

# ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION

September 1999

## Policies and Information:

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## **Summary of the Accountability System for Educator Preparation (ASEP)**

Texas is committed to the principles of accountability and high standards for educator preparation programs. As required by the Texas Education Code (TEC §21.045), the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) has implemented over the past two years a rigorous performance-based accountability system. The Accountability System for Educator Preparation (ASEP) is the only program of its kind in the nation and served as the model for legislation recently passed by the United States Congress.

ASEP policies and rules were developed based on comprehensive, ongoing input received by the Board from educators and citizens across Texas. The strength of ASEP is the result of this collaboration and reflects the commitment of the education profession to provide highly qualified educators for the students of Texas.

Annual accreditation ratings are issued based on both the combined performance of all candidates and data disaggregated by ethnic and gender groups. Programs can be rated "Accredited," "Accredited – Under Review," or "Not Accredited." The law requires the SBEC executive director to appoint an oversight team to assist entities that are "Accredited – Under Review." If the program is under review for two consecutive years, the law compels the executive director to appoint a manager with full powers to supervise all aspects of that program. Entities that do not meet standards for three consecutive years become "Not Accredited" and lose the authority to recommend individuals for certification.

Ratings are determined by the performance of the program's candidates on the assessments required for certification. These assessments evaluate the knowledge and skills (both pedagogy and content) that have been identified by Texas educators as being necessary for beginning educators to possess.

Candidates are eligible to take the certification exams near the end of their preparation program; however, the program must approve their registration for the exams. Assessment data represent candidates' success during the final year of their program ("first-year pass rate" reflects performance during the year the tests are initially taken) as well as the subsequent year ("cumulative pass rate" is based on performance over the two-year period). Such an approach provides an incentive for programs to work with their students if they are not successful in passing on their first attempt. If a program's pass rate reflects the performance of fewer than 30 students, current data are combined with data from the previous one or two years.

To be rated "Accredited," a program must achieve a 70% first-year pass rate or an 80% cumulative pass rate. Each candidate group ("all" candidates, and the ethnic and gender groups) must demonstrate performance at or above either the first-year or cumulative standard. Effective with accreditation ratings issued in September 2002, the standards will increase to 75% for the first-year pass rate and 85% for the cumulative pass rate.

Also effective September 2002, ASEP will be enhanced by the implementation of the following:

- An assessment of the classroom performance of beginning teachers will be used for accountability and is currently under development. It will be piloted during the 1999-2000 school year and implemented for new teachers beginning in fall 2000.

- Success in an acceptable proportion of the certification fields offered by the program will also become part of the accreditation process. The Board has not yet set the proportion required and acceptable pass rates.
- Approval of a program's ability to offer preparation in individual certification fields will be based on test performance. If performance in a single certificate field (e.g., mathematics or special education) is below the standard for three consecutive years, the program may no longer offer preparation in that field. After two years, the program may request reinstatement by the executive director or re-apply for approval to offer that field.

Beginning this year, ASEP recognizes programs that have achieved commendable levels of success in the diversity of their certification candidates or the proportion of their candidates prepared in state or regional high-need teaching fields.

Questions concerning ASEP should be directed to the SBEC Office of Accountability at (512) 469-3000. Additional information is also available on the SBEC web site at [www.sbec.state.tx.us](http://www.sbec.state.tx.us).

## Description of ASEP Accreditation Ratings

### ASEP Rules

During 1998-99, the Board adopted several significant amendments to the ASEP rules (19 TAC Chapter 229.1-229.5), such as the use of the “first-year pass rate” and the combining of small-group certification exam data. The ASEP rules are available on the SBEC website. Key aspects of the rules are presented below to assist in your understanding of the ASEP materials and data.

### Accreditation Status Report

This report provides the annual accreditation rating for each program and the performance data on which the rating is based. The rating is effective from September 1, 1999 - August 31, 2000.

The rating (either Accredited or Accredited – Under Review) is shown at the top of the report and the data indicate the success of the program’s candidates on the *Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET)* and the *Texas Oral Proficiency Test (TOPT)*. The rating is based on the first-year and cumulative (two-year) pass rates for each candidate group. The seven groups are “all students” and the two gender and four ethnic groups. **To be accredited, each group must achieve or exceed either the 70% first-year pass rate or the 80% cumulative pass rate.**

The top box shows the *first-year pass rates for 9/1/98-8/31/99* (i.e., the candidates’ performance on tests taken initially during 9/98-8/99), and the fourth box shows the *cumulative pass rates for 9/1/97-8/31/99* (i.e., based on tests taken initially during 9/97-8/98, this pass rate represents performance on those tests over a two-year period [9/97-8/99]). Depending on the number of candidates in each ethnic and gender group, the pass rates shown in these two boxes are the pass rates used to determine the accreditation rating and, as a result, no data are shown in the second, third, fifth, and sixth boxes. If a program has less than 30 test takers in an ethnic or gender group, the data for that group is combined with performance data from a previous group, as explained below.

**Data for the “all students” group is never combined with data from previous years, regardless of the number of persons in that group.**

Combining small-group data: In order to eliminate problems associated with evaluating a program’s performance based on a small number of candidates, ASEP rules provide for the combining of current test data with test data from previous years.

If the number of current (9/98-8/99) first-year test takers in an ethnic or gender group is less than 30, the group’s performance is combined with the performance of first-year test takers from 9/97-8/98 (the performance of that group is shown in the second box). The *combined first-year pass rate* is shown in the third box. If the resulting combined pass rate represents the performance of less than 30 test takers, this pass rate is not used in determining accreditation status; a combined pass rate based on 30 or more test takers is used for accreditation purposes.

If the current cumulative test takers (shown in the fourth box) have less than 30 in an ethnic or gender group, their test data are combined with the previous cumulative groups’ data (shown in the fifth box) in the same manner. If the resulting combined pass rate (shown in the sixth box) represents the performance of less than 30 test takers, this pass rate is not used in determining

accreditation status; a combined pass rate based on 30 or more test takers is used for accreditation purposes.

Please note that some candidates may have taken their required tests initially in different academic years (e.g., took their professional development test initially in 1997-98 and their content test initially in 1998-99); therefore, their performance would be included in the data within two separate reporting years (e.g., in the 1997-98 first-year rate for Professional Development and in the 1998-99 first-year rate for their content test). Anytime data are combined as described above, the ASEP software analyzes the data to ensure that a candidate is counted only once when determining whether the combined data represent 30 or more test takers. As a result, the number of test takers in the current and previous years may not sum to the number of test takers shown in the combined data.

For accreditation ratings issued in September 2000 only, ASEP uses the performance of all first-year and cumulative groups, regardless of the size of the ethnic or gender group after combining over years has occurred.

#### **State Totals for 1998-99 School Year**

For your reference, this page provides aggregate state performance data for educator preparation programs. State data are calculated using the same methodology as that described for the individual programs.

## Description of ASEP Commendations

For the first time, commendations are being awarded to allow SBEC to publicly recognize preparation programs that have shown success in the areas of diversity of certification candidates and preparation of teachers in high-need subject areas. Only accredited programs are eligible for commendation in the following areas:

- COMMENDATION: Achievement In Candidate Diversity
- COMMENDATION: Certification Of Teachers In High-Need Subject Areas

Each commendation is discussed below, and the standards and methodology applied to award the commendations are presented in the attachments. Due to the schedule for the annual release of ASEP commendations and the timeframe under which candidates become certified, commendations are based on data from the previous one or two years (e.g., commendations awarded in September 1999 are based on individuals who became certified in 1997-98 and earlier).

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Commendation for Diversity of Candidates Recommended for Certification</b></p>
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This commendation recognizes preparation programs from which a diverse group of candidates have obtained certification as a teacher. The commendation for diversity is awarded to programs already preparing a diverse group of candidates for certification and/or demonstrating significant progress in increasing their diversity. A program's diversity is defined as the percent of its certified candidates that are African American, Hispanic, or Other (Asian, Native American, etc.).

The methodology for commending **programs already preparing a diverse group of candidates for certification** is shown in Attachment I (#1-2) and provides for a comparison of a program's diversity to the diversity of the K-12 public school population in the state or region. A program is designated "commendable" if the percent of diverse candidates who became certified either...

- meets or exceeds the minority population of the public school students of the state (55%); or
- exceeds the minority student population in the region by at least 10 percentage points.

The *ASEP Program Diversity Report* shows the percentage of the program's candidates that were minorities and how the percentage compares to the state and regional data.

Due to differences in sizes of programs and variations in changes in program size and diversity over time, ASEP recognizes **growth in a program's diversity** based on appropriate increases in either the number or percentage of minority candidates.

Attachment I (#3-6) presents the detailed criteria under which this commendation is calculated. The *ASEP Program Diversity Report* shows the number and percentage of the program's candidates that were minority for the last three years, as well as the changes that occurred.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Commendation for Preparation of Persons for High-Need Subject Areas</b></p>
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This commendation recognizes preparation programs that are producing a commendable percentage of teachers in state and/or regional high-need subject areas. Attachment II provides the details for implementing this commendation.

The six **state high-need subject areas**, as identified by the Commissioner of Education, are:

- bilingual/English as a second language;
- foreign languages;
- mathematics;
- science;
- special education; and
- technology applications.

**Regional high-need subject areas** are identified as the six subject areas (out of the twelve areas analyzed) in which the greatest percentages of teachers do not hold the “target certificate.” The “target certificate” refers to the optimum certificate to be held by a teacher in that assignment (e.g., for a middle school mathematics teacher, the secondary mathematics certificate is the target certificate). The region is the education service center (ESC) region in which the program is located.

A program is designated “commendable” if either...

- 50% or more of the program’s candidates were certified in at least one state high-need subject area; or
- 40% or more of the program’s candidates were certified in at least one regional high-need subject area.

The enclosed *Teachers Certified by Subject Area* report identifies the subject areas in which the program’s candidates were certified during September 1, 1996 - August 31, 1998, and the number and percent of those teachers who were certified in at least one state or regional high-need area.

Complete “target certificate” data for all ESC regions are available on the SBEC website at [www.sbec.state.tx.us](http://www.sbec.state.tx.us). Enter through the section titled “Publications,” then click on the view labeled “Who is Teaching in Texas Public Schools.” The *Report of Teachers Holding and Not Holding Target Certificates, 1997-98, By Region and Subject Area*, provides target-certificate data for each region.

**Attachment I**  
**ASEP Commendation for**  
**Diversity of Candidates Recommended for Certification**

**Standard:** A program is commended if it meets one or more of the following six criteria:

*Percentage certified compared to state and ESC-region diversity*

1. The program certified 10 or more total candidates during the previous academic year *and* the percentage of minority candidates certified by the program was equal to or higher than the total percentage of minority public school (K-12) students in the state for that year; OR
2. The program certified 10 or more total candidates during the previous academic year *and* the percentage of minority candidates certified by the program was at least 10 percentage points higher than the percentage of minority public school (K-12) students in the education service center (ESC) region for that year; OR

*Growth in percentage certified compared to the prior one or two years*

3. The program certified 20 or more total candidates during the previous academic year *and* the percentage of minority candidates certified by the program was at least five percentage points higher than the prior year's percentage of minority candidates; OR
4. The program certified 40 or more total candidates during the previous two academic years, *and* the percentage of minority candidates certified by the program during the previous academic year was at least 10 percentage points higher than the percentage of minority candidates from the second year prior to that year; OR

*Growth in number certified compared to the prior one or two years*

5. The program certified 50 or more total candidates during the previous academic year *and* the number of minority candidates certified by the program, compared to the prior year's number of minority candidates, shows an increase of at least 10 candidates and 10 percent (rounded); OR
6. The program certified fewer than 50 total candidates during the previous academic year *and* the number of minority candidates certified represented a commendable increase, as indicated in the table below, based on the prior year's number of minority candidates OR the average of the annual increase in the number of minority candidates for each of the two prior years:

**TO BE COMMENDABLE:**

Total number of candidates certified <u>previous year</u>	Increase in number of minority candidates <u>over prior year</u>	Average increase in number of minority candidates <u>over prior two years</u>
1-10	2 or more	2.0 or more
11-20	4 or more	4.0 or more
21-30	6 or more	6.0 or more
31-40	8 or more	8.0 or more
41-49	10 or more	10.0 or more



Explanatory Notes:

“Diversity” of candidates means the percent or number of the program’s candidates that is Hispanic, African American, and in the “other” demographic group for ethnicity (i.e., are not in the category of “white”). “Total candidates” means all groups combined. A candidate is counted as *certified* by a program if the candidate becomes certified as a teacher based on that program’s recommendation. Public school student diversity data are obtained from the Texas Education Agency.

The percentage of diverse candidates certified during an academic year is the *number of minority candidates certified by the program* divided by the *total number of candidates certified by the program*.

The analysis counts all teachers certified in an academic year based on certificate issuance dates of September 1 - August 31. “Current year” is the academic year immediately preceding the issuance of the ASEP rating; “previous year” is the year before the current year (e.g., for commendations issued in September 1999, 1997-98 is the previous year). To clarify, September 1999 commendations are based on the following academic years for the six criteria as numbered above:

1. 1997-98 total candidates must be 10 or more; 1997-98 program data are compared to 1997-98 state data.
2. 1997-98 total candidates must be 10 or more; 1997-98 program data are compared to 1997-98 regional data.
3. 1997-98 total candidates must be 20 or more; 1997-98 program data are compared to 1996-97 program data.
4. The sum of total candidates from 1997-98 and 1996-97 must be 40 or more; 1997-98 program data are compared to 1995-96 program data.
5. 1997-98 total candidates must be 50 or more; 1997-98 program data are compared to 1996-97 program data.
6. 1997-98 total candidates must be fewer than 50; 1997-98 program data are compared to (a) 1996-97 program data or (b) 1996-97 and 1995-96 program data.

**Attachment II**  
ASEP Commendation for  
Preparation of Candidates for High-Need Subject Areas

**Standard:** A program is commended if it recommended for certification 10 or more candidates during the previous academic year and meets either of the following criteria:

1. 50% or more of the program's candidates were certified in at least one state high-need subject area; or
2. 40% or more of the program's candidates were certified in at least one regional high-need subject area.

**High-need subject areas:** The following subject areas are designated as high-need areas for ASEP commendations awarded from September 1999 - September 2003:

- State high-need subject areas, which are designated by the Commissioner of Education: bilingual/English as a second language; foreign language; mathematics; science; special education; and technology applications.
- Regional high-need subject areas: In the education service center region in 1997-98, the six subject areas in which the greatest percentages of teachers did not hold the target certificate for assignment in that area.

**Explanatory Notes:**

A subject area is defined as an appropriate combination of subject fields (e.g., science is an "area," whereas biology is a "field" within the area of science). For this analysis, 12 subject areas are identified: bilingual/ESL; career and technology (secondary); elementary education; English language arts (secondary); fine arts (secondary); languages other than English (secondary); mathematics (secondary); physical education and health (secondary); science (secondary); social studies (secondary); special education; and technology applications (secondary). Certificate fields within these subject areas are consistent with those identified in the *Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills*. The target certificate is the optimum certificate for that teaching assignment (e.g., the target certificate for a middle-school mathematics teacher is the secondary mathematics certificate).

A candidate is *certified by a program* in an area if the candidate became certified in a field within that area, based on the program's recommendation. A candidate is counted as certified only once within an area (e.g., a candidate certified in both biology and physics is counted as one teacher certified in the area of science). Certification data are from the SBEC database, and include certificates issued during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> academic years prior to the award of commendations (e.g., September 1999 commendations are based on certificates issued from September 1, 1996 - August 31, 1998).

The percentage of candidates certified in at least one high-need subject area is the *number of candidates certified in at least one high-need teaching area* divided by the *total number of candidates certified in all teaching areas*.