



Compliance Audit Report LeTourneau University Principal Certification Program

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. Wayne Jacobs, Dean

County/District Number: 092-502

TEA Approval Date: March 2005

A compliance audit visit for the post-baccalaureate principal certification program at LeTourneau University, Longview, Texas, was conducted on November 30-December 2, 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 by LeTourneau University, a review of documents, syllabi, and curriculum correlation charts, and responses from electronic questionnaires as evidence of compliance with Texas Administrative Code. A total of 31 responses were received by TEA to the electronic questionnaires: 20 (of 51) from advisory committee members; five (of 14) from field supervisors; and six (of 38) from principal candidates. 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:

An Opening Session was held the morning of December 1, 2011. The meeting was attended by 18 people, including Dr. Wayne Jacobs, Dean of the School of Education at LeTourneau University, Ray Thompson, Assistant Dean of Graduate and Professional Studies, Dr. Stacey Bryce, Superintendent of Sabine ISD, and Dr. Wes Jones, Superintendent of Spring Hill ISD. Dr. Jacobs presented an overview of the LeTourneau University principal certification program, and Dr. Mary S. Black, TEA program specialist reviewed audit procedures. Dr. Black also presented

a summary of findings at a Closing Session to Dr. Jacobs and five other LeTourneau faculty and staff members.

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

FINDINGS:

Component I concerns governance, or the advisory committee for educator preparation programs. The advisory committee for the LeTourneau University educator preparation program, including principal certification, has 51 members, including five LeTourneau University students. Twenty-one local school districts are represented on the advisory committee, one Education Service Center, and seven business or community members. Minutes, agendas and attendance records were reviewed for the two meetings one held on February 24 and the second on October 4, 2011. The next scheduled meeting will be February 23, 2012. The advisory committee has been trained in their roles and responsibilities via a PowerPoint presentation and a brochure includes the committee's purpose and charge. The PowerPoint was presented to the group at the February 2011 meeting. Responsibilities to participate in the design, delivery, policy decisions and evaluation of the program were discussed at the October 4, 2011 meeting. Roundtable discussions were also held on aspects of the principal certification program at that meeting, as reflected in minutes.

Based on the evidence presented, LeTourneau University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.20 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs.

COMPONENT II: ADMISSION CRITERIA - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10 and TAC §241 – Admission and Certification Criteria

FINDINGS:

Component II concerns admission criteria to educator preparation programs. LeTourneau University complies with all rules in Texas Administrative Code concerning this issue. In addition they require a 2.8 GPA for admission into the principal program, above the state-mandated 2.5. A standard teaching certificate and two creditable years of teaching experiences are also required. Students must graduate and receive their master's degree before LeTourneau University recommends them for the standard principal certificate. No out-of-country students are enrolled in this program, but it is open to them upon appropriate transcript review and a passing score on the TOEFL. Pre-admission interviews were found in student records. An essay and the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) are also required. Admission criteria are available publically on the university website and in the catalog. A review of 10 candidate records found all had submitted applications and official transcripts showing a baccalaureate degree from an accredited university. No candidates with GPAs lower than 2.8 have been admitted.

Based on the evidence presented, LeTourneau University is in compliance with TAC §227 and §241 - Admission Criteria.

COMPONENT III: CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §241 – Principal Preparation Curriculum

FINDINGS:

Component III concerns the curriculum for the principal certification program. Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §241.1 (b) states that the standards for this certificate must emphasize instructional leadership; administration, supervision, and communication skills; curriculum and instruction management; performance evaluation; organization, and fiscal management. These standards shall be the curricular basis for all principal preparation programs [TAC §241.10 (a)].

To evaluate the principal certification curriculum at LeTourneau University, TEA program specialists reviewed course syllabi and three correlation charts showing the relationship of the standards to the courses. The required curriculum meets all standards set for such programs by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and TAC rule. In addition to core courses such as Human Resources Management, Administration of EC-12 Curriculum, and School Finance, LeTourneau requires five electives in such topics as Religion in School, Technical and Social Communities in Schools, Gangs at School, and State Testing for Academic Achievement. A review of faculty vitae showed that the curriculum is delivered by faculty with appropriate credentials. The curriculum is delivered online and meets criteria for quality online programs as established by the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL). These standards have been adopted by TEA Commissioner's Rules (August 2010).

Based on evidence presented, LeTourneau University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §241- Principal Preparation Curriculum.

COMPONENT IV: PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ONGOING SUPPORT - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35 – Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training

FINDINGS:

Component IV regards the required number of clock hours in a program and field supervision of practicum candidates. In order to receive the principal certification and required master's degree at LeTourneau University, candidates must take a total of 1620 clock hours of coursework and training, which exceeds the state mandate of at least 200 clock hours. The practicum for principals at LeTourneau University is 160 clock hours, as required by TAC 228.35 (C) (3). Candidates take the practicum in four 40-hour blocks, and receive mentoring by a campus administrator and field supervision from the university. Lists of principal candidates and their assigned mentors and field supervisors were reviewed by TEA program specialists.

Training is provided by the university to the mentors through a PowerPoint and online material. Field supervisors are trained via a handbook and group meetings. The sign-in sheets and agendas for field supervisor trainings for January 6, 2011, and September 15, 2011, were reviewed by TEA program specialists.

Initial contact by the field supervisor with the candidate is made prior to the first practicum block. Four formal observations of the candidates are made by the field supervisors, one during each of the four practicum blocks. Copies of formal observation evaluations found in student records verify this information. According to the time in/out found on the observation forms, observations

last a minimum of 45 minutes as required by TAC rule. Forms were signed by the field supervisor and the candidate to indicate that a conference was held after the observation to discuss strengths and areas for improvement.

No principal candidates are on probationary certificates, and the program indicated that they did not plan to issue probationary certificates to principal candidates.

Based on evidence presented, LeTourneau University is 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:

LeTourneau University ensures that candidates are prepared to receive the standard principal certificate by requiring success on designated benchmarks and assessments for candidates. Candidates must successfully complete all required courses and the four blocks of practicum training prior to graduation. Both graduation with a master's degree and a passing score on the TExES certification exam are required by the university in order to be recommended for the standard principal certificate. Candidate's readiness to test is determined by success on practice examinations held twice a month by the university.

The principal program is evaluated on an ongoing basis by both the College of Education and the university as a whole. Candidate evaluations of courses and test results are two primary pieces of evaluation data. For example, the college is currently reviewing test results by domain and competency to determine any weaknesses. Failure to pass the TExES in past years has been traced to a few candidates who took the test multiple times. As a result of this evaluation, a new course in test-taking skills for professional candidates has been created to ensure all candidates have the skills they need to be successful. Advisory committee minutes show that both candidate and overall program evaluation are discussed.

TEA program specialists also reviewed the Institutional Effectiveness Planning Chart for 2011-2012 and Results Chart for 2010-2011 that detail evaluation of the College of Education. These are university documents signed by the Dean, Program Director, Vice-President for Accreditation and Quality, Vice President of Graduate and Professional Studies, and the Provost. Student records are maintained in locked steel cabinets in a locked room for a minimum of five years, as verified by program specialists.

Based on evidence presented, LeTourneau University 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).

Current Accreditation Status

LeTourneau University is currently rated “Accredited”

Standard I: Results of Certification Exams

Pass Rate Performance:	2008-2009 Final 80% Standard	2009-2010 70% Standard	2010-2011 75% Pass Rate
Overall:	97%	96%	96%
Principal Exam Only	90.9%	63.2%	77.8%

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:

- None at this time

GENERAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Discuss field experience, evaluation, policy and curriculum with the advisory committee each year.
- Distinguish in advisory committee minutes which specific certification areas are discussed at meetings.
- Ensure field supervision for any principal candidates on probationary certificates.