

2022–2023 Continuing Approval Review Report Region 7 ESC Region 7 Education Service Center

INTRODUCTION

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Education Specialist, Keena Sandlin, conducted a five-year Continuing Approval Review of the educator preparation program (EPP) for the Region 7 Education Service Center on February 13 - 16, 2023. 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...". Todd Schneider, Executive Director, was identified as the program Legal Authority and Brian Ralson, Director and the Primary Point of Contact was identified as the primary EPP contact for the review process. The Region 7 EPP was approved as an EPP on March 26, 1999. At the time of the review, the EPP was rated Accredited. The risk level was Stage 1 (low). The EPP reported 17 finishers for the 2020-2021 reporting year and 17 finishers for 2021-2022.

At the time of the review, Region 7 was approved to prepare and recommend Teacher candidates for certification in the alternative certification (ALT) route.

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 requirements for EPPs as applicable to the certification class and route offered by the EPP using a standardized rubric aligned to 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. A Status Report and related program documents were submitted to TEA on January 27, 2023. Additional EPP documents, including records for 10 candidates, were submitted on January 31, 2023. 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.

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

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GOVERNANCE (COMPONENTS 1 & 5)

Oversight of the EPP and ongoing evaluation of effectiveness of the programs within the EPP were reviewed. 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 the EPP. [19 TAC §228.20(b)]
2. The advisory committee has been informed of their roles and responsibilities. [19 TAC §228.20(b)]
3. The EPP has established evaluative tools and processes for continuous improvement of the EPP and has engaged the advisory committee in the evaluation and continuous improvement process. [19 TAC §228.40(e)]
4. The governing body of the EPP has provided sufficient support to enable the EPP to meet all standards set by the SBEC. [19 TAC §228.20(c)]
5. The EPP has notified TEA of program amendments. [19 TAC §228.20(e) & (f)]
6. The EPP has established a calendar of program activities that allows adequate time for admission, coursework, training, and field-based experience requirements prior to a clinical teaching or internship experience. [19 TAC §228.20(g)]
7. The EPP has not published an exit policy that is reviewed & signed by each candidate at admission. [19 TAC §228.20(h)]
Evidence: None of the 10 candidates had a signed acknowledgement of an exit policy in their records.
8. The EPP is approved to offer clinical teaching. [19 TAC §228.10(c)]
9. The EPP has qualified instructors for the certificate categories offered. [19 TAC §228.10(d)(1)]
10. The EPP has consistently retained candidate and EPP records per the records retention requirement in [19 TAC §228.40(f) & §228.10(b)(2)]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must correct the deficiencies identified by **January 5, 2024**.

1. **[19 TAC §228.20(h)]** Require all Teacher candidates to review and sign the exit policy upon admission.

REQUIRED NOTIFICATIONS (COMPONENTS 2 & 7)

Candidate records, the EPP website, and other EPP documents were reviewed for evidence the EPP has published the required notifications for applicants and candidates. Following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. The EPP has not published information about the required criminal history background checks for clinical teaching and for employment as an educator in Texas. [19 TAC §227.1(b)]
Evidence: This information was not located on the website, in an application for admission, or in any other admission documents that were transparently available to applicants.

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2. The EPP has published information 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 published the admission requirements of the EPP. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(1)]
4. The EPP has published the completion requirements of the EPP. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(2)]
5. The EPP has not published information about the EPP performance over time for the past five years. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(3)(B)]
Evidence: There was no evidence of this information published on the website.
6. The EPP has published information about the effect of supply and demand forces on the educator workforce in Texas. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(3)(A)]
7. The EPP has published a complaints process that provides a link to the TEA complaints process. [19 TAC §228.70(b)]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must publish the required information in a location transparent to applicants and/or candidates (as applicable) as required by **January 5, 2024**.

1. **[19 TAC §227.1(b)]** Update language on website or other place such as the admission application that is transparently available to applicants so they know they must pass a background check prior to employment as an educator and prior to internship, if that is applicable.
2. **[19 TAC §227.1(c)(3)(B)]** Update language on the website or other place such as the admission application that is transparently available to applicants about the performance over time of the Region 7 EPP for the past five years.

FORMAL & CONTINGENCY ADMISSION (COMPONENT 2)

Candidate records and records in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) were reviewed to verify the EPP has implemented a formal and/or contingency admission process as required in 19 TAC §227.17 and/or §227.15. Following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. The formal written offer of admission was consistently found in candidates records. [19 TAC §227.17(b) & (c)]
2. Applicants were consistently required to accept the offer of admission in writing. [19 TAC §227.17 (c)]
3. The formal date of admission was included in the written offer of admission. [19 TAC §227.17(d)]
4. The ECOS audit trail revealed candidate admission records were consistently created in the ECOS within the 7 calendar days required. [19 TAC §227.17(e) or §227.15(c)]
5. Candidates were not provided coursework, training, and/or test approval prior to formal or contingency admission. [19 TAC §227.17(f)]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

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ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS (COMPONENT 2)

Candidate records including applications, transcripts, screening rubrics, and other documentation were reviewed to verify the programs within the EPP qualify applicants for admission as required in 19 TAC Chapter 227. Following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. The EPP consistently requires applicants to meet requirements for GPA. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(3)]
2. The EPP consistently requires applicants to meet requirements for subject-specific semester credit hours. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(4)]
3. The EPP consistently requires applicants to complete an application for admission. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)]
4. The EPP does not use one or more appropriate screening devices to evaluate the applicant's appropriateness for the certificate sought. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)]
Evidence: For 10 out of 10 candidates, there was no evidence that a rubric with an identified cut score was used to evaluate candidate performance on an interview.
5. The EPP consistently collects all additional requirements for admission and verifies candidates meet all additional requirements for admission. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(9) and/or §227.10(b)]
6. The EPP has consistently verified English language proficiency. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(7)]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must implement processes to appropriately qualify applicants for admission into each program offered as required in 19 TAC Chapter 227 by **January 5, 2024**.

1. **[19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)]** Utilize a rubric with levels of proficiency and a cut score for the screen.

STANDARDS-BASED COURSEWORK (COMPONENTS 3 & 4)

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 in each certificate class offered. Following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. Candidates were consistently required to complete the minimum number of hours of coursework and training prior to completing the EPP. [19 TAC §228.35(b)]
2. Required standards were identified in coursework. [19 TAC §228.30]
3. Evidence of performance assessments was limited and was not aligned to standards. [19 TAC §228.40(a)]
Evidence: Assessment submitted for coursework EC-6 was not aligned to standards.

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

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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 §228.30, §228.35, and §228.40 by **January 5, 2024**.

1. **[19 TAC §228.40(a)]** Update coursework and training to include more performance-based assessments with rubrics that are aligned to standards for the certificate sought.

REQUIRED CURRICULUM TOPICS (COMPONENT 3)

Syllabi published degree plans, candidate records, 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 Texas Administrative Code and/or Texas Education Code. Following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. Training in Ethics was found in coursework. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(1)]
2. Training in educating students with Dyslexia was found in coursework and was provided by the approved provider. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(2)]
3. Training in Mental Health, Substance Abuse, & Youth Suicide was provided to candidates and was provided by an approved provider. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(3)]
4. Instruction in the skills educators are required to possess, the responsibilities educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students in Texas was apparent in coursework. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(4)]
5. The importance of building strong classroom management skills was identified in coursework. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(5)]
6. Information about the framework for teacher and principal evaluation in Texas was provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(6)]
7. Training in appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications with students was provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(7)]
8. Instruction in digital learning, virtual instruction, and virtual learning was not provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(8)]
Evidence: There was no evidence of virtual instruction, digital learning, or virtual learning in syllabi, on the Status Report, or in candidates' records.
9. The Digital Literacy evaluation and the related prescribed curriculum was not provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(8)]
Evidence: There was no evidence of an assessment used to uncover deficiencies or a related prescribed curriculum.
10. Instruction regarding students with disabilities, the use of proactive instructional planning techniques, and evidence-based inclusive instructional practices was provided to candidates. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(9)]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must revise coursework to include instruction in the missing curriculum areas to meet requirements in 19 TAC §228.30 by **January 5, 2024**.

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1. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(8)] Update coursework for all candidates to include the required instruction in digital learning, virtual instruction, and virtual learning; and develop and implement the Digital Literacy assessment with the prescribed curriculum to address deficiencies uncovered by the assessment.

PRE-SERVICE REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES (COMPONENT 4)

Syllabi, degree plans, benchmark documents and other candidate records, and published information was reviewed for evidence the EPP requires Teacher candidates to complete pre-service requirements (coursework and field-based experiences) as identified in 19 TAC §228.35(b) and §228.35(e)(1). Following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. There is sufficient evidence that candidates consistently complete the 30 field-based experience (FBE) hours as required. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(1) & §228.35(e)(1).]
2. FBE assignments and activities consistently meet requirements for completing FBE. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)]
3. Candidates consistently complete pre-service coursework and training as required prior to beginning the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(2)]
4. The structure of pre-service coursework and training allowed the EPP to capture candidate proficiency in the identified pedagogical areas. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(2)]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

SUPERVISED CLINICAL EXPERIENCE (COMPONENT 4)

Syllabi, degree plans, and documentation in candidate records such as placement documents, logs, observation records, mentor agreements, and training materials were reviewed as evidence the EPP consistently ensures that candidates complete the supervised clinical experience as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e) - (g).

FINDINGS

1. There is sufficient evidence that candidates consistently complete the required duration for the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)]
2. Candidates were consistently placed in an approved supervised clinical experience assignment. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)]
3. There is sufficient evidence that candidates do not consistently engage with the educator standards for the certificate sought during the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(ix)]
Evidence: None of the 10 candidate observations indicated engagement with educator standards.
4. Candidates were consistently assigned appropriate campus personnel to support them during the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(f)]

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5. Qualifications of campus personnel supporting candidates in the supervised clinical experience were not consistently verified by the EPP. [19 TAC §228.2(14), (26)]
Evidence: 9 out of 10 candidate records contained no evidence of verification of qualifications.
6. Training was not consistently provided as required to campus personnel supporting candidates in the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.2(14), (26)]
Evidence: 9 out of 10 candidate records contained no evidence of scientifically based training for campus supervisors.
7. Candidates were consistently assigned a field supervisor to provide support and feedback to the candidate and EPP during the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
8. There was insufficient evidence that field supervisors supporting candidates in the clinical experience met qualification requirements. [19 TAC §228.2(18)]
Evidence: For the field supervisors assigned to 9 out of 10 candidates, there was insufficient evidence of the field supervisor’s experience as an educator.
9. Training was consistently provided as required to field supervisors supporting candidates in the clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
10. There was sufficient evidence that field supervisors conducted the first observation within the required time frame. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
11. Candidates received the required number and duration of formal observations during the clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
12. There was sufficient evidence that field supervisors consistently conduct observations through a POP cycle which includes a pre-conference and a post-conference for each formal observation. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
13. Field supervisors did not consistently capture educational practices observed and evidence of candidate demonstration of proficiency in the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g), §228.35(e)(2)(A)(iii), §228.35(e)(2)(B)(ix)]
Evidence: Observation instruments used by field supervisors lacked levels and progression of candidate proficiency.
14. There is insufficient evidence that the field supervisor consistently provides ongoing coaching and support to candidates completing the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
Evidence: 9 out of 10 candidate’s records lacked evidence of continued support outside of formal observations.
15. Field supervisor and campus supervisor did not consistently provide documented recommendation for a successful clinical experience. [§228.35(e)(2)(B)(ix)]
Evidence: All candidate records did not contain successful completion of internship from the field supervisor.

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 as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e) by **January 5, 2024**.

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1. **[19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(ix)]** Update the requirements for internships to include capturing evidence and levels of proficiency and progression from the campus supervisor and the field supervisor that the candidate had engaged in the standards. Also, update the requirements for internships to include capturing evidence from the campus supervisor and the field supervisor that the candidate had demonstrated proficiency in the standards and was successful in the internship and is ready to be recommended for a standard certificate.
2. **[19 TAC §228.2(14), (26)]** Update the process for assigning cooperating teachers and mentors to include verification they meet the qualification requirements or assign an individual who most closely meets the criteria and document the reason for selecting an individual that does not meet the criteria if an individual who meets the certification category and/or experience criteria for a mentor is not available.
3. **[19 TAC §228.2(14), (26)]** Require cooperating teachers/mentors to be trained within 3 weeks of being assigned to a clinical teacher or intern candidate.
4. **[19 TAC §228.2(18)]** Require field supervisors (FS) to be qualified. The FS must: Be currently certified, preferably have advanced credentials, and have at least three years of experience and current certification in the class in which supervision is provided. Be an accomplished educator as shown by student learning.
5. **[19 TAC §228.35(g)]** Provide ongoing support to Teacher candidates for the full term of the initial and any additional internship, unless, prior to the expiration of that term (I) a standard certificate is issued to the candidate during any additional internship under a probationary certificate; (II) the candidate resigns, is non-renewed, or is terminated by the school or district; (III) the candidate is discharged or is released from the EPP; (IV) the candidate withdraws from the EPP; or (V) the internship assignment does not meet the requirements.

EPP COLLABORATION WITH CAMPUS AND CANDIDATE (COMPONENT 4)

Documentation in candidate records such as logs, observation records, mentor agreements, and training materials were reviewed as evidence the EPP consistently collaborates with the campus and candidate during the candidate's supervised clinical experience as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g). Following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. There is insufficient evidence that the field supervisor consistently collaborates with the campus personnel assigned to support the candidate during the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
Evidence: 9 out of 10 candidates' records contained no evidence of communication or collaboration between the field supervisor and campus supervisors.
2. There is insufficient evidence that the field supervisor makes initial contact with the candidate as required during the supervised clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
Evidence: 9 out of 10 candidates' records contained no evidence of initial contact between field supervisor and candidates.
3. There is sufficient evidence that the field supervisor provides feedback from the observation to the campus personnel assigned to support the candidate during the clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]

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CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

The EPP must revise the structure and requirements in the supervised clinical experiences to ensure the EPP staff collaborate with the campus personnel and candidate as needed to support candidate success in the supervised clinical experience as required in 19 TAC §228.35(g) by **January 5, 2024**.

1. **[19 TAC §228.35(g)]** Require the field supervisor to collaborate with the candidate, cooperating teacher/mentor and campus administrator throughout clinical teaching or internship. Require the field supervisor to collaborate with the candidate and campus supervisor throughout the intern experience. Utilize the benchmark document as a record of collaboration and the dates it occurred.
2. **[19 TAC §228.35(g)]** Require all Teacher candidates to have an initial contact by the FS within the first 3 weeks of assignment to the candidate. Initial contact may be by phone, email, or other electronic communication. Train field supervisors about the requirements during local training.

CERTIFICATION (COMPONENT 8)

Candidate records such as transcripts, degree plans, and 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 who were recommended for certification consistently met the degree required for the certificate sought. [19 TAC §230.11, §230.36(b)(1), & §230.37(b)(1)]
2. There was sufficient evidence that the EPP consistently ensures candidates complete all requirements prior to recommendation for the certificate sought. [19 TAC §230.11, §230.36, & §230.37]
3. Candidates consistently met the English language proficiency requirement prior to being recommended for certificates. [19 TAC §230.11(b)(5)]
4. Candidates were consistently recommended for certificates in areas in which they were prepared by the EPP. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B), §230.36, §230.37, §230.11, & §230.13]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

INTEGRITY OF DATA SUBMISSION (COMPONENT 9)

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

FINDINGS

1. Candidates were consistently identified as enrolled in the area in which one or more certificates were issued. [19 TAC §229.3]

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2. Admission data were reported accurately according to information in candidate transcripts and admission letters. [19 TAC §229.3]
3. Observation dates and durations were reported as detailed on observation documents. [19 TAC §229.3 & §229.4]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

None

PROACTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING TECHNIQUES & INCLUSIVE PRACTICES FOR ALL STUDENTS PROVIDED TO CANDIDATES IN ALL CONTENT AREAS (COMPONENTS 3, 4, & 10)

Syllabi, coursework samples, information in the Status Report, and observation instruments were reviewed for evidence the EPP has implemented the required instruction. Following are the findings:

FINDINGS

1. The EPP incorporates proactive instructional planning techniques throughout coursework and across content areas using a framework that:
 - provides flexibility in the ways information is presented, students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and students are engaged.
 - reduces barriers in instruction.
 - provides appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges; and
 - maintains high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students of limited English proficiency. [19 TAC §228.10(a)(1)(J) and §228.30(c)(9)]
2. The EPP has integrated instruction in inclusive practices for all students, including students with disabilities, and evidence-based instruction and intervention strategies throughout coursework. [19 TAC §228.10(a)(1)(J) and §228.30(c)(9)]
3. The EPP has integrated instruction in inclusive practices for all students, including students with disabilities, and evidence-based instruction and intervention strategies throughout the clinical experience. [19 TAC §228.10(a)(1)(J)]
4. As required under TEC 21.044 (a-1), there is sufficient evidence that field supervisors consistently capture candidate demonstration of competency in the use of proactive instructional planning techniques that:
 - provide flexibility in the ways information is presented, students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and students are engaged.
 - reduce barriers in instruction.
 - provide appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges; and
 - maintain high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students of limited English proficiency. [19 TAC §228.30(c)(9); §228.35(e)(2)(B)(9)]

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5. In the supervised clinical experience, there is sufficient evidence that field supervisors consistently capture candidate demonstration of competency in the use of evidence-based inclusive instructional practices as required under TEC 21.044 (a-1). [19 TAC §228.30(c)(9); §228.35(e)(2)(B)(9)]

CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

1. **[\$228.35(e)(2)(B)(9)]** Require 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 cooperating teacher.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a process to add clinical experience records and observation records into ECOS as they occur throughout the year.
- Develop and implement more performance assessments in all 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, Primary Point of Contact, Backup Legal Authority, or Certification Officer or when the EPP has changes in EPP contact information.
- 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, 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 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.