Region 5 Education Service Center
Educator Development and Certification Program Handbook

IMPACT SETX Candidate Handbook



This handbook is subject to change at any time. It is the candidate's responsibility to stay informed of updates and adhere to the most current version found on our website.

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Welcome

We appreciate your interest in the IMPACT SETX Teacher Certification Program! As a fully accredited educator preparation program (EPP) by the Texas State Board of Educator Certification, we take pride in assisting aspiring teachers in the East Texas area to become fully certified educators. This program handbook describes our program and streamlines your progress through the necessary steps to becoming certified. If you require further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us at impactsetx@esc5.net. Our team is excited to help guide you on your education journey!

Background

Texas Administrative Code requires that all students benefit from a qualified teacher knowledgeable in the content they are responsible for teaching. As a result, prospective teachers in all content areas must demonstrate content competency before receiving a standard teaching certificate. For teachers in Texas, this is accomplished by completing at least 300-clock hours of coursework through an Education Preparation Program (EPP), passing the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) exam(s) that match(es) the area of certification and the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR).

The Region 5 Educator Development and Certification (EDC) Program was established in 2007 to allow professionals from various careers to become teachers through TEA-accredited alternative routes to certification. Over the last 20 years, the Region 5 EDC has transitioned from fully face-to-face courses to our current virtual program, further known as IMPACT SETX. IMPACT SETX provides flexibility and convenience while preserving the high standards of quality we have always upheld.

Teacher candidates will learn how to contribute to public school using a cohort module. You will collaborate and network with specialists and other candidates who attended courses at similar times. Each candidate will also work one-on-one with a trained and experienced field supervisor to provide coaching, support, and resources through open and honest communication. Lastly, we offer training for your on-campus mentor assigned to support you throughout your internship.

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Mission Statement

IMPACT SETX prepares, supports, and empowers future educators and school leaders through innovative, high-quality certification programs that cultivate excellence, strengthen school communities, and positively impact student success across Southeast Texas.

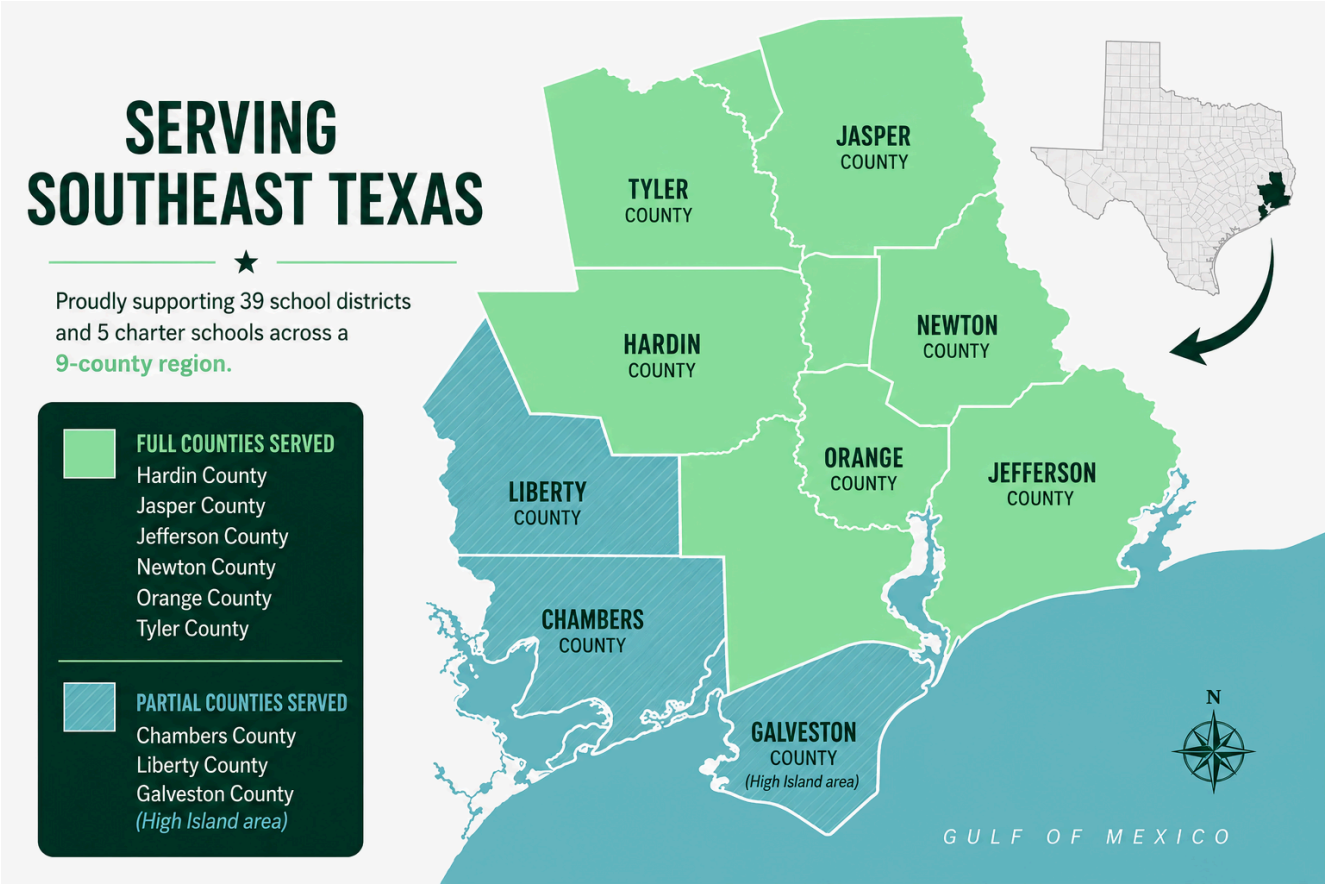
Vision Statements

IMPACT SETX (Region 5 ESC) is committed to training candidates to who are:

- **Student-centered** educators who put the success and well-being of every learner first.
- **Instructionally effective** professionals who use research-based practices to create engaging learning environments.
- **Reflective and lifelong learners** who continuously grow through feedback, innovation, and professional development.
- **Collaborative leaders** who build positive relationships with students, families, colleagues, and communities.
- **Ethical professionals** who serve with integrity, compassion, and a commitment to excellence.

Location

Located at 350 Pine Street, Suite 500, Beaumont, Texas 77701, the IMPACT SETX serves 39 school districts, 5 charter schools, and more than 90,000 students in 9 Southeast Texas counties. The school districts and charter schools being served by IMPACT SETX can be found at the **Region 5 Area School List**.



EDUCATOR WORKFORCE IN TEXAS

Supply and Demand Forces on the Educator Workforce

The following chart outlines the current employment and projected workforce on educator positions in the Region 5 ESC regional areas. The numbers documents are retrieved from the TopStatistics - Texas Labor Analysis using the South East Texas Region, Deep East Texas Region, and Gulf Coast Texas Region.

Certification Areas:

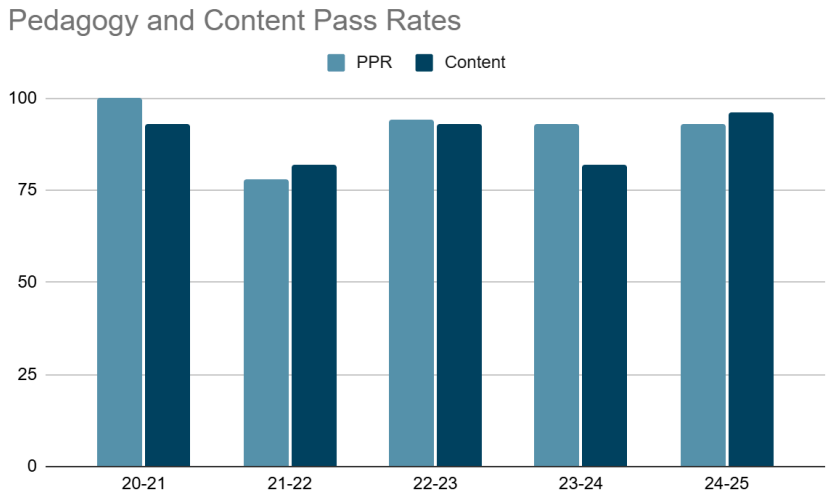
	Current Employment	Job Postings	Projections (2034)
Elementary School Teachers	4140	29	3341
Secondary School Teachers	3570	92	3392
Middle School Teachers	1720	8	1790
Education Administrators	1180	43	1092

For more information, visit the Texas Labor Analysis webpage: TopStatistics - Texas Labor Analysis

Consumer Information

The table below shows the performance of our preparation program during the previous five years. You can find a copy of the past five years of Accreditation Ratings for IMPACT SETX and other alternative certification programs on the TEA website. Other consumer information can be found on the TEA website.

Consumer Information About Educator Preparation Programs | Texas Education Agency



In accordance with TEC 21.044(e)(3), you can locate the effect of supply and demand forces on the educator workforce in the state of Texas at the following link:
https://tea.texas.gov/data-reports/educator-data/educator-reports-and-data

Continuous Improvement

IMPACT SETX staff are dedicated to a culture of continuous improvement that involves learning, evaluating, refining, and enhancing practices, products, or services to achieve higher quality, efficiency, and effectiveness over time. We measure success in the following ways:

- Coursework participation and assignments internalization/utilization
- Implementation of Educator's Code of Ethics
- TExES passing results
- Campus mentors' observations and feedback
- Region 5 ESC field supervisor observation and feedback
- Principal evaluations
- Principal's recommendation for certification
- New Teacher Satisfaction Survey

Program Description and Important Dates

Our certification path requires you to participate in one of four cohorts, with the due dates listed below. Candidates can access the updated cohort calendar at any time by visiting www.esc5.net.

Cohort Timelines 2026-2027

	Fall Cohort *Cohort A*	Winter Cohort *Cohort B*	Spring Cohort *Cohort C*	Summer Cohort *Cohort D*	PLCP *Cohort 14*
Application Deadline	August 27, 2026	January 7, 2027	April 1, 2027	July 1, 2027	September 4, 2026
In-Person Orientation	September 10, 2026	January 21, 2027	April 15, 2027	July 15, 2027	September 19, 2026
Coursework Begins	September 11, 2026	January 22, 2027	April 16, 2027	July 16, 2027	September 19, 2026
Internship Begins	August 2027	August 2027	January 2028	January 2028	
Completion	May 2028	May 2028	December 2028	December 2028	June 2027
Monthly Payments	$266.75 per month for 20 months	$333.14 per month for 16 months	$266.75 per month for 20 months	$242.50 per month for 22 months	$396.50 per month for 10 months; $650 due at orientation

- **Application** – is submitted virtually through our website, which can be found HERE. There is no fee to apply, but all application requirements must be submitted according to the deadline above. We will not accept any application (or incomplete application) for a cohort past the application deadline. You must wait until the next cohort if you miss the application deadline.

- **Interview** – If your application meets all the requirements listed in the Admissions Criteria section of this handbook, you will be contacted to schedule a video-conference interview during the dates listed above. During this interview, you will answer our screening questions, which we will score using a rubric.

- **Enrollment and Mandatory Orientation** – Based on the admissions rubric, qualified applicants will be accepted into the IMPACT SETX. Upon acceptance, candidates will sign and accept the terms listed in this handbook's Standards of Conduct section. The MANDATORY new candidate orientation will be in person as noted on the dates listed above.

- Non-Acceptance Notification – After reviewing all submitted documentation and scoring the admissions rubric, a non-acceptance notification will be issued in the following situations:
    - Unacceptable or no subject-related coursework
    - Overall GPA or last 60 horus below a 2.5 GPA or PACT score below 240
    - A below-average interview score from the interview rubric
    - Failure to meet the minimum threshold on the admission rubric
    - Failure of a criminal history evaluation
    - Failure to submit a transfer form showing not a completer and in good standing (if applicable)

- **Coursework** – Each teacher candidate must complete at least 300 coursework hours, including 50 hours of field-based experience. Our coursework is divided into multiple phases. During phase one (1), you will complete at least 25 hours of field-based experiences and coursework hours in Educators' Code of Ethics, Classroom Management, Teacher Evaluations, Students with Disabilities, Lesson Planning, and Instruction. By the end of phase one (1), candidates must pass their state content examination. Preparation for the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) content exam is provided through online instruction for most certification areas.

  Phase two (2) builds on this knowledge with another 25 hours of other field-based experiences and additional coursework hours, including data-driven decision-making, achievement for all students, clear communication, and collaboration with students, families, and colleagues. By the end of phase two (2), candidates who are required to take the Science of Teaching Reading Exam must pass it before proceeding with their internship experience.

- **Accelerated Pathway** – Some candidates may have circumstances that require or allow them to progress at a faster pace than our standard cohorts. These candidates might be

interested in the $500 acceleration fee to expedite their progress compared to their admitted cohort. However, it's important to note that the acceleration fee does not guarantee that you will complete the program faster.

Candidates transferring from other programs must start the coursework from the beginning. Credit hours will only be awarded for coursework completed in another program through the $500 acceleration fee. This fee goes towards evaluating the coursework and aligning it with the IMPACT SETX coursework. It's important to note that there is no guarantee that any or all previously completed coursework will be accepted.

- Internship – During past three (3), candidates are eligible to be employed as a teacher under an Intern Certificate (see certification areas below) while completing their paid internship year. Once a full-time teaching position is secured, the candidate is hired by a district as the teacher of record. To successfully complete the program, candidates must complete **either two consecutive semesters of paid internship as the teacher of record or one semester of full-time clinical teaching**. Both pathways provide the hands-on classroom experience required for certification. Throughout phase three (3), candidates will continue completing program coursework while preparing for and successfully passing the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exam.

- Completion – The program concludes upon successfully completing either two consecutive semesters of internship or one semester of full-time clinical teaching, completing a minimum of 300 coursework hours, full payment of all required tuition and fees, and passing all required certification exams. Candidates will earn a standard teaching certificate aligned to their assigned certification area once all program requirements have been fulfilled.

Types of Certificates Offered

Intern Certificate or Clinical Teaching

- Candidates must pass all TExES content exams required for their certification area AND have completed 150-clock hours of coursework, plus at least 50 hours of field-based experience.
- Candidates will receive FOUR (4) formal observations and FOUR (4) informal observations by the education preparation program.
- Certification is valid for one year, and candidates are allowed only ONE (1) Intern Certificate for their lifetime.

Probationary Certificate

Only for candidates who have used an intern certificate already.

- Candidates must pass all TExES content exams required for their certification area AND the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exam.
- Candidates will receive FOUR (4) formal observations and FOUR (4) informal observations by the education preparation program.
- Certification is valid for ONE (1) year with the option for ONE (1) additional year.

Standard Certificate

Awarded at the completion of the certification process.

- Candidates must pass all TExES content exams required for their certification area AND the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exam AND have completed 250-clock hours of coursework, plus at least 50 hours of field-based experience AND completed four (4) formal observations and four (4) informal observations by the education preparation program.
- Candidates must receive outstanding recommendations from both their field supervisor and principal.
- Certification is valid for FIVE (5) years and must be renewed by the expiration date.

Certification Areas Offered

IMPACT SETX is approved to offer the following certification areas. In accordance with the Texas Administrative Code, candidates must demonstrate appropriate content knowledge for the certification area they are seeking. Eligibility for a certification area is determined by qualifying transcript hours in the content area or by successful completion of the Pre-Admission Content Exam (PACT).

Certification Areas:

Elementary & Middle School	Secondary	All Grade Levels
Core Subjects with Science of Teaching Reading (STR) (EC-6)	Chemistry (7-12)	Special Education (EC-12)
Core Subjects with Science of Teaching Reading (STR) (4-8)	English Language Arts (7-12)	
ELAR with STR (4-8)	History (7-12)	
ELAR/Social Studies with STR (4-8)	Life Science (7-12)	
Math (4-8)	Math (7-12)	
Math/Science (4-8)	Physics/Math (7-12)	
Science (4-8)	Physical Science (6-12)	
Social Studies (4-8)	Social Studies (7-12)	
	Science (7-12)	

Changing Certification Areas

Preparation is specific to the certification area; therefore, the program must be completed within the certification area approved at admittance. Changing certification areas will require a qualifying transcript evaluation or a passing PACT score and may require additional coursework, field-based experience, and/or additional content tests. The candidate must request and complete a subject-area change request to initiate this process.

Standards of Conduct

IMPACT SETX upholds standards of conduct. We expect the candidates to demonstrate professionalism throughout the program. This includes adherence to the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Texas Educators (found in Appendix 1) and a commitment to completing requirements ahead of deadlines. Individual conferences can be scheduled if there is a need to discuss program expectations.

If a candidate fails to follow these expectations,the director will meet with the candidate to determine the course of action, which may include a candidate support plan with timelines for remediation. Candidates on a candidate support plan may not be approved for any certification exams. A candidate may be removed from the program if they are unable to meet its expectations.

Fees

Program Cost	$5,335.00 *(includes $35.00 TEA Technology fee)*
Additional fees (if internship is outside of Region 5)	$1,500.00
Additional internship	$1,700.00
Additional Fees (not associated with total program cost)	
PACT Exam	$106.00
TExES Content, PPR, STR	$116.00 each (additional fees may apply) $136.00 each (ELAR 7-12, ELAR 4-8, SPED, and STR)
Criminal History Background Check *(fingerprinting)*	$50.25
Certificates	$78.00 Intern Certificate (issues at the beginning of the internship) $78.00 Probationary Certificate (if needed) $78.00 Standard Educator Certificate (issued upon completion of program)
Program Accelerated Pathway Fee	$500.00 (non-refundable paid on enrollment)
Program Extension Fee *(based on incomplete*	$200.00 per month for the first year after internship $300.00 per month for the second year after membership

coursework only)	

Payment Options

- Option 1 (preferred): Payroll deduction (total cost is divided into equal monthly payments)
- Option 2: Auto draft from a savings/checking account. (Total cost is divided into equal monthly payments)
- Option 3: Pay in full in advance with either credit card, check, money order, or cashier's check. Credit card payments will incur a 3.5% surcharge.

Refund and Cancellation

All tuition and fees are fully earned upon signing, and are non-refiundable, non-transferable, and non-cancelable. If a candidate is separated from the program by their own choice or under the IMPACT SETX's exit policy, the tuition remains due.

Application, Acceptance, and Dismissal

Admission Criteria

Admission requirements for the program are based on adopted rule revisions of the Texas Administrative Code Chapters 227 and 228. Applicants must meet current state and program admission requirements.

1. Application – Submit a completed application, found on the IMPACT SETX website, www.impactsetx.com, on or before the application deadline.

2. Degree – Admission requires at least a Bachelor's degree or an expectation to obtain the Bachelor's degree at the end of the semester in which admission into the education preparation program is sought. Degrees must be earned from and conferred by an accredited institute of higher education recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Transcript(s) showing the degree conferred must be mailed or e-scripted from the college/university Registrar's Office.

    a. **Credentials from outside the United States (Foreign Transcripts)** - TEA must evaluate foreign transcripts approved by a credential evaluation service. The evaluation must include a list of courses, semester-hour equivalents, grade-point averages, and a statement confirming that the foreign degree is equivalent to a 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 for a list of credential evaluation services). An official or certified copy of the foreign transcript must be viewed by the consultant and copied for the applicant's file. If TEA has reviewed the degree-approved credential evaluation service and stated in the review that the degree is equivalent to at least a baccalaureate degree from an American university, the evaluation must be submitted with the application.

        i. **Oral Communication Skills** - Applicants must demonstrate English fluency as required by Texas Administrative Code 230.413 if an undergraduate or graduate degree was completed outside the United States. Evidence that the primary

language of instruction was English must be from a country listed on the TEA-approved list. If not, the TOEFL iBT is the approved measure. All four parts of the test, taken within two years of acceptance, are required with the following acceptable scores: Speaking - 24, Listening - 22, Reading - 22, and Writing - 21. The information for the Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet Based Test (TOEFL iBT) may be found at http://www.toefl.org.

3. GPA – IMPACT SETX computes the GPA based on **ALL** transcripts. Official transcripts from ALL institutions of higher education the applicant has attended must be submitted with the application. IMPACT SETX requires the applicant to have an overall grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 **OR** 2.5 in the last 60 semester credit hours. For those who do not meet the minimum coursework or GPA requirements may be required to take the PACT exam before program admission.

   GPA Exception Rule - Acceptance may be granted to individuals with a GPA less than 2.5 or those with transcripts using a Pass/Fail grading system, such as Western Governors University. IMPACT SETX may use this exception to the minimum GPA requirement to admit up to 10% of candidates into any cohort if this exception does not cause the average cohort GPA to drop below 3.0.

4. Criminal History – All Texas School Districts and TEA are authorized to obtain any criminal history information relating to an applicant for employment (TEC22.083). You **MUST** pass a criminal history background check to be admitted into the education preparation program. A conviction for a crime is not an automatic bar to admission. Be aware that conviction of an offense may affect your eligibility for teacher certification from the Texas Education Agency. Additionally, school district hiring policies may prohibit employment if an applicant has a criminal conviction. We recommend that candidates carefully review TEA's requirements and connect with any districts of interest to understand their specific hiring guidelines regarding criminal histories. This will allow you to make an informed decision about pursuing certification and employment in the education field in Texas.

   a. You may be ineligible to enroll in the educator preparation program due to a conviction or deferred adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense.
   b. Individuals can request a preliminary criminal history evaluation form from TEA. For more information, visit the TEA Investigations site.
   c. The requestor will receive an email preliminary criminal history evaluation letter from the agency advising the requester of a determination of potential ineligibility for educator certification. The evaluation is based solely on the information provided by the requestor. TEA Preliminary Criminal Evaluation FAQs
   d. **Affidavit for Acquisition and/or Release of Criminal History, Personal or Professional Data** – This document may be submitted electronically or mailed.

5. Additional Requirements –

   a. **Interview Screening** to determine whether a candidate meets the qualifications for our program. Candidates are scored using a rubric.

b. **Additional screening procedures** may be necessary to assess an applicant's suitability for teaching or other admission criteria.

Contact Information

It is each candidate's responsibility to keep their contact information current. Contact our office at impactsetx@esc5.net to update your contact information, including address or primary contact changes.

Deadlines and Forms

Consult the Region 5 ESC IMPACT SETX website or this handbook to determine application and payment deadlines. The application must be completed online. Once the application and required documents are received and reviewed, qualified applicants will be invited to participate in an interview during the dates listed above in the *Program Description and Important Dates* section.

Fingerprinting

The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) requires all applicants for an initial credential, including standard, probationary, and intern certificates, to undergo a national criminal background check by submitting fingerprints for review. The FBI can only run the national criminal history background check. The FBI can only conduct a national criminal background check by comparing the applicant's fingerprints to a database containing the fingerprints and corresponding criminal history information for more than 47 million subjects.

Acceptance

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) set rules that NO EPP may admit an applicant who:

1. Has been reported as completing all EPP requirements by another EPP in the same certification category or class, unless the applicant only needs certification examination approval; or
2. Has been employed for three years in a public school under a permit, intern, or probationary certificate unless the applicant is seeking clinical teaching that may lead to the issuance of an initial Standard certificate.

Candidates are selected for the program based on the qualifications listed on their application and in the screening process during the interview. Not all applicants who meet the minimum requirements are selected for the program. Applicants will be evaluated using a rubric over these criteria:

- GPA (the better of either overall or last 60 hours)
- Coursework hours in the certification area
- GPA on coursework
- Score from the interview
- Previous work experience in education
- if applicable
    - a passing score on the Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT Exam),
    - language fluency for applicants for Languages Other Than English and bilingual applicants, as well as applicants with transcripts from outside the United States

Applicants who meet the admission requirements will receive an invitation to formal admission. Once an offer of formal admission has been made, the applicant will have *3 calendar days* to sign and return the invitation, indicating whether they will accept. If the acceptance form is not

returned within 10 calendar days, it will be assumed that the applicant has denied formal admission into the program. We will follow up with a denial email, explaining that we were unable to accept the applicant because the invitation was not formally accepted or returned. Prior to formal admission, except for those eligible under Contingency Admission, IMPACT SETX will not provide coursework, training, or examination approval to an applicant. Once the invitation is received, the applicant will now be referred to as a "candidate."

Transfers

Transfer acceptance will be at IMPACT SETX's director's discretion. Individuals wishing to transfer from another education preparation program must complete ALL steps of the application process. In addition, they MUST submit a TEA Candidate Transfer form with their online application.

- Military Service – In accordance with 19 TAC 228.35(a)(5)(A), any verified service, training, or education directly related to the certification being sought will be considered for credit toward certification requirements. Candidates MUST submit verified military service, training, or education documentation for review. The director will notify the candidate of any awarded hours.

Contingency Acceptance

A candidate may be accepted into IMPACT SETX on a contingency basis, pending receipt of the following:

- An official transcript that does not reflect the degree conferred, provided that:
  - The candidate is currently enrolled in and expects to complete the courses and other requirements for obtaining a baccalaureate degree at the end of the semester in which admission to the program is sought, and ALL other program admission requirements have been met.
- A candidate admitted on a contingency basis may begin program training but shall not be recommended for a certificate until IMPACT SETX receives an official transcript of a baccalaureate degree from the university/college Registrar's Office.
  - The contingency admission will be valid for the admission semester only and may not be extended for another semester.
  - It is the responsibility of the applicant to have the university/college Registrar's Office mail/e-script the degree conferred transcript to IMPACT SETX when the transcript becomes available.
  - The degree-conferred transcript must be received before signing an employment contract.

Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements for IMPACT SETX will be notified via email of any deficiency in a timely manner. This will allow the applicant to address any deficiencies and request reconsideration of their application for program acceptance.

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 and a $200.00 readmission fee must be paid. Credit for coursework completed before withdrawal or dismissal may be awarded upon readmission at the director's discretion. We reserve the right to deny readmission to the program based on prior program performance.

Revoked Certificate

Candidates whose certificates have been revoked by TEA will not be considered for admission to IMPACT SETX.

Suspended Certificates

IMPACT SETX will comply with TEA guidelines for admission or readmission of candidates with suspended certificates. The suspended certificate candidate's acceptance will be at IMPACT SETX's director's discretion.

Program Dismissal

Accepted applicants will sign a candidate agreement before beginning the program. The agreement states that the candidate may be dismissed from the program. The following are possible reasons for dismissal

- Termination from a position under district board policy
- Insubordination to program and/or district personnel
- Unacceptable behavior identified in the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics
- Failure to comply with the school district's rules or policies. (This applies to actions outside the classroom and in the classroom.)
- Classroom incompetence based on appraisal results and evaluations by the building principal and/or IMPACT SETX education preparation program staff.
- Failure to pay all fees in a timely manner
- Failure to show consistent and timely progress in coursework
- Falsification of information or documentation (This includes sign-in/out sheets, observation reports, and other required documentation.)
- Failure to comply with instructional requirements
- Resignation by the teacher intern from their contracted position with a district before completing their internship.
- Removal from campus/district during Field-Based Experience or internship
- Revocation of the contract by the district
- Failure to meet IMPACT SETX requirements and policies

The program director will investigate and determine if the candidate will be dismissed. Although the candidate may be placed on probation/suspension before dismissal, it is not a requirement.

Exit Policy

The candidate will complete and sign a resignation/withdrawal form and return it to IMPACT SETX's director within seven (7) days of the effective date. In the event of withdrawal/dismissal from the program, any amount paid toward the required fee(s) are non-refundable.

IMPACT SETX's director will notify the school district if the candidate withdraws or is dismissed from the program within ten (10) days of the effective date.

The candidate must notify the program director in writing within ten (10) days if they are placed on administrative leave, asked to resign, or terminated from their teaching position. They shall include the documentation so the program director can determine whether dismissal is necessary. Failure to notify the program director by email within ten days of being placed on administrative leave,

asked to resign, or terminated from the teaching position could result in dismissal from the program.

Technology Requirements

IMPACT SETX integrates technology for communication, form submission, and coursework. All candidates MUST have a personal email address, daily access to a computer, and high-speed Internet. A mobile phone or tablet will not meet this requirement.
Recommend requirements:

- High-speed Internet connection with an Internet speed of 512kbps
- Personal computer five years old or newer with at least 1GB of RAM and Windows 7 or higher, or macOS X 10.9 or higher
- Web browsers such as Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or Safari with the latest update
- Adobe Acrobat Reader, the most recent version
- Word Processing, such as Microsoft Word 2010 or higher, or Google Docs
- Webcam, either internal or external

Coursework and Completion Requirements

Coursework Completion

Candidates MUST complete all coursework assignments according to the requirements listed in each course syllabus to earn credit hours. Failure to complete all course assignments (responses, assignments, readings, activities, quizzes, etc.) will result in an "Incomplete" status. You should expect 4 to 12 hours of coursework each week, depending on the phase and time of year. Coursework hours and completion dates for each phase will be provided during the orientation. The program specialists will regularly communicate with you throughout each phase, and you will be required to check your email and communication regularly.

- Assignments: Candidates are assigned projects and/or written assignments in various ways throughout the coursework. (e.g., quizzes, reflections on classroom observations, and written submissions evaluated by program specialists.) Each assignment has specific requirements, such as rubrics or passing percentages. Success on assignments during the coursework is needed to ensure mastery of the coursework content.

Plagiarism

IMPACT SETX expects all candidates to model ethical and professional behavior in all aspects of their teaching careers. Modeling professional behavior begins with modeling academic integrity in completing assignments during coursework. Plagiarism is 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, without documentation of the source. Plagiarized work will not be accepted in responses, assignments, or other coursework.

Artificial intelligence (AI) should not replace the essential role of human educators. Although AI is a tool candidates can use while learning the coursework, you must thoroughly understand the material to internalize knowledge and apply it in the classroom.

Coursework Overview

Candidates begin coursework in one of four cohorts (Fall, Winter, Spring, and/or Summer). The Texas Education Agency requires at least 300 clock hours for all candidates in IMPACT SETX. At

least fifty (50) of these clock hours are from field-based experiences described in the next section. The IMPACT SETX coursework consists of multiple phases with specialized pathways. All coursework is aligned to the state standards found in Texas Administrative Code Chapter 149 and is delivered online. The online coursework also meets the Program Design and Teaching Support Certification by Quality Matters.

All coursework has been planned and designed to prepare you to succeed on state certification exams and effectively teach in the classroom. Throughout the coursework, candidates will become proficient with:

- Designing clear, well-organized, sequential, engaging, and flexible lessons that reflect best practices, align with standards and related content, are appropriate for diverse learners, and encourage higher-order thinking, persistence, and achievement.
- Formally and informally collecting, analyzing, and using student progress data to inform instruction and make needed lesson adjustments.
- Ensuring high levels of learning, social-emotional development, and achievement for all students through knowledge of students, proven practices, and differentiated instruction.
- Clearly and accurately communicating to support persistence, deeper learning, and effective effort.
- Organizing a safe, accessible, and efficient classroom.
- Establishing, communicating, and maintaining clear expectations for student behavior.
- Leading a mutually respectful and collaborative class of actively engaged learners.
- Meeting expectations for attendance, professional appearance, decorum, procedural, ethical, legal, and statutory responsibilities.
- Reflect on their practice.
- Effectively communicating with students, families, colleagues, and community members.
- Instruction in digital learning, virtual instruction, and virtual learning as defined in TEC, §21.001

<u>Phases 1 and 2</u>

The coursework begins with foundational training prior to entering a classroom as an intern.

- Phase 1 consists of foundational learning experiences that include:
    - In-person Orientation – An overview of program requirements, expectations, documentation, and introduction to the online coursework management system. (Attendance is mandatory)
    - Field-Based Experiences – Field-based Observation Experiences involving student interactions, instructional practices, learning environments, and discussions with certified teachers. You will gather data on teacher and student behaviors and the learning environment during these observations. Reflecting on this data will strengthen your understanding of effective instruction throughout the online coursework.
    - Online Coursework – Various courses developed to cover the material required in the Texas Education Code, focusing on the lesson cycle, classroom management, and effective teaching practices that the candidate will be able to implement in their classroom. The strategies presented and modeled are appropriate for teachers at all grade levels and in all certification areas.
    - Content Area TExES Preparation – Use the *240 Tutoring* diagnostic to identify weak areas. Then complete the required content modules including study notecards, quizzes, and practice tests.

    - Cohort Collabs – This optional professional learning community will meet via Zoom once a month from 4:00 to 4:30.
- Phase 2 adds learning experiences that include:
    - Online Coursework - TEA required 30 hours of G/T Basics, professional demeanor and ethics, communication, data-driven instruction, achieving expectations, and effective teaching practices that the candidate will be able to implement in their classroom.
    - Field-Based Experiences – Classroom observations through videos or awarded based on prior experiences, including teacher of record, paraprofessional, or 30 days of long-term subbing.
    - Cohort Collabs – This optional professional learning community will meet via Zoom once a month from 4:00 to 4:30.
    - In-person Intern Orientation – An overview of internship requirements, expectations, documentation, and introduction to the observation management software. (Attendance is mandatory)

<u>Phases 3 and 4</u>
This portion of the program includes all coursework after the candidate has accepted a full-time, year-long (quizz-day) teaching position as an intern. Candidates MUST hold an internship certificate that can only be awarded after completing 150 hours of coursework, 50 hours of field-based experiences, and passing the content TExES exam(s).

Coursework builds on the foundational understanding that was gained during Phases 1 and 2. The coursework is designed to help the intern strengthen and refine their teaching skills. These phases include:

- Online coursework – Continues to review and build upon understanding of the learning environment, monitoring and adjusting instruction, professional demeanor, goal setting, and knowledge of diverse students.
- Cohort Collabs – This optional professional learning community will meet via Zoom once a month from 4:00 to 4:30.
- TExES Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Exam Preparation – In addition to our coursework, a book study about educational psychology will help prepare you for being an educator as defined by the PPR standards.
- Mentoring – Each intern will be assigned a mentor by their district. Teacher interns must complete at least one (1) mentor observation each semester. During these observational meetings, you will discuss and observe classroom management, lesson preparation, instructional practices, communication with parents, and other aspects of effective teaching. Your district mentor is an important resource throughout your internship, so you are expected to stay in regular contact and utilize their experience, feedback, and guidance as you grow in your teaching practice.
- District/Campus Training – With appropriate documentation, such as a certificate of attendance, sign-in sheet, or other written school district verification, 50 clock hours of training may be provided by a school district and/or campus that is an approved Texas Education Agency (TEA) continuing professional education provider to a candidate.

Field-Based Experience

Per TAC §228.43, TEA requires that all teacher candidates complete a minimum of 50 hours of Field-Based Experience (FBE) PRIOR TO an internship. FBE is defined as *Introductory*

experiences for a certification candidate involving reflective observation of Early Childhood-Grade 12 students, teachers, and faculty/staff members engaging in educational activities in a school setting.

All candidates are required to complete 25 clock hours of in-person Field-based experiences

Up to 25 clock hours of field-based experience may be provided using electronic transmission or other video or technology-based methods. Field-based experiences must include 25 clock hours in which the candidate, under supervision, is actively engaged in instructional or educational activities that include:

- authentic school settings in a public or private school accredited by the TEA;
- instruction by content-certified teachers;
- actual students in classrooms/instructional settings with identity-proof provisions;
- content or grade-level specific classrooms/instructional settings; and
- written reflection of the observation.

Field-based experience must be documented on the Region 5 forms located in the Field-based Experience course.

A service as a teacher of record or service as an educational aide can excuse you from 25 hours of field-based experience. Service as a long-term substitute teacher can excuse you from 15 hours of field-based experience. This experience may occur after the candidate's admission to IMPACT SETX or during the 2 years preceding that admission. A letter from the campus principal is required for credit. A maximum of fifteen (25) hours of credit may be given.

Testing

Candidates must take and pass at least two (2) different TExES exams, including the content exam and the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exam. During phase 2 of the program, candidates seeking Core Subjects EC-6, Core Subjects 4-8, ELAR 4-8, or ELAR/Social Studies 4-8 are also required to take the Science of Teaching Reading (STR) exam. Once approved for one attempt, candidates are expected to register for the content exam within 14 days and take the exam within 30 days of approval. Candidates must pass the content exam before being approved for any additional TExES exams.

TExES Exam Preparation and Support

Level 1 Support

All candidates must complete an online test preparation program (provided by 240 Tutoring), including the diagnostic exam, participating in content modules, and achieving an 85% or better on a practice test before approval for any TExES certification exam. We will provide access for 30 days at no cost. If a candidate needs more time to complete the above requirements, they are responsible for the additional 30-day cost of the test preparation, except for Core Subjects EC-6 and Core Subjects 4-8 candidates, who may receive one extra 30 days at no cost upon verified program participation. The program expects candidates to take the TExES exams within 30 days of being approved for one attempt.

Level 2 Support

If any candidate has an unsuccessful attempt at their required TExES certification exam(s), IMPACT SETX requires the candidate to complete additional preparation, including Passage Preparation Test Prep Program and 5 live webinar sessions with an IMPACT SETX tutor. The candidate is required to complete 30 days of access to Passage Prep at their own cost. In addition to scoring

above 85% on a practice test, you must complete tutoring sessions via the live webinars before you are released to attempt the test again. IMPACT SETX will provide the cost for tutoring. Note: The state requires a 30-day waiting period after an unsuccessful exam attempt. IMPACT SETX expects candidates to complete their exam preparation and be registered to retake the exam within 14 days of being approved for an additional attempt.

Level 3 Support
The state requires a 30-day waiting period after an unsuccessful exam attempt. IMPACT SETX expects candidates to complete their exam preparation using The *Learning Liaisons* at the candidate's expense and to be registered to retake the exam within 14 days of being approved for one attempt. The candidate can request an individualized learning plan.

Additional Support
If a candidate is still not successful in passing the exam, a personal conference with the Educator Development and Certification program director will be scheduled to discuss next steps, including an individualized learning plan and/or a possible change of certification area. Any additional failures to pass a certification exam can result in withdrawal from the Educator Development and Certification program.

Content Exam Retesting Requirements for New Candidates
New candidates to the IMPACT SETX program who have previously been unsuccessful in passing a content exam are required to complete additional test preparation before being approved for another testing attempt. Candidates must attend live test prep sessions with the IMPACT SETX test prep tutor and enroll in a test preparation program that is different from any previously used program, as determined by the Program Specialist. While attending the live test prep sessions, candidates must concurrently complete all requirements of the assigned test prep program, including taking the diagnostic assessment, completing all required content modules, and passing a practice exam with a score of 85% or higher. Once these requirements are met, the candidate will be approved for one testing attempt and must register for the exam within 30 days of approval.

Internship

Candidates enrolled in the program must meet all requirements updated by the Texas Education Agency before beginning an internship. A Statement of Eligibility will be issued to candidates who have completed at least 50 clock hours of field-based experience, at least 150 hours of coursework, AND passed the content exam(s).

Program participation does not guarantee an intern position. Candidates seeking intern opportunities MUST accept a position at a TEA-accredited public, charter, or private school. Interns MUST be the primary classroom instructor as reported on the campus Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data. Examples of accepting a position include signing a letter of agreement for an "at will" position, signing a letter of intent, or signing a contract. The position MUST be in the area where the teacher intern is being certified and MUST be a full-time position. An internship may NOT be conducted in a distance-learning lab setting.

Internship Requirements:

- Teach *at least* four (4) hours of the instructional day in the subject area for which certification is being sought.
- Three documented coaching experiences between the field supervisor and the intern.

- Four documented collaborations between the field supervisor, intern, principal, and mentor teacher.
- Four documented formal observations (including pre-conference and post-conference for each)
- Four documented informal observations (including post-conference for each)
- Principal recommendation for certification at the conclusion of the internship.
- Field supervisor recommendation for certification at the conclusion of the internship.

Late Hire
An individual who is both accepted into IMPACT SETX after the 45th day before the first day of instruction and 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.

Release of Information
Candidates understand that IMPACT SETX will disclose program performance and performance records to school administrators and program representatives to review performance, acquire feedback, or procure required signatures.

Probationary Certificate Extension
If the campus administrator and field supervisor recommend that an intern needs a second year of internship for more professional development, the candidate must apply and pay for the probationary certificate. Other fees, including the re-entry processing fee of $200.00, may be addd to the total amount due.

Non-Renewed or Terminated Teachers
A candidate who does not successfully complete an internship and is not recommended for an extension or is terminated, non-renewed, or resigned in lieu of termination will be withdrawn from IMPACT SETX. The candidate may write a letter of appeal to the program director. If approved for readmittance, the program director will create a letter of probation. The candidate will be required to meet the probationary stipulations and pay any associated fees.

Complaints and Appeals
Complaint Process:
IMPACT SETX encourages stakeholders to discuss their complaints with appropriate program personnel who have the authority to address the concern. Complaints should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible level. Informal resolution shall be encouraged.

A formal public complaint is a signed written statement of complaints or concerns regarding the customer service provided by IMPACT SETX's employees. A formal written public complaint must include the facts based on the complaint. For a complaint, please provide a signed copy of the Region 5 Complaint Form (you will need to download this form prior to completing) to the IMPACT SETX office in person or by mail or email to:

Region 5 Educator Development and Certification Department

IMPACT SETX
350 Pine Street
Beaumont, TX 77701
Phone: 409-951-1854
Email: cmoss@esc5.net

IMPACT SETX will not process anonymous or unsigned complaints. It is also essential to know that IMPACT SETX must verify the sender of complaints received by email. The sender must provide a full name, address, and phone number that matches the information found on the Region 5 Complaint Form. Verification of the sender will be conducted by phone and documented in an email reply message to the sender.

Complaint Procedures:

1. Any complainant wishing to submit a complaint about IMPACT SETX shall initially file a written formal complaint with the Director of IMPACT SETX within 14 days of the alleged incident. The complainant must provide a signed copy of the Region 5 Complaint Form.
2. The Director will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 10 working days. After the complaint is received, an investigation will take place. The investigative period may last up to 30 business days; extenuating circumstances may cause a deviation from the defined time frames. The Director shall conduct the investigation. The Director will gather all facts pertaining to the complaint. This procedure ensures a thorough investigation, affording all involved parties an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint.
3. The Director shall send a written resolution to the complainant with the outcome(s), reason(s) for the decision, and any remedies afforded, if any, within 30 days of receipt of the complaint.

Appeals:

1. If the complainant wishes to file an appeal of the resolution, the complainant shall notify the Director in writing with a copy of the initial Region 5 Complaint Form and copy of the Director's written resolution. The written appeal must be signed by the complainant, and submitted within 10 business days of the Director's resolution.
2. An investigation shall follow the submission of the appeal. Within 30 business days of receiving the appeal, IMPACT SETX Review Committee shall submit a decision in writing to the complainant with the outcome(s), reason(s) for the decision, remedies afforded, if any. Extenuating circumstances may cause a deviation from the defined time frames.
3. The final step in the complaint process is the Associate Executive Director.

TEA Complaint:

If any complainant has an unresolved complaint and appeal decision regarding IMPACT SETX and wishes to report it to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the complainant will need to follow the required steps outlined by TEA. Information can be found on this website: Complaints Against Educator Preparation Programs | Texas Education Agency

Program Completion Requirements

The following documentation will be included in each candidate's file:

- Application Requirements.
- Completion of a minimum of 300 clock hours of coursework and field-based experience.
- Completion of remediation tasks, if necessary.
- Completion of all documentation/assignments required during internship.
- Program may permit an internship of up to 30 days less than the minimum if due to maternity leave, military leave, illness, or a late hire date. In this event, documentation is required.
- The intern must be employed as a classroom teacher in a TEA-accredited public, charter, or private school; teach an average of at least four hours per day in an academic instructional setting aligned with the probationary or intern certificate, and is responsible for evaluating student achievement and assigning grades.
- Approval of certification is required from the principal, or their designee, and the field supervisor.

Ongoing Support After Completing the Program

IMPACT SETX is devoted to assisting school districts in improving student performance, enabling school districts to operate more efficiently and economically, and implementing initiatives assigned by the legislature or the commissioner. As a teacher employed with a Region 5 district or charter, you will have access to continued support through their purchase of services. The relationships you build with course specialists will continue as you interact with them through continued education workshops.

Region 5 Policy

As teachers, you are role models and should always behave in a professional manner.
You are expected to read, understand and adhere to 247.2 Code of Ethics and Standards Practices for Texas Educators. As an educator, you shall maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law, demonstrating personal integrity, and exemplifying honesty. The following standards apply:

1. Region 5 ESC is a smoke and tobacco free environment. Tobacco products, nicotine products, electronic cigarettes, vaping devices, or related products are strictly prohibited. Therefore, please do not use tobacco and vape-free products in the building. All school campuses are tobacco free; therefore, there should be no tobacco products on the entire school campus (before, during or after school).
2. Alcohol/drugs are not allowed at Region 5 ESC or on any school campus. Alcohol/drugs should not be consumed during any part of the training day, including lunch.
3. Any other conduct that is considered unprofessional or in violation of any rule of law or policy of the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC), Texas Education Agency, State Board of Education (SBOE), or Region 5 ESC may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

Sanctions up to and including dismissal from the program may result from failure to abide by the standards stated in the IMPACT SETX Handbook.

Appendix 1: Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

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. 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.

Principle I: Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performances

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.

Standard 1.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.

Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or that are used 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.

Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.

Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

Standard 1.9. The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.

Standard 1.10. The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.

Standard 1.11. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.

Standard 1.12. The educator shall refrain from the illegal use, abuse, or distribution of controlled substances, prescription drugs, and toxic inhalants.

Standard 1.13. The educator shall not be under the influence of alcohol or consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

Principle II: Ethical Conduct toward Colleagues

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.

Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.

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.

Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.

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.

Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

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.

Standard 2.8. The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly subject a colleague to sexual harassment.

Principle III: Ethical Conduct Toward Students

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

Standard 3.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly 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.

Standard 3.3. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts

regarding a student.

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.

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

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

Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

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

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.