



## **2021 – 2022 Continuing Approval Review Report Relay Graduate School of Education Alternative Certification Program**

### **PURPOSE**

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Education Specialist Emily Carrizalez conducted a five-year Continuing Approval Review of the educator preparation program (EPP) at Relay Graduate School of Education (Relay GSE) February 3-24, 2021. Per 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(b), "...An entity approved by the SBEC under this chapter shall be reviewed at least once every five (5) years...". Katherine Legreid was identified as the program's Legal Authority and the primary EPP contact for the review process. Helen Hailemariam and Monique Robinson were identified as the Backup Legal Authorities. Relay GSE was approved as an EPP on August 1, 2014. At the time of the review, the EPP was rated Accredited for 2018-2019 and Not Rated: Declared State of Disaster for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. The risk level was Stage 2 (Medium). The EPP reported 212 finishers for the 2020-2021 reporting year and 153 finishers for 2019-2020.

Relay GSE is approved to certify Teacher candidates in the alternative certification (ACP) and post-baccalaureate (PB) routes, and Principal candidates in the ACP route. It is important to note that Principal candidates were not included in this review due to the inactive status of the Principal program.

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 to regulate all EPPs in the state. (See the complete [TAC](#) for details.) The five-year Continuing Approval Review was conducted in a desk review format where EPP staff submitted requested documents to TEA for review.

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

At various stages, the EPP staff participating in the review were Katherine Legreid, Kathryn Sherwood, Maya Weatheron, Julian Roberts, and Katya Melkote.

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

Information concerning compliance with TAC governing EPPs was collected by various means. A Status Report and related program documents were submitted to TEA on January 14, 2022. Additional EPP documents, including records for ten candidates, were submitted on January 31, 2022. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies of content analysis, cross-referencing, and data triangulation was used to evaluate the evidence.

### **FINDINGS, COMPLIANCE ISSUES, and RECOMMENDATIONS**



“Findings” indicate evidence collected during the review process. If the program is “not in compliance” with any identified component, the program should consult the TAC and correct the issue immediately. A “Next Steps Plan” was drafted during the review that identifies compliance issues to be addressed and a timeline for completion. “Recommendations” are suggestions for general program improvement, and no follow-up is required.

## **COMPONENT I: GOVERNANCE – 19 TAC Chapter 228**

### **Findings**

- TEA reviewed Governance documents submitted with the Status Report to determine compliance.
- The advisory committee membership, input provided by members, advisory committee member training, and meeting frequency meets requirements. [19 TAC §228.20(b)]
- The governing body has provided sufficient support and resources to Relay GSE. [19 TAC §228.20(c)]
- Relay GSE has a published calendar of activities, including application deadlines, available on the EPP website. [19 TAC §228.20(g)]
- Relay GSE submitted the Status Report for the EPP Review on January 14, 2022. [19 TAC §228.10(b)(1)]
- Per TEA records, Relay GSE is not currently approved to offer clinical teaching. The EPP only offers internship experiences to its candidates. [19 TAC §228.10(c)]

### **Compliance Issues to be Addressed**

- None

Based on the evidence presented, Relay GSE was in compliance with 19 TAC Chapter 228 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs.

## **COMPONENT II: ADMISSION - 19 TAC Chapter 227**

### **Findings**

- Relay GSE has informed applicants of the required information about the EPP. Program admission requirements and completion requirements were found on the EPP website. The effects of supply and demand on the educator workforce, and the performance of the EPP over five (5) years were found on the EPP website. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(1-3)]
- Relay GSE has informed applicants and candidates about the required information regarding criminal history. The information was found on the EPP website. [19 TAC §227.1(d)]
- A total of 10 Teacher records were reviewed. Five (5) records were for ACP candidates, and five (5) records were for PB candidates.
- All five (5) PB candidates and all five (5) ACP candidates held the minimum of a bachelor’s degree at the time of admission. Official transcripts were provided as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(1-2)]
- All five (5) PB and five (5) ACP candidates met the minimum GPA requirement for admission. The GPA range was 2.80-3.56 for the PB candidates, and the GPA range



was 2.80-3.96 for the ACP candidates. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(3)(A)]

- Before admission, teacher applicants must demonstrate content knowledge by completing at least 12 semester credit hours in the content area in which they are admitted, 15 hours if the content area is math or science at grade 7 or above, or by passing a pre-admission content test (TX PACT). All five (5) PB records and five (5) ACP records contained evidence that the candidates met the requirements. Official transcripts served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(4)]
- Applicants must demonstrate basic skills before admission. Official transcripts in each of the five (5) PB and five (5) ACP candidate records were evidence the candidates met the basic skills requirement. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(6)]
- All applicants must demonstrate proficiency in English language skills before admission. All five (5) PB and five (5) ACP candidates met the English language proficiency requirement per official transcripts from the US. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(7)]
- An applicant for admission must be screened to determine appropriateness for the certification sought. Relay GSE uses an interview as the screening instrument. Four (4) out of five (5) PB records included the candidate's screening instrument and rubric, but it was unclear what cut score was used to determine their admission. One (1) out of five (5) PB records did not include evidence of a screening instrument. Four (4) out of five (5) ACP records included the candidate's screening instrument, but the rubric was not provided, and it was unclear what cut score was used to determine the candidate's admission. One (1) out of five (5) ACP records did not include evidence of a screening instrument. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed for the PB and ACP routes. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)]
- An EPP may adopt requirements in addition to and not in conflict with those required in TAC. Relay GSE requires a resume and references for each of its ACP and PB candidates for admission. All five (5) ACP and all five (PB) records included a resume. Four (4) of the five (5) PB records included the required references. None of the ACP records included the required references. The program met the requirement as prescribed for the PB route. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed for the ACP route. [19 TAC §227.10(b)]
- An applicant must submit an application to the EPP. All five (5) PB records and five (5) ACP records included an application to the EPP. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)]
- An applicant may be accepted into an ACP or PB program on a contingency basis pending receipt of an official transcript showing a degree conferred. One (1) of the five (5) ACP candidates was admitted to the EPP under contingency admission. The written offer of admission, the written acceptance, and the official transcripts showing the candidate's conferred bachelor's degree served as evidence. The effective date of contingency admission must also be included in the offer of contingency admission. The record of the one (1) candidate offered contingency admission included a written offer of



admission with an effective date of admission. The program met the requirements as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.15(a) and 19 TAC §227.15(b)]

- The EPP must notify the TEA within 7 calendar days of a candidate's contingency admission. The one (1) ACP candidate offered contingency admission was not reported to TEA within 7 calendar days. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed for the ACP route. [19 TAC §227.15(c)]
- An applicant admitted on a contingency basis may begin program training and may be approved to take certifications exams but cannot be recommended for a probationary certificate until the bachelor's degree is conferred. The one (1) ACP candidate offered contingency admission was not issued any certificates until the bachelor's degree was conferred. The records in Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) and the candidate's official transcripts served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.15(d)]
- An ACP cannot provide coursework, training, or exam approval to an applicant prior to admission on a contingency basis. The one (1) ACP candidate offered contingency admission did not receive coursework, training, or test approval until after contingency admission to the EPP. The contingency admission letter, transcripts, and ECOS records served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.15(e)]
- Contingency admission is only valid for the semester in which contingency admission is granted and may not be extended. The one (1) ACP candidate offered contingency admission received a conferred bachelor's degree the same Spring semester in which contingency admission was accepted. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.15(f)]
- Formal Admission to the EPP includes a written offer of formal admission from the EPP to the applicant and a written acceptance of the offer of formal admission from the applicant to the EPP. All five (5) PB records and four (4) out of five (5) ACP records included documentation of each candidate's written offers of admission and the written acceptance from each candidate. One (1) out of five (5) ACP records included evidence of a contingency admission. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.17]
- The effective date of formal admission must be included in the formal admission offer. All five (5) PB records and four (4) out of five (5) ACP records included an effective date of formal admission in the written offer of admission. One (1) out of five (5) ACP records included evidence of a contingency admission. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.17(d)]
- An EPP must notify TEA within 7 calendar days of a candidate's formal admission. Per formal offers of admission and ECOS records, admission was reported to TEA for three (3) out of five (5) PB candidates and four (4) out of five (5) ACP candidates within 7 calendar days. Two (2) out of five (5) PB candidates were reported more than 7 days after their effective date of formal admission. One (1) out of five (5) ACP records included evidence of a contingency admission. The program met the requirement as prescribed for the ACP route. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed for the PB route. [19 TAC §227.17(e)]



- Per records in ECOS, formal admission letters, and EPP coursework, none of the five (5) PB candidates and none of the four (4) ACP candidates reviewed received coursework before being formally admitted to the EPP. One (1) out of five (5) ACP candidates was contingently admitted to the EPP. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.17(f)]

#### **Compliance Issues to be Addressed** (see Next Steps Plan)

- 19 TAC §227.10(a)(8) – Screening Instrument  
Action: The EPP needs to update their screening instrument to include a rubric and documented cut score and update their processes to retain evidence of an admission screen for every candidate. Submit the screening instrument used to determine appropriateness for the certification sought for one current Teacher PB candidate and one current Teacher ACP candidate. The rubric and cut score implemented must be provided.
- 19 TAC §227.10(b) – Additional Admission Requirements  
The EPP needs to update admission processes to ensure all required admission materials are retained for all candidates. Submit the required admission materials, including all additional admission requirements like a resume or references, for one current Teacher ACP candidate.
- 19 TAC §227.15(c) – Contingency Admission: 7-Day Notice of Admission  
The EPP needs to report all candidates to TEA within 7 calendar days, including contingently admitted candidates. Submit the formal admission letter, full name, and TEA ID for one current Teacher ACP candidate who was contingently admitted. TEA will then use the candidate's formal admission letter and ECOS records to determine if the candidate was reported to TEA within 7 calendar days.
- 19 TAC §227.17(e) – Formal Admission: 7-Day Notice of Admission  
The EPP needs to report all candidates to TEA within 7 calendar days. Submit the formal admission letter, full name, and TEA ID for one current Teacher PB candidate. TEA will then use the candidate's formal admission letter and ECOS records to determine if the candidate was reported to TEA within 7 calendar days.

Based on the evidence presented, Relay GSE is not in compliance with 19 TAC Chapter 227 - Admission Criteria.

#### **COMPONENT III: CURRICULUM – 19 TAC §228.30**

##### **Findings**

- TEA reviewed curriculum documents, course syllabi, and a variety of performance-based assessments and corresponding rubrics to determine compliance.
- Relay GSE provides a standards-based curriculum per the Status Report, completed standards alignment charts, the CK 301 Final Assessment and rubric, and the CK 311 Constructed Response: Written Assignment and rubric. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(a)]



- TEKS instruction is taught in SGA 301, CK 301, CK 302, and several other required courses. The Status Report and completed alignment charts served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(a)]
- The curriculum Relay GSE provides is research-based. Evidence of a research-based curriculum was verified through citations included in the Status Report. The EPP used research conducted by Linda Darling-Hammond, Ruth Chung, and Fred Freelow. Relay GSE also used published works in the Journal of Teacher Education to improve their curriculum in all certificate categories, specifically related to virtual education. The HEALTH 101 module has also been updated to allow candidates to explore cognitive behavior theory, gratitude journals, and the feelings wheel based on the work of Lamos, et al. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(b)]
- Candidates must complete the Texas Education Agency Teacher Ethics Training: Modules 1-4 to meet the Educators' Code of Ethics instruction requirement in TAC. Candidates are required to complete this training within the first three months of being admitted to the EPP. EPP staff are responsible for monitoring candidate progress with completing this requirement. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)]
- Candidates receive Mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide instruction through the TIER TBSI training, the National Center on Substance Abuse or the Child Welfare or Youth Mental Health First Aid Trainings, and the Kognito or Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide training. The Status Report served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)]
- The high expectations for students in this state are taught in SGA 300; candidates are provided an orientation to teaching practice which includes topics such as the skills that educators are required to possess, responsibilities educators are required to accept, and the high expectations for students in this state. The Status Report served as evidence. [19 TAC §228.30(c)]
- The importance of building strong classroom management skills is taught in SGA 300. The Status Report served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)]
- Relay GSE curriculum includes coursework on teacher and principal evaluation in EDU 500. The Status Report and course syllabi served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)]
- Appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communication between educators and students are taught in the Sanford Inspire training. Candidates are required to submit their certificate of completion to Relay GSE staff. The Status Report served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)]
- Relay GSE requires candidates to complete a digital literacy course offered by Relay GSE in Canvas. Each module includes a multiple-choice quiz that assesses the candidate's understanding of the ISTE standard. Candidates then use their quiz results to navigate the prescriptive curriculum and complete assignments that require a demonstration of their proficiency in the ISTE standards. The Status Report served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(c)]



- English Language Proficiency Standards are addressed in CK 311, CK 301, ECE 301, SGA 302, and other required courses. The Status Report served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d)]
- For certificates that include early childhood education and prekindergarten, the PK Guidelines are taught in ECE 301, ECE 302, and other required courses. The Status Report served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d)(3)]
- Reading instruction for all content areas is covered in CK 311. The Status Report served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d)]
- Evidence of instruction in the Texas Teachers standards was identified for all standards. Per the standards alignment chart, the Teacher standards are covered in SGA 303, CK 303, ECE 303, SGA 304, CK 304, and other required courses. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.30(d)]

#### **Compliance Issues to be Addressed**

- None

Based on the evidence presented, Relay GSE is in compliance with 19 TAC §228.30-Curriculum.

#### **COMPONENT IV: PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ONGOING SUPPORT – 19 TAC §228.35**

##### **Findings**

- Relay GSE has processes to ensure their candidates are provided adequate preparation and will be effective in the classroom. The candidate's course transcripts, degree plan, and course materials served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(1)]
- Per candidate transcripts, degree plan, the performance-based assessments, standards-based rubrics, and curriculum detailed in the Status Report, the coursework and training provided to candidates is sustained, rigorous, intensive, interactive, and candidate-focused. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(2)]
- All coursework must be completed before EPP completion and standard certification. Relay GSE course transcripts and Progress Reports served as evidence that four (4) out of the five (5) PB candidates and all five (5) ACP candidates completed their coursework before EPP completion and standard certification. One (1) of the five (5) PB candidates completed the EPP but was not standard certified at the time of the review. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(3)]
- Relay GSE has a policy for allowing relevant military experiences, education, or training to substitute for required coursework and training. Relay GSE also has a policy to substitute required coursework and training with prior or ongoing service, training, or education for candidates who are not military service members or veterans. These policies are published on the EPP website. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(5)(A-B)]
- Relay GSE submitted a letter from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) for each of the Relay GSE locations (Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, and San



Antonio) approving the EPP to offer online coursework as long as the EPP maintains its accreditation through the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). Relay GSE also submitted a certificate from MSCHE verifying their most current 2017 accreditation status. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(6)]

- Candidates for initial teacher certification exceed the minimum requirement of 300 coursework hours. All five (5) PB and five (5) ACP candidates exceeded the coursework requirement. Relay GSE course transcripts served as evidence of completed coursework. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(b)]
- All five (5) PB and five (5) ACP candidates completed at least 150 hours of coursework before beginning their internship. The Relay GSE course transcripts and the Teach for America course transcripts served as evidence of completed coursework. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(2)]
- Per field-based experience (FBE) documentation, all five (5) PB candidates and four (4) out of the five (5) ACP candidates met the 30 clock-hour minimum FBE requirement. The FBE logs and reflections served as evidence. One (1) of the five (5) ACP candidates completed less than 30 hours of FBE. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(b)(1); 19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)(A-B)]
- Per FBE logs and reflections, all five (5) PB and four (4) out of five (5) ACP candidates completed their FBE hours in two (2) or more settings. One (1) out of the five (5) ACP records included evidence of FBE completed in only one (1) setting. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)]
- Per FBE logs and reflections, all five (5) PB records and two (2) out of five (5) ACP records included evidence of at least 15 hours of interactive FBE. Three (3) out of five (5) ACP candidates completed their 15 hours of interactive FBE in a virtual setting during the Spring of 2020 under the COVID-19 allowances. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)(A)]
- None of the PB records included evidence of the use of electronic FBE. All five (5) ACP records included evidence of the use of electronic FBE. Two (2) out of the five (5) records did not exceed 15 hours of electronic FBE. Three (3) out of five (5) records exceeded 15 hours of electronic FBE because the FBE were completed during Spring of 2020 under the COVID-19 allowances. FBE logs and reflections served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)(B)]
- All five (5) PB and all five (5) ACP candidates had completed an internship experience at the time of the review. Internship placement documentation served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)]
- Five (5) PB and five (5) ACP candidates participated in an internship experience. Per observation documents, all five (5) PB and all five (5) ACP candidates completed a full-year internship under the supervision of the EPP. The recommendation form signed by the campus principal, mentor, and field supervisor served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)]
- An internship must be in a classroom assignment that matches the category in which the EPP prepares the candidate. Internship placement information and documentation were available for all five (5) PB and all five (5) ACP intern candidates. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)]





- Per the Site Visit Logs and the placement information, all five (5) PB and all five (5) ACP intern candidates were in an appropriate placement in the subject and grade level of the certificate sought for at least four (4) hours each day. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(iii)]
- Each intern candidate held an intern or probationary certificate while participating in the internship. This was verified through effective dates on the certificates in ECOS. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(iv)]
- Per field supervisor observation documents, three (3) of the five (5) PB candidates and four (4) of the five (5) ACP candidates demonstrated proficiency in each educator standard during the internship. The formal observation documents served as evidence. Two (2) of the five (5) PB and one (1) of the five (5) ACP candidate's observation documents did not capture the candidate's proficiency in the educator standards. It is important to note that in 2019-2020 the EPP updated their formal observation instrument to include a rubric with the educator standards and varying levels of proficiency. The EPP had identified that it was an area needing improvement, and they took the initiative to update their documents. While the EPP did not meet 80% compliance for the PB route, the EPP has demonstrated that this area of non-compliance has already been updated. The most recently observed candidates had observations using the updated formal observation instrument that captures candidate proficiency. This item is therefore not included in the Next Steps Plan. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(vii)]
- Successful completion of the internship and recommendation for standard certification was collected for all five (5) PB candidates and four (4) out of five (5) ACP candidates from the candidate's field supervisor, mentor, and campus supervisor. The signed Recommendation Form served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B)(vii)]
- Teacher candidate training included experiences with a full range of professional responsibilities, including the start of the school year. All five (5) PB and all five (5) ACP candidates received experience, including the start of the school year through their internship experience. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(4)]
- All five (5) PB and five (5) ACP internship assignments were in an actual school setting. The placement documentation, the statement of eligibility documents, and the observation documentation served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(6)]
- All five (5) PB and five (5) ACP candidates were assigned a mentor per candidate placement information and mentor emails from the campus principals. The program met the requirements as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(f)]
- Mentors must meet the qualification requirements outlined in 19 TAC §228.2(26). Four (4) of the five (5) PB records and four (4) of the five (5) ACP records included an email from the campus principal verifying the mentor's certification qualifications. The email did not provide sufficient evidence showing the mentor's years of experience or accomplishments as an educator as shown by student learning. One (1) of the five (5) PB records did not include evidence of the mentor's qualifications, so TEA was unable to determine if the mentor met the qualification requirements in TAC. One (1) of the five (5) ACP records included an email from the campus principal verifying the mentor's



certification and years of experience but did not include sufficient evidence verifying the mentor's accomplishments as an educator as shown by student learning. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed for the PB and ACP routes. [19 TAC §228.2(26)]

- Four (4) out of five (5) PB records and all five (5) ACP records included dated training materials showing evidence of mentor training by the EPP. Evidence of training was not provided in one (1) of the five (5) PB records. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(f)]
- The EPP training provided to mentors must occur within three (3) weeks of being assigned to a candidate. Two (2) out of five (5) PB records and one (1) out of five (5) ACP records included evidence that mentor training occurred within three (3) weeks of being assigned a candidate. Two (2) out of five (5) PB records and four (4) out of five (5) ACP records included evidence of training, but it was dated more than three weeks after the candidate's assignment. Evidence of training was not provided in one (1) of the five (5) PB records. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed for the PB and ACP routes. [19 TAC §228.2(14), §228.2(26)]
- All five (5) PB and all five (5) ACP records included evidence of an assigned field supervisor. Completed observation documents served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
- Field supervisors must hold the required credentials appropriate for the candidate being supervised. There were 7 field supervisors assigned to support the 10 candidates. Six (6) out of 7 field supervisors met the qualification requirements per their educator certificates, resumes, and curriculum vitae. One (1) of the assigned field supervisors did not hold an active certificate at the time of supervision. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.2(16)]
- Six (6) of the 7 field supervisors completed TEA-approved observation training per certificates of completion. The TTESS and Field Supervisor Observation Training certificates served as evidence. All 7 field supervisors were provided local EPP field supervisor training. The attendee list and email records served as evidence. The EPP should continue to provide regular training to their field supervisors on updates to TAC and EPP requirements. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
- Initial contact between the candidate and field supervisor must occur within the first three (3) weeks of the candidate's internship assignment. Evidence of initial contact was available in all five (5) PB and all five (5) ACP records. The Site Visit Log completed by the field supervisor served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
- Three (3) out of five (5) PB records and three (3) out of five (5) ACP records included evidence that each candidate received a pre-and post-observation conference for each observation. Pre-conference, observation, and post-conference forms served as evidence. One (1) out of five (5) PB records included observation documents that did not include evidence of the post-observation conferences, and one (1) out of five (5) PB records included observation documents that were missing evidence of a pre-conference. Another observation document included a date discrepancy with the pre-conference. One (1) out of five (5) ACP records was missing an observation document



and the pre- and post-conference docs. One (1) out of five (5) ACP records had observation documents that included several discrepancies with the dates and times of the pre- and post-conferences. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed for the PB and ACP routes. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]

- Observation instruments completed by field supervisors documented educational practices observed for all five (5) PB and all five (5) ACP candidates. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
- For each formal observation, the field supervisor must provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's mentor. All five (5) PB records and four (4) out of five (5) ACP records included a signed Verification Form that verified a copy of the written feedback for each observation was provided to the mentor, campus principal, and candidate. The Verification Form was not provided for one (1) of the five (5) ACP records, so TEA could not verify the copies were provided to the candidate's mentor. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
- Field supervisors must collaborate with the candidate, mentor, and campus supervisor while the candidate is completing an internship. The signed Verification Form in the five (5) PB records and four (4) out of five (5) ACP records served as evidence that the field supervisor collaborated with the candidate, mentor, and campus supervisor throughout the internship. The Verification Form was not provided for one (1) of the five (5) ACP records. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g)]
- Formal observations conducted by the field supervisor must meet the duration, frequency, and format requirements. Per formal observation documents, four (4) out of five (5) PB records and three (3) out of five (5) ACP records included observations that were captured as being at least 45 minutes. One (1) of the five (5) PB records and two (2) of the five (5) ACP records included one observation that did not have a recorded time on it, so TEA was unable to verify the observations were at least 45 minutes in duration. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed for the ACP route. [19 TAC §228.35(g)(1)]
- All five (5) PB and five (5) ACP candidates received their first observation within the first 6 weeks of their assignment. Two (2) out of five (5) PB and three (3) out of five (5) ACP candidates were issued an intern certificate. Per the observation documents in the candidate's record, the candidate received the prescribed number of observations as required in TAC. Three (3) out of five (5) PB and two (2) out of five (5) ACP candidates were issued a probationary certificate. Per the observation documents in their records, three (3) of the candidates on a probationary certificate received the number of observations required in TAC. Two (2) candidates on a probationary certificate received the required number of observations under the COVID-19 allowances during Spring of 2020. The program met the requirements as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g)(3-4)]

#### **Compliance Issues to be Addressed** (see Next Steps Plan)

- 19 TAC §228.2 (26) – Qualifications of Mentors  
Action: The EPP needs to update the email used to collect mentor qualifications to verify the mentor's certificate(s), years of experience, and accomplishments as an educator as shown by student learning. Submit evidence of the qualifications, including certificates,



years of experience, and accomplishments as an educator, for the assigned mentor for one current Teacher PB candidate and one current Teacher ACP candidate.

- 19 TAC §228.2(26) – Training Mentors  
Action: The EPP needs to update its training procedures to ensure each mentor is trained within three weeks of being assigned a candidate. Submit the candidate internship placement information, including the internship start date and assigned mentor, and the certificate of completion for the mentor training (dated) for one current Teacher PB candidate and one current Teacher ACP candidate.
- 19 TAC §228.35(g) – Pre-and Post-Conferences  
Action: The EPP needs to update their observation document to include a start and stop time and date for the pre-conference, observation, and post-conference. The EPP also needs to update local field supervisor training to provide updated guidance to field supervisors on completing the required observation documents. Submit the observation documents, including the pre-observation conference, observation, and post-observation conference, for one current Teacher PB candidate and one current Teacher ACP candidate.
- 19 TAC §228.35(g)(1) – Formal Observation Duration & Format  
The EPP needs to update their observation document to include a location for a start and stop time and date for the pre-conference, observation, and post-conference. The EPP also needs to update local field supervisor training to provide updated guidance to field supervisors on completing the required observation documents. Submit the observation documents, including the pre-observation conference, observation, and post-observation conference, for one current Teacher ACP candidate that capture that each formal observation was at least 45 minutes in duration. Observation documents must reflect the date and time of the observation.

Based on the evidence presented, Relay GSE is not in Compliance with 19 TAC §228.35 – Program Delivery and On-Going Support.

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

### **Findings**

- Relay GSE has established benchmarks to measure candidate progress. Records for all five (5) PB candidates and four (4) out of five (5) ACP candidates included a benchmark document called a Progress Report, that captured admission, coursework, testing, certification checkpoints, and candidate progress. The Progress Report for one (1) out of the five (5) ACP candidates was not submitted for review. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(a)]
- Relay GSE has included structured assessments throughout the EPP. The Core Subjects EC-6 and Science of Teaching Reading performance-based assessments submitted for review served as evidence. Both performance-based assessments included a standards-based rubric that evaluated the candidate's proficiency in the standards. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(a)]



- Relay GSE has processes to ensure that candidates are prepared to succeed in their certification exams. The test readiness requirements are outlined on the Relay GSE Texas Guide to Testing Permissions document. Four (4) out of five (5) PB records included evidence the candidates met test readiness requirements for all required certification exams. One (1) of the five (5) PB records did not include evidence of test readiness for the required content certification exam. Four (4) out of five (5) ACP records included evidence the candidates met test readiness requirements for all required certification exams. One (1) of the five (5) ACP records did not include evidence of test readiness for the required ESL Supplemental certification exam. The program met the requirements as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(b); 19 TAC §228.40(d)]
- An EPP cannot grant test approval for a certification exam until a candidate has met all admission requirements and been formally admitted to the EPP. All five (5) PB candidates and five (5) ACP candidates were admitted to the EPP before receiving test approval. Candidate admission records and ECOS test approval dates served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(d)]
- When a candidate is prepared and granted test approval for a certificate category other than the category in which the candidate was initially admitted, the EPP must collect a written request from the candidate. One (1) out of five (5) PB candidates and two (2) out of five (5) ACP candidates were prepared and given test approval for certificate categories other than those in which they were initially admitted. A written request was included in the candidate records for all three (3) candidates. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(c)]
- Relay GSE collects feedback from candidates, campus principals, and resident advisors. Sample surveys and their results served as evidence. Relay GSE also submitted the Middle Grades Certification Category Options-Evaluation Plan showing the evaluation of the program delivery and design specific to the Core Subjects 4-8 certificate area that has been ongoing since 2019-2020. The program has met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(e)]
- The admission records for all five (5) PB and all five (5) ACP candidates were available except one (1) out of five (5) PB records and one (1) out of five (5) ACP records did not include the candidates screening instrument. All five (5) PB records included the formal observation documents. Three (3) out of five (5) ACP records included the formal observation documents, and two (2) out of five (5) ACP records were missing one of the formal observation documents each. All five (5) PB and five (5) ACP records included the required field supervision documents. All five (5) PB and four (4) out of five (5) ACP records included a Progress Report documenting the candidate's progress in the EPP. One (1) of the five (5) ACP candidate records did not include a Progress Report. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(f)]

### **Compliance Issues to be Addressed**

- None

Based on the evidence presented, Relay GSE is in compliance with 19 TAC §228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement.



## **COMPONENT VI: PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT - 19 TAC §228.50**

### **Findings**

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

- All five (5) PB and all five (5) ACP candidates signed an agreement that they understand and will adhere to the Educator's Code of Ethics. The signed code of ethics statements served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.50]
- Relay GSE faculty, staff, and field supervisors signed a copy of the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics (ECOIE), agreeing to understand and adhere to the ECOIE. Signed copies of the ECOIE served as evidence of compliance. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.50]

### **Compliance Issues to be Addressed**

- None

Based on the evidence presented, Relay GSE is in compliance with 19 TAC §228.50 - Professional Conduct.

## **COMPONENT VII: COMPLAINTS PROCESS – 19 TAC §228.70**

### **Findings**

- Per 19 TAC §228.70(b), the EPP complaints process is filed at TEA. The EPP complaint policy is also posted on the website and posted in the classrooms at the Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Houston locations. The program provides the complaint policy in writing upon request. The program met the requirements as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.70(b)(1-4)]

### **Compliance Issues to be Addressed**

- None

Based on the evidence presented, Relay GSE is in compliance with 19 TAC §228.70 – Complaints Process.

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

### **Findings**

- Teacher candidates must meet degree requirements for certification. Four (4) out of five (5) PB candidates reached standard certification, and all five (5) ACP candidates reached standard certification. The PB candidates who reached standard certification held a master's degree when they received their standard certificate. The ACP candidates who reached standard certification held, at least, a bachelor's degree when they received their standard certificate. Official transcripts from Institutions of Higher



Education served as evidence. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §230.13(a)(1)]

- The Relay GSE Progress Reports and official transcripts served as a record of EPP completion for all four (4) PB and five (5) ACP standard certified candidates. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §230.13(a)(2) & §230.13(b)(3)]
- All four (4) PB and all five (5) ACP standard certified candidates met the application and issuance deadlines for the certificates awarded. [19 TAC §230.13(a)(2); [19 TAC §230.13(b)(3)]

#### **Compliance Issues to be Addressed**

- None

Based on the evidence presented, Relay GSE is in compliance with 19 TAC Chapters 228 and 230 – Certification Procedures.

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

##### **Findings**

- Relay GSE submitted all data required in 19 TAC §229.3(f)(1). [19 TAC §229.3(f)(1) and Associated Graphic]
- Data reported by the EPP in ECOS was compared with related documentation in the 10 candidates' records to verify accuracy. The following are the findings:
  - Admission – The admission data were reported accurately when compared with the documentation in the candidates' records.
  - Observations – The observation data were reported accurately when compared with the documentation in the candidates' records except for the observation dates and times in three (3) out of five (5) PB candidates and four (4) out of five (5) ACP candidates.
  - Program Enrollment – The program enrollment data were reported accurately when compared with the documentation in the candidates' records.

The program did not meet the requirements as prescribed for the ACP and PB routes. [19 TAC §229.3(a), §229.3(f)(1), & related graphic Figure 19 TAC §229.3(f)(1)]

#### **Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps Plan)**

- 19 TAC §229.3(a), §229.3(f)(1), & related graphic Figure 19 TAC §229.3(f)(1)  
Action: The EPP needs to update their observation documents to better record the dates and times of observations and update the data reporting processes to ensure all observation data is reported as it is documented on the observation documents. Submit the observation documents, including the pre-observation conference, observation, and post-observation conference, for one current Teacher PB candidate and one current Teacher ACP candidate. TEA will use the observation documents and records in ASEP to verify the observations were reported in ASEP accurately.

Based on the evidence presented, Relay GSE is not in compliance with 19 TAC Chapter 229 – Integrity of Data Reported.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVISEMENT**

- For Teacher preparation programs, the TExES exam #291 (Core Subjects EC-6) and #117 (ELAR 4-8) are no longer available for testing effective January 1, 2022. To use the 291 for certification, candidates must be certified by December 30, 2022. To use the 117 for certification, candidates must be certified by October 30, 2022. Communicate these important deadlines to applicable current candidates and past finishers who are pending certification.
- Application A has changed – plan to review requirements to prepare for adding new certificate areas.
- Develop and implement more performance assessments in all programs. Evidence of performance assessments is a requirement for adding new certificates using the new Application A.
- Review all certificate areas that the EPP no longer plans to support and request, in writing, for TEA to remove them from inventory.
- Intern and Probationary certificate deactivation timelines and requirements have been updated in TAC. Changes include new timelines for requesting deactivations and information provided to stakeholders in advance of internship start dates. Field supervisors will need to verify candidate placement information at the beginning of the assignment.

## **PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS AII EPPS**

- To ensure continuity in record keeping and other related processes, consider creating a procedure manual documenting EPP processes.
- Align the verbiage of the program to the verbiage of Texas Administrative Code (TAC) (ex. Field supervisor, cooperating teacher, mentor, candidate, etc.);
- Continue to follow the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and the State Board of Education (SBOE) meetings and/or review the minutes to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about 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 program specialist assigned to the program.





- Ensure that TEA staff has the most current contact information by sending updates to the assigned program specialist.

**SUMMARY**

The Next Steps Plan was created collaboratively with Relay Graduate School of Education ACP staff.

**“I have reviewed the EPP Report and agree that all required corrections will be made on or before June 24, 2022.”**

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**Signature of Legal Authority**

**Date**

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**Printed Name of Legal Authority**

**Date**