

Item 10:**Consider and Take Appropriate Action on Request
to Approve New Class of Certificate at Harris County
Department of Education****DISCUSSION AND ACTION**

SUMMARY: This item provides the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) an opportunity to approve a request by Harris County Department of Education, an approved and accredited educator preparation program (EPP) located in Houston, Texas, to offer the Superintendent class of certificate. Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff reviewed the proposal and found that it complied with provisions of 19 TAC Chapter 227, Provisions for Educator Preparation Candidates, Chapter 228, Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs, Chapter 229, Accountability System for Educator Preparation Programs, Chapter 230, Professional Educator Preparation and Certification, Subchapter B, General Certification Requirements, and Chapter 242, Superintendent Certificate.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: The statutory authority related to the approval of new classes of certification are the Texas Education Code, §21.0443 and §21.044.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon SBEC approval.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND JUSTIFICATION: The SBEC approves all new classes of certificates that are offered through an EPP. An EPP must be rated "Accredited" under the Accountability System for Educator Preparation Programs to be eligible to add new classes to program offerings. The EPP prepares an extensive and complete application addressing the SBEC required components of governance, admissions criteria, curriculum, program delivery and on-going support, evaluation, professional conduct, complaint process, issuance of certificates, and submission of required data. The proposal is reviewed by several TEA staff members who hold extensive discussions with the applying entity to ensure compliance with the SBEC rules for the certification class being requested. The Harris County Department of Education application meets the minimum requirements for approval by the SBEC.

PUBLIC AND STUDENT BENEFIT: Approving a new class of certificate offering will increase the number of certified superintendents in the state.

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Superintendent class of certificate at Harris County Department of Education as presented.

Staff Members Responsible:

Tam Jones, Director, Educator Preparation
Vanessa Alba, Program Specialist, Educator Preparation

Attachments:

- I. Statutory Citations Relating to the Approval of New Classes of Certification
- II. Executive Summary for Harris County Department of Education, Superintendent Certification

ATTACHMENT I

Statutory Citations Relating to the Approval of New Classes of Certification

Texas Education Code, §21.0443, Educator Preparation (excerpts):

- (a) The board shall propose rules to establish standards to govern the approval or renewal of approval of:
 - (1) educator preparation programs; and
 - (2) certification fields authorized to be offered by an educator preparation program.
- (b) To be eligible for approval or renewal of approval, an educator preparation program must adequately prepare candidates for educator certification and meet the standards and requirements of the board.

Texas Education Code, §21.044, Educator Preparation (excerpt):

- (a) The board shall propose rules establishing the training requirements a person must accomplish to obtain a certificate, enter an internship, or enter an induction-year program. The board shall specify the minimum academic qualifications required for a certificate.

ATTACHMENT II

Executive Summary for the Harris County Department of Education, Superintendent Certification

Introduction: Texas schools are rapidly becoming more diverse - over 75% of students represent minority populations. Yet, our workforce of diverse leaders with the cultural competence to ensure that all students have the culturally-sustaining learning experience they need to thrive is not growing at the same pace. The Texas Education Agency's 2015 equity plan focused on recruitment of educators of color to address the persistent inequities that impact students from poverty, English language learners, and those from racially diverse populations. Harris County Department of Education (HCDE) proposes to build on this plan by offering a superintendent certification program with a curriculum that embeds content around critical learning related to race, district leadership, and social justice issues in each learning module. HCDE has a long-standing record of providing high quality educator preparation services in the Houston area since its initial program approval in 2005. We have a specific goal to actively recruit underrepresented individuals who have a history of successful teaching and leadership in diverse schools, and who express a desire to engage in community-based learning experiences that will help them to bridge the equity gaps in school districts of Texas. Each year HCDE selects a cohort of 20 candidates who meet the established admission criteria. The first cohort's anticipated start date is fall 2019. We offer a face-to-face program model, and seminars are facilitated at the HCDE facility.

Component 1: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs

HCDE educator preparation program advisory committee meets twice annually to provide input on program design, delivery, evaluation, and major policy decisions. The advisory committee is comprised of 41 individuals representing all 4 categories of stakeholders as required by 19 TAC §228.20(b). New members receive a formal invitation and a face-to-face training, facilitated by the program director, to explain the Advisory Committee Handbook as well members' commitment, roles, and responsibilities.

Component 2: Admission Criteria

Admission consists of all elements required in 19 TAC §227 and §242 including additional criteria above the state minimum requirements. Applicants are required to hold a master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution of higher education [19 TAC §242.5], have a minimum GPA of 3.0 [state minimum is 2.5 per 19 TAC §227.10], complete an application [19 TAC §227.10], engage in screening activities to determine the candidates' appropriateness for the Superintendent certificate [19 TAC §227.10 and §242.5], and meet the English Language Proficiency requirements [19 TAC §227.10(a)]. Additional requirements above state minimum include an application matrix with a reference rating scale rubric and a scholarly writing sample completed on-site. Out-of-state and out-of-country applicants must also meet requirements set in 19 TAC §230.11(b)(5)(B), §227.10(e), and §242.5. The program cost for candidates is \$4,200.

Component 3: Educator Preparation curriculum

HCDE's superintendent program curriculum is aligned with the superintendent standards in 19 TAC §242.15 and 19 TAC §228 to ensure the highest level of superintendent preparation, including sustained, intensive, instruction, and relevant standards-based practicum. The five learning modules and practicum are grounded in the eight administrative standards, reinforce the standards-based curriculum, and provide relevant, common, authentic leadership learning experiences for each domain and competency assessed on the state exam. Progress towards standards mastery is evaluated upon completion of five thematic learning modules, competency

reviews, and item analyses of an in-person secure practice test. Program instructors assess module coursework and on-site monthly seminars based on behavioral objectives and rubrics.

Component 4: Preparation Program Coursework, Delivery & Ongoing Support

The 11-month program offers monthly on-site seminars with follow up assignments. Candidates complete 200 clock-hours of coursework and a minimum of 160 hours of experiential standards-based practicum. Technical support is available to candidates who need assistance. During the practicum, candidates receive guidance from site supervisors and continuous support from a program field supervisor who is an experienced Texas educator certified as a teacher, principal, and superintendent. The field supervisor makes initial contact with all candidates within three weeks of assignment; and conducts three formal observations that include a pre- and post-observation conference with feedback for each. Additional coaching is provided as needed.

Component 5: Assessment & Evaluation of Candidates & Program

Evaluation of the quality of the professional learning experiences for program candidates is structured on the Kirkpatrick Training Evaluation Model. HCDE Advisory Committee and staff conduct a periodic review and internal evaluation of all program components including participants' feedback, survey data, field observation data, candidate completion and certification rates, and candidates' perception inventories. The curriculum content and delivery are systematically evaluated to determine the quality and relevance of the curriculum. Benchmark data is reviewed after scoring the components of each monthly learning module to ascertain candidates' mastery of the objectives. Adjustments to program design, delivery, and/or content are made based on these formative assessments. All records related to each candidate are retained for five years after program completion.

Component 6: Professional Conduct

All program staff and candidates are required to read, sign, and abide by the Educators' Code of Ethics. Knowledge, understanding, and compliance with the Educators' Code of Ethics are embedded in the staff onboarding process and the program curriculum. Systemic feedback from site and field supervisors allows the program to monitor candidates' professional conduct.

Component 7: Complaints Process

The program complaint procedure is posted in the front office and on the website. Candidates can report initial concerns through an informal conference. If the complaint fails to reach a resolution, a Level One written complaint may be filed. Complaints must be filed within 15 days of the date the individual knew of the action giving rise to the complaint. An official conference is held within ten days after receipt of the written complaint and a written response is provided within ten days following the conference. If the complaint is not resolved at Level One, a Level Two grievance appeal notice may be filed within ten days after receipt of the response from the program director. A written response to the appeal notice will be provided and the results will be retained for a minimum of 3 years. A Level Three grievance through the official TEA complaints process provides a candidate with a final remedy if prior levels failed to resolve the complaint.

Component 8: Issuance of Certificates

HCDE determines candidates' eligibility for the intern, probationary, and standard certificates in strict compliance with 19 TAC §230 rules. Issuance of superintendent intern and probationary certificates is based on candidates' program enrollment, degree of progress, and passing of the TExES Superintendent (195) exam. Issuance of a superintendent standard certificate is based on candidates' readiness as demonstrated by meeting all program benchmarks including successful completion of required coursework and practicum, a passing score on the TExES superintendent (195) exam, and recommendations from field and site supervisors and the program director.