

**Texas Education Agency Division of Educator Standards**  
**Post Approval Site Visit**  
***Intern. Teacher ACP***  
**April 10 – 11, 2007**

**Visit Conducted by TEA Staff: Mary Gawron and Tabita Gutierrez, Program Specialists**

**I. Entity Commitment and Collaboration**

**Findings:**

The first Intern. Teacher ACP (ITACP) was approved by the SBEC Board on May 6, 2006 for Bilingual Spanish Generalist EC-4 and ESL certification. The first ITACP Advisory Council Meeting was held on May 7, 2006.

Initially, nine members comprised the Council; however, two no longer serve on the Advisory Council. One advisory council member cannot serve due to medical reasons and another member has been designated as an ITACP employee. The roles of the Advisory Council members have been defined and established to include a president, vice-president, treasurer, education liaison, and educational representatives. Advisory council members have expertise in school administration, teaching, mentoring, and dual language programs. The Advisory Council maintains clear communication with ITACP co-executive directors about Board decisions and related regular business.

Agendas/Minutes indicate that members meet and serve in an advisory capacity and demonstrate their commitment through their attendance, professional expertise and participation. Board members are requested to support candidates by making area schools campuses available for intern visits and pre-service observations, make suggestions for program improvement, and to share experiences with interns.

Presently, the Board is in the process of designating new legal counsel. Although the board members represent accredited public schools, institutions of higher education, and business and community interests, there is no regional education service center representation.

By Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Rule §228.20(b), the preparation of educators shall be a collaborative effort among accredited public schools and/or private schools, as defined by Chapter 230, Subchapter Y of this title (relating to Definitions); regional education service centers; institutions of higher education; and business and community interests; and shall be delivered in cooperation with accredited public schools and/or private schools. An advisory committee with members representing each of the above shall assist in the design, delivery, evaluation, and major policy decisions of the preparation program. The approved entity shall approve the roles and responsibilities of each member of the advisory committee.

The ITACP is not in compliance with the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Rule §227.10 requirements.

## **II. Admission Criteria**

### **Findings:**

Recruitment is promoted through the web page and word-of-mouth as well as through school district contacts. The ITACP co-directors ensure that all applicants are afforded interviews, given program information, and encouraged to register if they meet the criterion for matriculation. Since the program recruits out-of-country candidates, English proficiency, foreign transcript evaluations, and US visa requirements include a minimum GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 system, passing THEA scores, oral assessment in Spanish or English (IDEA Language Proficiency Tests or ICP). Official college transcripts, a resume, three professional references, and a screening interview are also required. Intern cost for the intern is \$4,000.00.

Interviews with ITACP program staff revealed that there is no consistent interview procedure in place. It is advised that a standardized interview instrument be used for the admissions procedure. It is also advised that ITACP staff document intern placement policies and procedures.

At present, ITACP interns represent a variety of countries: Brazil, El Salvador, Mexico, Columbia, Panama, Peru, Venezuela, India, Pakistan, and Egypt. Of the 25 candidates who have been accepted into the program, 7 interns are currently working in schools. The ITACP places emphasis on speaking English at a level that will allow candidates to experience success in mastering the required certification exams as well as provide quality instruction in the English language to students in the classroom.

There are obstacles to placement in public school classrooms due to visa and work permits and visas. The ITACP is knowledgeable about visa procedures and can provide effective guidance to out-of-country applicants.

ITACP Admission criteria are in compliance with the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Rule §227.10 requirements.

## **III. Curriculum**

### **Findings:**

The curriculum includes the following courses: Oral Language, Phonemic and Phonological Awareness, Alphabetic Principles, Literacy Development, Word Analysis and Decoding, Assessments, Fluency, Comprehension and Research, Written Communication, Mathematics (4 courses), Social Studies, Science, Art, Music, Health, Physical Education, Bilingual and ESL. It covers the Foundation and concepts of bilingual education (written in or speaking two languages) and biculturalism (near native-like knowledge of two cultures; includes the ability to respond effectively to the different demands of these two cultures). It also covers the development and assessment of literacy in the primary language and instruction in the content areas and in the process of teaching language arts and reading in the bilingual classroom.

The ITACP courses address SBEC Standards, test competencies and domains, lesson plan development, and thematic unit lesson designs. Candidates are prepared to teach reading in the

content areas and review criteria for the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TEXES). The final course products include written reflections, pre-tests quizzes, presentations, and a post tests with an 80% grade requirement.

There were indications that ITACP needs to align academic and content knowledge more closely with the TEKS and SBEC standards. Interviews revealed that interns understood the lesson cycle; however, the actual implementation and presentation of the lesson, the intern's lack of expertise in the content area was evident.

ITACP is currently in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Rule §228.30 (a) (b).

#### **IV. Program Delivery**

##### **Commendations:**

Technology applications for second-language learners of English are employed along with teaching, learning, and organizing strategies. Wireless technology allows all interns connections to the Internet and affords them the opportunity to integrate technology into their lessons.

##### **Findings:**

ITACP has hyperlinked their program website to Blackboard, ETS, and SBEC. Converting the website to PDF allows the interns to capture, archive, and share documents.

The curriculum is taught by the two executive co-directors who have a combined total of over 40 years of teaching experience in school districts and at the university level. Ms. Carmen Cuprill Young teaches EC-4 Generalist and shares Bilingual/ESL with Dr. William (Joe) Kortz. Dr. Kortz also teaches Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) and technology integration.

Blackboard is the management delivery system utilized by ITACP. Students studying PPR must use it for collaboration and sharing work through scholarly postings, email, and synchronous dialogue in the online portion of the hybrid class.

Consideration is being given to acquire software to matriculate, categorize, and generate reports for ITACP about intern and program status.

ITACP utilizes e-mail, telephone, faxes and the ITACP website for communication purposes. Courses focus on small group presentations and using multiple intelligences to model competencies allows the interns to reflect on the relationship and connection of the domains, competencies, and the TEKS.

Tutoring sessions, study groups, and portfolios promote the interns' direct connections to content/pedagogy in course work.

The emphasis on utilization of technology to promote lesson delivery is evident. When lessons are taped, CDs are distributed to students at the end of the presentation.

Data accumulated through the use of student surveys, certification test pass rates, surveys, and informal candidate input. The data is used for ongoing program improvement.

At this time, interns participate in approximately 20 hours of pre-service observations.

Intern Teacher ACP is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Rule §228.30 (a) (b) and (c).

## **V. On-Going Support**

### **Findings:**

ITACP has interns working with seven different school districts and have commitments from numerous others for future placements.

The seven ITACP interns currently placed in school districts have been offered continuing contracts.

Dr. Kortz has received a continuing professional education (CPE) provider designation. This status will allow ITACP the opportunity to include interns in professional development activities with certified teachers as they participate as co-presenters.

Interviews with interns indicated that more consistent and frequent contact by the field supervisor would provide the support needed to promote interns' success. Although the supervisor does meet with the interns on a somewhat regular basis, formal procedures to communicate with the mentor teacher about the intern's status have not been established. Interviews further revealed ITACP staff provides inadequate attention or time to communicating ITACP expectations to the interns and district partners.

Interviews with principals and mentor teachers revealed a strong need for increased communication from ITACP administration to build stronger campus relationships. An intentional and concerted effort to increase connections to all stakeholders would enhance collaboration and demonstrate the program's commitment.

It is imperative that campus staff become more aware of their responsibilities in preparation of the intern as well as the ITACP program expectations.

ITACP is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Rule §228.30(2) and §228.40 (a) through (e) and §229.3.

### **Program Recommendations**

- Adhere to TAC Rule §228.20(b) to implement mandated membership in the Advisory Committee by actively seeking representation from the regional education service center.
- Utilize TxBESS skills to improve communication with interns, mentors, and campus personnel.
- Conduct additional TxBESS training for supervisors and mentors.

- Develop a format/process for field supervisors to promote collaboration with campus administrators.
- Consider ways to increase opportunities for interns to acquire expertise in academic and content areas.
- Focus on heightened public relations and improved communication with all partners.
- Implement strategies to strengthen mentoring component.
- Increase ITACP staff availability and time devoted to program management and communication with school administrators, interns, mentors, and supervisors.
- Implement a standardized interview procedure for admissions.
- Continue to facilitate the process of acquisition of visas and work permits, as appropriate.
- Continue to provide program notebooks to ensure that all candidates receive program materials in a variety of formats, including paper format.