

# Handbook for Educator Preparation Program

**Curriculum and Instruction Department  
Admissions, Programs, & Certification**



**College of Education and Human Development  
Warrior Hall Suites 318 & 322  
Academic Year 2023 – 2024**

## **OVERVIEW**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a comprehensive reference guide to students seeking Texas teacher certification. The handbook outlines policies, procedures, and guidelines used by the Education Preparation Program (EPP) in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction at Texas A&M University-Central Texas (A&M-Central Texas).

## **MISSION STATEMENTS**

### EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM MISSION

The mission of the Teacher Educator Preparation Program is to enhance the development of educators through contemporary teaching, research, and service practices. This education prepares undergraduates and graduates to become high-quality, reflective, culturally and linguistically aware 21st century educators who will be effective in a local as well as global capacity. Our projects and programs strive to address the needs of an increasingly diverse and technology driven world.

### EDUCATOR PREPARATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT MISSION

Educator Preparation Services ensures compliance with local, state, and federal Educator Preparation Program requirements by coordinating the certification process, managing related data, and interpreting regulations and standards in support of the college and university mission.

## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION

The Departments of Curriculum & Instruction and Educator Preparation Services (EPS) are housed in the College of Education and Human Development.

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## DEFINITIONS

**Applicant**-An individual seeking admission to an educator preparation program for any class of certificate.

**Candidate**-An individual who has been formally admitted into an Educator Preparation Program

**Clinical Teacher**-A candidate who is assigned to a certified teacher in an accredited public school.

**Clinical Teaching / Practicum / Yearlong Residency**-The culminating experience in a teacher certification preparation program. In the practicum, the clinical teacher gradually assumes the teacher role. The assignment must be at a public school accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) that is in the particular class for which a certificate is being sought.

**Code of Ethics**-Standards of practice and ethical conduct toward students, colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community to which Texas educators adhere.

**Cooperating Teacher (Cooperating Teacher Mentor)** -For a clinical teacher candidate, an educator who is collaboratively assigned by the educator preparation program (EPP) and campus administrator; who has at least three years of teaching experience; who is an accomplished educator as shown by student learning; who has completed cooperating teacher training by the EPP within three weeks of being assigned to a clinical teacher; who is currently certified in the certification category for clinical teaching assignment for which the clinical teacher candidate is seeking certification; who guides, assists, and supports the candidate during the candidate's clinical teaching 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.

**Educator Preparation Council (EPC)**-The A&M-Central Texas Educator Preparation Council (EPC) is a review body with oversight of any matter related to the preparation of PK-12 education professionals including undergraduate and graduate programs.

**Field-Based Experiences**-Introductory experiences for a classroom teacher certification candidate involving, at the minimum, reflective observation of Early Childhood-Grade 12 students, teachers, and faculty/staff members engaging in educational activities in a school setting.

**Field Supervisor**-A currently certified educator, hired by the Educator Preparation Program, who preferably has advanced credentials, to observe candidates, monitor their performance, and provide constructive feedback to improve their effectiveness as educators. A field supervisor 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. A field supervisor with experience as a principal and who holds a current certificate that is appropriate for a principal assignment may supervise principal, classroom teacher, master teacher, and reading specialist candidates.

**Intern**-A candidate hired on an internship or probationary certificate serving as the teacher of record in the Alternative Certification Program (ACP) or Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT).

**Internship**-A supervised, full-time educator assignment for one full school year at a public school accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) that may lead to completion of a standard certificate.

An internship is successful when the field supervisor and supervising campus administrator recommend to the EPP that the candidate should be recommended for a standard certificate.

**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 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.

## **EFFECTIVE TEACHING PRACTICES & LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The initial teacher certification programs offered by A&M-Central Texas provide teacher candidates with a strong foundation to meet the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of K-12 students. Through coursework and field experiences, A&M-Central Texas teacher candidates will develop effective pedagogical, technology, and classroom management skills to address the needs of a diverse student population in schools. Teacher candidates will recognize the importance of collaboration and communication in planning, delivering, and evaluating effective educational programs. Teacher candidates will take an active role in school improvement efforts, participate in site-based decision-making, and work to increase K-12 students' achievement in relation to the goals of education.

Through coursework, teacher candidates will remain current in research-based instructional strategies and professional expectations in the field; clinical teachers will actively engage in opportunities for professional growth. Reflection and self-assessment are central to effective teaching. The combination of college coursework and supervised teaching allows a clinical teacher, intern, or teacher candidate to engage in goal setting, high-leverage teaching practices, and reflective assessment. These are vital to achieving the goal of becoming a learner-centered teacher.

### **GOALS OF THE EPP**

Teacher education at A&M-Central Texas emphasizes broad general education as a foundation for mastery of teaching skills and specialized knowledge in an academic discipline. The primary purpose of the teacher educator preparation program is to prepare highly qualified teachers for employment in Texas and the nation. The goal of the EPP is to develop teachers who:

- Demonstrate appropriate knowledge and skills in specific content areas or teaching fields.
- Communicate effectively with students, parents and families, colleagues, and other professionals.
- Apply the principles of effective, relevant, and learner-centered instructional planning in the development of curriculum for diverse learners.
- Use effective, research-based, teaching practices which actively engage students in the learning process.
- Formally and informally assess student performance and use results of such assessment in the instructional decision-making process.
- Use effective strategies to create and maintain a safe, positive, productive and culturally safe classroom environment.
- Promote and facilitate critical, reflective thinking and participatory citizenship in students.
- Use resources and technologies suitable for instructional and assessment goals which engage students cognitively.
- Are proficient in mathematical skills.
- Operate within the legal guidelines and uphold the ethics of the teaching profession.
- Demonstrate awareness of students' social emotional (SEL), cultural, and academic backgrounds and apply appropriate instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse EC-12 student populations; and
- Are committed to continued growth and development as a professional educator.

## PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

University coursework in the program serves two purposes: 1) to prepare candidates for the practicum or internship; and 2) to extend and enrich the professional development progress of teacher candidates.

Teacher candidates are required to maintain continuous satisfactory progress toward certification.

Satisfactory progress includes:

- performance in university coursework,
- C or better in **ALL EDUCATION** program courses, or the course must be re-taken,
- maintenance of an overall GPA (2.50 undergraduate/3.0 graduate),
- completing all required candidate documentation requirements,
- maintaining standards of performance and conduct related to the Code of Ethics.

Graduate students must meet specific requirements. Please refer to the Graduate Student Performance and Progression information: Graduate Student Performance.

Failure to maintain program standards can result in the candidate's dismissal from the program or require the candidate to repeat coursework or training.

Candidates must complete the content test(s) before advancing in the program. BS Education Yearlong Residency students will successfully complete the content test during Block 2 before advancing to Block 3 and Science of Teaching Reading (as applicable) in Block 3 before advancing to Block 4. Traditional Clinical Teaching candidates will complete content testing before starting Clinical Teaching. Graduate students must complete all content test(s) before advancing to internship.

### TEXAS A&M-CENTRAL TEXAS DEGREES WITH TEACHER CERTIFICATION

Students interested in seeking a degree offered by the College of Education and Human Development are encouraged to visit the catalog for specific information regarding admission to the university and the available degree plans. Information can be found by visiting: [Texas A&M University-Central Texas](#)

After admission to the university and initial appointment with university advising, students must schedule an appointment with **their assigned faculty advisor**. The faculty advisor will work with advisee to prepare a degree plan. Students are encouraged to visit their faculty advisors periodically to audit their progress and ensure they are following their designated plan.

## EPP APPLICATION PROCESS

After an applicant applies and is accepted to the university, the application to the EPP can begin. The application uses the applicant's university email address and a digital application (ex. Dynamic Forms). Links to the application can be found on the Benchmark Checklist located on the department website.

Applications are due no later than **September 1, November 1, February 1, May 20, or July 20.**

### TRANSFERS

If a candidate has been previously admitted to any other EPP Certification Program, the candidate must provide a completed, signed TEA Candidate Transfer Form from the previous EPP. Transfer forms that do not indicate that the candidate is in "good standing" will not be considered for acceptance into the A&M-Central Texas EPP.

### TRANSCRIPT ARTICULATION

Undergraduate students must submit all official transcripts to the university admissions department and Graduate students submit official transcripts to Graduate School for transcript articulation. Graduate students only must also send unofficial transcripts to [educatorprep@tamuct.edu](mailto:educatorprep@tamuct.edu) to determine content screening test.

Policies that govern the acceptance of transfer credit toward teacher certification include the following:

- Students must submit all official transcripts for the undergraduate and graduate university admission office for articulation and analysis.
- Students transferring from in and out of state institutions must meet the university's program requirements to be considered for certification through A&M-Central Texas.
- Professional Development course work will not be accepted for transfer credit or as a substitute for A&M-Central Texas teacher program requirements.
- For undergraduate students, a minimum of one third of the semester hours required in each teaching field or area of specialization sought must be completed at A&M-Central Texas.

### INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

Applicants must submit accredited translations and evaluations of all the previous academic course work, which includes a complete description of courses and overall grade point average (GPA). The transcript must bear the date of bachelor's degree conferral indicating that the applicant was in good standing at the last institution attended. International candidates are responsible for securing sponsorship.

Texas Education Agency (TEA) only accepts course by course evaluations from a recognized foreign evaluation service. See the [TEA website for approved vendors](#). More information can be found [here](#).

Before a teacher certificate can be issued, a candidate must complete the fingerprinting process. To complete this process, the candidate must first obtain a social security number. For more information on how to obtain a social security number, visit the Social Security Administration website.

All applicants for Teacher Certification must demonstrate English Language Proficiency before admission by verification of:



- Completion of an undergraduate or graduate degree at an accredited Institution of Higher Education (IHE) in the United States, or
- Verification of satisfactory score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language-Internet Based Test (TOEFL, IBT). Applicants must take all four portions and score at or above: Listening - 22, Speaking - 24, Reading - 22, and Writing - 21); or
- Earned an undergraduate or graduate degree from an IHE in a country outside of the United States approved by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) listed in the graphic in the TEA link listed above.

## **ADMISSION STANDARDS**

For more information, see the program catalog on the university website.

### **Bachelor of Science in Education (BS Ed):**

- Successful University Admission
- Completed EPP application
- Minimum 2.50 grade point average (GPA) overall or in the last 60 hours
- Completion of 54 Semester Credit Hour (SCH) towards degree
- Completion of 15 SCH in Field of Study with a grade of C or better
- Content Proficiency Assessment (Certify Teacher with a score of “pass”; for EC-6, 70% on every subject)
- Interview with the EPP (may be virtual or recorded video)
- TSI complete
- Enrolled in or have completed all Block I courses required for degree plan to include EDUC 3370, SPED 3361, EDUC 3321, READ 3310\* (\*except Math certifications)

### **Secondary / Education Minor:**

- Successful University Admission
- Completed EPP application
- Minimum 2.50 GPA overall or in the last 60 hours
- Completion of 54 SCH towards degree
- Completion of 15 SCH in Field of Study with a grade of C or better
- Content Proficiency Assessment (Certify Teacher with a score of “pass)
- Interview with the EPP (may be virtual or recorded video)
- TSI complete

### **Graduate - Master of Arts in Teaching and Alternative Certification Program (MAT and ACP):**

- Successful University Graduate School Admission
- Bachelor’s Degree with a minimum 2.50 GPA overall or in the last 60 hours to include semester where 60th hour occurred
- Completed EPP application
- Interview with EPP (may be virtual or recorded video)
- Content Proficiency Assessment (see Benchmark form)
  - Dependent on bachelor's degree Courses (faculty advising required)

- Certify Teacher with a score of “pass”; for EC-6, 70% on every subject  
OR
- Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT)

## **INTERVIEW**

The interview session serves as an assessment of the applicant’s knowledge, experience, skills, and aptitude. The applicant will submit a recorded video responding to a series of questions. Two or three educational professionals will review and score each applicant. Each applicant will have the same set of questions for the interview, depending on the program, and all interviewers will be trained on a rubric for scoring applicants’ responses. If a second interview is needed in the case of a re-application, the applicant will have two new interviewers and a second set of questions. All applicants needing a second interview will receive the same set of questions, and these will be different than the first interview questions.

## **LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Professional employees in the Texas Public School systems have broad protection from personal liability while acting within the scope of their duties. [Texas Education Code 22.0511 \(a\)](#) states, "A professional employee of a school district is not personally liable for any act that is incident to or within the scope of the duties of the employee’s position of employment and that involves the exercise of judgment or discretion on the part of the employee, except in circumstances in which a professional employee uses excessive force in the discipline of students or negligence resulting in bodily injury to students."

This paragraph is interpreted to mean that professionals (teachers) have this protection unless bodily injury occurs while the professional uses excessive force in the discipline of students. Texas Education Code 22.0511 (b) states, "This section does not apply to the operation, use, or maintenance of any motor vehicle."

The law protects professional employees from personal (civil) liability, but it does not protect them from criminal prosecution. Criminal prosecution occurs whenever a law (statute) is violated. Does this mean that professional employees (including clinical teachers) cannot be sued? Certainly not. Lawsuits are common in our litigious society, and the possibility is great that a professional employee will be the subject of a suit at some point in their professional life. However, it is comforting to note that the law currently provides professional educators with a great deal of protection.

Please note that state law does not provide protection for nonprofessional employees. Therefore, custodians, cafeteria workers, parent volunteers, and student observers or teacher candidates have no legal protection for personal liability. Candidates are required to join a professional organization, which in most cases, provides adequate liability insurance. It is important that the candidate consults with the organization's office to determine eligibility requirements. A listing of professional organizations is provided below.

### **PROFESSIONAL TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS (not limited to the following examples):**

Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)	Texas American Federation of Teachers(AFT)
Texas Classroom Teachers Association (TCTA)	Texas State Teacher Association (TSTA)

Veterans Administration The program is approved to train veterans. To inquire, contact the VA Office at VA@tamuct.edu or (254- 968-9126).

## **CRIMINAL HISTORY INFORMATION**

TEA conducts a national criminal history check on all applicants for certification. Texas Education Code (TEC) §22.0831 states, "The board shall review the national criminal history record information of a person who has not previously submitted fingerprints to the department or been subject to a national criminal history record information review." The State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) may require disclosure of previous arrest, conviction, and/or deferred adjudication. SBEC may refuse to issue an educator certificate to a person who has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor for a moral turpitude crime which relates to the teaching function. Pursuant to TEC §22.083 the SBEC may refuse to confer state certification based on such criminal history information. Pursuant to TEC §22.083 a school district or private school may access any criminal history information pertaining to teachers and teacher candidates held by any law enforcement or criminal justice agency. A school district or private school may refuse to provide a placement for field experience or employ a candidate based on the candidate's criminal history. A school district or private school must report to the SBEC if the school district or private school obtains or has knowledge that a candidate, applicant, or holder of an educator certificate has a criminal history.

Candidates with a conviction or deferred adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense are required to obtain a Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation, which is a non-mandatory, nonbinding evaluation of an individual's self-reported criminal history. In addition, the agency obtains the candidate's name-based Texas criminal history information. The service is provided to the requester for a nonrefundable fee. The requester will receive an evaluation letter by email from agency staff advising of potential ineligibility for educator certification. If you believe that you may need to complete a Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation (PCHE) to be eligible for a Texas educator certificate based on your self-reported criminal history, please review the information found on the link below.

Additional information can be found at <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/investigations/preliminary-criminal-history-evaluation-faqs>

While A&M-Central Texas does not perform criminal history background checks, Texas public schools are permitted by state law to conduct criminal history background checks on a person intended for hire or a person who has requested a volunteer position. As a participant in field experiences, clinical teaching, internship, or practicum in a Texas public school, you will be subject to a criminal history background check and must be able to provide the required documentation.

## **ADMITTANCE INTO THE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM**

### **ACCEPTANCE**

Applicants will be notified with an offer of admission to the A&M-Central Texas Educator Preparation Program by a letter through the applicant's student email address. Educator Preparation Services department must receive a signed acceptance letter via dynamic forms **by the due date on the letter**. If the formal Acceptance of Admittance document is not received by the required deadline, applicants will not be admitted and will be ineligible to participate in coursework leading to certification at Texas A&M University Central Texas.

Upon accepting the program, applicants will be charged a \$35.00 fee that will be paid to A&M-Central Texas, which will then be sent to TEA per TAC (Texas Administrative Code) 229.9. Texas Administrative Code 229.9 (7)(A) requires candidates who accept admission into an Educator Preparation Program to pay a \$35.00 fee that will be sent to Texas Education Agency (TEA). If the required \$35.00 fee is not paid, a hold will be placed on the student's account that will prevent registration into future classes.

### **DENIAL OF ADMISSION TO THE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM**

Educator Preparation Services will provide written notification to applicants found to be ineligible for admission. Applicants who are denied admission must meet with their program coordinator or faculty advisor to develop a remediation strategy if they plan to reapply. Those who wish to appeal their denial must petition in writing within 10 business days of the date of notification of denial. Denied applicants may reapply to the program only one (1) time. A new application must be completed in its entirety (to include all application documentation and interview) and submitted during one of the scheduled application windows. If a second interview is needed, faculty who conducted the first interview will not be part of a second interview process.

### **APPEALS TO THE TEACHER EDUCATION PREPARATION PROGRAM**

The College of Education and Human Development Dean is responsible for making decisions regarding appeals in accordance with program rules, the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), and the Texas Education Code (TEC) statutes. As appropriate, the input related to decisions will be sought from the certification officer, faculty, and administrators. Applicants who wish to appeal a decision made by the Educator Preparation Council must make their appeal in writing to the College of Education and Human Development Dean within 10 business days of the date of notification of denial. The Dean will provide the Certification Officer with the documentation to process the decisions made as required.

### **RETENTION IN THE EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM**

Candidates must maintain all Program Expectations throughout the duration of the program. The candidate will receive written notification of being placed on a Probationary Status from the Program Coordinator if the program standards are not maintained. The candidate will be placed on probation for a period of one semester (additional time may be allowed where mitigating circumstances prevent completion of requirements in a particular semester, i.e., class offerings). If the deficiency is not corrected by the end of the probationary period, the candidate will be withdrawn from the program. Candidates who are withdrawn from an A&M-Central Texas certification program are not eligible for enrollment in undergraduate or graduate certification courses.

A&M-Central Texas reserves the right to monitor a student's professional ethics as specified in the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Education. Appropriate disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the Teacher Education Program, may be instituted for violations of ethical conduct.

#### **PROCESS FOR NON-PARTICIPATION PAUSE**

Candidates who need to take a temporary leave or wish to formally withdraw from the EPP must complete the Program Non-Participation Form requested from the EPS office. Failure to complete the required form for accurate account in the candidate's certification record may prohibit the student from reapplying and/or returning to the program and obtaining a Texas Educator Certificate. Students returning from non-participation may be required to take supplemental courses if requirements have changed or have been added, or they may need to retake outdated coursework (more than five years).

### **STANDARDS**

Teacher candidates will demonstrate their proficiency and development by following Texas Teacher Standards, Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Standards, and Technology Standards. The teacher candidate will be evaluated based on these standards through multiple measures.

#### **STANDARD PRACTICES FOR TEXAS EDUCATORS**

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public Schools of the community.

#### **19 TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE - CHAPTER 247**

The provisions of this Chapter 247 are authorized under Texas Education Code, 21.041(b) (8), which requires the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) to propose rules providing for the adoption, enforcement, and amendment of an educators' code of ethics, and Section 63(l) of the conforming amendments to Senate Bill 1 (74th Legislature, 1995), which provides for a code of ethics proposed by the SBEC and adopted by the State Board of Education.

Candidates are responsible for reviewing the most current Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators found at:

[Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators](#)

Texas Education Code Chapter 21 provides detailed information regarding requirements for teachers in public education. For more information, please visit the following website:

[Texas Education Code Chapter 21](#)

## DISPOSITIONS

<b>Professional Behavior</b>
1. Uphold the laws and ethical codes governing the profession (e.g., maintain professional boundaries, maintain accurate records, do not deny benefits to a student).
2. Exhibit a positive attitude toward the teaching profession, staff, and students.
3. Remain abreast of current research and practices relevant to the teaching profession (e.g., read books/journals, attend workshops, professional organization membership, etc.).
4. Actively participate in opportunities to improve instructional practices and student outcomes.
5. Engage in self-reflection on how my experiences and bias shape my practice, and act to better serve my educational community.
6. Accept responsibility for helping all students succeed by evaluating my professional practices and the impact on student outcomes.
7. Communicate promptly and professionally with others.
8. Engage with families in culturally and linguistically affirming ways (e.g., gathering feedback, involving parents in decision-making, highlighting student work, developing programming for parents, etc.).
9. Demonstrate sensitivity to other's feelings through compassionate and empathetic social awareness.
10. Justify my decisions based upon careful consideration and awareness of impact.
<b>Creating a High-Quality Learning Environment</b>
11. Create a responsive learning environment that stimulates and supports each student's learning and development.
12. Utilize formative feedback to provide timely scaffolds to increase learning for all students.
13. Establish routines and procedures to maximize instructional time.
14. Use differentiated forms of instruction and assessment to support student learning.
15. Develop high-quality relationships with students, learning about their beliefs, values, traditions, and social and academic abilities, to enhance my teaching effectiveness.
16. Identify high quality instruction materials.
17. Recognize matters of inequity, injustice, or discrimination in instructional materials or the learning environment.
18. Address matters of inequity, injustice, or discrimination in instructional materials or the learning environment.
19. Implement highly effective teaching strategies to broaden impact on student learning.

\*Formative-EDUC 3370

\*Midway-EDUC 4484

\*Summative-EDUC 4335

### CHANGING CERTIFICATIONS

BS Ed Candidates

- Changing a certification will require the following:
  - Occurs before placement arrangements have been made / internship
  - Faculty advising meeting to review degree alignment
  - Student must have faculty advisor approval

- Request is in writing with student signature and sent to Program Coordinator and EPS office
- Passing a representative exam in the new content area with an 70% or higher (each subject matter for EC-6)

#### Education Minor Candidates

- Cannot change certification area due to degree plan

#### ACP Candidates:

The Alternative Certification Program consists of one semester of classes and a one-year internship. This accelerated program includes academic rigor and teacher preparation for today's ever-changing classroom. Upon admission, students will have selected a certification based on choice and guidance from faculty. Due to the program's timeline from admission to internship, students are unable to change certifications.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Educator Preparation Services (EPS) only sends emails to the students' university email addresses. It is imperative to check that email regularly.

## **CERTIFICATION TESTING**

One of the required foundations for teacher certification is the successful challenge of the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES). A score of PASS on this examination indicates the ability to provide the necessary tools to facilitate learning in a public-school classroom.

The process for testing includes a test taking strategies session, studying (course curriculum, 240 Tutoring, content screening test from the application process, <https://www.tx.nesinc.com/>, etc), university provided Representative exam in person on campus on predetermined dates to review test readiness, more study resources to include faculty led study sessions, and finally, TExES.

The TExES Representative test serves as an assessment of how well the certification candidate has prepared for the TExES test framework. This secure test is administered in person at the college in a supervised setting. There is no retest of the representative form except in rare circumstances approved by the EPP and Testing Coordinator. The candidate is provided a matrix that analyzes performance by the domain and competency. No comparison of answers or discussion of questions is allowed to preserve the effectiveness of the form for future users.

Candidates must be admitted to the EPP prior to taking the Representative exam. To demonstrate test readiness, students must make a 70% to receive approval to test. If the Representative score is less than 70%, the candidate will need to provide "proof of studies" as determined by the Program and EPS within 30 days after the unsuccessful score(s) on the representative exam.

Approval to register for the TExES examination is approved by the EPS office under the following conditions:

- The EPP Program Coordinator, Department Chair, or assigned Faculty Advisor in coordination with the Testing Coordinator signifies the candidates have completed all required program benchmarks and establishes readiness to test.

### **TESTING REQUIREMENTS TIED TO PROGRAM PROGRESSION**

Candidates must complete the content test(s) before advancing in the program. BS Education Yearlong Residency students will successfully complete the content test during Block 1 OR during Block II before advancing to Block 3 and Science of Teaching Reading (as applicable) in Block 3 before advancing to Block 4. Traditional Clinical Teaching candidates will complete content testing before starting Clinical Teaching. Graduate students must complete all content test(s) before advancing to internship.

### **REQUIRED TESTS FOR STANDARD CERTIFICATION**

- Certification Content Exam
- Science of Teaching Reading for Core Subject EC-6, Core Subject 4-8, ELAR 4-8, and ELAR/SS 4-8 certifications
- Special Education for All Level Special Education certification as listed on degree plan (not required before graduation but recommended)
- English as a Second Language (recommended)
- Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities EC-12

### **TEXES REGISTRATION**

TEXES test registration is completed through the Pearson website: [TEXES test registration](#)

Candidates are responsible for paying all fees associated with testing and re-testing for each required exam. Testing fee information can be found on the website listed above. Budget accordingly for each test during the required testing times approximately \$116-\$136 per test.

Follow the steps on the Texas Educator Certification Examination Program website to register for your exams as approval is given.

Alternate Testing arrangement information can be found at: [Alternative Arrangements](#).

### **ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION TESTING INFORMATION**

In response to HB 2205, 84th Texas Legislature, 2015, Texas Education Agency (TEA) all candidates are limited to four (4) attempts to retake any TExES examination. Failure to successfully pass any TExES examination within five (5) attempts may result in the candidate's ineligibility for certification in that subject area.

Candidates will challenge the required TExES exam(s) according to the established test sequence and dates.

Candidates will only be given approval for administration of one test at a time and only after established screening and preparation processes and a challenge of the applicable representative test has been completed.



Candidates must schedule the TExES test within **30 days of test approval**, with appropriate interval to test and retest prior to beginning clinical teaching rotation and as directed by the EPS department.

In the event a candidate is unsuccessful on a TExES, the candidate must provide documented remediation assigned by the Program Coordinator or representative prior to expiration of the 30-day waiting period for retest.

Appeals related to any TExES policy MUST be made in writing to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development at A&M-Central Texas. An information copy of the appeal MUST also be given to the appropriate department head.

For additional information, please view (on EPS Canvas Page):

[Testing Policy](#)

[Testing Flow Chart](#)

## **PRE-PRACTICUM BENCHMARKS**

Before advancing to the practicum, students must be admitted to the EPP and meet certain benchmark requirements (course completions, testing, and field-based experience).

### **Course Completions**

#### **Undergraduate**

- BS Ed students must have successfully completed Block 1 courses and be in Block 2 for pre-practicum.
- Education minor students must successfully complete the Pre-Practicum courses (EDUC 4332 / assigned MUED with a C or Better).

#### **Graduate**

- Students must complete a minimum of 150 coursework hours prior to practicum.
- Standard Certification and Program Completion should align. Students should work with course faculty to ensure courses are complete prior to practicum.

### **Testing**

#### **Undergraduate**

- The BS Ed student must be certification area content TExES complete prior to start of Block 3 and Science of Teaching Reading (STR) TExES complete prior to the start of Block 4.
- Education Minor students must be certification area content TExES complete prior to Clinical Teaching.

#### **Graduate**

- Students must be certification area content complete prior to enrolling in EDUC 5384 and accepting a teaching position. This includes STR as appropriate for certification.

### **Field Based Experience (FBE) / Observations**

Texas Administrative Code and the EPP require observations and a reflective assignment before starting practicum. These must occur AFTER admission.

The student must be actively engaged in instructional or educational activities that include:

- authentic school settings in a public school accredited by the TEA or other school approved by the TEA for this purpose;
- instruction by content certified teachers;
- actual students in classrooms/instructional settings with identity-proof provisions;
- content or grade-level specific classrooms/instructional settings;
- and written reflection of the observation.

Students are encouraged to observe a plethora of different teachers, as well as numerous different schools, subject areas and grades all the while staying within their range of the certification area. The

observation hours will be recorded on the attached form that will require the teacher's signature that is being observed.

Incomplete observation hours could render the student unable to continue to practicum. Background checks are required by the districts and performed by the districts or campuses. Each district has different requirements. It is recommended to perform observations at the partner districts. An orientation to FBE will be provided. See the EPS Canvas Page for more information.

The completed observation log and reflective assignment should be uploaded to your ShareFile Folder. Label LastName\_FirstName\_Observation Log; LastName\_FirstName\_Reflection. Do not change the file type. Scan in your log as a PDF. No pictures of certification documents are allowed.

You will be required to complete a Reflection Assignment based on your observations. Follow your course syllabus for the reflective assignment.

Students must complete a pre-set number of observation hours depending on degree path. Students are not allowed to obtain FBE with a family member as the teacher of record.

### **Undergraduate**

- BS Ed requires 30 classroom observation hours spread across Blocks 1 and 2
- Education Minor students follow the course syllabus and calendar for a minimum of observation hours at approximately 50 hours.

### **Graduate**

- Students will be required to observe 30 hours prior to EDUC 5384.
- Once testing, courses, and FBE are complete, students will need to obtain a Statement of Eligibility (SoE) from the EPS office and apply for an intern certificate with fingerprinting to progress to internship.

## PRACTICUM

The A&M-Central Texas practicum is the culminating experience leading to teacher certification. Teacher candidates are required to display knowledge, skills, and attitudes about teaching and learning developed through specialized coursework and training.

The practicum is a valuable professional experience in teacher preparation since it represents the bridge between professional preparation and professional practice. Practicums are designed to provide opportunities for students to observe, plan, implement, and evaluate instructional materials and techniques in order to meet the varied learning needs of students from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

The success of the candidate will depend on the cooperative efforts of many people. Our expectation is that the teacher candidate, cooperating teacher/mentor, and the Field Supervisor will form a triad with closely connected goals - all resulting in a positive and memorable learning experience. It is both the aim and expectation that all candidates will become reflective professional educators who facilitate successful clinical learning.

The purpose of the practicum experience is to ensure candidates are fully equipped with the skills necessary to be successful in the classroom. Completion of all incomplete grades is required prior to the first-class day of the semester in which practicum takes place (exceptions require departmental approval). During the practicum, the teacher candidate will apply their learning of research-based practices and teaching strategies in a classroom setting with the support of a cooperating teacher/mentor and a field supervisor.

Texas A&M University-Central Texas does not approve practicums outside of Texas. Further, program approval is required for practicums outside of a 60-mile radius of the central campus or East Williamson County Higher Education Center (EWCHEC) campus. An additional fee from the student may be required due to travel cost for formal and informal observations.

A practicum experience must take place in an actual school setting rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting. A practicum experience shall not take place in a setting where the candidate: (A) has an administrative role over the mentor or cooperating teacher; or (B) is related to the field supervisor, mentor, or cooperating teacher by blood (consanguinity) within the third degree or by marriage (affinity) within the second degree.

Clinical Teaching and Yearlong Residency are successful when the candidate demonstrates proficiency in each of the educator standards for the assignment and the field supervisor and cooperating teacher recommend to the EPP that the candidate should be recommended for a standard certificate. If either the field supervisor or cooperating teacher do not recommend that the candidate should be recommended for a standard certificate, 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.

An internship is successful when the candidate demonstrates proficiency in each of the educator standards for the assignment and 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 that the candidate should be recommended for a standard

certificate, 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.

**All practicum experiences require Formal Observation by an approved Field Supervisor. This is known as the “POP Cycle”.**

- Pre-Conference / Lesson Plan
- Formal Observation – minimum of 45 minutes
- Post-Conference / Learning Reflection

This information will be reviewed in the mandatory practicum orientation, ShareFile, and EPS Canvas page. Also see the program’s practicum manual for more information.

### **UNDERGRADUATE PRACTICUM TYPES**

The EPS department assumes full responsibility for contacting the public schools regarding placement of clinical teachers. Students should not call the campuses or districts requesting placements, placement changes or any problems relating to practicum unless authorized by the EPS department.

There are three routes for practicum at the undergraduate level. The route is based on the student degree path, not personal choice.

#### **\*Traditional Clinical Teaching**

This route requires departmental approval and is in place primarily for Education Minor students. This will consist of 5 clinical days a week (excluding holidays) and 16 weeks for one semester. Four Formal Observations will be performed by the assigned Field Supervisor.

#### **\* Yearlong Residency**

This is the common route that will consist of 3 clinical days a week for two semesters. Two Formal Observations will be performed by the assigned Field Supervisor each semester. See below for more information.

#### **\* Aide Route**

This route requires department and district and campus level approvals for students that are paid working educational aides in the public school system. It will consist of ½ days at a minimum of 4 hours a day, 5 days a week for a full year. Two Formal Observations will be performed by the assigned Field Supervisor each semester.

### **GRADUATE PRACTICUM TYPES**

There are two paths for practicum at the graduate level.

#### **\* Internship**

During the year-long paid internship, the candidate is employed by the district within an approximate 60-mile radius, paid as a first-year teacher, eligible for benefits, and reported as the teacher of record for retirement purposes. The internship must occur in the teacher's approved certification area. The intern will work under an Intern/Probationary Certificate and must be enrolled in the practicum course during both semesters. To complete the intern certification, please see the EPS Canvas Page for more information.

Five Formal Observations will be performed by the assigned Field Supervisor: three observations in one semester and two in the next semester. Informal observations may also be conducted during EDUC 5384, 5385

### **\* Yearlong Residency**

This unpaid route will consist of 3 clinical days a week for two semesters. Two Formal Observations will be performed by the assigned Field Supervisor each semester. Informal observations may also be conducted during EDUC 5384, 5385. See below for more information.

#### **Yearlong Residency (YLR 1 and YLR2)**

Yearlong Residency (YLR) is an unpaid yearlong placement in a public-school setting. The teacher yearlong residency is conducted alongside coursework as the culminating practice-based preparation (one-year).

#### **Clinical Teacher / Resident (graduate and undergraduate)**

- YLR is a minimum of 3 days per week in a co-teaching setting under the supervision of a qualified mentor teacher.
- The Clinical Teacher experiences a full academic year.
- The Clinical Teacher's placement is selected in collaboration with the campus or district partner and student preferences / needs.
- The Clinical Teacher remains for the full residency with placements dependent on certification areas and student needs. A candidate must have a clinical teaching assignment for each subject area in which the candidate is seeking initial certification.
- The Clinical Teacher must engage in a co-teaching model with a gradual release of instructional responsibility to the teacher resident, with sufficient lead instruction time to practice, receive feedback on, and demonstrate proficiency in the educator.

#### **Mentor Teacher**

- The EPP and the district and campus leadership co-select and match mentor teachers to Clinical Teachers.
- The mentor teacher is an educator who is collaboratively assigned by the educator preparation program (EPP) and campus administrator; who has at least three years of teaching experience; who is an accomplished educator as shown by student learning; who has completed cooperating teacher training, including training in how to coach and mentor teacher candidates, by the EPP within three weeks of being assigned to a clinical teacher; who is currently certified in the certification category for the clinical teaching assignment for which the clinical teacher candidate is seeking certification; who guides, assists, and supports the candidate during the

candidate's clinical teaching 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.

- The mentor teacher must complete a minimum of 2 annual trainings (mentor academy and robust virtual Howdy Visit) provided by the EPP and district and receive ongoing, job-embedded support. Training must include explicit training in co-teaching strategies and coaching practices.

### **Field Supervisor**

- The Field Supervisor is a current certified educator, hired by the EPP, who preferably has advanced credentials, to observe candidates, monitor their performance, and provide constructive feedback to improve their effectiveness as educators. A field supervisor 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. A field supervisor with experience as a campus-level administrator and who holds a current certificate that is appropriate for a principal assignment may also supervise classroom teacher. 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.
- The Field Supervisor will participate in formal TEA and program training once a year.
- The Field Supervisor will attend T-TESS training and calibration meetings as required by the EPP.
- Field Supervisors will perform four formal observations with feedback (two each semester).
- The Field Supervisor will participate in ongoing collaboration and shared governance with the clinical teacher, campus leadership, mentor, and EPP faculty and staff.

### **EPP**

- Participate in shared governance with Local Education Agency to include the EPP advisory committee.
- Informal observations may be conducted during EDUC 4484, EDUC 4345, EDUC 4320, READ 4312, EDUC 4335, EDUC 5384, 5385

### **MILITARY DEPLOYMENT**

Candidates that are involved in a military deployment or reassignment and would like to request an Out-of-State placement must complete the TEA Out-Of-State application process. A&M-Central Texas does not make the decisions regarding Out-of-State placements. There is a \$500.00 fee that must be paid to TEA in addition to all fees required for your Field Supervision. For more information, please visit the Texas Education Agency webpage

### **TEXAS EDUCATION CODE, 261.101: REPORTING CHILD ABUSE**

In accordance with the Texas Family code (TFC) anyone suspecting the abuse or neglect of a child must report the suspected abuse to the Child Protective Services Child Abuse hotline at 1-8002525400.

Specifically, a teacher must report no later than 48 hours of first suspecting a child has been abused or neglected. All reports of suspected child abuse or neglect are confidential. If the report is made in good faith, without malice, reporters are immune from civil or criminal liability. Although your school district may have its own protocol regarding reporting, the person suspecting the abuse must be the reporter.

Reporting may not be delegated to another person, remember, the law requires you to report suspected abuse, not prove that abuse occurred. In fact, professionals ask that you not attempt to validate the abuse. Knowing failure to report is a Class B misdemeanor offense.

### **TERMINATION OF CLINICAL TEACHING PRACTICUM**

The EPP is a cooperative relationship between A&M-Central Texas, partnering school districts, cooperating teachers and the clinical teacher / resident. Each clinical teacher / resident is to be made aware that their presence in the district, and in a particular classroom, requires professionalism and courtesy at all times. Occasionally there are circumstances that warrant the termination of the clinical teaching practicum. Termination may be initiated by the clinical teacher / resident, the school district, or A&M-Central Texas. When such action is deemed necessary, there are specific reasons and procedures that should be taken into consideration by all parties involved.

There may be circumstances that lead to the mutual consent and agreement for termination by the clinical teacher / resident, cooperating teacher/school, and field supervisor for reasons of illness, injury, or other unforeseen problem. These circumstances are not ones based on moral character, but would be a condition under which a student could be removed from the program due to unforeseen circumstances by mutual agreement.

Certification candidates who do not satisfactorily complete their clinical teaching are automatically dropped from the EPP. In addition, candidates must formally withdraw from both EDUC 4335 and EDUC 4691 or they will receive a failing grade for both courses. The candidate will not be eligible for recommendation for certification but may still be eligible for graduation with a major other than Education. Consult with an advisor to discuss options.

### **Reasons for Termination**

The grounds for dismissal from the Teacher Educator Preparation Program (EPP) shall be based upon not adhering to following purposes as presented in TAC § 249.5:

1. protect the safety and welfare of Texas school children and school personnel;
2. ensure educators and applicants are morally fit and worthy to instruct or to supervise the youth of the state; and
3. fairly and efficiently resolve educator disciplinary proceedings.

As a candidate in the A&M Central Texas EPP, you have agreed to be of good moral character as defined in Chapter 249 - Texas Educator's Code of Ethics. Good moral character is defined as "the virtues of a person as evidenced, at a minimum, by his or her not having committed crimes relating directly to the duties and responsibilities of the education profession or acts of moral turpitude." Acts for which an individual will be dismissed from the EPP of A&M Central Texas will include, but not be limited to, the following as related to "good moral character."

1. Failure by the clinical teacher to abide by the conduct policies of the cooperating school and/or unprofessional conduct towards school personnel or students.
2. Evidence of a reported criminal offense.
3. Violation of the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics.



In the instances listed as # 1-3 termination procedures begin with #5 under “Procedures for Termination”. Other circumstances under which a clinical teacher may be removed from clinical teaching and terminated from the program are:

4. Failure by the clinical teacher to establish and maintain a satisfactory performance level in classroom instruction and management.
5. Failure to abide by the placement campus’ faculty policies as outlined in the district’s Faculty Handbook. Examples of (but not limited to) excessive absences or disregarding the faculty dress code.
6. Violation of the Texas A&M University-Central Texas Student Code of Conduct (see p. 14).

### **Procedures for Termination**

Termination of the assignment of a clinical teacher for the reasons previously stated should follow these prescribed procedures in a sequential manner:

1. The clinical teacher shall be informed by the cooperating teacher and field supervisor of any unsatisfactory performance. This shall be done through a written evaluation from the cooperating teacher and/or field supervisor, a joint conference between all three, and written documentation of any infractions of school policy or professionalism. A clinical teacher may not be terminated for undocumented problems, unless the clinical teacher is in violation of the school’s professional conduct policies/unprofessional conduct, the Educator’s Code of Ethics and/or there is evidence of a reported criminal offense. In this case the Procedure for Termination begins with #5 below.
2. When it is evident that a clinical teacher does not follow through with prescribed verbal and written suggestions for improvement, a **Notice of Concern** shall be initiated by the Field Supervisor, course instructor or cooperating teacher and presented to the clinical teacher during a three-way conference. This contract shall be signed by the clinical teacher, the cooperating teacher and the Instructor or Field Supervisor and the Director of Field Experiences and External Partnerships, with a copy submitted to the Educator Preparation Services Department, and the Department Chair of Curriculum and Instruction.
3. Within a specified time frame, the clinical teacher, the cooperating teacher, the Instructor/Field Supervisor and Director of Field Experiences and External Partnerships will confer to assess progress.
4. If inadequate progress in teaching effectiveness and violations of school policy or procedure continues, a formal **Deficiency Notice & Growth Contract** will be administered with a clear time limit for compliance or in some cases immediate termination. A copy will be submitted to the EPS Department Director. The cooperating teacher and field supervisor may request additional outside observations. A conference of all concerned parties will follow.
5. When a clinical teacher is placed on probation and reassessment indicates unfavorable progress, the clinical teacher will visit with the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development and/or Department Chair of Curriculum and Instruction to discuss possible options. The options offered will depend upon each individual case and what is deemed to be in the best interest of the clinical teacher, the school, the cooperating teacher and the students in the classroom. Some options that may be considered are:

- a. Movement to another classroom for the remainder of the semester. This may be in another school or district and will be done ONLY if a classroom placement is available and the school schedule permits. Clinical teaching may be extended.
  - b. Withdrawal from clinical teaching with the option to reapply for clinical teaching after waiting at least one semester and no more than three (3) semesters. During the interim time, there may be prescriptive growth experiences created by the Department Chair of Curriculum and Instruction and field supervisor that must be completed and submitted for review prior to reassignment for clinical teaching. All returning students will be placed in the local area.
    - i. Withdrawal from clinical teaching with a decision to transfer to another college within the University for pursuing a different degree. Withdrawal will be allowed only if it is prior to the end of Q-drop date for the semester.
  - c. Termination of clinical teaching with a failing grade.
6. If the clinical teacher is to be terminated or withdrawn from clinical teaching placement, they will be given a letter stating the decision made, the reasons for that decision, and whether or not an opportunity for application for a clinical teaching placement at a later date will be permitted. The letter will also specify any growth assignments that are expected prior to reassignment to clinical teaching.

The student will meet with university personnel for guidance in withdrawal and re-admittance procedures.

Clinical teachers will have due process at each step of the termination process and will have an opportunity to respond and give input.

The goal of the Educator Preparation Program at A&M Central Texas is to provide support and guidance in order for clinical teaching students to learn and develop the skills necessary to become a proficient teacher. The purpose of the Notice of Concern and Deficiency Notice is to provide a clear understanding to the student of what needs to change or be improved to be successful and become a professional educator.

For information on expectations for teacher candidates in field placement settings, refer to the course syllabi for field experience courses, the Orientation for Observation PowerPoint, the Orientation to Clinical Teaching PowerPoint and materials posted on the Educator Preparation Service Canvas page, placement district handbooks, placement campus handbooks, placement campus orientations, and the Clinical Teaching Manual and the Code of Ethics for Educators.

## TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM EXIT/WITHDRAWAL POLICY

I acknowledge that I am being prepared for an initial teacher certificate by the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) Educator Preparation Program (EPP) at Texas A&M University – Central Texas,

My signature on the application acknowledges that I have read and understood this document.

I agree to:

- remain professional with CEHD faculty and EPP staff at all times.
- follow program policies within TEA guidelines as established by the CEHD including, but not limited to:
- ensure that I am prepared to receive a standard teaching certificate, CEHD shall establish benchmarks and structured assessments to track my progress and ensure that I am adequately prepared to pass the appropriate content exams required for classroom teacher certification. o CEHD shall determine my readiness to take the appropriate certification exams based the EPP’s data informed protocols. o I understand that the CEHD evaluates the design and delivery of components in the EPP based on performance data and research practices and uses these data to continuously improve the program, which may result in changes to certification exam approval policy at any time.
- CEHD retains documents showing evidence of my eligibility for admission to the program and evidence of completion of program requirements for a period of five (5) years after I complete, withdraw from, or am discharged or released from the program.
- follow the plans established by CEHD faculty and EPP staff to ensure completion of program requirements; I will not exceed established timelines to acquire a teaching certificate.
- if applicable, attend prescribed courses/trainings as required by TEA for certificate issuance.
- participate in self-tracked test preparation on Certify Teacher and/or 240Tutoring as assigned to me by EPP faculty and staff.
- complete test prep assignments according to the schedule provided by CEHD faculty and EPP staff.
- complete and submit any remediation program as assigned by EPP staff/faculty.

I understand that:

- I am limited to five (5) attempts on any TExES exam title
- I must notify EPP staff if I voluntary withdrawal from the program.
- If I am inactive from the A&M University - Central Texas coursework for greater than **12 months**, I will be removed from the EPP and TEA as a teacher candidate and will no longer have TExES exam eligibilities.
- If I am inactive from Texas A&M University - Central Texas for greater than 12 months, I will need to reapply to the University and the EPP
- Policies in effect at the time of reapplication will apply to the new admission.

Students exiting the program prior to program completion should notify the EPP and EPS in writing with a minimum of two weeks' notice except in emergency situations. Students must complete the Non-Participation form to separate from the EPP in TEA. To receive a withdrawal “in good standing”

(required to transfer to another EPP), the student's financial and overall program status will be reviewed. Examples of "not good standing" might include, but not limited to, financial obligations to the university, leaving an internship not in good standing with the hiring district, having a deficiency plan, being removed from a practicum site due to violations of the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.

## **STANDARD CERTIFICATION**

All applications for certification are completed online via the TEA Login (TEAL) site. Follow the instructions to update your TEAL account if necessary and submit the application and payment for your standard certificate. It is important to understand that a teaching certificate cannot be approved by the Certification Officer until your degree has been conferred, benchmarks are completed, and all practicum documentation has been reviewed.

In meeting the requirements set forth by TEA, it is important that all candidates seeking teacher certification receive necessary training and coursework. Part of the completion of the certification program, all teacher candidates are required to complete program evaluations at the time of certification application.

## **EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM COMPLAINT PROCESS**

As defined by 19 TAC 228.70: a candidate or former candidate in an Educator Preparation Program (EPP), an applicant for candidacy in an EPP, an employee or former employee of an EPP, a cooperating teacher, a mentor, a Director of Educator Preparation Services in a school district, charter school, or private school may submit, in accordance with subsection (c) (1) of this section, a complaint about an EPP for investigation and resolution.

Any of the above aforementioned, hereinafter referred to as the complainant, who has a complaint may seek resolution without fear of retaliation. If the complainant is a current A&M-Central Texas student, you must follow the University Student Complaint Procedure. This information can be found at: Texas A&M University Central Texas Student Conduct. For more information, please contact the Associate Dean of Student Affairs at (254) 501-5877.

All other complainants, please follow the guidelines listed below.

### **FILING A COMPLAINT**

A formal public complaint is a signed written statement of complaints or concerns regarding the customer service provided by employees of the College of Education and Human Development Educator Preparation Programs. A formal written public complaint must include the facts upon which the complaint is based.

Please provide a written and signed copy of the A&M-Central Texas College of Education and Human Development-Educator Preparation Program Complaint Form to the College of Education and Human Development-Educator Preparation Services in person or by mail, fax, or email to:

### **Educator Preparation Services**

College of Education and Human Development

1001 Leadership Place Warrior Hall 322 G  
Killeen, TX 76549  
Phone: (254) 519-8737  
Email: [educatorprep@tamuct.edu](mailto:educatorprep@tamuct.edu)

Anonymous or unsigned complaints will not be processed. It is also important to know that the sender of complaints that are received by fax or email must be verified. The sender must provide a full name, address, and phone number that matches the information found on the A&M-Central Texas College of Education and Human Development- Educator Preparation Program Complaint Form. Verification of sender will be conducted by phone and documented in an email reply message to sender.

#### COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

A&M-Central Texas College of Education and Human Development has established the following procedures for responding to a formal complaint from the public regarding an issue involving the College of Education and Human Development – Educator Preparation Programs.

- Any complainant, wishing to submit a complaint shall initially file a formal complaint using the A&M-Central Texas College of Education and Human Development Educator

Preparation Program Complaint Form to the Director of the Educator Preparation Services.

- If the complaint is against the Director of the Educator Preparation Services, then the complainant should notify in writing the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development.
- The A&M-Central Texas College of Education and Human Development-Educator Preparation Program Complaint Form must be signed and dated by the complainant and submitted within 30 business days of the alleged incident. The Director of Educator Preparation Services will make a determination on a case-by-case basis as to whether complaints submitted after the deadline will be considered.
- The Director of Educator Preparation Services will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 10 working days. After the complaint is received, an investigation will take place. The investigative period may last up to 30 business days; extenuating circumstances may cause a deviation from the defined time frames. The Director of Educator Preparation Services shall conduct the investigation or appoint a university or system investigator, if necessary.
- The EPP and EPS will take reasonable measures to avoid any and all conflicts of interest in selecting the investigator. The investigator will gather all facts pertaining to the complaint and submit those in writing to the Director of Educator Preparation Services. This procedure ensures thorough investigations, affording all involved parties an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint.
- The Director of Educator Certification and Accountability shall send a written resolution to the complainant with the outcome(s), reason(s) for the decision, any remedies afforded, if any, and notice of the appeals process. The Director of Educator Certification and Accountability shall

also forward a copy of the resolution to the employee overseeing the area or individual and be kept on file.

#### APPEAL

If the complainant wishes to file an appeal of the resolution, the complainant shall notify the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development in writing with a copy of the initial

A&M Central Texas College of Education and Human Development Educator Preparation Program Complaint Form and copy of the Director of Educator Preparation

Services' written resolution. The written appeal must be signed by the complainant and submitted within 10 business days of the Director of Educator Preparation Services' resolution. The Dean of the College of Education and Human Development will make a determination on a case-by-case basis as to whether appeals submitted after the deadline will be considered.

An investigation shall follow the submission of the appeal. The Dean of the College of Education and Human Development will present the findings of the investigation to the Educator Preparation Council (EPC). Within 30 business days of receiving the appeal, the EPC shall submit their decision in writing to the complainant with the outcome(s), reason(s) for the decision, any remedies afforded, if any.

Extenuating circumstances may cause a deviation from the defined time frames. The EPC shall also forward a copy of the resolution to the Department of Educator Preparation Services to be filed. The resolution or outcome from the appeal is final and not appealable.

Additional information for complainants who have complaints or questions specifically related to Educator Preparation Programs can be found by visiting the A&M-Central Texas website.

#### TEA COMPLAINT

If any complainant has an unresolved complaint and appeal decision regarding the A&M-Central Texas College of Education and Human Development Educator Preparation Program and wishes to report it to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the complainant will need to follow the required steps outlined by TEA. Information can be found on the TEA website at [TEA Website](#)