



2021–2022 Continuing Approval Review Report ACT Houston at Dallas

PURPOSE

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Education Specialist, Vanessa Alba conducted a five-year Continuing Approval Review of the ACT Houston at Dallas educator preparation program (EPP) on November 1-29, 2021. Per 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(b), "...An entity approved by the SBEC under this chapter shall be reviewed at least once every five years...". Dr. Bobette Dunn, owner, was identified as the program Legal Authority and the primary EPP contact for the review process. The ACT Houston at Dallas EPP was approved as an EPP on May 21, 2004. At the time of the review, the EPP was rated Accredited-Warning Year 1 in 2018-2019 and Not Rated-Declared State of Disaster in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. The risk level was Stage 2 (medium). The EPP reported 138 finishers for the 2019-2020 reporting year and 120 finishers for 2020-2021.

At the time of the review, the ACT Houston at Dallas EPP was approved to certify candidates in the Teacher class. The EPP is approved to offer the alternative certification program (ACP) route to certification.

Per 19 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 TEA administers TAC required by the Texas legislature for the regulation of all EPPs in the state. (See the complete [TAC](#) for details.) The five-year Continuing Approval Review was conducted in a "Desk Review" format where EPP staff submitted requested documents to TEA for review.

The scope of this review included: 1) verifying compliance with Texas Administrative Code and Texas Education Code as applicable to all certification classes in all certification routes offered by the EPP; and 2) developing a plan for improvement based on review data, performance indicators identified in 19 TAC §229.4, and self-reported EPP information provided in the Status Report. Next Steps were developed to address plans for quality improvement. Evidence of compliance was measured using a rubric aligned to TAC.

EPP staff participating in the review at various stages were Dr. Bobette Dunn, owner, and Ms. Sara Green, certification officer.

DATA ANALYSIS

Information concerning compliance with TAC governing EPPs was collected by a variety of means. A Status Report and related program documents were submitted to TEA on October 1, 2021. Additional EPP documents, including records for ten candidates, were submitted on October 21, 2021. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to evaluate the evidence.



FINDINGS, COMPLIANCE ISSUES, and RECOMMENDATIONS

“Findings” indicate evidence collected during the review process. If the program is “not in compliance” with any identified component, the program should consult the TAC and correct the issue immediately. A “Compliance Plan” or “Next Steps” may be drafted during the review that identifies compliance issues to be addressed and a timeline for completion.

“Recommendations” are suggestions for general program improvement and no follow up is required.

COMPONENT I: GOVERNANCE – 19 TAC Chapter 228

Findings

- TEA did not review Governance documents but relied on self-reported information contained within the Status Report to determine compliance.
- The preparation of educators shall be a collaborative effort among public schools accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and/or TEA-recognized private schools; regional education service centers; institutions of higher education; and/or business and community interests with members representing as many as possible of the groups identified as collaborators. It was self-reported that the ACT Houston at Dallas advisory committee (AC) consisted of 19 members from ten different districts, community members, and higher education. Membership rosters for AC meetings in the 2018-2019, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 years served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.20(b)]
- An advisory committee shall assist in the design, delivery, evaluation, and major policy decisions of the EPP and shall meet a minimum of one time per academic year. The program provided meeting agendas, minutes, and sign-in sheets for meetings on June 13, 2019, July 30, 2020, and August 24, 2021 noting items discussed. It was noted that the meeting on June 13, 2019 was an in-person meeting, but the July 30, 2021 and August 24, 2021 meetings were held via Zoom due to the pandemic. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.20(b)]
- The approved EPP shall inform each member of the advisory committee of the roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee. A Handbook link was sent for each meeting and the Handbook identified the roles and responsibilities of members. It was also noted that the EPP was using an outdated TEA AC Training PowerPoint to train its members. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.20(b)]
- The governing body and chief operating officer shall provide sufficient support to enable the EPP to meet all standards set by the SBEC and shall be accountable for the quality of the EPP and the candidates whom the program recommends for certification. The legal authority’s participation in all aspects of the review served as evidence of compliance. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.20(c)]
- Each EPP must develop and implement a calendar of program activities that must include a deadline for accepting candidates into a program cycle to assure adequate time for admission, coursework, training, and field-based experience (FBE) requirements prior to a clinical teaching or internship experience. If an EPP accepts candidates after the deadline, the EPP must develop and implement a calendar of program activities to



assure adequate time for admission, coursework, training, and field-based experience (FBE) requirements prior to a clinical teaching experience or prior to or during an internship experience. ACT Houston at Dallas has a published calendar of activities for its program. Evidence in the form of a calendar was found on the website under the Schedules/Resources tab and under the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) tab. It was noted that the calendar found on the website under the FAQ tab had all required information and the information under Schedules/Resources tab pertained only to admission requirements. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.20(g)]

- ACT Houston at Dallas submitted the Status Report for the EPP Review on October 1, 2021, as required and met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.10(b)(1)]
- ACT Houston at Dallas has met the requirements to offer clinical teaching. The program was approved to offer clinical teaching on January 28, 2010. The application is on file with TEA. [19 TAC §228.10(c)]
- ACT Houston at Dallas opened an additional location in Austin on May 9, 2017. The approval letter is on file with TEA. The program was accredited at the time the additional location was opened. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.10(e)]
- All EPPs shall have a published exit policy for dismissal of candidates that is reviewed and signed by candidates upon admission effective October 15, 2020. The exit policy was published on the application. The candidate Participation Agreement, Intern Agreement, and a Contract noting the exit policy were found in each file reviewed. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.10(h)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (See Next Steps):

None.

Recommendations:

- Consider using the most current TEA advisory committee PowerPoint to train members.

Based on the evidence presented, ACT Houston at Dallas was in compliance with 19 TAC Chapter 228 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs.

COMPONENT II: ADMISSION - 19 TAC Chapter 227

Findings

- ACT Houston at Dallas has informed applicants and candidates about the required information regarding criminal history. The information was found within the application for the ten files reviewed. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.1(b), (d)]
- ACT Houston at Dallas has informed applicants of the required information about the EPP. Admission requirements, completion requirements, information about the effects of supply and demand on the educator workforce and information about the performance of the EPP over time for the past five years were found on the website. ACT Houston at



Dallas acknowledged that it currently has an Accredited-Warning status on its website. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(1-3)]

- A total of ten teacher files were reviewed to verify admission requirements are compliant with TAC. Nine out of ten (90%) candidates met the required institution of higher education (IHE) degree requirements. The candidates held the minimum of a bachelor's degree at the time of admission. Official transcripts were provided in each file reviewed. The tenth file reviewed was that of a Trade & Industrial 6-12 (T&I) candidate and T&I candidates are not required to hold a degree at the time of admission. The high school transcript was provided for review. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(2)]
- For an undergraduate university program, alternative certification program, or post-baccalaureate program, to be eligible for admission into an EPP, an applicant shall have a grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 before admission. Eight out of ten files reviewed for GPA and the GPA range was 2.42-3.81. Eight out of ten (80%) met the minimum requirements. One candidate was admitted with less than a 2.5 GPA and the T&I file reviewed was that of a Career and Technology Education (CTE) candidate and a GPA was not required. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(3)(A)]
- An exception to the minimum GPA requirement may be granted by the program director only in extraordinary circumstances and may not be used by a program to admit more than 10% of any incoming class of candidates. An applicant is eligible for this exception if: (i) documentation and certification from the program director that an applicant's work, business, or career experience demonstrates achievement equivalent to the academic achievement represented by the GPA requirement; and (ii) an applicant must pass an appropriate content certification examination. The requirement was effective February 28, 2016. One file reviewed contained evidence the candidate was admitted with a GPA that was less than 2.5. There was written documentation from the candidate explaining the extraordinary circumstance. There was also a signature from the legal authority signing off on the extraordinary circumstance. The candidate did not take a pre-admission content test (TXPACT, but was a transfer candidate and had passed the content exam with another EPP. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(3)(B)]
- Teacher applicants are required to demonstrate content knowledge prior to admission by having 12 hours semester credit-hours completed in the content area for which they are admitted, 15 hours if the content area is math or science at grade 7 or above, or by passing a pre-admission content test (TX PACT) prior to admission. Nine out of ten files reviewed (90%) met the requirement. The CTE candidate was not required to have content hours. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(4)]
- Applicants must demonstrate basic skills prior to admission. Nine out of ten (90%) files reviewed contained evidence of a bachelor's degree with official transcripts noting a degree conferred and the candidates met the requirement. The CTE file reviewed was not required to have a bachelor's degree, but the high school transcript was provided for review. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(6)]
- All applicants must demonstrate proficiency in English language skills prior to admission. Six files reviewed contained evidence of a US bachelor's or master's degree. One file



reviewed contained evidence of a high school transcript from a US school. Three files reviewed contained a bachelor's degree from a country whose language is not English, and a test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based test (TOEFL-iBT) was required. Those three files contained evidence of official TOEFL scores that met or exceeded minimum requirements: Speaking 24, Listening 22, Reading 22, and Writing 21. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(7)]

- Five files contained evidence of a bachelor's degree from out of country and a transcript evaluation was required. It was noted that two of the files were admitted based on a US master's degree conferred. All five files (100%) contained a transcript evaluation from an approved service. The approved services used by ACT Houston at Dallas were Foreign Credentials Services of America (FCSA) and Joseph Silny & Associates. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(f)]
- All ten files reviewed contained a completed application with a writing sample contained within it. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8-9)]
- An applicant for admission must be screened to determine appropriateness for the certification sought. All ten files reviewed contained evidence of an oral interview scored on a rubric with a cut score. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)]
- An EPP may admit an applicant for Career and Technical Education (CTE) certification who has met the experience and preparation requirements specified in 19 TAC Chapter 230 and Chapter 233. One CTE candidate seeking T&I 6-12 certification was admitted. A Merchant Mariner Credential, Statement of Qualifications (SOQ), and a high school diploma were provided as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(d)]
- All applicants are required to be formally admitted. All ten files reviewed contained a written formal offer of admission letter and a written dated formal acceptance letter. ACT Houston at Dallas has rolling admission with candidates admitted throughout the year. The effective date of formal admission was found in the letters for all files reviewed. All candidates were admitted prior to beginning coursework and training as required. The formal offers of admission accepted by the candidates, testing history, and benchmark documents served as evidence of compliance for each file reviewed. The program met the requirements as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.17; 19 TAC §227.17(d); 19 TAC §227.17(f)]
- Nine out of ten (90%) candidates were uploaded into the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) as admitted within seven calendar days of admission and the tenth file reviewed did not have a current admission record. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.17(e)]
- The overall grade point average (GPA) of each incoming class admitted between September 1 and August 31 of each year by an educator preparation program (EPP), including an alternative certification program, may not be less than 3.00 on a four-point scale or the equivalent. A person seeking career and technical education certification is not included in determining the overall GPA of an incoming class. ACT Houston at Dallas had an incoming GPA of 3.17 and 3.19 for 2019 and 2018, respectively. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.19(a)]



Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps):

- None.

Recommendations:

- None.

Based on the evidence presented, ACT Houston at Dallas was in compliance with 19 TAC Chapter 227 - Admission Criteria.

COMPONENT III: CURRICULUM – 19 TAC §228.30

Findings

- The scope of the curriculum review was the Core Subjects w/Science of Teaching Reading (STR) EC-6 certificate. TEA relied on self-reported information contained within the Status Report, the Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 Scope & Sequence, Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 syllabi, and alignment charts to determine curriculum compliance. While TEA only reviewed the Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 certificate area, the program was advised to consider eliminating certificate areas for which the program does not certify candidates and for which there are no qualified staff to ensure the program is focused on content areas for which the EPP has the most knowledge and expertise.
- ACT Houston at Dallas reported that the Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 curriculum is based on educator standards and addresses the relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Completed alignment charts were provided for the Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 certificate area as evidence and was verified with coursework contained in the syllabi and identified within the Status Report. The TEKS are specifically taught in the Curriculum Planning & Instructional Strategies course per the syllabus provided. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(a)]
- The curriculum for each educator preparation program shall rely on scientifically based research to ensure educator effectiveness. The ACT Houston at Dallas curriculum is research-based. The program cited its work to become fully accredited as an online program with Quality Matters as one of the scientifically-based research, *Restorative Discipline Practices* by Dr. Gayle Lang & Barbara Katz, *The Impact Cycle – What Instructional Coaches Should Do to foster Powerful Improvement in Teaching* by Jim Knight, and *Collaborative Leadership – 6 Influences that Matter Most* by Peter DeWitt as works used to guide instruction for candidates by the EPP. The EPP additionally cited the TExES Test Preparation material as research-based curriculum. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(b)]
- The coursework required in 19 TAC §228.30(c) is taught to all candidates in all certification categories and classes:
 - The Educators' Code of Ethics is taught in the Foundations for Effective Teaching course and candidates sign an attestation that they received, understand, and will abide by the Educator Code of Ethics at admission. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(1)]
 - Instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia, as indicated in the Texas Education Code (TEC), §21.044(b), is found in the Preparation



Program Institute Reading & Instructional Strategies course. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(2)]

- Instruction regarding mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide, as indicated in the TEC, §21.044(c-1) is found in the Preparation Program Institute Classroom & Behavior Management course. The material used is from an approved provider and is called Too Smart to Start. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(3)]
- The skills educators are required to possess, the responsibilities they are required to accept, and the high expectations for students in this state are taught in the Foundations for Effective Teaching course. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(4)]
- The importance of building strong classroom management skills is taught in the Classroom & Behavior Management course. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(5)]
- The framework in this state for teacher and principal evaluations is taught in the Foundations for Effective Teaching course and continuing coursework. Additionally, the program provided a document that identified the connection between T-TESS and T-P ESS. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(6)]
- Appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students is taught in the Program Institute and Foundations for Effective Teaching courses. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(7)]
- Instruction in digital learning, including a digital literacy evaluation followed by a prescribed digital learning curriculum was not provided to candidates as prescribed. The program identified the requirement as taught in the Program Institute and Foundations to Effective Teaching courses. However, the information provided does not completely align to the ISTE standards. It was also noted that evaluations occur throughout. The program did not identify an evaluation followed by a prescribed curriculum, but did identify resources to address deficiencies. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(8)(A-C)]
- The relevant TEKS, including the English Language Proficiency Standards, are taught in Curriculum Planning I & II, Equity for English Language Learners, and Lesson Planning for Differentiation courses. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d)(1)]
- Reading instruction, including instruction that improves students' content-area literacy is taught in Reading & Instructional Strategies I, II, & III courses for all candidates and the Science of Teaching Reading STR course for candidates seeking certification in Core Subjects EC-6, Core Subjects 4-8, and English Language Arts and Reading/Social Studies 4-8. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d)(2)]
- For certificates that include early childhood education and prekindergarten, the PK Guidelines are taught in Curriculum Planning I course. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d)(3)]



- Instructional planning and delivery are taught in Curriculum Planning I & II, Instructional Strategies I & II, Lesson Planning & Connections to T-TESS, and Lesson Planning for Differentiation courses. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d)(4); 19 TAC §149.001(b)(1)(Standard 1)]
- Knowledge of students and student learning is taught in Foundations I & II, Classroom & Behavior Management II, Equity for English Language Learners (ELLs), English as a Second Language, and Lesson Planning for Differentiation courses. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d)(4); 19 TAC §149.001(b)(2)(Standard 2)]
- Content knowledge and expertise is taught in Curriculum Planning I and Best Practices for Effective Teachers courses. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d); 19 TAC §149.001(b)(3)(Standard 3)]
- Learning environment is taught in the Foundations III course. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d); 19 TAC §149.001(b)(4)(Standard 4)]
- Data-driven practice is taught in Instructional Strategies II, Stages of a 1st Year Teacher, and Assessment, Reteaching, & Rubrics courses. [19 TAC §228.30(d); 19 TAC §149.001(b)(5)(Standard 5)]
- Professional practices and responsibilities are taught in Foundations I and Professional Practices & Responsibilities courses. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d); 19 TAC §149.001(b)(6)(Standard 6)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps):

- 19 TAC §228.30(c)(8) instruction in digital learning, including a digital literacy evaluation followed by a prescribed digital learning curriculum. The instruction required must: (A) be aligned with the latest version of the International Society for Technology in Education's (ISTE) standards as appears on the ISTE website; (B) provide effective, evidence-based strategies to determine a person's degree of digital literacy; and (C) include resources to address any deficiencies identified by the digital literacy evaluation.

Action: Require all teacher candidates to receive instruction in digital learning, that includes a digital learning evaluation that is aligned to the [ISTE Standards](#), determines the candidate's degree of digital literacy, and includes resources to address any deficiencies identified in the digital literacy evaluation. Provide the digital literacy evaluation and the prescribed training that comes after the digital literacy evaluation.

Recommendations:

- Consider eliminating certificate areas for which the EPP is not certifying candidates and for which the EPP does not have qualified staff.
- Focus scientifically-based research on content areas instead of just on PPR areas and test preparation to ensure candidates are adequately prepared for the content areas for which they will be standard certified.
- Continue to research mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide [approved providers](#) and material to locate something with more direct instruction, rather than just reading material to ensure candidate effectiveness.



Based on the evidence presented, ACT Houston at Dallas is not in compliance with 19 TAC §228.30-Curriculum.

COMPONENT IV: COURSEWORK, TRAINING, PROGRAM DELIVERY, AND ONGOING SUPPORT – 19 TAC §228.35

Findings

- ACT Houston at Dallas provides candidates with adequate preparation and training that is sustained, rigorous, and interactive. The program offers seven courses with multiple modules within each course. Ten candidate files were reviewed noting coursework & benchmarks completed. Also, testing records for candidates in various stages of the certification process served as evidence. Syllabi were reviewed to ensure candidates were receiving adequate coursework. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(1-2)]
- All coursework and/or training shall be completed prior to EPP completion and standard certification. Three candidates reached the point of standard certification, and the remaining seven candidates were in process. Program benchmarks, the schedule of courses completed, testing history noting exams passed, and transcripts served as evidence that coursework was completed prior to standard certification. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(3)]
- ACT Houston at Dallas has procedures for allowing relevant military experiences and procedures for allowing prior experience, education, or training for non-military coursework. The information and requirements for both were found on the ACT Houston at Dallas website. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(5)(A-B)]
- ACT Houston at Dallas offers coursework online. The program provided a document showing that it is in the Quality Matters (QM) candidacy phase. The program was advised that QM accreditation takes three years and the EPP should be fully QM accredited by the next EPP Review. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(6)(A-D)]
- Candidates for initial teacher certification complete 211 clock-hours of coursework plus 30 clock-hours of field-based experiences (FBEs) + 105 additional hours that all appear to be FBE hours. The program provided the Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 Scope and Sequence as evidence. Because 300 clock-hours of standards-based coursework could not be verified within the evidence provided, it was not accepted. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(b)]
- Unless a candidate qualifies as a late hire, a candidate shall complete the following prior to any clinical teaching or internship: 150 clock-hours of coursework and/or training that allows candidates to demonstrate proficiency in specified topics. [See TAC for prescribed content \(A-J\)](#). Per the ten candidate records reviewed, candidates complete 187, 197, or 205 clock-hours of coursework in the specified topics prior to clinical teaching or internship. Because the number of pre-service hours required for the Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 certificate area could not be determined from the Scope and Sequence document, TEA relied on the candidate benchmark document and syllabi with coursework identified to determine compliance. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(2)(A-J)]



- Candidates are required to complete a minimum of 30-clock hours of FBEs prior to clinical teaching or internship. Seven candidates had completed FBEs, and the number of hours ranged from 12-38.7 clock-hours completed. Of the seven, FBE hours for two candidates were accepted as having been completed with another EPP and were noted on the transfer forms. Only one out of seven had fewer than 30 clock-hours of FBEs. All seven (100%) completed the required clock-hours. The EPP provided FBE documentation for each file reviewed as evidence that each candidate completed the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(1)]
- An EPP shall provide evidence of ongoing and relevant field-based experiences throughout the EPP in a variety of educational settings with diverse student populations, including observation, modeling, and demonstration of effective practices to improve student learning. Field-based experiences must include 15 clock-hours in which the candidate, under the direction of the EPP, is actively engaged in instructional or educational activities that include: (i) authentic school settings in a public school accredited by the TEA or other school approved by the TEA for this purpose; (ii) instruction by content certified teachers; (iii) actual students in classrooms/instructional settings with identity-proof provisions; (iv) content or grade-level specific classrooms/instructional settings; and (v) written reflection of the observation. Seven out of ten candidates completed FBEs. All had evidence of FBEs completed via video transmission, in districts with one or two schools and several grade levels noted. All candidates that completed FBEs contained documentation per the FBE logs provided, except there were no written reflections for the FBEs completed. Additionally, one candidate that began FBEs in 2018 should have had interactive FBEs and did not. Six out of eight candidates were exempt from in-person interactive FBEs due to the pandemic and two were not. Six out of seven (86%) candidate FBEs met requirements and none of the candidates completed written reflections. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)(A)]
- Up to 15 clock-hours of field-based experience may be provided by use of electronic transmission or other video or technology-based method. The program used Teach Like a Champion (TLAC), UT Dana Center, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Teach for Texas, and Annenberg Learner videos. While the videos were acceptable, candidates were not required to provide written reflections of the FBEs completed. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)(B)]
- Seven out of ten candidates had reached the point of internship and were either in the process of completing or have completed the requirement. Of the remaining three, one had a certificate that was deactivated, and two had not started their internship year with ACT Houston at Dallas. Internship placement lists and statements of eligibility noting exams passed served as evidence. All internships were for a full year, or the candidate was in progress, with the exception of one candidate whose internship ended a month prior to a full year. All candidates were in a full day assignment in public or charter schools that matched the certifications sought. Each candidate held an intern or probationary certificate during the internship year. One candidate had an internship extension. The reason for the extension on a probationary certificate was to cover a Visa in case it was needed. The probationary extension overlapped the intern certificate and



was not used. It was noted that for this candidate, the standard was issued 20 days prior to the full internship year. Five out of six (83%) of candidates met the requirements for completing an internship year. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(ii); 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(iv); 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(v); 19 TAC §228.35(e)(6)]

- An internship is successful when the candidate demonstrates proficiency in each of the educator standards for the assignment. Observation instruments that captured levels of proficiency completed by the field supervisor were provided as evidence for the seven files reviewed. They were T-TESS type instruments based on educator standards with levels of proficiency noted. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(vii)]
- An internship is successful when the field supervisor and campus supervisor recommend to the EPP that the candidate should be recommended for a standard certificate. If either the field supervisor or campus supervisor do not recommend the person who does not recommend the candidate must provide documentation supporting the lack of recommendation to the candidate and either the field supervisor or campus supervisor. Three candidates reached the point of standard certification. All three files reviewed contained a recommendation by the field supervisor and campus administrator and the candidate received a copy of the recommendation. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(vii)]
- The program had to deactivate one intern certificate. The written notice to the candidate, campus/district, and TEA were provided as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(v)]
- Ongoing support for all candidates completing an internship and for all ten candidates in the program was provided. Contact logs noting the type of support given were provided for all files reviewed. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(vi)(I-V)]
- Teacher candidate training included experiences with a full range of professional responsibilities including the start of the school year. Six out of ten began their internship year at the start of the school year and experienced the start of the year during their internship assignment. One candidate began the internship year in the middle of the year and had transfer FBEs. The remaining three have not begun the internship assignment yet. In all, six out of seven (86%) met the requirement. [19 TAC §228.35(4)]
- An internship or clinical teaching experience shall not take place in a setting where the candidate has an administrative role over the mentor or cooperating teacher or is related to the field supervisor, mentor, or cooperating teacher. In all files reviewed, it was noted that the candidate did not have an administrative role over the mentor/cooperating teacher and was not related to the field supervisor, mentor, or cooperating teacher. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(7)(A-B)]
- All candidates placed in internship assignments were assigned to a mentor. Candidate placement lists with the mentor assigned, name of school/district, grade level, supervising administrator name, and a statement of eligibility for each served as evidence. Seven files were reviewed. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(f)]



- A cooperating teacher for a clinical teacher candidate, is an educator who has at least three years of teaching experience; who is an accomplished educator as shown by student learning; and who is currently certified in the certification category for the clinical teaching assignment for which the clinical teacher candidate is seeking certification. A mentor for an internship candidate, an educator who has at least three years of teaching experience; who is an accomplished educator as shown by student learning; and who is currently certified in the certification category in which the internship candidate is seeking certification. While ACT Houston at Dallas has both clinical teaching and internship as an option to candidates, the seven candidates reviewed were in internship assignments and none were in clinical teaching. The program provided evidence of qualifications as follows: a valid certificate and a resume for one mentor, valid certificates for three mentors, and no evidence of qualifications for the remaining three mentors. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.2(14) & (26)]
- All mentors assigned to the seven candidates were trained. The program provided the training material used for training along with a signed, dated mentor agreement noting that training was provided within three weeks of assignment to each candidate. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(f); 19 TAC §228.2(14) & (26)]
- Supervision of each candidate shall be conducted with the structured guidance and regular ongoing support of an experienced educator who has been trained as a field supervisor. Supervision provided on or after September 1, 2017, must be provided by a field supervisor who has completed TEA-approved observation training. All seven candidates were assigned to a field supervisor. The statements of eligibility (SOE), candidate placement information showing date of placement and field supervisor assigned served as evidence for each. Six out of seven field supervisors assigned to candidates (86%) were trained by ACT Houston at Dallas and six out of seven (86%) completed a TEA-approved observation training through an Education Service Center (ESC). Dated sign-in sheets were provided for the local training. ESC 10 and ESC 11 training certificates were provided for TEA-approved observation training. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
- A field supervisor is currently certified educator, who preferably has advanced credentials, and shall have at least three years of experience and current certification in the class in which supervision is provided. A field supervisor shall be an accomplished educator as shown by student learning. Resumes and valid teacher certificates were provided as evidence that each field supervisor assigned to the seven candidates was qualified. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.2(18)]
- A field supervisor shall not be employed by the same school where the candidate being supervised is completing his or her clinical teaching, internship, or practicum. A mentor, cooperating teacher, or site supervisor, assigned as required by 19 TAC §228.35(f) may not also serve as a candidate's field supervisor. The field supervisors were not employed at the same schools where each of the seven candidates completed their internship year. The field supervisors were also not mentors to any of the seven candidates. Placement lists noting that each candidate had both a field supervisor and a mentor



teacher served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.2(18)]

- For the initial certification of teachers, the initial contact, which may be made by telephone, email, or other electronic communication, with the assigned candidate must occur within the first three weeks of assignment. A log was provided in the seven candidate files reviewed noting an initial contact within the first three weeks of assignment. It was noted that one of the seven candidates had an initial contact in the summer prior to the fall internship start date. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
- For each formal observation, the field supervisor shall participate in an individualized pre-observation conference with the candidate; and provide written feedback through an individualized, synchronous, and interactive post-observation conference with the candidate. Neither the pre-observation conference nor the post-observation conference need to be onsite. For each formal observation, the field supervisor shall document educational practices observed. For each formal observation, the field supervisor shall provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's cooperating teacher or mentor. The field supervisor shall collaborate with the candidate, mentor, and supervising campus administrator throughout the internship. Informal observations and coaching shall be provided by the field supervisor as appropriate. Observation records for each formal observation identified a pre- and post-observation conference noting the date that each occurred, and all post-observation conferences were conducted synchronously. Educational practices observed were documented by the field supervisor on a T-TESS type observation instrument for each candidate at each observation. Written feedback was provided to each candidate, the mentor teacher, and campus administrator. Signatures at the bottom of each formal observation served as evidence. All seven candidates received informal observations and coaching throughout the internship year. Candidate contact logs served as evidence. Seven candidate observation records were provided as evidence. Evidence of field supervisor collaboration with the candidate, mentor, and campus administrator was found in observation records where all parties signed observation documents and candidate contact logs. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
- Each formal observation must be at least 45 minutes in duration, must be conducted by the field supervisor, and must be on the candidate's site in a face-to-face setting. An EPP must provide the first formal observation within the first third of all clinical teaching assignments and the first six weeks of all internship assignments. For an internship under an intern certificate or an additional internship described in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(v)(I), an EPP must provide a minimum of three formal observations during the first half of the internship and a minimum of two formal observations during the last half of the internship. For a first-year internship under a probationary certificate or an additional internship described in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(v)(II), an EPP must provide a minimum of one formal observation during the first third of the assignment, a minimum of one formal observation during the second third of the assignment, and a minimum of one formal observation during the last third of the assignment. For all seven files reviewed, the candidates were in internship assignments. Observation records for each identified that the first observation for each was conducted by the field supervisor



within the first six weeks of the assignment. All candidates who held an intern certificate received five observations spaced as required during the internship year and all candidates who held a probationary certificate received three observations spaced as required during the internship year or were in process of completing the requirement. Observation records served as evidence of compliance. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g)(1-4)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps):

- 19 TAC §228.35(b) Coursework and/or training for candidates seeking initial certification in the classroom teacher certification class. An EPP shall provide each candidate with a minimum of 300 clock-hours of coursework and/or training.
Action: Require 300 clock-hours of standards-based coursework and training. Require the first 150 clock-hours of prescribed coursework + 30 clock-hours of field-based experiences to be completed prior to internship or clinical teaching. The remaining 120 clock-hours of standards-based coursework may be completed prior to internship or clinical teaching or concurrent with internship or clinical teaching.
- 19 TAC §228.35(e)(1) & 19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)(B) An EPP shall provide evidence of ongoing and relevant field-based experiences (FBEs) throughout the EPP in a variety of educational settings with diverse student populations, including observation, modeling, and demonstration of effective practices to improve student learning (A) Field-based experiences must include 15 clock-hours in which the candidate, under the direction of the EPP, is actively engaged in instructional or educational activities that include: (i) authentic school settings in a public school accredited by the TEA or other school approved by the TEA for this purpose; (ii) instruction by content certified teachers; (iii) actual students in classrooms/instructional settings with identity-proof provisions; (iv) content or grade-level specific classrooms/instructional settings; and (v) written reflection of the observation. Up to 15 clock-hours of field-based experience may be provided by use of electronic transmission or other video or technology-based method. Field-based experience provided by use of electronic transmission or other video or technology-based method must include: (i) direction of the EPP; (ii) authentic school settings in an accredited public or private school; (iii) instruction by content certified teachers; (iv) actual students in classrooms/instructional settings with identity-proof provisions; (v) content or grade-level specific classrooms/instructional settings; and (vi) written reflection of the observation.
Action: Require FBEs to be conducted in a variety of settings under the direction of the EPP. Require 15 clock-hours of interactive FBEs. Require written reflections for each FBE occurrence. Provide guidance for FBE completion (“look fors”), such as classroom management, how teacher modifies instruction, types of material used, etc. If allowing 15-clock-hrs. of FBEs via electronic transmission for all, the other 15 must be interactive. Require FBEs completed via electronic transmission to include written reflections. Retain all documentation in candidate files. If candidates are not placed in an internship that begins at the start of the school year, require that they experience the start of the year through completion of FBEs.



- 19 TAC §228.2(26) Mentor--For an internship candidate, an educator who is collaboratively assigned by the campus administrator and the educator preparation program (EPP); who has at least three years of teaching experience; who is an accomplished educator as shown by student learning; who has completed mentor training, including training in how to coach and mentor teacher candidates, by an EPP within three weeks of being assigned to the intern; who is currently certified in the certification category in which the internship candidate is seeking certification; who guides, assists, and supports the candidate during the internship in areas such as planning, classroom management, instruction, assessment, working with parents, obtaining materials, district policies; and who reports the candidate's progress to that candidate's field supervisor.

Action: Require Mentors to be qualified: Three years of experience as a teacher, accomplished educator, certified as a teacher. Retain evidence of qualifications. Retain evidence of training including dated training certificates as evidence that the training occurred within 3 weeks of assignment to the candidate.

Recommendations:

- Consider providing a dated training certificate to all mentors and cooperating teachers as evidence that the training occurred within three weeks of assignment.
- Consider providing Continuing Professional Education (CPE) to mentors and cooperating teachers for their work mentoring candidates if they need CPE for certificate renewal. A standard certified educator may earn up to 45 CPE hours in a five-year period for serving as a mentor/cooperating teacher to a candidate.
- Ensure that each candidate is on an intern or probationary certificate for the full year and do not issue the standard certificate until the year has been completed.
- Covering a candidate visa is not a requirement for internship extension and the EPP is reminded to review the TAC requirements for internship extensions.

Based on the evidence presented, ACT Houston at Dallas is not in Compliance with 19 TAC §228.35 – Coursework, Training, Program Delivery, and On-Going Support.

COMPONENT V: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES AND EPP – 19 TAC §228.40

Findings

- ACT Houston at Dallas has established benchmarks to measure candidate progress. All files reviewed contained a benchmark document noting where the candidate was in the program. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(a)]
- ACT Houston at Dallas has structured assessments to measure candidate progress. The EPP provided an Early Childhood Education (ECE) performance-based assessment (PBA) based on the PK Guidelines work. The instructions for planning a lesson based on PK Guidelines were provided and a rubric that assessed the PK Guidelines lesson planning with levels of proficiency noted: Proficient, Developing, and Needs Improvement. It was noted that the first submission for an ECE PBA was scored on a



work ethic rubric. While the work ethic rubric is of value, it was not standards-based. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(a)]

- ACT Houston at Dallas has processes in place to ensure that candidates are prepared to be successful in their certification exams. Benchmark documents were provided for all ten files reviewed showing where the candidate was in the process of testing and the date test approval was granted. ACT Houston at Dallas does not grant test approval to any candidate until they are formally admitted. It was noted that three candidates took a TExES exam via the PACT route when it was allowed, four candidates passed content exams with other EPPs, and the remaining three candidates tested with ACT Houston at Dallas. [19 TAC §228.40(b); 19 TAC §228.40(d)]
- For the purposes of EPP improvement, an entity shall continuously evaluate the design and delivery of the EPP components based on performance data, scientifically-based research practices, and the results of internal and external feedback and assessments. ACT Houston at Dallas provided a set of questions about courses, structure, content, and instructors. It could not be determined if candidates had actually completed the questions. It could also not be determined how ACT Houston at Dallas uses the information or if any type of data is shared with the advisory committee. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(e)]
- All candidate records for the review served as evidence that the EPP retains records as required for a period of five years from admission to completion or withdrawal from the program for any reason. Complete records for ten files reviewed were provided for review. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(f)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps):

- 19 TAC §228.40(e) For the purposes of EPP improvement, an entity shall continuously evaluate the design and delivery of the EPP components based on performance data, scientifically-based research practices, and the results of internal and external feedback and assessments.

Action: Use completed candidate surveys to guide the program to evaluate the design, delivery of EPP components based on performance data (candidate test scores in Pearson), scientifically-based research practices, and the results of internal and external feedback. Share results with the advisory committee and ensure they provide input into the design and delivery of the ACT Houston at Dallas EPP. Provide completed candidate surveys in aggregate format noting what is working and what may need to be changed. Share the data with the advisory committee.

Recommendations:

- Require more rigorous standards-based assessments of candidates throughout the program that are based on the certificate areas candidates are seeking.

Based on the evidence presented, ACT Houston at Dallas is not in compliance with 19 TAC §228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement.



COMPONENT VI: PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT - 19 TAC §228.50

Findings

19 TAC §228.50 requires that during the period of preparation, the educator preparation program shall ensure that the individuals preparing candidates and the candidates themselves understand and adhere to Chapter 247 of this title (relating to Educators' Code of Ethics).

- Each candidate signs an agreement to adhere to the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics and all instructors & staff sign a code of ethics document. Signed documents were found in all ten (100%) of the candidate files reviewed and all EPP staff.

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps):

None.

Recommendations:

- Consider using the Education Service Center (ESC) Ethics training for candidates. It is an updated version of the four Ethics modules used by the program that are now outdated. If using the ESC training, require a training certificate of each candidate and retain it in candidate records. The ESC training certificate will identify the total hours earned for the training.

Based on the evidence presented, ACT Houston at Dallas is in compliance with 19 TAC §228.50 - Professional Conduct.

COMPONENT VII: COMPLAINTS PROCESS – 19 TAC §228.70

Findings

- Per 19 TAC §228.70(b), the EPP complaints process is on file at TEA and includes a timeline of two weeks for ACT Houston at Dallas to respond to a formal complaint. The EPP complaint policy is also posted on the EPP website. The program has the complaint policy posted on-site and provided a screenshot of where it is posted on the wall and on a placard in the front office. The program provides the complaint policy in writing upon request. The program met the requirements as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.70(b)(1-4)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps):

None.

Recommendations:

- Submit a new complaints policy to be on file with TEA. The current complaints policy references ACT Houston and identifies the director at that EPP, which is now closed.
- Strengthen the complaints process that is posted on the website by requiring a clear timeline for filing a complaint and for the written EPP response.

Based on the evidence presented, ACT Houston at Dallas is in compliance with 19 TAC §228.70 – Complaints Process.



COMPONENT VIII: CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES - 19 TAC Chapters 228 and 230

Findings

- Teacher candidates have met degree requirements for certification. Nine candidates held a bachelor's degree or higher at the time of admission and the tenth candidate file reviewed contained evidence of a high school diploma and experience in the area of the certificate sought. Three had reached the point of standard certification. [19 TAC §230.13(a)(1); 19 TAC §230.13(b)(1)]
- Standard career and technical education (CTE) certificates based on experience and preparation in a skill area shall require preparation, experience, and/or licensure, certification, or registration in a skill area as described in 19 TAC §233.14. One file was reviewed for a candidate seeking Trade & Industrial 6-12 certification. Licensure and experience documentation was provided as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §230.13(b)(2)]
- A record of EPP completion in the form of a benchmark document and a checklist noting all requirements were met served as evidence for the three candidates that reached standard certification. The recommendation date by ACT Houston at Dallas in the ECOS served as evidence that the EPP recommended each candidate for standard certification. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §230.13(a)(2); 19 TAC §230.13(b)(3)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps):

- None.

Recommendations:

- None.

Based on the evidence presented, ACT Houston at Dallas is in compliance with 19 TAC Chapters 228 and 230 – Certification Procedures.

COMPONENT IX: INTEGRITY OF DATA REPORTED - 19 TAC Chapter 229

Findings

- ACT Houston at Dallas has submitted all data as required within the Accountability System for Educator Preparation (ASEP) reporting years within the timeline required by TEA. Corrections had to be made by the program and they were done within the timeline required by TEA for the 2018-2019 thru 2020-2021 academic years. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §229.3(f)(1) and Associated Graphic]
- Three out of ten teacher candidate files reviewed contained a formal offer of admission with a formal admission date that did not correspond to the admission date entered into ECOS. The fourth file did not have an admission record in ECOS, but was admitted on March 5, 2021 and should have had an admission record. Six out of ten files (60%) were accurately reported. [19 TAC §229.3(f)(1)]



- Nine out of ten candidates (90%) were uploaded as admitted into ECOS within seven calendar days and the tenth candidate had no admission record in ECOS. [19 TAC §229.3(f)(1)]
- All ten (100%) candidates were correctly identified as other enrolled (OE) or as a finisher (F) for the years in which they were enrolled at ACT Houston at Dallas. [19 TAC §229.3(f)(1)]
- All observation data in candidate records corresponded to the data that was uploaded into ECOS in terms of frequency and duration. [19 TAC §229.3(f)(1)]
- Seven out of ten (70%) candidate files reviewed contained an admission GPA in the admission record that corresponded to the admission GPA reported to TEA during annual reporting for the year the candidate was admitted. The eighth candidate file reviewed was a T&I candidate and no GPA is required to be reported. The remaining GPAs did not correspond to the GPA data reported. The program was 80% compliant. [19 TAC §229.3(f)(1)(7)]
- All ten candidate candidates were accurately reported on the finisher record list for all certification areas for which they were admitted. The program was 100% compliant.

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps):

- 19 TAC §229.3(f)(1) and [Graphic](#) Report all data accurately in ECOS and related candidate documentation.
Action: Require admission dates in candidate records to correspond to the admission date reported by the EPP. Submit an admission data fix to ensure that the candidate that was not reported as admitted in 2020-2021 is accurately reported as having been admitted. Record the EPP process for data reporting to ensure that all required data is reviewed and accurately reported.

Recommendations:

- None.

Based on the evidence presented, ACT Houston at Dallas is not in compliance with 19 TAC Chapter 229 – Integrity of Data Reported.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVISEMENT:

- For Teacher preparation programs, the Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) changed effective January 27, 2020. Ensure curriculum in all teacher certificate areas has been updated to meet requirements for content pedagogy instruction and test preparation. Passing scores on TExES exams cannot be used to meet EPP admission requirements after 1/27/2020 but may be used for certification purposes until the expiration date of the related certificate. The new PACT, or “TX PACT”, is a content-pure assessment that cannot be used for certification purposes.
- Develop a plan to update EPP benchmarks and test readiness requirements for Teacher programs to address changes in PACT, if necessary.



- Application A has changed – plan to review requirements to prepare for adding new certificate areas.
- Develop and implement more performance assessments in all programs. Evidence of performance assessments is a requirement for adding new certificates using the new Application A.
- Review all certificate areas that the EPP no longer plans to support and request, in writing, for TEA to remove them from inventory.
- The transition from 291 Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 to 391 Core Subjects w/STR EC-6 is in process. December 2021 is the last date a candidate can take the 291 exam and the last date to standard certify candidates using the 291 will be December 30, 2022. You will want to remind candidates of the deadline for certification to ensure that they meet all requirements and can be standard certified using the 291 exam if applicable. Intern and Probationary certificate deactivation timelines and requirements have been updated in TAC. Changes include new timelines for requesting deactivations and information that must be provided to stakeholders in advance of internship start dates. Field supervisors will need to verify candidate placement information at the beginning of the assignment.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS ALL EPPS:

- To ensure continuity in record keeping and other related processes, consider creating a procedure manual documenting EPP processes.
- Align the verbiage of the program to the verbiage of Texas Administrative Code (TAC) (ex. Field supervisor, cooperating teacher, mentor, candidate, etc.).
- Continue to follow the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and the State Board of Education (SBOE) meetings and/or review the minutes to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about current Texas Administrative Code.
- Continue to participate in training and webinars provided by the Division of Educator Preparation to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about current requirements and changes in the Texas Administrative Code.
- Continue to maintain communication with the education specialist assigned to the program.
- Ensure that TEA staff has the most current contact information by sending updates to the assigned education specialist.



SUMMARY

Next Steps were created collaboratively with the ACT Houston at Dallas staff.

“I have reviewed the EPP Report and agree that all required corrections will be made on or before Friday, February 25, 2021.”

Signature of Legal Authority

Date

Printed Name of Legal Authority

Date