

Program and Policy Handbook 2023-2024



Our Mission

Our greatest contribution is to be sure there is a teacher in every classroom who cares that every student, every day, learns and grows and feels like a real human being.

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Education Service Center Region 13 Educator Certification Program Overview

Program Background

Alternative certification programs in Texas were established in 1984 by the 68th Legislature in House Bill 72. In this Bill, the State Board of Education (SBEC) was directed to provide for the certification of individuals who met specific requirements and who completed an internship in a public school or a Texas Education Agency (TEA) approved charter or private school. The bill was originally implemented for non-certified teachers to fill shortages in critical need areas and to provide an alternative certification route for qualified individuals interested in making a career change. The Region 13 Educator Certification Program (ECP) was established in 1989 to provide an opportunity for professionals from various careers to become teachers through an approved alternative route to certification. ECP is a rigorous field-based program that integrates theory with practice. In this program, teacher-interns make valuable contributions to accredited public, charter, and private schools as they draw upon their diverse past experiences to enhance student learning.

Texas Administrative Code requires that all students have the benefit of a qualified teacher knowledgeable in the content they are responsible for teaching. As a result, prospective teachers in all content areas are required to demonstrate content competency prior to teaching. For teachers in Texas, this is accomplished by passing the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) content exam(s) that match(es) the area of certification the prospective teacher is seeking.

Program Timeline

- Program participants will complete their state content examination(s) in the spring and summer preceding their internship experience. Participants are required to demonstrate content competency before seeking and accepting employment with a school district. Preparation for the TExES content exam is provided through online instruction for most certification areas. This requires a high level of personal discipline, as candidates are responsible for managing their time, completing all readings, assignments, and course tests in a timely manner.
- Upon successful completion of pre-service instruction and related program and state requirements and demonstration of a commitment to ongoing instruction during the school year, participants are eligible to be employed as a teacher for the internship year. Once a full-time teaching position is secured, participants are placed on an intern or probationary teaching certificate (*see types of certificates*). During the internship year, the teacher-intern is hired by a district as the teacher of record with full pay and benefits.
- Upon successful completion of the internship year and related program and state requirements, participants earn a standard teaching certificate specific to their teaching assignment/area of certification.

Certification Areas Offered by Region 13 ECP

The Region 13 Educator Certification Program is accredited by the Texas Education Agency/ State Board for Educator Certification. The program has been approved to offer the following certificate areas.

Elementary and Middle School Areas

- EC-6 Core Subjects + Science of Teaching Reading (STR)
- EC-6 Bilingual Core Subjects + STR
- EC-6 ESL Core Subjects + STR
- 4-8 Core Subjects + STR
- 4-8 Bilingual Core Subjects + STR
- 4-8 ESL Core Subjects + STR
- 4-8 Math
- 4-8 Science
- 4-8 Social Studies
- 4-8 English/Language Arts/Reading + STR
- 4-8 Math/Science
- 4-8 English/Language Arts/Reading/Social Studies + STR

Secondary Certification Areas

- 6-12 Agricultural, Food and Natural Resources
- 6-12 Health Science
- 6-12 Marketing
- 6-12 Business and Finance
- 6-12 Trades and Industrial Education
- 6-12 Technology Education
- 6-12 Computer Science
- 6-12 Family and Consumer Sciences (composite)
- 8-12 Human Development & Family Studies
- 8-12 Hospitality, Nutrition and Food Science
- 6-12 JROTC
- 7-12 Math
- 7-12 Math/Physics
- 7-12 Science
- 6-12 Math/Physical Science/Engineering
- 7-12 Social Studies
- 7-12 English/Language Arts/Reading
- 6-12 Dance
- 6-12 Speech

All Grade Levels

- EC-12 Reading Specialist
- EC-12 Languages Other Than English
- EC-12 Special Education + STR
- EC-12 Technology Applications
- EC-12 Music
- EC-12 Art
- EC-12 P.E.
- EC-12 Theatre Arts

Types of Certificates Offered

Intern Certificate

- To be placed on an Intern Certificate, a program participant must pass all TExES content exams required for their certification area.
- An Intern Certificate is valid for a period of one year and will require five formal observations by the educator preparation program.
- Participants are allowed **ONE** Intern Certificate for their lifetime.

Probationary Certificate

- To be placed on a Probationary Certificate, a program participant must pass all TExES content exams required for their certification area as well as the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exam.
- A Probationary Certificate is valid for one year with the option for one additional year. Three formal observations will be required by the educator preparation program for interns on this type of certificate.

ECP Application Process

Deadlines and Forms

Consult the website <http://teach.esc13.net> to determine application and payment deadlines for the certification areas offered. The application and application fee payment must be completed online, and official professional reference forms must be downloaded from the ECP website. Once the application and required documents are submitted and reviewed, qualified applicants will be invited to participate in a face-to-face interview.

GPA

For every certification area, admission requires a baccalaureate degree earned from and conferred by an institute of higher education recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Region 13 requires that the candidate have an overall grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 or a GPA of at least 2.75 in the last 60 semester credit hours. A candidate must have a minimum of 60 hours associated with a GPA on their transcript or they must take the Pre Admission Content Test.

The candidate must also have a 2.5 in the coursework required for the designated certification area. Region 13 computes the GPA based on all transcripts. Therefore, official transcripts from ALL institutions of higher education the applicant has attended must be submitted to the ECP office. Candidates seeking certification in the area of Trades and Industrial Education will be expected to document work experience in lieu of the required GPA.

GPA 10% Exception Rule

Consideration by the program coordinator may be granted to individuals with a GPA less than a 2.5. This exception to the minimum GPA requirement will be provided only in extraordinary circumstances, such as illness or deployment, and may not be used by a program to admit more than 10% of any cohort of candidates. All candidates in the 10% Exception Rule category must provide a passing score on a Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) in their content area to be considered for acceptance. For information about taking a PACT, please see <http://www.tx.nesinc.com/>.

A list of required coursework for each certificate offered can be found at this link:
<https://teach.esc13.net/path-to-certification/requirements>

Proficiency in Reading, Math and Writing

In addition to the coursework requirement, a candidate may provide evidence of competency in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics using one or a combination of the following:

- Master's Degree or higher OR
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) OR
- Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) OR
- THEA (Texas Higher Education Assessment-formerly TASP, or Texas Assessment of Skills Proficiency) OR
- COMPASS OR
- ACCUPLACER

Supplying scores for these tests is an optional part of the application process. Test scores submitted will be viewed as supplementary information. Submission of these scores is helpful but not required.

Second Language Proficiency Screening

Applicants for Languages Other Than English and Bilingual Education or those submitting foreign transcripts will be required to demonstrate language proficiency in reading, writing, listening and speaking by participating in a language screening during their interview for program admission.

Credentials from Outside the United States

Transcripts from institutions outside the United States must be evaluated by a TEA approved credential evaluation service. Evaluation must include semester hour equivalent, grade point evaluation and a statement confirming that the degree is equivalent to at least a bachelor's degree conferred by a college or university in the United States. The evaluation must indicate that the applicant has an overall grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 (See <http://goo.gl/qsRQFZ> for a list of credential evaluation services).

Applicants with a transcript from outside the United States must also provide TOEFL iBT test results with a minimum score of 24-Speaking, 22- Listening, 22-Reading, and 21-Writing. If you have a degree from a country where English is the official language, a TOEFL score is not required. [See approved list.](#)

Military Service

Applicants who currently or previously served in the military will be asked to provide a Joint Services Transcript or equivalent as part of their application materials. Cohort specialists will review Joint Services Transcripts to determine if coursework aligns with certification preparation coursework for their specific content area. For CTE applicants Joint Services Transcripts can be submitted along with the Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) for consideration when calculating work experience within the required time range. For CTE applicants, a Joint Services Transcript may count in lieu of the required industry license or certification. *Health Science applicants must hold an active license/certification.*

For all content-tested teachers the Joint Services Transcript will be evaluated for content specific coursework for admission purposes.

Interview

Applicants participate in a face-to-face interview developed by ECP to determine their aptitude for teaching.

Reapplication

Applicants who were previously accepted and withdrew or were dismissed before program completion may reapply to the program. A new application must be completed. If an applicant reapplies within one cohort year of the previous acceptance, and did not previously attend orientation, no additional application fee is required. In all other circumstances, a new application fee must be paid. If readmission occurs within one cohort year from original acceptance, fees paid for registration and pre-service will be applied to the new cohort year, if applicable.

Credit for coursework completed prior to withdrawal or dismissal may be awarded upon readmission at the discretion of the cohort specialist.

We reserve the right to deny program readmission based on prior program performance. No guarantees are made about reacceptance into the program.

Contingent Admission

Applicants who have not earned an undergraduate degree may be eligible for contingent admission into the ECP if their degree is conferred within the semester of applying.

Conditional Acceptance

Occasionally, an applicant is accepted into the program with conditions. These conditions are limited to pending receipt of an official transcript showing degree conferred. The educator preparation program shall not grant test approval for the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities exam until all conditions have been met.

Selection

Candidates are selected for the program based on their qualifications as set out in the screening process. Not all applicants who meet minimum requirements are selected for the program. Each year the program staff identifies a maximum number of applicants who will be accepted into the program, and those applicants whose qualifications rise to the top of the applicant pool are selected.

The selection criteria include:

- overall GPA
- coursework requirements per certification area
- GPA on coursework
- rubric score from face-to-face interview
- quality of references
- work experience
- experience working with students in an educational setting
- a writing sample
- a passing score on the Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT Exam), if applicable
- other criteria, such as language fluency for applicants for Languages Other Than English and bilingual applicants as well as applicants with transcripts from outside the United States, are also used.

Region 13 seeks a diverse applicant pool and strongly encourages all to apply. Region 13 shall not discriminate against any individual on the basis of any of the following characteristics: race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age (applies to individuals who are 40 years of age or older), disability, or genetic information.

Criminal History Checks

Per Texas Administrative Code 227.1. (b), Educator Preparation Programs should inform all applicants that: (1) Pursuant to the Texas Education Code (TEC), § 22.083, all candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to employment as an educator.

If you feel this is a concern and you have questions about eligibility for a Texas educator certificate, TEA staff may perform an evaluation for a non-refundable fee of \$50. Visit the [Texas Education Agency](#) for more information regarding these procedures.

If convicted of an offense there is a potential for ineligibility for a issuance of a certificate from the Texas Education Agency.

Transfers

Individuals wishing to transfer from another alternative certification program must complete all steps of the application process. In addition, they must submit a TEA Candidate Transfer form with their online application. Transfer acceptance will be at the discretion of the ECP (see Selection criteria above). If the intern is indicated as a "finisher" in the previous program, please see the finisher admission program information section in the handbook. Candidates transferring from other programs will be required to start ECP coursework from the beginning. Credit will not be given for coursework completed in another program.

Revoked Certificate

Candidates who have had their certificates revoked by TEA will not be considered for admission into ECP.

Suspended Certificates

Region 13 will comply with TEA guidelines for admission or readmission of candidates with suspended certificates. Suspended certificate candidates' acceptance will be at the discretion of the ECP (see Selection criteria above).

ECP Standards of Conduct

ECP Class Expectations

The ECP staff maintains high standards of conduct and expects interns to demonstrate professional behavior during training classes and in their own classrooms. This includes punctuality for all ECP class sessions and activities. Attendance and other professional behavior are required at all class sessions (online and on-site) for successful completion of the program. The curriculum taught in class sessions is aligned to the Texas Educator Standards, and instruction has been designed to provide interns with experiences and information needed for the first year of teaching.

Punctuality

Attendance during the entire class session is required. When an intern's cumulative tardy minutes reach 30 minutes, the intern will receive an absence. A tardy is defined as late to class, late returning from a break, late returning from lunch, or leaving class early. Tardy minutes will accumulate throughout the program.

Absences

Attendance for all class sessions is required. In case of an emergency, an intern may find it necessary to miss a class. All absences must be made up with learning experiences similar to the instruction missed and must be approved by the ECP cohort Specialist in advance of completing a make-up session. When an intern misses a class session they must notify the cohort specialist in advance of the absence, they must return the approved/assigned make-up work within 30 days of the absence. **NOTE: Attendance at ECP class sessions takes precedence over campus or district instructions, meetings, or activities.**

After the third absence, a letter will be mailed to the intern and the intern's principal. If necessary, a staff advisory committee will meet to discuss the absences and determine whether or not the intern will continue in the program. Options for the staff advisory committee to consider include placing the participant on program probation with an individual growth plan, denial of eligibility to take a TExES exam(s), or dismissal from the program. If a program extension is necessary due to absences, the intern will be charged fees in accordance with the extension policy. If a person is dismissed from the program due to absences, no fees will be refunded. *See program extensions for more information.*

Coursework

Interns are expected to complete all coursework within the time allotted. Failure to complete all course requirements (discussion assignments, readings, activities, tests, etc.) in the allotted time will result in an "Incomplete" status. Interns must complete all coursework with at least 80% proficiency in order for the assignment to be considered complete.

Children

Due to safety concerns, children of any age are not permitted at Region 13 during class sessions. Interns need to make other arrangements for child care. If a child is brought to a class session, the intern will be asked to leave the class session and make up the class session at a later date.

Updating Contact Information

It is the responsibility of each Intern to keep his/her contact information current. Please contact our ECP office at ecp@esc13.txed.net to update all contact information.

Changing Certification Areas

An applicant is admitted into the program based on a transcript evaluation or their PACT score. Content preparation is specific to the certification area, therefore pre-service and in-service must be completed within the certification area approved for.

The only exception would be the applicant may complete pre-service in a 7-12 content area and switch to the equivalent 4-8 content area certification only with ECP director/coordinator approval. The applicant must submit a written request for the certification area change.

Deadlines

All deadlines for the ECP application process are posted on the ECP website. Deadlines regarding coursework will be provided by the cohort specialist once accepted into the program. The deadline for finding a teaching position is 30 school days after the first day of school.

Professionalism

Professionalism is a critical part of the teaching profession. As teachers work with their colleagues, campus administration, parents, and community members, exhibiting professional behavior is very important. When an applicant becomes a member of ECP, professionalism will be modeled and taught. The Pre-Service/In-Service agreement has a clause that states, "I understand that my failure to comply with the ECP requirements and expectations, including the standards of professionalism as described in the ECP handbook, could be grounds for removal from the program without refund." The Internship agreement also states that interns agree to "maintain a professional demeanor and exercise sound judgment at all times while representing a school, a district, and the ECP." It also states interns will "maintain professionalism in all ECP classes and activities."

Professionalism includes: being on time for all classes, participating in class discussions, treating fellow interns, field supervisors and specialists with respect, academic integrity as well as other relevant practices and procedures. School districts hire and maintain faculty who are models for their students and their community. Professionalism is a vital part of the ECP instructional program and is a non-negotiable requirement for participation in the ECP. **Failure to adhere to these provisions is grounds for dismissal from the program.**

Plagiarism

The Region 13 ECP expects all program participants to model ethical and professional behavior in all aspects of their teaching career. Modeling professional behavior begins with modeling academic integrity in completing assignments done during training. Plagiarism is defined as the representation of another person's work, words, thoughts, or ideas, as one's own. Plagiarism includes copying materials from a source such as a book or an internet site without including documentation of references. It is important that ECP program participants have a full understanding of material covered in program coursework in order that they may internalize this knowledge and be able to apply it in their classroom. Therefore, plagiarized work will not be accepted in online courses, class assignments or any other coursework done as a part of the ECP curriculum.

Technology Requirements

The ECP integrates technology into the program for communication and online course delivery and in-class activities and assignments. All program participants must own or have daily access to a portable

electronic device (laptop or tablet with keyboard) and a high-speed Internet connection. A mobile phone will not meet this requirement. A personal email address is also required. Minimum system requirements:

- High-speed Internet connection
- Personal computer with a minimum of a Pentium based processor with Windows 7 or higher, or MacOS X 10.9 or higher
- Web browsers: Be sure you are on the most modern version of your favorite web browser; Chrome, Firefox, Safari, or Edge- <https://updatemybrowser.org/>
- Most recent version of Adobe Acrobat Reader
- Access to Microsoft Word 2010 or higher

Release of Information

In order to participate in the Region 13 Educator Certification Program, teacher interns will be asked to give consent to disclosure of records related to program performance and performance in the field, to school administrators and program representatives for the purpose of reviewing performance, acquiring feedback or procuring required signatures.

Testing

Texas Examination of Educator Standards

The Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) tests knowledge and skills that a beginning educator should possess for an entry-level position in Texas public schools.

PACT Exam

If an applicant does not have the required minimum number of college course hours or the applicant's GPA is below 2.5, a Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) will be required for admission into the Region 13 Educator Certification Program.

All Business and Finance candidates must pass a PACT for admission purposes regardless of transcript hours or GPA.

Content Exam

In order to be placed on an Intern Certificate, an applicant must pass all required content certification exams.

- Elementary Candidates must pass the EC-6 Core Content Exam and the Science of Teaching Reading Exam
- Special Education Candidates must pass the Special Education Exam and their Content Exam(s) for their certification area.
- EC-12 and Secondary candidates must pass their Content Exam for their certification area.

Pedagogy Exam

In order to be recommended for a Standard Certificate, an applicant must complete all certification requirements and pass their assigned Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (TExES PPR or TIE PPR). All participants have the opportunity to test for the PPR in the spring of their Internship year based on readiness.

Additional Exams

Some interns based on certification areas must pass additional exams:

- Candidates for Bilingual Certification must also pass the Bilingual Supplemental (theory/law/practice) and BTLPT TExES exams prior to being placed on an intern certificate.
- Some candidates might be directed to take the English as a Second Language Supplemental Exam based on their certification area.

Exam Registration and Retesting

Registration is facilitated by ECP and scores are provided by Pearson to the intern and the ECP. Texas Administrative Code requires an intern to pass the appropriate TExES content exam(s) before they can be placed on an Intern Teaching Certificate.

If an intern fails any of the exams, they must complete a study plan and show readiness in order to receive test registration in order to retake the exam. If the PPR has not been passed by July 30 of the internship year, the intern will be placed on an extension and required to pay extension fees. If the required content exam(s) are

not passed by the program deadlines the intern will be placed on an extension and required to pay extension fees.

ECP Fees

All fees submitted to the Region 13 ECP are non-refundable.

Elementary, Secondary, Special Education Cohorts

- Registration Fee - \$300
- Pre-Service Fee - \$1500
- Internship Fee - \$4313 (*\$2313 for critical needs content areas as determined by the U. S. Department of Education*)

ASEC¹ Cohort, CTE², ACCEL³ Cohort (Austin Area - hired within Region 13)

- Registration Fee - \$125
- Pre-Service Fee - \$450
- ACCEL Pre Service Fee - \$900.00 (*includes registration fee*)
- Internship Fee - \$4970 (*\$2970 for critical needs content areas as determined by the U. S. Department of Education*)

ASEC Cohort & CTE Cohort (Statewide Area - hired outside of Region 13)

- Registration Fee - \$125
- Pre-Service Fee - \$450
- Internship Fee - \$5510 (*\$3510 for critical needs content areas as determined by the U. S. Department of Education*)

District Referral Program Cohorts

- Registration Fee - \$125
- Internship Fee Year 1 - \$2250
- Internship Fee Year 2 - \$4313 (*\$2313 for critical needs content areas as determined by the U. S. Department of Education*)

Other Fees - All Cohorts

- Application fee - \$100
- Intern certificate fee - \$78 (*see more info below*)
- Probationary certificate fee - \$78 (*see more info below*)
- TExES registration fee (per exam) - \$116 - \$138 (*see more info below*)
- Standard Texas certification fee - \$78 (*see more info below*)
- Criminal history check and Fingerprinting for SBEC \$37.75 - \$14

¹ ASEC stands for Accelerated Secondary

² CTE stands for Career and Technical Education

³ ACCEL stands for Accelerated Elementary

- Out of region fee - \$500

Extension Fees (when necessary)

- For Testing-Based Extensions After a Successful Internship - \$125/month
- For Performance-Based Extensions - \$250/month
- For Testing-Based Extensions Prior to the Start of an Intern Certificate - \$250/month

Additional Fee Information

The Region 13 Educator Certification Program charges a \$100 application fee. No application will be processed until the fee has been received. The application fee covers transcript evaluation and processing of other items necessary to complete the application process.

All program fees are non-refundable and are subject to change without notice.

If accepted into the program, the applicant must submit a non-refundable registration fee to the ECP in order to reserve a spot in the program. [See website for due dates.](#)

An intern must be in good financial standing and/or have communicated with the Cohort Specialist and Budget Manager in any specific situations to be eligible for the recommendation of their intern/probationary certificate.

The internship fee is payroll deducted over nine months during the internship year. Currently, interns teaching in critical need content areas, as determined by the U. S. Department of Education, receive a \$2000 scholarship. There is no application for this scholarship; it is automatic for participants in the ECP program and is deducted from the internship fee.

All accounts will be reviewed in the Fall for compliance with class work, absence policy and financial obligations to determine if an intern is eligible for test approval.

If an intern withdraws, is dismissed, or is recommended before 9 months of in-service payments have been made, the candidate is responsible for payments for all months in which services were provided. Please note that the ECP bills candidates for services provided in the month prior to payment. *Even if payroll deductions have not begun or did not begin timely.*

If an intern withdraws or is dismissed and would like to transfer to another Educator Preparation Program they must be in good financial standing in order for the Region 13 Educator Certification Program Certification Officer to complete the required TEA Transfer form.

All ECP fees are non-refundable.

NOTE: The Education Service Center Region 13 (Region 13) does not meet the IRS definition of an "eligible educational institution" in that we do not provide courses for which academic credit is offered. Therefore, we are unable to file or provide a 1098-T form to the interns in our Certification Programs.

ECP Pre-Service Instruction

Schedule

Classes are held no more than two evenings a week and Saturdays. Class time is from 6:00pm – 9:00pm CST for evening instruction and 9:00am – 4:00pm CST for Saturday instruction.

Class Locations

Most instruction is provided at the Region 13 campus located at 5701 Springdale Road in northeast Austin. No smoking is allowed inside this building. Alcohol and drugs are not allowed at Region 13 or any of the Region 13 campuses.

Statewide CTE courses will receive instruction via video-teleconference at designated locations across the state.

Some classes are hosted via Zoom based on the cohort and schedule provided.

Field Experience

Interns participate in a required Field Experience for a two-week period that is scheduled according to the cohort timeline. Times for field experience are the regular school hours of the campus where the intern is placed. Field Experience is conducted on designated Region 13 campuses with cooperating teachers and field supervisors provided by ECP. Concepts learned during Pre-Service classes are expected to be implemented during this classroom experience. Successful completion of Field Experience is required before advancing into the internship phase of the program.

Field-Based Experience for CTE and Accelerated Programs

Interns enrolling in CTE or ASEC cohorts must complete a minimum of 30 clock-hours of field-based experience. Up to 15 clock-hours of this field-based experience may be provided by use of electronic transmission, or other video or technology-based methods. A candidate who does not qualify as a late hire (an individual who has not been accepted into an educator preparation program and is hired 45 days or less prior to the first day of instruction for a school year) may not be employed by a school district as a teacher of record until the candidate completes a minimum of 15 clock-hours of field-based experience, student teaching, or clinical teaching in which the candidate is actively engaged in instructional or educational activities under supervision at a public school accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

Instructions regarding field-based experience will be provided to program participants by their cohort specialist at orientation sessions.

ECP Curriculum

Texas Standards for Educators

The ECP curriculum is aligned to the Texas Standards for Educators established by the Texas Education Agency/ State Board for Educator Certification and the state curriculum established for Texas public schools, Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

There are four domains included in the Texas Standards for Educators:

Domain 1

The teacher designs instruction appropriate for all students that reflects an understanding of relevant content and is based on continuous and appropriate assessment.

Domain 2

The teacher creates a classroom environment of respect and rapport that fosters a positive climate for learning, equity, and excellence.

Domain 3

The teacher promotes student learning by providing responsive instruction that makes use of effective communication techniques, instructional strategies that actively engage students in the learning process, and timely, high quality feedback.

Domain 4

The teacher fulfills professional roles and responsibilities and adheres to legal and ethical requirements of the profession.

Assessment

Interns are assessed throughout the program in many different ways. Proficiency on performance tasks is required in order to advance through the program.

Securing Employment

Obtaining a Position

It is the responsibility of the intern to find a full-time teaching position before the beginning of the school year. The intern is responsible for finding a teaching position aligned to their area of certification. It is important that the position accepted be a match between the campus and the intern; therefore, the ECP does not “place” interns.

The ECP notifies schools of interns seeking employment along with providing them with intern contact information. ECP also provides guidance to the intern in developing resumes and participating in interviews. The deadline for obtaining a position is 30 school days after the first day of school. If a position is not found by that time, the intern is offered an option agreement (see “Non-hired,” below). The specialist will meet with the intern to offer options for which the intern is qualified and develop an individual plan.

NOTE: *If an intern is offered a position outside the districts served by Region 13, approval to accept the position must first be given by the ECP coordinator. If approved, an out-of-region fee will be added to the internship fee.*

Acceptable Positions

Interns must accept a position as a teacher of record in a public, accredited private, or charter school. The position must be a full-time position in the area for which the intern is being certified or a position in which the Intern is teaching at least four hours of their day in their certification area. At any point that the intern has questions about the assignment being offered by a district, a conference with the cohort specialist is highly recommended prior to accepting the position.

Out of Region Positions

Occasionally an intern will apply for a position outside of Region 13’s service area. Approval of this position by the ECP is required BEFORE accepting the position. If the position is approved, a minimum \$500 out-of-region fee for counties bordering Region 13 is added to the internship fee and payroll deducted.

Public Schools located in and serviced by Region 13 can be found [here](#) and there are also numerous charter schools and accredited private schools within the Region 13 service area that are approved for the internship year.

Non-Hired

If a candidate has not been hired by the deadline (see “Deadline” in the General Information section), they must meet with the ECP cohort specialist to review options and develop an individual plan. The specialist will determine which options are available to the candidate based on performance and develop an individual plan with the candidate. Options may include a hiatus, withdrawal or clinical teaching.

If a candidate chooses the hiatus option, they must complete the hiatus application. In order to be approved for a hiatus a candidate must have been accepted into the program, attended orientation and be in financial good standing. Upon approval of the hiatus, the candidate will pause participation in the program until the start of the following cohort year. The candidate will be responsible for completing all coursework not completed prior to

the hiatus and all additional coursework required for program completion. Candidates may be required to complete coursework that has been updated, regardless of if the coursework was completed previously, at the discretion of the cohort specialist. The Cohort Specialist will also determine based on testing readiness if test approvals will be granted during a hiatus and how long they will be left open. A hiatus is only valid for one cohort year, if you can't return the following year you will be asked to withdraw from the program.

If a candidate chooses to withdraw from the program and reapply for the following cohort year, a new application must be completed and a new application fee must be paid. Applications will be evaluated based on current admission requirements, and readmission into the program is not guaranteed. Upon readmission, prior coursework will be evaluated and the cohort specialist will design a pre-service plan for the candidate. Successfully completed coursework is valid for a maximum of three years, at the discretion of the cohort specialist.

Clinical Teaching

Interns who are not able to find an acceptable teaching position may be offered an option for clinical teaching. Clinical teaching is NOT an automatic option available to interns. Procedures and required documentation for applying for clinical teaching will be discussed with eligible interns by their cohort specialist.

Statement of Eligibility

A Statement of Eligibility (SOE) for Internship will be provided to all candidates in good standing once the required content TExES exam(s) are passed and all requirements for Internship have been met.

Fingerprinting and Applying for your Intern Certificate

Once eligible candidates are responsible for the creation of their TEAL account, applying and paying for the Intern Certificate with Region 13 ECP listed as the entity, and scheduling and completing the fingerprinting process.

ECP Internship

Curriculum

During the Internship phase of the program, the curriculum remains aligned to the state standards for educators. Instructional topics include instructional practices in the classroom, needs that have arisen as a result of these practices, the development of effective lessons, and classroom management. Instruction still occurs evenings and weekends, but less frequently than pre-service.

Observations

An important part of the internship phase of the program is classroom observations. Interns may be required to observe master teachers, other than their ECP mentor teacher, during the school year. A classroom observation record form is to be filled out by the intern and submitted to the ECP by the designated deadline. The ECP does not make the arrangements for these observations nor does the ECP arrange for the substitute.

Field Supervisors

Region 13 ECP supervisors and other experienced educators contracted by ECP provide intern support and monitor intern classroom progress.

A minimum of five observations are made during the year with feedback following each observation for program participants placed on an Intern Certificate. A minimum of three observations are made during the school year for program participants placed on a Probationary Certificate (see types of certificates).

Interns must complete a pre-conference set up by their field supervisor. Lesson plans must be prepared by the intern and available to the field supervisor at each visit. Paperwork documenting the observation and the feedback are made available to the intern and shared with the campus administrator.

Mentor

Research has shown that mentoring is an important component in the success of the first-year teacher. Texas Administrative Code supports this research by requiring the campus to appoint a mentor for each intern.

The mentor is required to participate in professional development training about mentoring a Region 13 ECP beginning teacher. This training is provided by the Region 13 Educator Certification Program.

Mentors and interns also participate in observations and structured conversations during the school year.

District/Campus Responsibilities

Interns will be provided a Campus Agreement to share with their campus principal that outlines the responsibilities of the campus during the Internship year. It is the responsibility of the Intern to ensure it is signed and returned to Region 13.

Region 13 ECP and the district will follow the Payroll Authorization Agreement policies and forms signed by the Intern and provided to the district by the Budget Manager.

Teaching Assignment Changes

Interns must complete their Internship at the same district and campus where they begin their internship. If the Internship begins in January, it must continue at the same campus in the fall of the following school year. Interns must notify their cohort specialist in the case of district assignment change.

Certification Requirements

Steps to be recommended for Standard Certification

In addition to passing the required TExES exams, an intern must meet the following requirements to be recommended for Standard Certification:

1. Satisfactory completion of all ECP class and coursework requirements including attendance, performance tasks, field supervisor observations, and mentor dialogues;
2. Submission of all required forms and application materials;
3. Satisfactory/proficient campus evaluation, such as the T-TESS (or district equivalent), from the supervising administrator;
4. A recommendation for certification from the campus administrator;
5. A recommendation for certification from the ECP program.

If the Region 13 ECP Staff determines that the intern has not demonstrated professionalism in their roles and responsibilities and/or has not adhered to the legal and ethical requirements of the profession, recommendation for certification will be withheld.

Applying for Standard Certification

The process for applying for the Texas Standard Teacher Certificate is on the TEA website. The ECP staff will provide instructions to interns about accessing the TEA/SBEC online site and completing the required information. A fee of \$78 will need to be paid to the Texas Education Agency for the Texas Standard Teacher Certificate. Once the fee is paid, the application is held by TEA/SBEC until the ECP confirms the recommendation. At that time, the application is processed and the intern is notified by email.

Growth Plans, Extensions, and Dismissals & ECP Exit Policy

Growth Plans

In the event that an intern is not meeting program expectations, they may be placed on a growth plan and ultimately may be removed from the program during either pre-service or in-service. If an intern is experiencing difficulty in a specific area, including participation in ECP classes, attendance, performance in field experience, or performance during internship, the ECP Specialist and/or Coordinator will meet with the intern to determine the course of action. This may include a growth plan. Timelines for meeting the expectations of the growth plan will be established. Failure to meet those deadlines may result in a dismissal from the ECP. Those involved in the development of the growth plan will meet regularly to evaluate progress. Copies of the growth plan will be provided to the intern, principal (if during in-service), field supervisor, and ECP Specialist; a copy will also be placed in the intern's ECP file.

Performance-Based Extension

If the intern does not perform in a proficient manner by the designated deadline, an additional extension of one year in the program is possible (but not guaranteed). Decisions about extensions are made by the ECP Coordinator, Program Specialist, and Field Supervisor.

Please note these three guidelines regarding extensions:

1. A program participant on an Intern Certificate may not be extended for a second year on a Probationary Certificate unless all exams have been passed.
2. If an intern does not receive an unconditional recommendation from the campus administrator or the ECP, a performance extension is possible, but not guaranteed. The intern must show progress toward meeting the certification performance requirements and must be employed for the extension year.
3. All program fees must have been paid prior to the beginning of the extension.

If the intern has not received a contract renewal from the current district, they must notify any district considering the intern for employment with information about the extension.

If granted an extension, the intern will start the second internship year on a growth plan developed by the ECP staff and/or campus administrator. The growth plan must be successfully completed prior to recommendation for Standard Certificate. The intern may also be required to attend additional ECP classes as deemed necessary for their professional growth and performance success.

Extensions are valid for one year, if at that time the intern has not completed all items (testing or performance) necessary for certification, the intern will be dismissed from the program or can reapply for an additional extension year. An official letter of dismissal will be sent to the intern and to the hiring principal. Testing approval may also be removed at this time.

Testing-Based Extension After a Successful Internship

If the intern does not pass the required state-administered exams by the designated deadline, an additional extension of up to one year in the program is possible (but not guaranteed). Decisions about extensions are made by the ECP Coordinator and the Program Specialist.

Once a program participant's Intern Certificate has expired, if they are extended for testing purposes they are not eligible for any state certificate through ECP.

Once a program participant has passed all state-required exams and successfully completed all ECP coursework, they are eligible for recommendation for a Standard Certificate. All extension fees must be paid in full prior to the recommendation.

Extensions are valid for one year, if at that time the intern has not completed all items (testing or performance) necessary for certification, the intern will be dismissed from the program or can reapply for an additional extension year. An official letter of dismissal will be sent to the intern and to the hiring principal. Testing approval may also be removed at this time.

Testing-Based Extension Prior to the Start of an Intern Certificate

If the intern does not pass all required content tests within the first thirty days of the start of the school year, they become a Testing-Based Extension.

To be eligible for an Intern Certificate starting in January of the program year, the following conditions must be met:

- Successful completion of all ECP content preparation
- Passing required content tests
- Notifying the hiring district in writing

Once the Intern Certificate begins, the intern must continue in the ECP throughout their internship year, extending their participation in the ECP program. For example, an Intern Certificate issued in January requires the intern to teach until January of the following year on the same campus.

During the extension, interns will continue to have field supervisor observations and complete program activities at the discretion of the program specialist.

See Certificate Requirements for the requirements to obtain Standard Certification.

Extensions are valid for one year, if at that time the intern has not completed all items (testing or performance) necessary for certification, the intern will be dismissed from the program or can reapply for an additional extension year. An official letter of dismissal will be sent to the intern and to the hiring principal. Testing approval may also be removed at this time.

Dismissals and ECP Exit Policy

Under certain circumstances, an Intern may be dismissed from the Region 13 ECP. Although the intern may be placed on a growth plan prior to dismissal, there is no requirement to do so.

The following are reasons for automatic dismissal with no growth plan:

- Termination from a teaching position under policy governing the hiring entity
- Unacceptable behavior identified in the Texas Educator Code of Ethics
- Falsification of information or documents
- Resignation by the intern of their contracted position

The following are reasons for dismissal or a growth plan:

- Insubordination to ECP and/or district personnel
- Failure to comply with a hiring entity's rules or policies which leads to concerns by the school administrator (this applies to actions outside the classroom as well as in the classroom).
- Unsatisfactory classroom performance on appraisal results, evaluations or Standard Recommendation Form by the building principal and/or ECP staff
- Failure to pay fees or submit required paperwork in a timely manner
- Excessive absences or tardiness
- Failure to meet ECP requirements/standards during Pre-Service
- Failure to meet ECP requirements/standards during Internship

ECP must notify the Texas Education Agency if a dismissal happens for any of the following reasons:

- Resignation, non-renewal or termination by the school or district
- Discharge or release from ECP
- Withdrawal from ECP
- The internship assignment does not meet the requirements described in Texas Administrative Code

The following is an outline of the notification process:

- ECP, the campus or district personnel, and the candidate must inform each other within one calendar week of the candidate's last day in the assignment; and
- TEA must receive the certificate deactivation request with all related documentation from ECP within two calendar weeks of the candidate's last day of the assignment in a format determined by TEA.

If an Intern who has been dismissed or withdrawn requests that ECP sign a TEA Transfer Form to move to another Educator Preparation Program, they must have paid all required program fees for this form to be provided.

ECP Appeals and Complaint Policy

Dismissals

To appeal a dismissal, an intern must contact the ECP Coordinator with a written explanation of the reasons for the appeal within 10 business days of the decision. Documentation supporting the written explanation may be submitted for consideration but is not required. The Coordinator will review the information, and if necessary, a face-to-face conference may be requested with the intern.

If the intern is not satisfied with the decision of the Coordinator, the intern can appeal the decision to the Deputy Executive Director for Academic Services. The final appeal would be to the Executive Director of the Region 13 Education Service Center.

Timeline

The intern must appeal the dismissal in writing within 10 business days of receiving the dismissal notification. The ECP must respond to the appeal within 30 business days of the filing of the appeal.

Complaint Policy

The Region 13 Educator Certification Program encourages all stakeholders to discuss their concerns with the Intern's program specialist. If concerns are not addressed, ECP encourages stakeholders to contact the Coordinator. Anyone can make a complaint without fear of retaliation.

A copy of the ECP Complaint Policy and process can be found here: <https://teach.esc13.net/complaints>

Finisher Admission Program Information and Fees

Admission Date:

A finisher (TEA term regarding a candidate who has finished all program pieces except state-mandated testing requirements) may be admitted into the Educator Certification Program at Region 13, although they will not be responsible for completing the same program requirements or timeline as a current cohort.

Admission Requirements:

- A finisher may be admitted if they meet regular ECP admission requirements including:
 - Completing our online application; <https://teach.esc13.net/>
 - Once complete send a follow-up email to amy.walsh@esc13.txed.net and sarah.jones@esc13.txed.net
 - Sending in college transcripts
 - Transfer form from original program
 - TOEFL scores if applicable
- supply documentation of completing all teacher preparation requirements except testing requirements not met.
- status of good standing upon exit as a finisher from their previous program.

Finisher Program Requirements:

- Monthly 30 minute check-ins with assigned cohort specialist
- Structured test preparation plan prepared by cohort specialist plan including but not limited to:
 - Reading of key textbooks aligned with the exam content
 - Online content course preparation
 - Attendance at pre service training during the summer
 - Attendance at in service training classes during the school year
 - Performance task completion
 - Practice Tests provided by ECP
 - Pearson Online Practice Exam

Note: You may be required to pay for the cost of a monthly subscription to 240 Tutorial if you are not meeting mastery levels by second practice exam provided by EPP.

Program Fees by Status:

- \$100 Application fee
- Testing Only: \$125 Monthly Testing Extension Fees until the certification process is complete
- Field Support Necessary: \$250 Monthly Extension Fees until the certification process is completed

Additional Notes:

- It is recommended that the transfer candidate will complete required testing and recommendation for standard certification within one year of the upload admission transfer date to ECP.
- Fees are subjects to change