

2024–2025 Continuing Approval Review Report

University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley

INTRODUCTION

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Education Specialists Vanessa Alba, Rebecca Bunting, and Educator Preparation Analyst David Campbell conducted a five-year Continuing Approval Review of the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) educator preparation program (EPP) on November 4-18, 2024. Per 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.13(a), "an educator preparation program (EPP) ...shall be reviewed at least once every five years...". Dr. Alma Rodriguez, Dean of the College of Education and P-16 Integration, was identified as the program's Legal Authority. Dr. Michael Whitacre, Director of Educator Preparation and Accountability and the EPP's Certification Officer, was the primary EPP contact for the review process. The UTRGV EPP was originally approved by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) as UT-Pan American University on June 8, 1968. On June 28, 2024, UTRGV was notified of the review. At that time, the EPP was rated Accredited with a risk level that was Stage 2 (medium). At the time of the review, the EPP was rated Accredited. The EPP reported 484 finishers for the 2022-2023 reporting year and 587 finishers for 2023-2024.

At the time of the review, the UTRGV EPP was approved to prepare and recommend candidates for certification in the Teacher, Principal, Superintendent, School Counselor, Educational Diagnostician, and Reading Specialist classes in the undergraduate (U), post-baccalaureate (PB), and alternative certification (ALT) routes. The Educational Diagnostician program was inactive and was not included in the review.

The TEA administers the 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 requirements for EPPs as applicable to the certification classes and certification routes offered by the EPP using a standardized rubric aligned to the Texas Administrative Code and Texas Education Code; and
- 2) developing a corrective action plan for compliance and quality improvement based on review data, performance indicators identified in 19 TAC §229.4, and self-reported EPP information provided in the Status Report.

Information concerning compliance with TAC governing EPPs was collected by a variety of means. The EPP submitted a Status Report and related program documents to TEA on October 18, 2024. Additional EPP documents, including records for five candidates from each active program for a total of 25 records, were submitted by the EPP on October 31, 2024. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to evaluate the evidence.

"Findings" reflect EPP compliance with the TAC requirement(s) in a component. Determinations of non-compliance are supported by "Evidence" collected during the review process. Where a "Corrective Action" is required, the program should consult the TAC and/or TEC, complete the corrective action to bring the EPP into compliance, and submit the required evidence of corrective action to TEA by the identified Due Date.

Corrective actions that are planned but have not been implemented must include an implementation date.

"Advisement" was provided to EPP staff regarding important new information and reminders.

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“Recommendations” are suggestions for general program improvement or reminders of important information for the EPP and no follow-up is required.

Following are the areas where the EPP was found to exceed requirements in TAC:

The EPP exceeds requirements in 19 TAC §228.25(b) by holding advisory committee meetings more than one time per year.

EVIDENCE

1. The EPP submitted advisory committee meeting minutes, agendas, and sign-in sheets reflecting that it meets two times each year to ensure more thorough discussions about ongoing projects and emerging issues related to the EPP.

Following are the additional findings of the review.

GOVERNANCE

Oversight of the EPP and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the programs within the EPP were reviewed. The following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. The EPP has established an advisory committee that
 - provides guidance and input on matters of program design, delivery, evaluation, and major policy decisions of each program within the EPP; and
 - is composed of a variety of collaborators including representation from at least three of these areas: public schools accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and/or TEA-recognized private schools; regional education service centers; institutions of higher education; and business and community interests. [19 TAC §228.20(b)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.25(b)]
2. The EPP has published an exit policy that is reviewed & signed by each candidate at admission in all programs except for candidates in the Superintendent and School Counselor programs. [19 TAC §228.20(h)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.31(b)]

Evidence: While the EPP posted the Handbook containing the exit policy on its website for each program, there was no evidence that applicants and candidates in the Superintendent and School Counselor programs signed and dated a document acknowledging their understanding of this policy.
3. The EPP has qualified instructors for the certificate categories and classes offered. [19 TAC §228.10(d)(1)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.15(c)(2)]
4. The EPP has not consistently retained candidate and EPP records per the records retention requirement in [19 TAC §228.10(b)(2) & §228.40(f)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.13(h) & §228.31(i)]

Evidence: Several documents requested from the Principal, Superintendent, School Counselor, and Reading Specialist programs were not available for review, including admission screens, documents supporting additional admission requirements, and verification of site and field supervisor qualifications and training.

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CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must correct the deficiencies identified by **5 PM CST on Friday, March 25, 2025:**

1. 19 TAC §228.31(b) Exit Policy

Update and implement an exit policy that all candidates review and sign upon admission.

The exit policy must be published. Retain the signed documents in the candidate's records per the records retention requirement. The exit policy must meet new requirements effective 9/1/2019 and must identify a point of dismissal for inactive candidates after no more than two years of inactivity, or, as a university-based EPP, you may adopt your institution's policy. An inactive candidate is one who is no longer completing coursework, training, and testing requirements with an EPP and is not a completer of the EPP.

2. 19 TAC §228.31(i) & §228.13(h) Records Retention

Update and implement a records retention process to retain records relating to candidate admission and completion of preparation requirements for at least five years from the date the candidate leaves the program or finishes the program. The records retention method must ensure information security.

REQUIRED NOTIFICATIONS

Candidate records, the EPP website, and candidate handbooks were reviewed for evidence that the EPP has communicated the required notifications to applicants and candidates. The following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. The EPP has informed applicants to all programs about the required criminal history background checks for clinical teaching and employment as an educator in Texas. [19 TAC §227.1(b)]
2. The EPP has notified applicants and candidates in all programs about
 - the potential impact of criminal history on candidate certification; and
 - the right to request a Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation from TEA. [19 TAC §227.1(d)]
3. The EPP has informed applicants about the admission requirements and completion requirements of each program in the EPP. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(1) & (2)]
4. The EPP has informed applicants in all programs about
 - the EPP performance over time for the past five years; and
 - the effect of supply and demand forces on the educator workforce in Texas. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(3)(A) & (B)]
5. The EPP has published a complaints process that includes a link to the TEA complaints process. [19 TAC §228.70(b)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.123 (a)-(d)]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

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ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Candidate records, including applications, transcripts, screening rubrics, and other related documentation, were reviewed to verify that the programs within the EPP qualify applicants for admission as required in 19 TAC Chapters 227, 239, 241, and 242. The following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. There is sufficient evidence that the EPP verifies that candidates hold the required degree at admission. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(1) & (2)]
2. There is sufficient evidence that the EPP requires applicants to all programs to meet the minimum 2.50 GPA requirement or meet requirements for the 10% exception to the GPA requirement. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(3)]
3. There is sufficient evidence that the Teacher programs require applicants to meet the requirement for subject-specific semester credit hours or have a passing score on the appropriate pre-admission content test (TX PACT) at admission. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(4)]
4. There is sufficient evidence that candidates admitted in a class other than classroom teacher who did not meet the minimum certification, degree, or experience requirements for issuance of a standard certificate were informed in writing of any deficiency prior to admission. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(5)]
5. Candidates consistently demonstrate English language proficiency prior to admission. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(7)]
6. Candidates do not consistently participate in one or more admission screen(s) to evaluate the candidate's appropriateness for the certificate sought. There is insufficient evidence that screens are scored using a rubric with a set of coherent criteria. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8) and §242.5(c)]
Evidence: Two out of five Superintendent candidates were missing two screens and their associated evaluative rubrics.
7. The EPP inconsistently collects evidence that applicants meet additional admission requirements. [19 TAC §227.10(b)]
Evidence: Two out of five Superintendent records reviewed were missing two letters of recommendation, and one of the two records was also missing a personal statement. Both were additional requirements for admission into the program.
8. The EPP has maintained an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher for each incoming class since the last five-year review. [19 TAC §227.19(a)]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must implement processes to appropriately qualify applicants for admission into each program offered as required in 19 TAC Chapters 227 and 242 by **5 PM CST on Friday, March 25, 2025**:

1. **19 TAC §227.10(a)(8) Admission Requirements: Screen**

Update admissions processes for the Superintendent program to require applicants to participate in two or more screening activities which could include an interview or other screening instrument to determine if the EPP applicant's knowledge, experience, skills, and aptitude are appropriate for the certification sought. Each screen must be scored using an aligned rubric based on a coherent set of criteria. Retain the documents in the candidate's records per the records retention requirement.

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2. 19 TAC §227.10(b) Additional Requirements

Update admissions processes for the Superintendent program to ensure that all additional admissions requirements, including two letters of recommendation and a personal statement, are required of all applicants. Retain the documents in the candidate's records per the records retention requirement.

FORMAL & CONTINGENCY ADMISSION

Candidate records and records in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) were reviewed to verify the EPP has implemented a formal admission process as required in 19 TAC §227.17. The following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. There is insufficient evidence that the EPP consistently provides a written offer of admission reflecting a transparent admission date, and ensures the offer is signed by candidates. [19 TAC §227.17(b)-(d)]
Evidence: Two out of five Principal candidate records were missing admission acceptance letters.
2. The EPP inconsistently creates admission records for formally admitted candidates in the ECOS within seven calendar days of the date of admission identified in the offer letter. [19 TAC §227.17(e)]
Evidence: Admission records for two out of five School Counselor candidates and three out of five Reading Specialist candidates were not created within seven calendar days of the date of formal admission.
3. Except as allowed for contingency admission, candidates are not provided coursework, training, or test approval prior to formal admission. [19 TAC §227.17(f)]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must implement the formal admission process(es) for all classes as required by **5 PM CST on Friday, March 25, 2025:**

1. **19 TAC §227.17(b)-(d) Written and Accepted Formal Admission**
Update the formal admission process in the Principal program to include a written offer letter that the candidate accepts in writing. The formal date of admission must be embedded in the written offer.
2. **19 TAC §227.17(e) Formal Admission Entered Within Seven Calendar Days**
Update the formal admission process in the School Counselor and Reading Specialist programs to include admission data entered in ECOS within seven calendar days of the formal admission date embedded in the offer letter.

STANDARDS-BASED COURSEWORK

Syllabi, performance assessments, published degree plans, standards alignment charts, and information provided by the EPP in the Status Report were reviewed as evidence the EPP provides the required standards-based coursework. Evidence was reviewed for the Core Subjects with Science of Teaching Reading (STR) EC-6 certificate as a focus area representative of the overall quality of standards-based coursework offered by the EPP. The following are the findings:

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FINDINGS

1. There is insufficient evidence that candidates are consistently required to complete at least the minimum number of hours of coursework and training prior to completing the EPP. [19 TAC §228.35(c)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.53(b)]
Evidence: The Reading Specialist program provides only three semester credit hours (45 clock hours) of coursework and a three-credit hour practicum as advertised on the website and reflected in candidate records reviewed.
2. The following required standards were identified in coursework:
 - The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS); and
 - English Language Proficiency Standards (Teacher programs); and
 - Pre-Kindergarten Guidelines (Teacher programs, as applicable); and
 - The skills and competencies captured in the Texas teacher standards (Teacher programs); and
 - The Texas administrator standards (Principal programs). [19 TAC §228.30(e)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(f)]
3. The following required standards were not identified in coursework:
 - The educator standards for the Core Subjects with Science of Teaching Reading (STR) EC-6 certificate reviewed. [19 TAC §228.30] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57]
Evidence: A comparison of the Scope & Sequence document, standards alignment charts, and syllabi for the Core Subjects with STR EC-6 certificate area released that all required standards were not addressed. The EPP also conducted an internal curriculum alignment and found that all standards were not addressed in the coursework provided for the certificate. The standards that were missing from the curriculum were Theater Arts, Science & Social Studies, Art & Music, and Physical Education & Health.
4. There is sufficient evidence the curriculum provided to candidates is research-based. [19 TAC §228.30(b)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(b)]
5. There is sufficient evidence the coursework provided to candidates is performance-based providing opportunities for candidates to practice skills. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(2) & §228.40(a)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(b)]
6. Coursework and training are offered partially or fully online for one or more programs. The online training meets the criteria set for accreditation, quality assurance, and compliance with the following:
 - 19 TAC Part 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter P (relating to approval of Distance Education Courses and Programs for Public Institutions).

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must revise coursework to ensure candidates are provided at least the minimum number of hours of standards-based coursework and assessments to meet requirements in 19 TAC Chapters 228 and 239 by **5 PM CST on Friday, March 25, 2025**:

1. **19 TAC §228.53(b) Required Coursework Hours**
Review and revise the Reading Specialist program to require that the program provides candidates with a minimum of 200 clock hours (14 semester credit hours) of coursework and training that is directly aligned with the educator standards for the Reading Specialist certificate.

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2. 19 TAC §228.57 Standards-based Curriculum

Review and revise the curriculum where needed to ensure all standards required for the Core Subjects with Science of Teaching Reading (STR) EC-6 certificate are taught.

REQUIRED CURRICULUM TOPICS

Syllabi, published degree plans, transcripts, and information provided by the EPP in the Status Report were reviewed to verify the EPP provides instruction in the additional curriculum areas required in the Texas Administrative Code and Texas Education Code. The following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. There is sufficient evidence that candidates receive the required training in the Educators' Code of Ethics and appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(1) & (7)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(c)(1) & (7)]
2. There is sufficient evidence that training in educating students with Dyslexia is consistently provided to candidates in all programs and is provided by the approved provider. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(2)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(c)(2)]
3. There is sufficient evidence that training in Mental Health, Substance Abuse, & Youth Suicide is consistently provided to candidates in all programs and is provided by an approved provider. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(3)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(c)(3)]
4. There is sufficient evidence that candidates in all programs receive instruction in:
 - the skills educators are required to possess; and
 - the responsibilities educators are required to accept; and
 - the high expectations for all students in Texas; and
 - the importance of building strong classroom management skills; and
 - the framework in Texas for teacher and principal evaluation. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(4)-(6)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(c)(4)-(6)]
5. There is sufficient evidence that candidates in all programs receive the required Instruction in digital learning, virtual instruction, and virtual learning. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(8)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(c)(8)]
6. The Digital Literacy evaluation and the related prescribed curriculum have been provided to candidates in all programs. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(8)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(c)(8)]
7. There is sufficient evidence the EPP provides to candidates in all programs opportunities for candidates to demonstrate competency in instruction regarding students with disabilities, the use of proactive instructional planning techniques, and evidence-based inclusive instructional practices, as required under TEC §21.044(a-1)(1)-(3). [19 TAC §228.30(c)(9)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(c)(9)]
8. There is sufficient evidence the EPP integrates inclusive practices for all students, including students with disabilities, and evidence-based instruction and intervention strategies throughout coursework for candidates in all programs as required under TEC §21.0443(b)(1)-(2). [19 TAC §228.11(a)(1)(J)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.11(a)(1)(J)]
9. There is sufficient evidence that Teacher candidates receive reading instruction, including instruction that improves students' content-area literacy. [19 TAC §228.30(d)(2)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(d)(2)]

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CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

PRE-SERVICE REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES

Syllabi, degree plans, benchmark documents, field-based experiences in candidates' records, and published information were reviewed for evidence the EPP requires Teacher candidates to complete pre-service requirements (coursework and field-based experiences) as identified in 19 TAC Chapter 228. The following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. There is sufficient evidence that candidates consistently complete pre-service coursework and training before beginning the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(2)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.41 & §228.43(b)]
2. There is sufficient evidence that the structure of pre-service coursework and training allows candidates to complete at least 150 hours of coursework and to demonstrate proficiency in the identified pedagogical areas. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(1) & §228.35(e)(1)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.41(2)(A)-(L)]
3. There is sufficient evidence that candidates consistently complete the required number of hours of FBE during pre-service coursework and training. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(1) & §228.35(e)(1)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.41(1) & §228.43(c)-(d)]
4. FBE assignments and activities do not meet the requirements for completing FBE. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.43(c) & (d)]
Evidence: FBE records for four out of five candidates reviewed were missing evidence of active engagement with students.

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must revise the structure and activities required in pre-service coursework to ensure Teacher candidates complete preservice requirements and demonstrate proficiency in the identified pedagogical areas prior to authorizing the supervised clinical experience as required in 19 TAC §228.41, §228.43, and §228.55(a) & (c) by **5 PM CST on Friday, March 25, 2025**:

1. 19 TAC §228.43(c) & (d) Pre-Service Requirements: FBE

Revise the FBE requirements and process to ensure candidates complete at least the required number of hours, including the required hours of active engagement, and that meet all other requirements for FBE. Retain the documents in the candidate's records per the records retention requirement.

SUPERVISED CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Syllabi, degree plans, and documentation in candidate records, including placement documents, logs, observation records, cooperating teacher or site supervisor agreements, and training materials, were reviewed as evidence that the EPP consistently ensures that candidates complete the supervised clinical experience as required in 19 TAC Chapter 228.

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FINDINGS

All five Teacher candidates completed clinical teaching:

1. There is sufficient evidence that the candidates consistently complete a clinical teaching assignment that is at least 70 days (490 hours) in duration and is completed in the subject area of the certificate sought on an approved campus. The clinical teaching structure includes co-teaching and increased responsibility for the classroom. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)-(B) & §228.35(e)(5)-(7) & (9)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.63 & §228.67]
2. There is sufficient evidence that the candidates completing clinical teaching are provided support throughout the clinical teaching experience that includes:
 - A qualified and trained cooperating teacher.
 - A qualified and trained field supervisor.
 - The required number and duration of formal and informal observations provided by the field supervisor.
3. There is insufficient evidence that the candidates completing clinical teaching are provided support throughout the clinical teaching experience that includes:
 - Feedback and coaching from the field supervisor based on pre-and post-observation conferences and educational practices observed. [19 TAC §228.2(14), §228.35(f), §228.35(g)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.93, §228.101, §228.105, §228.107]

Evidence: In the candidate records reviewed, three out of five contained evidence of a pre-and post-observation conference for each formal observation, and two out of five were missing evidence of post-observation conferences for one or more formal required by the program. None of the records reviewed contained a precise date for the pre-and post-observation conferences.

3. There is sufficient evidence that candidate proficiency in the implementation of the standards for the certificate sought is captured during clinical teaching. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(iii)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.67(e)]
4. The EPP has integrated inclusive practices for all students, including students with disabilities, and evidence-based instruction and intervention strategies in the clinical teaching experience. [19 TAC §228.10(a)(1)(J)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.11(a)(1)(J)]
5. There is sufficient evidence that candidates are consistently provided recommendations of a successful clinical experience by the cooperating teacher and the field supervisor. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(iii)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.67(e)]

All 20 candidates in the non-Teacher programs completed a practicum:

6. There is sufficient evidence that candidates consistently complete a practicum that is at least 160 hours in duration and is completed on an approved campus. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(A)-(C) & §228.35(e)(9)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.63 & §228.81]
7. There is sufficient evidence that the candidates completing a practicum are provided support throughout the experience that includes:
 - A trained site supervisor.
 - The required number and duration of formal observations provided by the field supervisor.
 - Feedback and coaching from the field supervisor based on pre-and post-observation conferences and educational practices observed.

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[19 TAC §228.2(33), §228.35(f), & §228.35(h)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.99, §228.101, §228.117]

8. There is insufficient evidence that the candidates completing a practicum are provided support throughout the experience that includes:

- A qualified site supervisor.
- A qualified and trained field supervisor.
- The required informal observations and coaching provided by the field supervisor.

[19 TAC §228.2(33), §228.35(f), & §228.35(h)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.99, §228.101, §228.117]

Evidence:

Site Supervisor Qualifications: In the Principal, Superintendent, and Reading Specialist programs, the site supervisors self-verified their qualifications. In the School Counselor program, two out of five candidate records reviewed contained evidence that the site supervisor assigned held a valid School Counselor certificate and resume reflecting qualifications, but three out of five records only contained evidence of a valid School Counselor certificate. In the Reading Specialist program, all five site supervisors were certified as Principals and not Reading Specialists. The EPP did not document reasons for selecting site supervisors that did not meet the criteria.

Field Supervisor Qualifications: In the Superintendent program, there was no evidence of field supervisor qualifications for the two field supervisors assigned to support the five Superintendent candidates.

Field Supervisor Training: In the School Counselor Program, candidates were assigned multiple field supervisors. One out of five candidate records reviewed contained evidence that the field supervisors met local and statewide training requirements. The remaining four candidate records reviewed contained inconsistent evidence that the field supervisors met both local and statewide training requirements. In the Reading Specialist program, the EPP provided evidence in the five records reviewed that all five field supervisors completed statewide training but no evidence that the field supervisors completed local training.

Informal observations and coaching: In all non-Teacher programs, no evidence of informal observations or coaching was provided.

9. There is insufficient evidence that candidate proficiency in the implementation of the standards for the certificate sought is consistently captured during the practicum. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.81(a)]

Evidence: The observation instrument used to evaluate Principal candidates during practicum was not constructed to capture proficiency in the standards. It captured only whether the standards were observed but not to what degree of proficiency.

10. The EPP has not integrated inclusive practices for all students, including students with disabilities, and evidence-based instruction and intervention strategies in the practicum experience. [19 TAC §228.10(a)(1)(J)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.11(a)(1)(J)]

Evidence: In the Principal and Superintendent programs, evidence of integration of this requirement was not found in the practicum materials or the observation instruments used by the field supervisors.

11. There is insufficient evidence that candidates are consistently provided recommendations of a successful practicum experience by the site supervisor and the field supervisor. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(E)] [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.81(e)]

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Evidence: In the Principal and Superintendent programs, only the field supervisor's recommendation that the candidates should be recommended for standard certification was provided, and in the School Counselor program, only the site supervisor's recommendation that the candidates should be recommended for standard certification was provided.

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must revise the structure and requirements in the supervised clinical experiences as needed to ensure candidates are placed in appropriate assignments where they are able to complete the experiences with appropriate supervision and support, and that candidate proficiency is accurately captured by the EPP by **5 PM CST on Friday, March 25, 2025**:

1. 19 TAC §228.93, §228.101, §228.105, §228.107 Clinical Experience: Clinical Teaching (Candidate Support)

Update the clinical teaching structure and processes to include ensuring field supervisors conduct the required formal & informal observations and conduct pre- and post-conferences for each formal observation. Train the field supervisors in the requirements. Retain the documents in the candidate's records per the records retention requirement.

2. 19 TAC §228.81, §228.91(d), §228.99, §228.101, §228.117 Clinical Experience: Non-Teacher Practicum (Candidate Support)

Update the Practicum structure and processes to include:

- verifying that site supervisors and field supervisors meet qualification requirements and have completed the required training;
- collaborating with campus or district administrators to ensure an individual who most closely meets the criteria is assigned to a candidate when a qualified site supervisor is not available & documenting the reasons for selecting individuals who do not meet the criteria;
- ensuring field supervisors conduct the required formal and informal observations and conduct pre- and post-conferences for each formal observation and
- obtaining a standard certification recommendation from the site supervisor and the field supervisor.

Retain the documents in the candidate's records per the records retention requirement.

CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Candidate records, including transcripts, degree plans, completed benchmark documents, and data reported in ECOS, provided evidence of EPP compliance with certification requirements. [19 TAC §230.11 & §230.13]
Following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. Candidates are consistently recommended for certificates in areas in which they are prepared by and completed the EPP. [19 TAC §230.11, & §230.13]
2. There is sufficient evidence that the EPP consistently ensures candidates complete all requirements prior to recommendation for the certificate sought. [19 TAC §230, §239, §241, & §242]
3. There is sufficient evidence that candidates consistently meet the English language proficiency requirement prior to being recommended for certification. [19 TAC §230.11(b)(5)]

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CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

INTEGRITY OF DATA SUBMISSION

Admission data, enrollment data, and observation data reported in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) by the EPP were compared with the data retained in candidates' records. The following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. Admission data have not been reported accurately according to information in candidate transcripts and admission letters. [19 TAC §229.3]
Evidence: GPA and/or content hours for two out of five Teacher candidates were inaccurately reported as compared to the data in the candidates' records. Formal admission dates for three out of five Principal candidates were inaccurately reported as compared to dates in the candidates' records and GPA data for three out of five Principal candidates were inaccurately reported as compared to data in the candidates' records.
2. Candidates are consistently identified as enrolled in the area in which certificates are issued but are not enrolled in the correct route for certification. [19 TAC §229.3]
Evidence: Two out of five Principal candidates, three out of five Superintendent candidates, and all five Reading Specialist candidates were incorrectly reported as PB candidates but were really ACP because the master's degree was conferred prior to EPP admission.
3. Clinical experience records reported in ECOS accurately represent the related data in candidates' records. [19 TAC §229.3]
4. Observation dates and durations have not been consistently reported in ECOS as detailed on observation documents. [19 TAC §229.3 & §229.4]
Evidence: In the School Counselor program, one candidate's first observation was not reported but was provided for review, and a second candidate had observation durations in candidate records that did not correspond to the observation duration reported.

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must revise the process of maintaining records and reporting data so that data reported in ECOS is an accurate representation of data retained in candidates' records to meet requirements in 19 TAC §229.3 and §229.4 by **5 PM CST on Friday, March 25, 2025**:

1. **19 TAC §229.3(a), §229.3(f)(1), & related graphic Figure 19 TAC §229.3(f)(1) Data Reported: Accurately**

Establish a process for reporting data in ECOS that ensures all required data is reported and reported accurately as correlates with EPP and candidate records. Provide training to individuals as needed that reflects expectations for accurately reporting data.

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ADVISEMENT

- Update processes, the EPPs Advisory Committee Training Presentation, all published handbooks, and the EPPs complaints process that is posted on the EPPs website and that TEA has on file for the EPP to meet the revised requirements in 19 TAC Chapter 228, effective as of September 1, 2024.
- Update coursework to include that candidates admitted on or after September 1, 2024, receive instruction in the open education resources instruction materials a) included on the list of approved instructional materials maintained by the SBEC under TEC §31.022, in each subject area and grade level covered by the candidate's certification category as required under TEC, §21.044(a-1)(4). The EPP has until August 31, 2026, to finish out candidates with admission dates prior to September 1, 2024, in the legacy Chapter 228 curriculum. New curriculum requirements must be in place for candidates admitted on September 1, 2024, and after. [Effective September 1, 2024: 19 TAC §228.57(c)(10)]
- Information about [House Bill \(HB\) 1605](#) and [OER](#) is found on the TEA website.
 - •Instructional materials related to OER can be found on the [TEA website](#).
 - •Plan to attend webinars as they become available for EPPs.
- The Physical Education EC-12 (158), Health EC-12 (157), and English Language Arts & Reading 7-12 (231) exams are no longer available effective September 1, 2024. Candidates pursuing certification in these certificate areas must now be approved for the new exams 258, 257, and 331, respectively. To be certified using exams 158, 157, or 231, candidates must apply and be recommended for certification by September 1, 2025. Additional information about the transitions of these certification exams is on the [Educator Testing](#) page on the tea.texas.gov website.
- The Special Education EC-12 and Special Education Supplemental certificates will expire and will be replaced by the Special Education Specialist EC-12 certificate. The certification exams, 161 and 163, respectively, will not be offered after August 31, 2025. Candidates will have until September 1, 2026, to be certified in the expiring certificate areas. The new Special Education Specialist EC-6 exam 186 will be available starting September 2, 2025. Be sure to attend one of the required webinars to qualify to add the new Special Education Specialist EC-12 certificate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a process to add and/or update records in ECOS as they occur throughout the year. Set short-term goals for ensuring records are updated at least by semester and prior to recommending standard certificates.
- More clearly identify the date of admission on all formal offers of admission to include the first date of the semester when classes start rather than identifying it as the "fall" or "spring" of the year admitted.
- Consider conducting an internal curriculum alignment audit for all programs and certificates offered to ensure that the EPP has an aligned standards-based curriculum for each certificate offered.
- Consider requesting route amendments for all non-Teacher programs to add the ACP route for the Principal, Superintendent, School Counselor, and Reading Specialist programs.
- Review all certificate areas that the EPP no longer plans to support and request, in writing, for TEA to remove them from inventory.
- Notify the assigned specialist at TEA promptly when the EPP has staff changes in the roles of Legal Authority, Backup Legal Authority, or Certification Officer or when the EPP has changes in EPP contact information.

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- To ensure continuity in record keeping and other related processes, maintain a procedure manual or process documents detailing EPP processes and procedures.
- Align the verbiage of the program to the verbiage of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) (ex. Field supervisor, cooperating teacher, mentor, candidate, clinical teaching, internship, practicum, 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 the current Texas Administrative Code.
- Continue to participate in training and webinars provided by TEA to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about current requirements and changes in the Texas Administrative Code, including changes to EPP processes and updates to certificates and related certification exams.
- Continue to maintain communication with the TEA education specialist assigned to the program.

CORRECTIVE ACTION COMPLETE

Evidence of Corrective Action received at TEA on March 28, 2025, has been reviewed by TEA staff and meets requirements for compliance with the Texas Education Code and/or Texas Administrative Code.