omission. Texas Administrative Code §228.10 (6) requires either an interview or some other screening instrument prior to admission to determine appropriateness of the candidate for certification. Dr. Crain and other confirmed that the program interviews prospective candidates, and a list a questions was found in the document review. No responses to the questions nor rubrics for scoring the interviews were found in student records, however, so TEA program specialists were unable to clearly determine that interviews are indeed held.

Official college transcripts were found in the 20 student records reviewed by Mixon Henry, demonstrating that candidates are admitted with appropriate baccalaureate degrees, at least a 2.5 Grade Point Average (GPA), a minimum of 12 semester hours of coursework in the field for which certification is sought, and evidence of meeting basic skills requirements. Evidence was also seen in student records that some candidates enter the program after having passed the

Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT), and some do not. An application to the program was found in each student record reviewed. Admission requirements are published on the program's website as well as in recruiting brochures.

Because of lack of documentation of the interview, Educators of Excellence is not in compliance with Component II.

Based on the evidence presented, Educators of Excellence is not in compliance with TAC §227 - Admission Criteria.

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

FINDINGS:

Evidence concerning the program's curriculum was found in the self-report, electronic questionnaires, course syllabi and materials, and three curriculum correlation charts. Evidence that the curriculum is based on the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) standards for educators was found in the course syllabi which listed domains and competencies from the general standards themselves. Evidence that the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are addressed was discovered in the TEKS correlation chart and the application matrix for the Generalist EC-6 certificate.

Evidence that the 17 topics mandated in TAC §228.30 are taught was found in a correlation chart and syllabi for the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) course. Mr. Henry and Dr. Black discussed the PPR course at length with Lynn Kirby and Dr. Crain. Six hours of test preparation is given through TCERT, an online project of TEA, Texas A&M University and Tarleton State University. Dyslexia training is accomplished through "station" activities during the time allotted for special education instruction. Only 17 of 22 candidates who responded to the electronic questionnaires said they received Instruction in reading throughout the curriculum. One respondent mentioned that more training in Instructional technology would have been helpful. The Texas Educator's Code of Ethics is discussed in the PPR course and printed in the Teacher Candidate Handbook.

Based on evidence presented, Educators of Excellence 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:

Component IV concerns how the program is delivered, the number of hours delivered, and field supervision. The coursework at Educators of Excellence is delivered primarily face-to-face with a few online components. For example, candidates reviewed an online component concerning

classroom management in addition to face-to-face discussion and activities on the topic. They also use the online TCERT for test preparation.

A chart of program hours supplied by Educators of Excellence to TEA indicates that they offer a total of 333 clock hours of coursework and training. The chart delineates 177 clock hours of coursework, 100 hours of field-based experience, 6 hours of required test preparation, 50 hours of training by the school districts for interns and clinical teachers, and either an internship of 180 academic school days or a minimum 12-weeks clinical teaching.

Documentation reviewed by TEA program specialists, such as course calendars and meeting times, confirmed 42 clock hours in the content course for Generalist EC-6 for Spring 2011. This course consisted of 14 meetings, each three hours long, or 42 clock hours. The Fall 2010 PPR course calendar shows 13 meetings, each three hours long, for a total of 38 clock hours. Special seminars in Spring 2011 were held five times for three hours each, for a total of 15 additional clock hours. This brings the total of course hours offered to 96, versus 177 claimed by the program on the hours chart.

Documentation of up to 50 clock hours of training from the school district for each intern or clinical teacher was found to be inconsistent through a review of student records. For example, one candidate's records showed he had received 34 clock hours of training from the district. No documentation could be found to show that the program had given this person the additional hours of training required to meet state minimum. Some candidate records revealed no training from the district at all, yet there was no documentation to show that the program provided additional hours of coursework to these candidates.

All internships or clinical teaching are completed in Texas school districts or accredited private schools. Interns and clinical teachers are assigned campus mentors by the school districts or private schools. Educators of Excellence trains the mentors through face-to-face meetings in January and August. These meetings are documented by agendas and sign-in sheets for January 13, 2011 and August 11, 2011. Dr. Crain and Ms. Kirby also attend these meetings and serve as field supervisors. Mentors receive a program handbook which contains requirements and necessary forms. The program co-founders created the program handbook and the field supervisor training manual for the program. Candidates officially meet their mentors and field supervisors at these meetings each semester.

The field supervisors keep logs to document their visits and observations of the candidates. Each intern or clinical teachers receives a minimum of three formal observations, and sometimes more, depending on need. Field supervisors also conduct a number of informal visits to provide coaching and other support as needed. Student records revealed as many as 10 visits a year by the field supervisors for some candidates, indicating extensive induction year support by the program. In addition, field supervisors try to include the mentor along with the candidate in the debriefing session following an observation as often as possible. A review of student records found inconsistency in dates and time in/out on observation forms.

The lack of documentation to account for the mandated minimum 300 clock hours of coursework or training leads to non-compliance by the program in this component.

Based on evidence presented, Educators of Excellence is not 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:

Educators of Excellence requires candidates to take two practice TExES exams as benchmarks for progress in the program. The program determines candidates’ readiness for the actual TExES exams through the completion of coursework and test preparation.

According to the self-report, the program has a systematic plan for overall evaluation. Both internal and external data are used in the evaluation process. The advisory committee plays a vital role in this process as shown in minutes of their meetings. Candidates evaluate each course at the end of the semester, and also evaluate the quality of field supervision and mentoring they receive. Instructors in the program have recently implemented a rubric to evaluate each candidate and their teaching.

Student records are retained for a minimum of five years in metal file cabinets in a locked office.

Based on evidence presented, Educators of Excellence 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).

Senate Bill 174/Texas Administrative Code §229

Current Accreditation Status

Educators of Excellence is currently rated “Accredited”

Standard I: Results of Certification Exams

Pass Rate Performance:	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
	Final 80% Standard	70% Standard	75% Pass Rate
Overall:	100%	100%	100%

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Program Compliance Recommendations are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency technical assistance visit. If the program is out of compliance with any component, please consult the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) rules and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. General Recommendations are suggestions for program improvement only. Failure to comply with TAC rules governing educator preparation programs may result in action by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) per TAC 229 beginning in 2010.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS: In order to meet requirements of all Texas Administrative Code rule governing educator preparation programs, the following recommendations are made:

- Provide a minimum of 300 clock hours of coursework and training to every candidate
- Document all hours of coursework and training offered
- Document the admission interview in each student's records, including an interview scoring rubric

GENERAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Develop a checklist for each candidate's records denoting when all admission criteria are met, dates when benchmarks are reached, all formal observation dates, and any other important data desired
- Provide additional coursework for candidates who do not receive the full 50 hours of training allowed from schools or districts
- Document any optional or additional coursework
- Document all informal field supervisor visits to interns or clinical teachers as proof of additional support and coaching
- Consider additional instruction in reading across the curriculum, especially for candidates seeking secondary certification
- Consider additional instruction in instructional technology
- Consider additional instruction in special populations, especially English language learners and special education
- Consider additional instruction in child and adolescent development, particularly the aspects of physical, emotional and social growth.