

Item 18: Discussion of Internship Requirements

DISCUSSION

SUMMARY: This item provides the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) with an opportunity to discuss the SBEC's current rules regarding internship requirements to help determine if the SBEC should adopt a rule(s) that would allow candidates to complete an internship in a virtual setting to satisfy certification requirements.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: The statutory authority for Internship Requirements is Texas Education Code (TEC) §§21.031, 21.044(a)(2), 21.051(g), as amended by Senate Bill (SB) 15, 87th Texas Legislature, Second Special Session, 2021.

The full text of statutory citations can be found in the statutory authority section of this agenda.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION: The SBEC rules in 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 228, Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs, establish all of the educator preparation program requirements for individuals seeking an SBEC Texas educator certificate. Included in those rules are the training requirements that candidates serving on an Intern certificate must accomplish. Included in those requirements are the expectations that the internship assignment take place in an actual school setting to ensure educator candidates have training in a Texas classroom with students prior to obtaining a standard certificate. Specifically, SBEC rules in §228.35(e)(6) specify, "An internship or clinical teaching experience must take place in an actual school setting rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting."

Chapter 228 also includes specific instances where the activities must be included in an actual school setting:

- To determine interns have demonstrated proficiency in the standards, field supervisors must conduct formal observations of candidates during their internship. 19 TAC §228.35(g)(1) requires the formal observations be conducted on the candidate's site in a face-to-face setting.
- 19 TAC 228.35(f) requires the educator preparation program (EPP) to collaborate with the campus to assign a mentor teacher who will support the candidate during the internship. The rule further identifies that the EPP must ensure the mentor has received training, and 19 TAC §228.2(26) requires the training must include coaching and mentoring candidates. Currently, there is no requirement for the training to include coaching and mentoring candidates in a virtual setting.

In addition to SBEC rules specifically naming that the internship must take place in an actual school setting, there are other SBEC-related activities and processes that do not align with the internship taking place outside of an actual school setting:

- There are no specifications in certification exam standards and frameworks for assessment of outside of an actual school setting [19 TAC 230, Subchapter C].
- Two of Accountability System for Educator Preparation indicators, the Principal Survey About the Preparation of First-Year Teachers and New Teacher Satisfaction Survey, annually used to determine EPPs’ accreditation status do not include survey items related an assignment outside of an actual school setting.

Senate Bill 15 §21.051(g)

On June 18, 2021, Senate Bill (SB)15, 87th Texas Legislature, Second Special Session, 2021, went into effect and expires on September 1, 2023. The bill amended §21.051 to add new subsection (g) that would allow, but not require, the SBEC to propose rules under TEC Section §21.044(a) or §21.051(g) (see statute below) to allow a candidate to satisfy certification requirements through an internship that provides the candidate employment as a teacher for courses offered through a local remote learning program under Section §29.9091 or the state virtual school network under Chapter 30A.

TEC §21.051(g), “Rules proposed by the board under Section 21.044(a) or this section may allow a candidate to satisfy certification requirements through an internship that provides the candidate employment as a teacher for courses offered through a local remote learning program under Section 29.9091 or the state virtual school network under Chapter 30A. This subsection expires September 1, 2023.”

Potential SBEC Options

Although SB 15 §21.051(g) expires on September 1, 2023, the SBEC has three options:

- (1) Maintain current SBEC rules regarding the internship assignment to be completed in an actual school setting; or
- (2) Amend SBEC rules to allow internships to be conducted in a virtual setting; or
- (3) Direct staff to explore a certificate for virtual teaching that would allow for virtual internship.

The chart below provides a description and implications for each option.

Option	Description	Implications
Option 1: SBEC maintains current rules regarding internship setting	Continue to require that candidates complete their internship in an “actual school setting rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting.	No impact.
Option 2: SBEC amend rules to allow internships to be	Adopt rules that would allow a candidate on an intern certificate to complete preparation	Rulemaking to Implement: Strike current §228.35(e)(6): An internship or clinical teaching experience must take place in an actual school setting rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting.

<p>conducted in a virtual setting, leading to a Standard certificate</p>	<p>requirements in a virtual setting. The proposed rule would need to provide evidence that the intern candidate has been prepared to teach in a virtual setting but not in an actual school setting.</p>	<p>Amend §228.35(g) to clarify formal observation requirements to comport with TEC §21.051(f) that requires three observations to occur in person.</p> <p>Amend §228.2 to include a definition of a virtual assignment.</p> <p>Amend §228.2(26) to include the requirement that mentor teachers provide support that helps candidates make connections between the virtual setting and the actual school setting so that candidates who complete an internship in a virtual setting are also prepared for in-person instruction.</p> <p>Additional Considerations:</p> <p>Amend §228.35(b)(2) to include subject matter related to virtual instruction in preservice coursework requirements.</p> <p>Update certification exams to test candidates' competencies to teach in a virtual setting.</p> <p>Update evaluation instruments, Principal Survey About the Preparation of First-Year Teachers and New Teacher Satisfaction Survey, to include evaluation of new teachers' competencies to teach in a virtual setting</p>
<p>Option 3: Direct staff to explore a new standard certificate exclusively for virtual teaching that would allow for virtual internship</p>	<p>The Board to discuss the possibility of creating an SBEC certificate that names an educator has been prepared exclusively in a virtual setting to provide full transparency to a hiring school district.</p>	<p>TBD- based on the Board's discussion and direction</p>

Staff Members Responsible:

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