



**Web-Centric Alternative
Certification Program**



**Teacher Preparation and Certification
Program Handbook**

etools4Education
**Web-Centric Alternative
Certification Program (WCACP)**

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Table of Contents

Section I: Code of Ethics	6
Section II: Admission Criteria	12
Section III: Program Components	18
Section IV: Field Experience Options.. ..	24
Section V: Program Policies.....	29
Section VI: Intern Support Team.....	35
Section VII: Program Fees.....	37
Section VIII: New State Mandates	41

Glossary of Terms

Academic year--If not referring to the academic year of a particular public, private, or charter school or institution of higher education, September 1 through August 31.

ACT®--The college entrance examination from ACT®.

Alternative certification program--An approved educator preparation program, specifically designed as an alternative to a traditional undergraduate certification program, for individuals already holding at least a baccalaureate degree.

Beginning teacher--A classroom teacher with less than three years' experience.

Candidate--A participant in an educator preparation program seeking certification.

Certification field--Professional development (elementary and secondary) and delivery system fields, academic or career and technical content fields, special education fields, specializations, or professional fields in which an entity is approved to offer certification.

Clinical teaching--A 14-week full-day teaching practicum at a public school accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) or a TEA-recognized private school that may lead to completion of a standard certificate.

Completer--According to the Higher Education Act, "A person who has met all the requirements of a state-approved educator preparation program." The term completer is no longer used to define the class of educator preparation program candidates subject to a determination of certification examination pass rate.

Cooperating teacher--The campus-based mentor teacher for the student teacher or clinical teacher.

Educator preparation program--An entity approved by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) to recommend candidates in one or more educator certification fields.

Entity--The legal entity that is approved to deliver an educator preparation program.

Examination--An examination or other test required by statute or State Board for Educator Certification rule that governs an individual's admission to an educator preparation program, certification as an educator, continuation as an educator, or advancement as an educator.

Field supervisor--A certified educator, hired by the educator preparation program, who preferably has advanced credentials, to observe candidates, monitor his or her performance, and provide constructive feedback to improve his or her professional performance.

GPA--Grade point average.

Head Start Program--The federal program established under the Head Start Act (42 United States

Code, §9801 et seq.) and its subsequent amendments.

Highly qualified teacher--A teacher who has a baccalaureate degree and full state certification and has demonstrated competency in all subjects in which he or she teaches. A highly qualified teacher has not had any certification requirements waived on an emergency certificate or permit.

Internship--A one-year supervised professional assignment at a public school accredited by the TEA or a TEA-recognized private school that may lead to completion of a standard certificate.

Late hire--An individual who has not been accepted into an educator preparation program before the 45th day before the first day of instruction and who is hired for a teaching assignment by a school after the 45th day before the first day of instruction or after the school's academic year has begun.

Mentor--For a classroom teacher, a certified educator assigned by the campus administrator who has completed mentor training; who guides, assists, and supports the beginning teacher in areas such as planning, classroom management, instruction, assessment, working with parents, obtaining materials, district policies; and who reports the beginning teacher's progress to that teacher's educator preparation program.

Pedagogy--The art and science of teaching, incorporating instructional methods that are developed from scientifically-based research.

Practicum--Practical work in a particular field; refers to student teaching, clinical teaching, internship, or practicum for a professional certificate that is in the school setting.

SAT®--The college entrance examination from the College Board.

Scaled score--A conversion of a candidate's raw score on an examination or a version of the examination to a common scale that allows for a numerical comparison between candidates.

Teacher of record--An educator employed by a school district who teaches the majority of the instructional day in an academic instructional setting and is responsible for evaluating student achievement and assigning grades.

Texas Education Agency staff--Staff of the TEA assigned by the commissioner of education to perform the SBEC's administrative functions and services.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)--The Kindergarten-Grade 12 state curriculum in Texas adopted by the State Board of Education and used as the foundation of all state certification examinations.

Source Note: Chapter §228.2 Definitions – Texas Administrative Code and Chapter §229.2 Definitions – Texas Administrative Code

Section I



Code of Ethics



Code of Ethics and Standard Practices For Texas Educators
TAC Title 19, Part 7, Chapter 247, Rule 247.2

Statement of Purpose

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 and good moral character. 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. This chapter shall apply to educators and candidates for certification.

Enforceable Standards

1. Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.

- A. Standard 1.1. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.
- B. Standard 1.2. The educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert or use monies, personnel, property or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.
- C. Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses or pay.
- D. Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
- E. Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.
- F. Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.
- G. Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies and other state and federal laws.
- H. Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

- I. Standard 1.9. The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students or parents of students.
- J. Standard 1.10. The educator shall be of good moral character and demonstrate that he or she is worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.
- K. Standard 1.11. The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly misrepresent the circumstances of his or her prior employment, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.
- L. Standard 1.12. The educator shall refrain from the illegal use or distribution of controlled substances and/or abuse of prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.
- M. Standard 1.13. The educator shall not consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

2. Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.

- A. Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- B. Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly or recklessly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.
- C. Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.
- D. Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional or citizenship rights and responsibilities.
- E. Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.
- F. Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.
- G. Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

3. Ethical Conduct Toward Students.

- A. Standard 3.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

B. Standard 3.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, recklessly, or negligently treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health or safety of the student or minor.

C. Standard 3.3. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

D. Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.

E. Standard 3.5. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.

F. Standard 3.6. The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.

G. Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal / unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

H. Standard 3.8. The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator--student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.

I. Standard 3.9. The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

- i. The nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
- ii. The subject matter of the communication;
- iii. Whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
- iv. Whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
- v. Whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
- vi. Whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

(c) Pursuant to Article 6252-13d, Revised Civil Statutes, the executive director shall notify the applicant or certificate holder in writing of the agency's intent to seek disciplinary action, including denial or revocation, and the reasons for the proposed action. The applicant or certificate holder shall have the opportunity to be heard according to the procedures set forth in this chapter.

Source Note: The provisions of this §249.16 adopted to be effective March 31, 1999, 24 TexReg 2304

Section II



Admission Criteria



My WCACP Portal

The *My WCACP* portal is used throughout the program to track program status. All paperwork received is updated in the portal on a daily basis.

- Admission Status Tab – tracks the paperwork received for admission
- Profile Tab – tracks contact information
- Transcript Tab – tracks transcripts received
- References Tab – tracks reference forms received
- Forms Tab – paperwork or downloads needed for the application process

Program Consultation

Applicants will receive a call from their Admission Specialist within 1-2 days of applying. The contact will cover admission requirements, *My WCACP* portal access, and help answer any questions that may arise.

Transcript Review

Teaching candidates' official transcripts will be reviewed during the application process to ensure all possible certification areas are identified.

If a teaching candidate does not meet the credit hour requirement for a desired certification area, there is an option to take the Tx PACT for program acceptance. Review the [certification areas](#) page on our website for more detailed information regarding the college hours needed for each certification area.

If a candidate falls into one of these categories, they must take the Tx PACT to be reviewed for the program:

1. Low GPA (overall and last 60), or
2. Do not have the necessary credit hours for desired certification, or
3. WCACP matrix score for admittance is not met (85%) – Tx PACT is requested to bolster application.

To pass the Tx PACT, a candidate must score a 240 or higher. For exams such as Core Subjects EC-6/4-8, candidates will need to pass every section with a minimum of 240.

A score of 250 or higher on the Tx PACT is preferred by WCACP for the following certification areas: 1) Core Subjects EC-6, 2) Core Subjects 4-8, 3), ELAR 7-12, 4) Social Studies 7-12, 5) Science 4-8. A passing Tx PACT score will be reviewed.

Visit the [Pearson website](#) for more information about registering for the Tx PACT.

Email Account

A teaching candidate can use their personal email account for correspondence during the program. In the *My WCACP* portal, follow the prompts to verify an email account during the admission process.

Teaching candidates are responsible for ensuring that email correspondence from the program is received. Contact a program representative if anti-virus software or a spam filter is blocking email correspondence from the program.

Admission Requirements

Requirements to qualify for the online program:

Possess a Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education

If an applicant has not graduated, they are eligible to start the program during the last semester in college. Refer to the contingency admission section for more information regarding the admission options.

GPA Guidelines

To qualify for a Low GPA Exemption, you must:

- Pass your TExES content exam (must be a certification area WCACP offers) and
- Document one year of experience in a related field on your Low GPA Letter.

Certification Areas

To determine eligibility for a particular certification area, college transcripts will be reviewed during the admission process. Teaching candidates have the option to list two certification areas of interest on the online application.

Contingency Admission

Contingency admission applies to all applicants beginning the program that have not received a Bachelor's degree, but are currently in their last semester of coursework in college.

Contingency admission is valid only for one semester and cannot be extended. Teaching candidates will be temporarily suspended if they fail to graduate during contingency admission. If this occurs, the progress in the program will be halted until they are able to graduate.

Will I be given full access to the program?

A contingency admission applicant will be able to work on the online curriculum and take the TExES content exam. Study prep for the content exam will be provided in the online curriculum.

An internship cannot be started before graduation; however, a contingency admission applicant can complete a clinical teaching assignment with the program prior to graduating from college.

Graduated from a Foreign Country

Teaching candidates that graduated outside of the United States and U.S. Territories must turn in the following paperwork during the admission process

Foreign Credential Review

Provide an official transcript evaluated by a **foreign credential evaluator**. Transcripts from a foreign country are not accepted.

- Type of evaluation required: a course-by-course evaluation including grades
 - Official evaluation must be mailed directly from the foreign credential evaluator. Only official evaluations that are mailed directly from the foreign credential service will be accepted. Unofficial copies will not be accepted.
-

Passing TOEFL Scores

Provide proof of English language proficiency by scoring a minimum of 79 on the *Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet-Based Test (TOEFL iBT)*.

- Minimum TOEFL scores required by section: (1) Speaking - 24, (2) Listening – 22, (3) Reading – 22, and (4) Writing - 21
 - Exemption from TOEFL:
 - Completion of an undergraduate or graduate degree at an accredited institution of higher education in the United States, not including US Territories.
 - Completion of an undergraduate or graduate degree earned at an institution of higher education in a **country outside of the United States approved by the State for Educator Certification (SBEC)**.
-

Passing Testing Scores

Provide proof of basic skills competency through the TExES, THEA/TASP, ACT, or SAT. Minimum scores required:

- Passing score on the TExES Content Exam – must be on approved WCACP list, or
- TASP/THEA: Reading - 230, Math - 230, Writing – 220, or

- SAT scores within 5 years of taking the exam; total score of 1050, with a minimum of 500 on verbal and math, or
 - ACT scores within 5 years of taking the exam; total 23 with a minimum of 19 on English and Math.
-

Verification of Work Authorization Status

Provide a verification of lawful permanent residence or a copy of current Green Card if you are not a US citizen. This paperwork must be provided with your application.

GPA Exemption

The program is able to accept a limited number of applicants each year that have a GPA lower than the 2.50 threshold. Each applicant will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by our transcript committee for acceptance into the online program.

During the admission process applicants will be asked to write a short narrative explaining the reasons that led to a low GPA. In addition, passing scores on the PACT are required to be reviewed for a low GPA exemption.

Web-Centric ACP has a limited number of Low GPA Exemptions that can be awarded each year.

Candidate Transfer Information Form

For any applicant that has previously been enrolled in another alternative certification program in Texas, a Candidate Transfer Information Form must be completed and returned. The Candidate Transfer Information Form is a state procedural form used to transfer an individual to another alternative certification program. Acceptance into WCACP will not be granted until the Candidate Transfer Information Form has been completed and processed.

If an alternative certification program does not release the individual in good standing it is the responsibility of the teaching candidate to remedy the situation.

Service Record/Eligibility

Applicants cannot complete an internship assignment if they have taught for three years on an emergency or probationary certificate in Texas. This requirement only applies to applicants that have been the teacher of record. This does not apply to substitute, long term substitute, or instructional aide assignment.

Accreditation Status

WCACP is accredited by SBEC to provide online teacher certification in Texas. Applicants enrolled in the program can teach in any of the 20 regions of the state during their field experience.

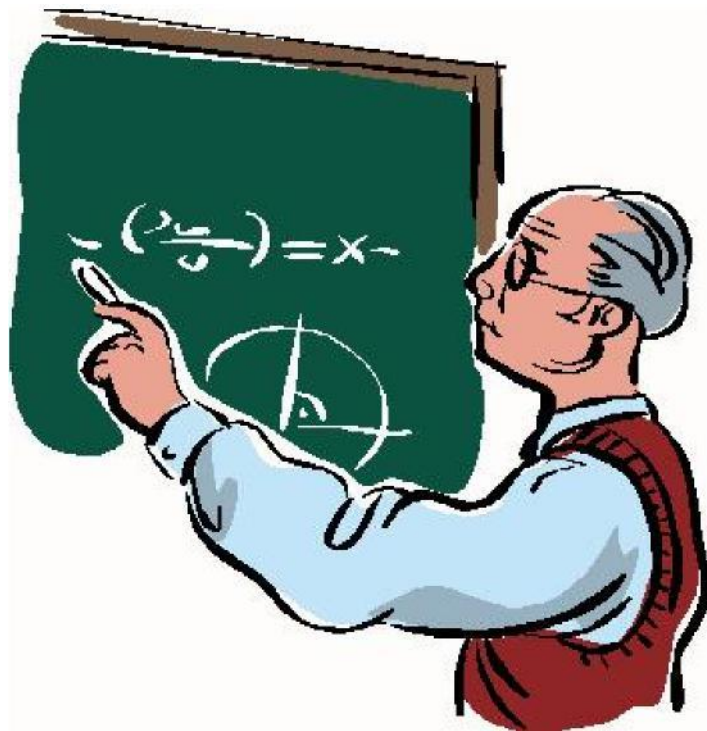
Legal Status to Work in the U.S.

Applicants who are not U.S. citizens have the responsibility of obtaining the appropriate immigration and naturalization documents prior to entering the classroom. Non-citizens are required to have work authorization from the United States Customs and Immigration Service and must inform both the employer and WCACP staff of this fact when receiving an offer of employment. The applicant may begin their field experience assignment once work authorization has been received. The applicant must have work authorization on the first day of their field experience assignment.

Section III



Program Components



Online Coursework Requirements

In accordance with state mandates, teaching candidates are required to complete ongoing training throughout the program (minimum of 300 hours). Teaching candidates must complete four modules during the program. A minimum grade of 80% is required for each module. Additional class sessions are required at specific intervals during the program.

A syllabus for each online module section will be available on the Moodle tab in the My WCACP portal.

Online Curriculum:

- Module I – Instructional Strategies
- Module II – Classroom Management
- Module III - Instructional Technology
- Module IV – Intern/Clinical Teacher Best Practices
 - TxBESS mentor assignments (completed during field experience)

Online Classes:

- Reading Safari Classes (5)
- Pre-Service Classes (4)

WCACP is an online environment that can be accessed and completed at a teaching candidate's convenience. When a teaching candidate becomes an intern or clinical teacher our staff will help them pace online curriculum completion, so they will be ready to become a standard teacher when the required classroom assignment is completed. Teaching candidates' time will be logged and tracked by the learning management system and document their activity while completing online curriculum.

Observation Hours

Teaching candidates must complete 30 state mandated observation hours while enrolled in the program. A total of 15 hours of observations can be completed by accessing our video library. The remaining 15 hours can be completed via in-class observation hours at a school.

An observation letter will be provided in the online curriculum that will allow teaching candidates to schedule in-class observations. Teaching candidates will need to contact an Independent School District, TEA recognized private school, or charter school directly to inquire about observation policies and procedures. It is the teaching candidate's responsibility to set-up the observation assignments.

Certification Exams

Teaching candidates are required to take a minimum of two certification exams to become certified in Texas. Certain certification fields may require additional tests in order for the teaching candidate to be considered highly qualified.

Teaching candidates are required to pass the TExES content exam and Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exam in order to be recommended for a standard teaching certificate.

Science of Teaching Reading (STR)

Beginning January 1, 2021, House Bill 3 will require teacher candidates seeking certification in the following fields to pass the new Science of Teaching Reading (STR) Exam as part of the certification process.

- Core Subjects EC-6
- Core Subjects 4-8
- English Language Arts and Reading 4-8
- English Language Arts and Reading / Social Studies 4-8

What is the Science of Teaching Reading Exam?

The STR exam is targeted for classroom teachers of early learners (prekindergarten - grade 6). It is designed to assess whether the examinee is proficient in the science of teaching reading standards and has obtained the requisite knowledge and skills to practice teaching early reading.

The state preparation manual for the STR exam is now available and can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

To read more about the STR exam, please visit the [Texas Education Agency website](#).

What does this mean for me?

For the program to recommend a certificate, a teaching candidate must pass the new STR exam in addition to the TExES Content exam and PPR exam.

The STR exam will be available to test takers on January 2, 2021. The cost of the exam is \$136. Scores for this exam are reported within 28 days of testing.

WCACP will continue to update our teaching candidates as more information and additional resources for the STR exam become available.

STR Guidelines

A minimum score of 220 is required on the first try of the STR. If the score is below 220, candidates must pass the TX PACT: Essential Academic Skills (700) and complete the retake analysis.

A retake analysis will be required to obtain a test approval for a second STR attempt. Once the retake analysis is completed/approved, candidates have one month to register for the STR exam and 3 months to take the STR exam before approval is removed. The STR passing score is 240.

Consent to Monitor ECOS Account

During WCACP the Educator Info Tab, Addresses Tab, Request Status Tab, Examinations Tab, and Certifications Tab on the state Educator Certification Online Screen (ECOS) will be reviewed on an occasional basis.

The information is used to review for entrance to WCACP, to issue a statement of eligibility once a content exam is passed, verify fingerprinting is complete, and to recommend/monitor a probationary/standard certificate.

Cohort Class

While enrolled in the program, you will be grouped into a cohort class with other certification seekers in the state. The cohort class will encourage collaboration with other candidates for study help, classes, and the online curriculum/projects.

WCACP provides a calendar of program activities to help clarify the process to become certified. The calendar on the website lists out the timings for major certification requirements candidates will focus on during the program.

WCACP candidates have the option to progress slower than the suggested timeline. The timeline is provided to help give clarification of the requirements that must be met before a candidate can complete an internship or clinical teaching assignment.

Performance Standards

- WCACP reserves the right to restrict testing attempts if a certification area fails accreditation standards for 2 straight years. If this occurs, one attempt will be allowed until the ASEP year has completed on 8/31.
- WCACP reserves the right to ask for remedial testing materials to be completed if a testing attempt is failed – for both the content and PPR exam. Benchmarks and remedial assignments must be completed for all F1 applicants. Extra material is required if a candidate scores below 215.
- WCACP reserves the right to restrict testing for a candidate that scores below 215 on any single subject or section of the Core (EC-6 and 4-8). Remedial and CPE courses may be required.
- WCACP reserves the right to require candidates to recomplete pre-service curriculum and classes if testing scores are not passing.
- WCACP reserves the right to change/update study material and program benchmark requirements if state administrative code changes occur.

- WCACP reserves the right to require the Tx Pact if the candidate has a lack of credits, low GPA or has failed multiple certifications in the past.

Switching Certification Areas

- If a candidate fails a certification area twice while enrolled in the program, a passing score on the Tx Pact will be required to switch to a new certification area. This is for all certification areas.
- If a candidate scores below 200 on a certification exam, a passing score on the corresponding Tx PACT exam is required to regain test approval. F1 assessment is required. CPE and remedial benchmarks may be needed.
- If a candidate enters the program and then wants to switch to a Tx PACT admission certification area, they must take and pass the Tx PACT. For example, Business and Finance 6-12.

Test-limit waiver applications

The TEA permits 5 attempts at each certification exam. If a candidate maxes out their attempts, they can apply to the TEA for additional attempts. While WCACP must give approval to the candidate to submit the application, completion of the application is the candidate's responsibility. Questions regarding the application should be directed to the TEA.

Study Material

- WCACP provides study material for each certification exam required for certification. This includes the content exam and PPR exam. The program will pay for two 60-day windows to utilize study material for each exam. Benchmarks are required to be met to obtain a test approval.
- WCACP does not provide study material for the Tx PACT exam. It is the responsibility of the candidate to obtain adequate study material.
- A Fail 1 candidate will be required to complete a full retake analysis. This will consist of study materials to help improve the candidate score on the second attempt. Minimum scores are required to be passed on the benchmark assessments.

Benchmarks for Program Completion

- Candidates have 1 year to attempt content test
- Candidates have 3 years from their start date to begin a field experience assignment:
 - Extensions to remain in the program are granted by request – up to 1 year is possible

- After three years and no extension requested, the candidate is removed from the program - candidate must reapply to the program
- Candidates must recomplete the program curriculum if not certified within 5 years (from start date)
- Candidates must complete a minimum of 180 days in classroom for internship credit (minimum of 4 hours per day)
- Candidates that have already completed 3 years on a certificate with the state – a clinical teaching assignment is the only way to become certified in this situation
- Candidates are responsible to complete study material and retake paperwork for content and PPR testing – more information and requirements can be found on the Test Approval Guidelines page located on the downloads button (located on the Moodle tab)

Section IV



Field Experience Options



Internship vs. Clinical Teaching

Participants enrolled in WCACP have the option to become certified by either completing a one-year teaching internship or a 14-week clinical teaching assignment. Either route to certification will allow a teaching candidate to become a certified teacher in the state of Texas.

Internship

This route to certification is a one-year (two semester) internship that will be completed at an Independent School District, TEA recognized private school, or charter school in the state of Texas. The one-year teaching internship must match the certification area. During the one-year teaching internship, a teaching candidate will receive salary and benefits commensurate of a first-year teacher. Paraprofessional, substitute, or volunteer positions do not count toward an internship.

During the one-year teaching internship, WCACP will recommend an intern or probationary certificate that will run for 12 months. The intern or probationary certificate enables the intern to be considered the “teacher of record”, with all rights, privileges, and responsibilities of any other first year teacher in Texas.

Clinical Teaching

This route to certification is a 14-week unpaid assignment in the classroom of a certified teacher with at least three years of experience. The clinical teaching assignment will consist of gradually taking on the responsibilities of the classroom teacher. The assignment can be completed at any Independent School District or TEA recognized private school in the state of Texas. Charter school requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

The assignment must be completed in the grade level and subject area of the TExES certification exam the candidate has passed. During the clinical teaching assignment, a probationary certificate is not recommended. However, after a successful clinical teaching experience a teaching candidate is eligible to be recommended for a standard certificate.

Internship Year

Teaching candidates must teach full-time in a designated content area during their one-year teaching internship. Paraprofessional, substitute, or volunteer positions do not count toward an internship. During the internship year, an intern or probationary certificate is only issued for the approved certification areas listed on the completed Statement of Eligibility.

An internship is defined as a minimum of one academic year for the assignment that matches the certification field for which the individual holds a highly qualified status. The individual would hold a probationary/intern certificate and be classified as a teacher as reported on the campus (PEIMS) data. WCACP may permit an internship of up to 30 school days less than the minimum if due to maternity leave, military leave, or illness.

If an intern is placed on a deficiency plan, a second-year certificate will be warranted in most instances. This type of action in some circumstances can jeopardize the program ability to recommend a standard certificate.

Employment Requirements

Teaching candidates must teach in a Texas Independent School District, TEA recognized private school or, charter school for a full year to complete the requirements for the internship. WCACP does not guarantee employment nor places candidates in teaching positions.

Teaching candidates may teach only in the area for which certification is being sought. For an internship to be acceptable, the teaching candidate must work full-time in a designated content area. Coaching and other extra-curricular duties must not interfere with WCACP requirements.

Obtaining an Internship

While WCACP **does not guarantee employment**, there are several resources available to candidates and districts that may assist in the employment process:

1. Human Resource directors and school administrators receive updates of candidates who are highly qualified to begin a one-year teaching internship
2. Several job fairs are held throughout the 20 regions of the state
3. WCACP staff help with the candidate's overall teaching portfolio – resume, cover letter and reference page

Teaching candidates seeking a teaching position will need to apply to districts to ensure they are considered for posted positions.

Keep in mind the economy may affect the number of teaching jobs available (funding, RIFs in school districts), availability of jobs in rural areas, especially west Texas and the I-35 corridor from Dallas/Ft Worth to San Antonio.

Authorization for Release of Information

WCACP reserves the right to release teaching candidate's names, email addresses, and phone numbers to Human Resource directors and school administrators. This information is released to help teaching candidates find employment to complete the requirements of the certification process. The information will only be released to Human Resource directors and school administrators once you have obtained your highly qualified status.

The teaching candidate must inform WCACP staff during the admission process to opt out of the candidates search database.

Special Ed Requirements

In order to receive a probationary or intern certificate in special education, a corresponding Generalist exam must be passed.

Elementary/Middle School – Core Subjects EC-6 + Special Education EC-12

Deactivation of Intern or Probationary Certificate

The following steps must be taken if you resign, are non-renewed, or are terminated from your teaching position while running on an active intern or probationary certificate.

Step #1: Notify program – fill out intern cancellation form to give the program details

- Available on the Downloads tab
- You can call the main office to request the link to be sent to you for completion
- Link to form -- <https://www.sealeddata.net/internship-cancellation-form2.php>

Step#2: Within 24 hours of filling out the intern cancellation form, you must provide the program with your resignation, non-renewal, or termination letter from the school.

You will be notified by letter once the deactivation process begins. Failure to provide the required information to WCACP in the given amount of time will result in your termination from program.

Emergency Permit

An Emergency Permit is not a path to certification. This type of permit cannot be renewed. Candidates are using 1 of 3 possible years of certification eligibility with the Texas Education Agency/SBEC.

The following items must be completed prior to issuance of a Deficiency Plan.

- Complete Module 1 (all three sections) in the curriculum
- Process the \$400 emergency permit fee

If needed, the emergency permit fee will be waived for pay-in-full admission candidates.

Benchmarks for the 23-24 school year:

The following benchmarks are required to stay in good standing during an Emergency Permit. Failure to meet benchmarks on time will result in dismissal from WCACP.

Benchmark #1: Within 2 months of beginning an emergency permit, a candidate is required to complete Module 2 in the curriculum.

Benchmark #2: Within 5 months of beginning an emergency permit, a candidate is required to attempt their content exam.

When benchmark deadlines are approaching, a reminder letter will be sent to the candidate, principal and district alerting them of the deficiency.

Certification and Legal Status

The intern or probationary certificate enables the intern to be considered the “teacher of record”, with all rights, privileges, and responsibilities of any other first year teacher in Texas. A person completing an alternative certification program is viewed as having the same first year probationary status as a teacher who has successfully completed all the requirements of an approved teacher education program at an institution of higher education.

Texas law recognizes WCACP teacher status and code as being one that affords individuals hired by a district all the benefits of any other probationary teacher within the district. Interns hired as the teacher of record are placed on an intern or probationary (issued by the State Board for Educator Certification) in order to teach during their year of internship. A person is allowed to teach for one year on a probationary certificate.

The state of Texas will not allow an individual to teach for more than three years without earning certification. Individuals who have taught on an emergency permit before being accepted into WCACP may not qualify for an extension of the probationary certificate due to the three-year rule.

An extension of a probationary certificate may be issued under one or both of the following circumstances, assuming a district is willing to continue employment of the individual:

- The individual has completed WCACP but has not yet passed all required certification exams; and/or completed the necessary curriculum.
 - The individual has not performed satisfactorily in the classroom and requires an additional year of internship. This may include repeating a portion of the WCACP curriculum and supervision by WCACP staff.

Teaching candidates have a maximum of three years of eligibility to become a certified teacher in Texas. This includes the first probationary certificate that is initiated and subsequent extensions that may be granted by WCACP.

Section V



Program Policies



Application Timeframe

A WCACP application will remain active for 3 months (from the application submission date). If an applicant has not turned in admission paperwork by the end of the three-month period, the individual will need to reapply and submit updated paperwork to be considered for admission to the program.

Once a formal invitation of acceptance is sent, an applicant will have one month to accept the invitation of acceptance and to process the necessary curriculum access fee payment. After 30 days, the invitation of formal acceptance is no longer valid.

If denied acceptance to the program, an applicant can reapply every six months. Updated paperwork and a new online application are required.

Application Disqualifiers

Probation

If an applicant is currently on probation for any type of offense, they will not qualify for entrance into WCACP.

Enrolled in Multiple Teacher Certification Programs

If an applicant has been enrolled in more than one teacher certification program in the state of Texas, they will not qualify for entrance into WCACP.

Resigned or Terminated from Teaching Position

If an applicant resigned or was terminated from a teaching position while running on a probationary certificate in Texas, they will not qualify for entrance into WCACP.

Not Released in Good Standing from Previous Teacher Certification Program

If an applicant was previously enrolled in a different teacher certification program in Texas, a Candidate Transfer Information Form will need to be processed before full acceptance to the program can be granted.

If the prior teacher certification program does not release an applicant in good standing, they will not qualify for entrance into WCACP. If they decline to fill out the form, WCACP's only recourse is to deny acceptance to the applicant. WCACP cannot force another ACP in Texas to fill out the state mandated form so a transfer can be possible

Educator Sanction Placed on ECOS Account

If an applicant is currently under educator sanction by TEA, they will not qualify for entrance into WCACP.

Disciplinary Actions

Failure to comply with program expectations or the required training requirements may result in the individual being suspended or dismissed from the program.

Possible causes for disciplinary action include, but are not limited to the following:

- Noncompliance with the Texas Education Code, Texas Administrative Code, Morals Clause or SBEC/TEA rules and regulations
- Educator sanction placed on your ECOS account
- Failure to follow compliant guidelines
- Failure to exhibit professionalism with Program Directors, WCACP staff members, Virtual Instructors or Field Supervisors in person, on the telephone or over electronic communications. This may include, but not limited to:
 - Hanging up on program staff (rude phone call),
 - Derogatory in nature over the phone or email,
 - Screaming emails (i.e., I DEMAND ACTION),
 - Unprofessional behavior during class series.
- Inability to demonstrate proficient classroom management or instructional skills
- Failure to submit program documents in a timely manner. Interns that do not submit paperwork by the fourth week of starting their teaching assignment will face disciplinary actions.
- Failure to submit intern information form once employed by a district full-time. A probationary certificate will not be recommended until all required paperwork is turned in to WCACP staff.
- Failure to contact WCACP staff within 30 days of receiving full-time employment from an Independent School District, TEA recognized private school, or charter school (teaching job is full time in their content area) – The *I Got a Job* form should be filled out to alert WCACP when a teaching job is obtained.
- Termination from a teaching position under district board policy
- Failure to comply with training requirements

- Failure to set-up ACH payments in a timely manner
- Failure to consistently make payments during internship
- Discovery of counterfeit or forged transcripts or official paperwork
- Omission of service record – any full-time teaching assignment in the state of Texas
- Omission of termination from a previous teaching assignment
- Inappropriate posting/contact with students or children on social networking sites

Placed on administrative leave by school (disciplined in some way, but keeping on as teacher until end of contract) – probationary will be deactivated per TEA rules

Probation

If a teaching candidate is charged with a felony, misdemeanor or is placed on probation during the program, they must contact a WCACP staff member immediately. Proper disciplinary action may be warranted depending on the particular situation. Failure to alert a WCACP staff member will result in immediate termination from the program.

Paperwork Return

All paperwork received during the admission process will not be returned to applicants for any reason. This includes reference forms and transcripts.

Program Contact

Once enrolled in WCACP, program staff will only correspond with the individual enrolled in the program. Family members or friends will not be allowed to inquire about program status or a particular file of the individual enrolled in the program. This is to protect the privacy of the individual enrolled in the program at all times.

MAC Computer

Depending on the version of MAC computer, individuals may have trouble accessing certain systems crucial to completing WCACP. This includes the online portal and online curriculum platform used throughout the program. Alternate computer accommodations may be required if compatibility problems arise.

Texting as a Method of Contact

WCACP program staff will use a combination of phone calls, emails, and texts during the program. The texting method of contact will be used in certain

situations to let teaching candidates know of important deadlines or paperwork reminders.

If an applicant chooses not to receive texts as a method of contact, please email Wendy Brasher at wbrasher@etools4education.com during the admission process.

Testimonials

If an individual decides to submit an internship or clinical teaching testimonial, WCACP reserves the right to post the information in the My WCACP portal or on the main etools4Education website. The teaching candidates' name will be used with the testimonial unless you notify us to remove all identification information from the posting.

Fingerprinting

If an applicant has ever been charged or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony criminal offense, they may be asked to complete state mandated fingerprinting prior to acceptance to the online program. An evaluation will be completed during the review process to determine if they will be required to fulfill this requirement.

Failure to Complete Internship (when eligible)

Teaching candidates should begin a teaching internship if they are actively enrolled in the online program and teach full-time at an Independent School District, TEA recognized private school or charter school. WCACP is required by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to follow state law code related to an internship, which involves field supervisor visits at specific intervals during an internship.

Compliant Process

WCACP encourages all candidates to first resolve problems internally with their WCACP program contact. Program Directors are on standby to resolve any issues or problems that arise while enrolled in WCACP.

Click on [formal complaint](#) to file a complaint against WCACP. Allow 2-3 days for a response from a WCACP Program Director.

The complaints process is to help alleviate conflicts and problems at the program level. Contacting TEA for resolution should only occur once all attempts have been exhausted with the program to resolve the matter. Failure to follow these guidelines can result in removal from the program.

Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation

(1) pursuant to the Texas Education Code (TEC), §22.083, candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to employment as an educator; and

(2) pursuant to the TEC, §22.0835, candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to clinical teaching.

Potential impact of criminal convictions on becoming certified: (19 TAC 249.15)

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/sbecrules/tac/chapter249/ch249b.html#249.15>

Rules regarding specific criminal offenses: (19 TAC 249.16)

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/sbecrules/tac/chapter249/ch249b.html#249.16>

How a criminal history may impact my eligibility for the classroom and how to check with the state to see if a problem exists that would prevent certification:

- Keep in mind the potential ineligibility of a candidate with a prior criminal history. Issuance of a certificate in Texas will not be possible in some cases.
- Be aware of the current State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) rules prescribed in §249.16 of this title (relating to Eligibility of Persons with Criminal History for a Certificate under Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 53, and Texas Education Code, Chapter 21)
- Candidates have the right to request a preliminary criminal history evaluation prior to admission: (19 TAC 227.103)
 - <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/sbecrules/tac/chapter227/ch227b.html#227.101>
 - https://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Educators/Investigations/Preliminary_Criminal_History_Evaluation-FAQs/ (How to Apply)

The effect of supply and demand forces on the educator workforce in this state:

<http://www.online-distance-learning-education.com/supply-and-demand-of-teachers-in-texas.html>

The performance over time of the EPP for the past five years:

https://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Educators/Preparation_and_Continuing_Education/Consumer_Information_about_Educator_Preparation_Programs/Consumer_Information_about_Educator_Preparation_Programs/

Section VI



Intern Support Team



Intern Support Team

During a field experience assignment, a trained team of professional educators will be available to provide on-the-job support throughout the school year.

Field Supervisor

A WCACP Field Supervisor will be assigned to each intern completing a one-year teaching internship. The Field Supervisor will visit at least 3 times during the school year to assist and evaluate each intern. Additional sessions may be required if an intern is placed on a deficiency plan by the campus principal.

A WCACP Field Supervisor will be assigned to each clinical teacher during their 14-week assignment. The Field Supervisor will visit at least 3 times during the 14-week assignment. Additional sessions may be required if a clinical teacher is not meeting the expectations of the cooperating teacher.

Campus Administrator

The campus administrator is employed by the school district and is normally the campus principal or assistant principal. The assistance offered by the administrator includes providing campus level program supervision and support. The administrator will also complete walk-throughs on a regular basis and complete a district appraisal for each intern.

Mentor Teacher

The mentor teacher is employed by the district. The duties of the mentor teacher include working with an intern who has little or no classroom experience. The mentor provides support to the intern throughout the school year. The relationship of the two is critical to the success of the intern. The relationship is supportive and formative; it is not evaluative. Mentor teachers should be able to demonstrate competencies in planning and delivery, management and assessment and professional leadership. Mentor teachers provide feedback to the intern. Typically, the mentor teacher is assigned by the building principal with assistance provided by WCACP.

Cooperating Teacher

The duties of the cooperating teacher are to supervise and give guidance to a clinical teacher during their assignment in the classroom. The cooperating teacher will be assigned by the principal in most instances. The cooperating teacher will have at least three years of classroom experience in your particular content area.

Section VII



Program Fees



Program Fees

Fees Paid to the Program		
Curriculum Access Fee	\$149	Paid once you are accepted into the program.
Tuition Fee	\$1,800	Pay with progression through the online curriculum or defer this expense until the field experience assignment.
Field Experience Fee	\$1,950	Pay the field experience fee when beginning a teaching internship or clinical teaching assignment.
Total Program Cost	\$3,899	

Each applicant will be given the best discount/promotion available during the admission process. **Multiple discounts are not permitted.**

Fees Paid to Other Individuals/Agencies

TEExES Content Test	\$116	Paid directly to Pearson
TEExES PPR Test	\$116	Paid directly to Pearson
BTLPT (bilingual candidates only)	\$116	Paid directly to Pearson
Core Subjects Individual Subject Test	\$65	Paid directly to Pearson
Probationary or Intern Teaching Certificate	\$78	Paid directly to SBEC
Standard Teaching Certificate	\$78	Paid directly to SBEC
Fingerprinting	\$52	Paid directly to fingerprinting agency

**Agency fees are subject to change without notice

** Each applicant will be given the best discount/promotion available during the admission process.
Multiple discounts are not permitted.

Technology Fee

The program is responsible to collect a \$35 technology fee per candidate who are admitted on or after 9/1/2018. The technology fee collected from candidates is paid to the [Texas Education Agency \(TEA\)](#).

Intern Certificate Fee

This fee will be added (once employed) to a candidate's remaining program fees if an Intern Certificate is needed - additional field supervisor support and observations are required.

- \$400 if PPR has not been attempted
- \$200 if working on PPR retake attempt or completed 1st attempt study material requirements for PPR

The intern certificate fee is required if a candidate has not passed the PPR exam prior to being recommended for a certificate.

The fee is waived for pay-in-full admission candidates.

Clinical Teaching Coupon

A teaching candidate is allowed to use one coupon when signing up for a clinical teaching placement. The program discount (depending on the amount) will be deducted once a candidate begins a clinical teaching assignment.

If the teaching candidate fails to complete the CT requirements or is not placed into an assignment, the program discount will be removed from the Invoice tab.

Internship Extension Fee

A \$2,400 fee is required for an intern or clinical teaching extension -- less than 5% of candidates need a 2nd year in the classroom due to noncompliance with certification standards

Refund Policy

All program fees (curriculum access fee, tuition fee, and field experience fee) paid to etools4Education, LLC for services rendered through the Web-Centric Alternative Certification Program (WCACP) are non-refundable. This includes all third-party payments received, including DARs and MyCAA payments.

Tuition Fee Payment Programs

Teaching candidates starting the program will have the option to take advantage of Pay-in Full options and the Freedom Program. These programs provide reimbursement offers to pay down program fees prior to beginning a field experience assignment.

Freedom Program

The Freedom Program allows a more flexible payment option. Eligibility for program rewards is renewed each month the teaching candidate is enrolled in the program.

The Freedom Program allows a teaching candidate to set up reoccurring monthly payments as low as \$50 per month. This will help lower tuition fees while progressing through the program.

Reactivation of Inactive Account

A candidate will need to fill out the reactivation information form if they have an inactive program status and would like to restart the certification program. Review of the certification file usually takes 2-3 business days.

A candidate is turned inactive for the following reasons: (1) candidate asks to be inactive, (2) candidate is terminated from program, (3) candidate fails to respond to multiple calls, emails, text while enrolled, (4) candidate is not meeting benchmarks outlined in the program.

Candidates are entered in the TEA system on a yearly basis to show candidates actively enrolled in the program. TEA is requiring WCACP to re-enroll candidates that have been inactive for more than a year. This is a recent change that has forced us to re-screen applicants for admission.

Reactivated candidates may be asked to take the Tx PACT to qualify. With new accreditation standards imposed by the state, WCACP has to maintain adequate testing standards.

Candidates will be notified by email within 2-3 business days to let them know if they are eligible for reactivation. A \$65 reactivate fee is due in order to restart the program.

All program resources are restored once reactivation is complete. A short program restart call will be conducted to get each candidate on a successful path towards certification.

Automatic Disqualifiers for Reactivation:

The following reasons will prevent a candidate from reactivating: (1) if candidate is currently on probation or have criminal charges pending, (2) failed to submit an official conferred transcript, (3) currently under educator sanction by TEA, (4) terminated from a clinical teaching or internship assignment or (5) began the program more than 5 years ago.

Disclaimer

These policies, regulations, and procedures are subject to change without notice by the program. Updates and revisions are posted in the Program Handbook on an occasional basis. The Program Handbook is always available for download in the *My WCACP* portal.

Section VII



New State Mandates



Educator Certification Examination Retake Policy Change

Candidates are now limited to five attempts to take a certification exam. The five attempts include the first attempt to pass the examination and four retakes. The five attempts include any of the test approval methods (PACT, EPP, out of state, charter, and CBE). The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is implementing this change to Texas Education Code §21.048 in response to HB 2205, 84th Texas Legislature, 2015.

Certification Changes - (new state law code)

New certification rules concerning teaching internships effective September 1, 2017:

- Probationary Certificate: Valid for one year, must have passed content and PPR exam, may be renewed two times, minimum of 3 field supervisor visits during internship
- Intern Certificate: Valid for one year, must have passed content exam, but have not passed PPR exam (given the school year to pass), may not be renewed, minimum of 5 field supervisor visits during internship.
- 24/12 Exemption: has been removed – candidates must pass a content exam to be hired
- Bilingual Candidates: Must pass a content exam (core EC-6 or core 4-8), bilingual supplemental, and the BTLPT exam in order to be hired
- 30 observation hours must be documented - 15 can be completed with approved virtual videos

Science of Teaching Reading (STR)

- Starting January 1, 2021, all candidates pursuing Core Subjects EC-6, Core Subjects 4-8, ELAR 4-8 and ELAR/SS 4-8 will be required to pass the Science of Teaching Reading exam.