



## 2018 – 2019 Continuing Approval Review Report

### Introduction

A Five-Year Continuing Approval Desk Review was conducted by Lorrie Ayers of the Texas A&M University-San Antonio (015712) educator preparation program (EPP) on May 20, 2019. Per 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(b), an entity approved by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) to certify educators shall be reviewed at least once every five (5) years. The EPP at Texas A&M University-San Antonio (TAMU-SA) was originally approved on September 15, 1989.

Dr. Carl Sheperis is the program Legal Authority. Melissa Beene, Certification Officer, is the primary EPP contact for the 2018-2019 review. The TAMU-SA EPP is approved to certify candidates in the undergraduate (U), post-baccalaureate (PB) and alternative (ACP) routes. The following certificate classes are approved for TAMU-SA: Teacher, Principal, Superintendent, Educational Diagnostician, School Counselor, Reading Specialist, and Master Teacher. The EPP reported 283 program finishers for the 2016-2017 reporting year and 313 finishers for 2017-2018.

Candidate records were requested for five (5) designated candidates from each of the approved certificate classes and routes. The results were discussed with EPP staff in a phone conference on Tuesday, May 28, 2019. Attending from the EPP were: Dr. Carl Sheperis, Dr. Suzanne Mudge, and Melissa Beene.

### Results for Teacher Programs

1. Records for 10 teacher candidates from the U program and the ACP were requested for review as evidence that admission requirements as identified in 19 TAC Chapters 227 were met.

A limited number of records were submitted for candidates in the U and ACP teacher preparation programs. It appears various document samples were submitted for randomly selected candidates from the Designated Candidate list. Because the file labels did not correspond with the names on the Designated Candidate list, no evidence could be extracted from the files for specific candidates. Evidence of program compliance with TAC was primarily determined from data reported to TEA; however, the accuracy of this self-reported data could not be verified.

It could not be verified that admitted candidates had met the minimum GPA requirement.

An interview or other screening instrument used to determine if the EPP applicant's knowledge, experience, skills, and aptitude are appropriate for the certificate sought is an admission requirement identified in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(8). Due to the limited documentation submitted for the candidate record review, it could not be determined if the U and ACP programs have implemented a screening instrument.

Candidate admission dates are captured in the Test Approval screen in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS). Based on admission dates uploaded into Test Approval, five (5) of the 10 candidates reviewed were admitted after February 28, 2016. As



such, records for these candidates should contain written offers of admission with the formal date of admission embedded and a written acceptance from the candidate. Due to the limited documentation submitted for the candidate record review, it could not be determined if the teacher programs are in compliance with this formal admission requirement in 19 TAC §227.17.

Formal admission dates uploaded into Test Approval in ECOS could not be verified using candidates' records. It was noted that four (4) out of 10 candidates had more than one (1) admission date uploaded into Test Approval and one (1) candidate had never been uploaded into Test Approval.

The audit trail in ECOS reflected that the admission date for candidates admitted later than February 28, 2016 was not uploaded into Test Approval within 7 days of the formal date of admission as required in 19 TAC §227.17(e).

The GPA spreadsheet is a document EPP staff use to report required data that cannot be uploaded into the ECOS or into the Accountability System for Educator Preparation (ASEP). Five (5) out of the 10 candidates whose records were reviewed could not be identified on past GPA spreadsheets. For the remaining five (5) candidates, the data reported on the GPA spreadsheet could not be verified as accurate due to limited documentation submitted for the candidate record review.

Based on records and EPP materials submitted, it could not be verified that applicants and candidates are informed of required background checks and their right to a Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation (PCHE). If this information is not displayed elsewhere in a place apparent to applicants and candidates, the EPP must update documents to meet requirements in 19 TAC §227.1(d) that requires EPPs to a) inform applicants and candidates of their potential ineligibility for a certificate if they've been convicted of an offense; and b) inform applicants and candidates of the right to request a PCHE from TEA.

Due to limited documentation submitted for the candidate record review, it could not be determined if teacher candidates sign an agreement of understanding and adherence to the Educators' Code of Ethics (ECOE) as identified in 19 TAC §247.2.

2. Candidates' records were reviewed to verify candidate status had been reported accurately in the ASEP system as required in 19 TAC §229.3(a) and (e).

When dates were compared with admission dates in Test Approval and dates on certificates and conferred degrees identified in ECOS, candidate status appears to have been reported correctly in ASEP on the Finisher Records list except for one (1) candidate that was identified as a finisher in the year in which he/she was certified and not in the prior year in which the degree was conferred. It should be noted that candidate records are needed to validate the dates used to make this determination.

3. Candidates' records were reviewed as evidence that each teacher candidate had completed a supervised, standards-based, clinical teaching or internship experience as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e), §228.35(f), and §228.35(g).

The TAMU-SA EPP is approved to offer clinical teaching and internships to candidates. Per the candidate handbook, TAMU-SA has a formal agreement with the partner school districts



for placing candidates in clinical teaching assignments. The published schedule for clinical teachers indicates the clinical teaching assignment is at least 70 days.

A probationary certificate was issued to one (1) candidate but it could not be verified if candidates completed 14 weeks of clinical teaching as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A) or a full-year internship as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B).

Based on records submitted for cooperating teachers, mentors, and field supervisors (FS), it appears that candidates completing clinical teaching or internships are assigned qualified campus mentors and field supervisors as required in 19 TAC §228.35(f) and (g); however, due to the limited number of candidate records submitted for the record review, it could not be to verified for each candidate. Electronic signatures and training materials are evidence that mentors and cooperating teachers receive training from TAMU-SA staff.

Observation data was uploaded into ASEP for 8 out of the 10 candidates. Due to the limited records submitted for the candidate record review, observation documents could not be reviewed to verify candidates received the observations as reported in ASEP.

It could not be determined if field supervision was conducted per requirements in 19 TAC §228.35(g) so it could not be verified that FS capture instructional strategies observed, conduct pre- and post-conferences with candidates, identify if candidates demonstrate proficiency in the standards for the certificate sought, or if the candidates were observed for a minimum of 45 minutes.

4. Candidates' records were reviewed for evidence that each teacher candidate that was standard-certified met the requirements for that certificate as required in 19 TAC Chapter 230.

The candidate handbook identifies the requirements that must be met for a candidate to be recommended for a standard certificate. The requirements identified in the handbook are in alignment with certification requirements in TAC.

Eight of the 10 candidates achieved a standard teaching certificate. All certificates were effective on or after the date the bachelor's degree was conferred. There were no transcripts in candidate records to verify the degree conferred date.

One (1) U candidate received a standard certificate however there were no observations uploaded into ASEP for the candidate.

### **Results for Non-Teacher Programs**

Records were requested for five (5) candidates each from the School Counselor, Principal, Superintendent, Educational Diagnostician and Reading Specialist classes.

1. A limited number of records were submitted for candidates in the non-teacher preparation programs, and consequently, there was limited evidence that admission requirements as identified in 19 TAC Chapters 227, 239, 241, and 242 were met. It appears various document samples were submitted for randomly selected candidates from the Designated Candidate list. Because the file labels did not correspond with the names on the Designated



Candidate list, no evidence could be extracted from the files for specific candidates except for one (1) Educational Diagnostician candidate. Evidence of program compliance with TAC was primarily determined from data reported to TEA; however, the accuracy of this self-reported data could not be verified.

It could not be verified that admitted candidates had met the minimum GPA requirement.

An interview or other screening instrument used to determine if the EPP applicant's knowledge, experience, skills, and aptitude are appropriate for the certificate sought is an admission requirement identified in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(8). Principal and Superintendent programs are required to implement multiple screening activities to determine the candidate's appropriateness for the certificate sought. [19 TAC §241.45(c) and §242.5(c)] Due to the limited documentation submitted for the candidate record review, it could not be determined if the non-teacher programs have implemented a screening instrument.

Based on admission dates uploaded into ECOS, 18 of the 25 candidates identified for the review were admitted after February 28, 2016. As such, records for these candidates should contain written offer offers of admission with the formal date of admission embedded and a written acceptance from the candidate. Due to limited documentation, it could not be verified that the non-teacher programs are in compliance with this requirement in 19 TAC §227.17.

The audit trail in ECOS reflected that the admission dates for five (5) candidates admitted later than February 28, 2016 were not uploaded into Test Approval within 7 days of the formal date of admission as required in 19 TAC §227.17(e).

The GPA spreadsheet is a document EPPs use to report required data that cannot be uploaded into the ECOS or into the Accountability System for Educator Preparation (ASEP). Ten candidates could not be identified on past GPA spreadsheets. These candidates were admitted in 2016-2017 or before. Candidates admitted after 2016-2017 were reported on GPA spreadsheets in the reporting year corresponding with the admission date uploaded into the Test Approval screen in ECOS.

Due to limited documentation, it could not be verified that applicants and candidates are informed of required background checks and their right to a PCHE. If this information is not displayed elsewhere in a place apparent to applicants and candidates, the EPP must update documents to meet requirements in 19 TAC §227.1(d) that requires EPPs to a) inform applicants and candidates of their potential ineligibility for a certificate if they've been convicted of an offense; and b) inform applicants and candidates of the right to request a PCHE from TEA.

Due to limited documentation submitted for the non-teacher candidates, it could not be determined if each signs an agreement of understanding and adherence to the ECOE as identified in 19 TAC §247.2. TEA strongly encourages the EPP to strengthen candidate focus on the ECOE by requiring a signature of understanding and adherence on a document that reflects each of the requirements in the ECOE found in 19 TAC §247.2.

Based on data in ECOS, each of the five (5) Superintendent candidates held a Master's degree and principal certificate at admission. Due to limited documentation submitted for the Superintendent candidates, the degree could not be verified through an official transcript.



2. Candidates' records were reviewed to verify candidate status had been reported accurately in the ASEP system as required in 19 TAC §229.3(a) and (e).

For 9 of the 25 candidates reviewed, there were discrepancies between candidate status reported on the Finisher Records list in ASEP and the admission dates and/or certification dates in ECOS.

One (1) of the five (5) Reading Specialist candidates was concurrently certified as a Reading Specialist and Master Reading Teacher. The candidate was recommended for a standard certificate in both areas however he/she was listed in the Finisher Records list as pursuing only the Reading Specialist certificate.

One (1) Principal candidate was certified in 2015 but was identified as finisher in the 2017-2018 reporting year.

3. Candidates' records were reviewed as evidence that each non-teacher candidate had completed a supervised, standards-based practicum as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8), §228.35(f), and §228.35(h).

There was some evidence that non-teacher candidates complete a practicum because documentation was submitted as evidence they were assigned qualified site supervisors and field supervisors as required in 19 TAC §228.35(f) and (h). Electronic signatures and training materials are evidence that site supervisors are trained by EPP staff.

There were no Intern or Probationary certificates issued to the non-teacher candidates.

It could not be verified that candidates received field supervision as required in 19 TAC §228.35(h) because non-teacher programs are not required to upload observations into ASEP and there were no candidate records submitted as evidence the EPP meets the field supervision requirement.

4. Candidates' records were reviewed for evidence that each candidate in a non-teacher program that was standard-certified met the requirements for that certificate as required in 19 TAC Chapter 230.

Each of the five (5) School Counselor candidates achieved a standard certificate. There were no records available to verify if each met certification requirements. When the certificate effective date was compared with the admission date for one (1) candidate, it appeared the candidate completed the School Counselor requirements in 5.5 months which seems fast for a candidate to complete 200 clock-hours of coursework and a 160 clock-hour practicum. A second candidate was certified in 6 months.

Two (2) of the five (5) Reading Specialist candidates achieved a standard certificate. Service records were not available to verify each had a minimum of two (2) years of service at the time the certificate was recommended.

Three (3) of the five (5) Superintendent candidates achieved a standard certificate. There was no documentation to verify if requirements were met; however, a Master's degree was uploaded into ECOS for each.



Three (3) Educational Diagnostician and four (4) Principal candidates achieved a standard certificate.

Candidates were recommended for certificates with effective dates after the date the degree was conferred.

### **Next Steps**

The EPP will submit evidence to TEA that deficiencies in these areas have been corrected on or before 9/1/2019:

- For all programs within the TAMU-SA entity, update the formal admission process so that the formal admission date is embedded in the formal written offer and require applicants to respond to the offer in writing as required in 19 TAC §227.17. Retain documentation of formal admission in candidates' records as required in 19 TAC §228.40(f).
- For all programs within the TAMU-SA entity, update the admission screening process to implement a screening instrument to “determine if the EPP applicant’s knowledge, experience, skills, and aptitude are appropriate for the certification sought” as required in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(8). Principal and Superintendent preparation programs must implement, at minimum, two (2) screening activities to “determine the candidate’s appropriateness for” the certificate sought as required in 19 TAC §241.5(c) and §242.5(c) respectively. A rubric and a cut score must be applied to the screen.
- For all programs within the TAMU-SA entity, review requirements in 19 TAC §227.1(b) - (e) and update materials provided to applicants and candidates to ensure they reflect the required information.
- All programs within the TAMU-SA entity should review requirements in 19 TAC §228.10(b)(2) and §228.40(f) and must implement processes to retain appropriate documentation.
- Staff in non-teacher preparation programs should review practicum requirements and requirements for field supervision in 19 TAC §228.35(e) and (h). EPP staff must ensure:
  - All candidates complete a minimum of 200 clock-hours of coursework;
  - All candidates complete a practicum of 160 clock-hours or more;
  - FS make first contact with candidates within the first three (3) weeks of the assignment start date;
  - FS conduct the observations per the schedule identified in 19 TAC §228.35(h);
  - FS record dates and durations of observations and instructional strategies observed;
  - FS capture candidate demonstration of proficiency in the standards for the certificate sought;
  - FS conduct pre- and post-conferences with candidates for each observation;
  - FS have completed TEA-approved observation training;
  - Copies of observations are provided to the appropriate campus staff; and



- Appropriate documentation is retained in candidates' records per 19 TAC §228.40(f).
- EPP staff must implement a process to efficiently track the status of all candidates in every certification class as "admitted", "other enrolled", "finisher", or "removed" and convey that status to the person responsible for making ASEP updates and preparing and submitting required reports to TEA.
- EPP staff must implement a process for all programs certifying candidates in all classes to provide the documentation that candidates have met the requirements for certification to whomever in the EPP recommends certificates. The documentation must be retained in candidates' records.
- TEA strongly encourages the EPP to strengthen candidate focus on the ECOE by requiring a signature of understanding and adherence on a document that reflects each of the requirements in the ECOE found in 19 TAC §247.2.

**General Recommendations**

- To ensure continuity in record keeping and other related processes, consider creating a procedure manual documenting EPP processes.

**"I have reviewed the EPP Report and agree that all required corrections will be made on or before September 1, 2019".**

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<b>Signature of Legal Authority</b>	<b>Date</b>
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<b>Printed Name of Legal Authority</b>	<b>Date</b>
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